

BORNEO.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—Our periodicals have become so many that they seem put to the necessity of being less select in the choice of matter than is desirable to their readers. All seems to be good fish that comes into their net, and when we should have a haul of herring, or salmon, half of it turns out to be only sprats. Two new publications, called the "Anglo-Saxon," and the "London Review," and an old one, the "Dublin University Magazine," have each in their last numbers caught a sprat, labelled "Borneo." That taken in the Dublin drag-net is the largest of these small fishes, and I shall confine myself to a few remarks on it.

The writer is severe on the gross ignorance of all who happen to differ from him. Let me show, then, the state of his own knowledge. "The unknown interior" of Borneo, and the other islands is asserted by him, to possess "incalculable stores of wealth," and then we have a specification of some of the incalculables. The difficulty, however, is to understand how the writer came to be inspired to tell so very exactly what is contained in the "unknown."

Among the invaluable of the "unknown interior" is a certain commodity called "tripang." Now this article, a great slug, is the produce of the sea, and not of the land, as its popular name, "sea-slug," shows, and its being caught in the "interior," can only be accounted for by the interior being an "unknown interior." Tortoise-shell is another inland production of the same writer. His next communication will perhaps inform us that pearls are the production of the unknown interiors of Ceylon, Persia, and South America.

Shortly after this display of tropical statistics he has the following:—"What British heart would not feel a thrill of pleasure at hearing in a temple among mangrove woods, from the lips of once untutored savages, the voice of thanksgiving and praise swelling up to the true God, instead of wild chants, and superstitious invocations addressed to unknown deities?" The mangrove, as every one knows, who ever saw a tropical coast, or carefully read about one, grows and grows only in two or three feet depth of salt ooze, and the grove of mangroves is invariably the favourite haunt of the mosquito. Fancy, then, a Christian temple built in the salt mud, the sea ebbing and flowing around it, crowds of mosquitos within it, and the thermometer at 90 degs., and you have this writer's prospects for the pious!

The writer next informs us, that "Borneo is so lovely an island, that some have conjectured it to be the scene of the 'Thousand and One Nights' Entertainment." The conjecture is his own and no one else's. His own description would be an Arabian tale, only there is no entertainment in it.

According to the magazine writer, the Malay pirates are not mere handfuls of men, as some persons, "in their intense ignorance," have asserted, but "a vast organised body, whose numbers have not yet been correctly ascertained." The organised body is then described as "spreading through the intricate channels of the eastern seas," and plundering every vessel that comes within its reach. What a desperate web! All that I can venture truly to predicate of this curious web is, that it is made of fusian!

At one time, says the imitator of the Arabian Nights, "it was well known that a pirate fleet of 1,200 strong was cruising about the Indian seas." According to the calculations of the Bornean writers, the crew of each was 50 men, so that this fleet must have carried 60,000 mariners! I wonder how they were fed, for "the lovely island of Borneo" in ten years' time would not yield a surplus produce sufficient to provision them for a six months' cruise.

Rajah Brooke must pray, I should think, to be saved from such friends.—I am, sir, &c.

A COLONIST.