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PHANLEON, THE ADVENTURER; OR, THE EUROPEANS IN THE EAST. A Romantic Biography. By WILLIAM DALTON. S. O. Beeton, 248, Strand.

Mr. Dalton is a charming writer. He has always a purpose when he takes the pen in hand, and his purpose is a good one. He is not afraid of exhibiting the unpalatable doctrine at the present day, that high principle and good courage—not merely talent and romantic sentiment—are the qualities which lead to eventual success. This he showed in "Will Adams," and he repeats the lesson in "Phanleon," which, though not a continuation of, has a connection with, the former work, inasmuch as the grand-daughter of Will Adams, of Japan, marries Faalcon, the Greek adventurer in Siam.

This interesting tale, like the other, is founded on fact. It is strictly a biography, and the hero had an existence in the singular scenes which are described; but, of course, much which is told has been worked out by the writer from his own imagination. The missionary labours, however, of the Jesuits in the East have been in former days so very remarkable that their career has an historical interest; and for those to whom the original French documents are not accessible, the work before us will be a valuable guide.

The time of Phanleon's adventures was the seventeenth century, and the work gives us the extraordinary life of the hero, from his first flight from Cephalonia, where his father had been illused, to his final settlement in England as a married and successful man. In his original escape from the land of his birth he made an enemy, who pursued him with malice and danger throughout his subsequent life in Siam; and this part of the story is the most important and interesting of all the biography. But, in contrast with this Malay's hatred, is Blake, the Puritan's friendship, interrupted as it was from time to time over religious differences, inasmuch as Phanleon, being a Roman Catholic, strongly espoused the cause of the Jesuits in their attempts to convert the Siamese.

It was, after various disappointments in early life, as a sailor, that Phanleon resolved to try his fortunes in Siam; and there, by the patronage of the king, he obtains a high post in the State, and almost succeeds in converting the ruler to Christianity. He also negotiates with France for the introduction of soldiers from that country for the better disciplining of the Siamese troops. He promotes commerce, and in every way advances the interests of the people. But when his royal patron dies he undergoes special persecutions, which had been previously carried on, at Abdoul, the Malay's, suggestion, and in connection with the expectant heir to the throne. Finally, he escapes to England with his wife and child—Monica, the wife, having been more than a sharer in the pains and penalties which had overtaken himself.

There are many highly-finished characters in this book, viz.:—Faulion, Monica, Blake, Captain West, the Jesuit Antoine Thomas, Des Farges, and De Fourbin. Amongst the Siamese are the King, the Barcalon, and Prenawi. Powerful also in drawing are the characters of Prince Soyaton and Abdoul, the Malay, who are instruments of evil throughout the story.

About the country of Siam and neighbouring countries, with the customs and manners of the inhabitants, there is much information conveyed; and, indeed, we can honestly say, that this work is thoroughly real and lifelike, and so far totally distinguished from the mass of stories which come under our notice, and whose scenes, purporting to be drawn in foreign lands, convey less distinct images of the places named than the badly-coloured canvas which is shifted on the stage of a second-rate Theatre. We sincerely thank Mr. Dalton for his vivid and most interesting work, which will stir the blood in many a young and eager heart, and give nerve to the reader for enterprise and adventure, should his lot be cast where high spirit and good principle are needed. The book is beautifully illustrated with chromo-lithographic pictures.