

LETTERS OF

October 21, 1868.

To Messrs. Harper Brothers, New York.

We have now in the press a book of travels which we have reason to believe will be one of the most popular (and that not only for the moment, but for years to come) that has appeared for a long time. It is the travels of Alfred Wallace in the Malay Archipelago. For charm of style and variety of interest, it seems to many of the very best judges, who have seen it privately, that it cannot be surpassed. And it has beyond this a fine, unobtrusive, yet most effective current of far-stretching philosophy that, without making the book in the least degree dull for the general reader, yet gives it great value to the higher class. Mr. Wallace resided for about eight years in these regions, and saw them minutely and carefully in a way that no traveller ever saw them before. He has given such details of Natural History, manners and customs of the people, as could only be got after long experience, and has selected what to tell with such perfect judgment that the general result is a perfect work of art. One

ALEXANDER MACMILLAN

gentleman has been there since, and he is writing a work which is to be published by Messrs. Appleton. But there is no chance of his being anything like so interesting or so full.

I enclose you an extract from the speech of the President of the British Association at the last meeting at Norwich, which will show you the estimation he is held in by the scientific world. I also send you by this post a few sheets up and down the early part of the book that you may be able to judge for yourself. The work will be very fully illustrated, and by the best artists.

Now we offer you the early sheets of this work on the same terms as you are publishing Sir Samuel Baker's book. We should be glad of an early answer to this proposal.