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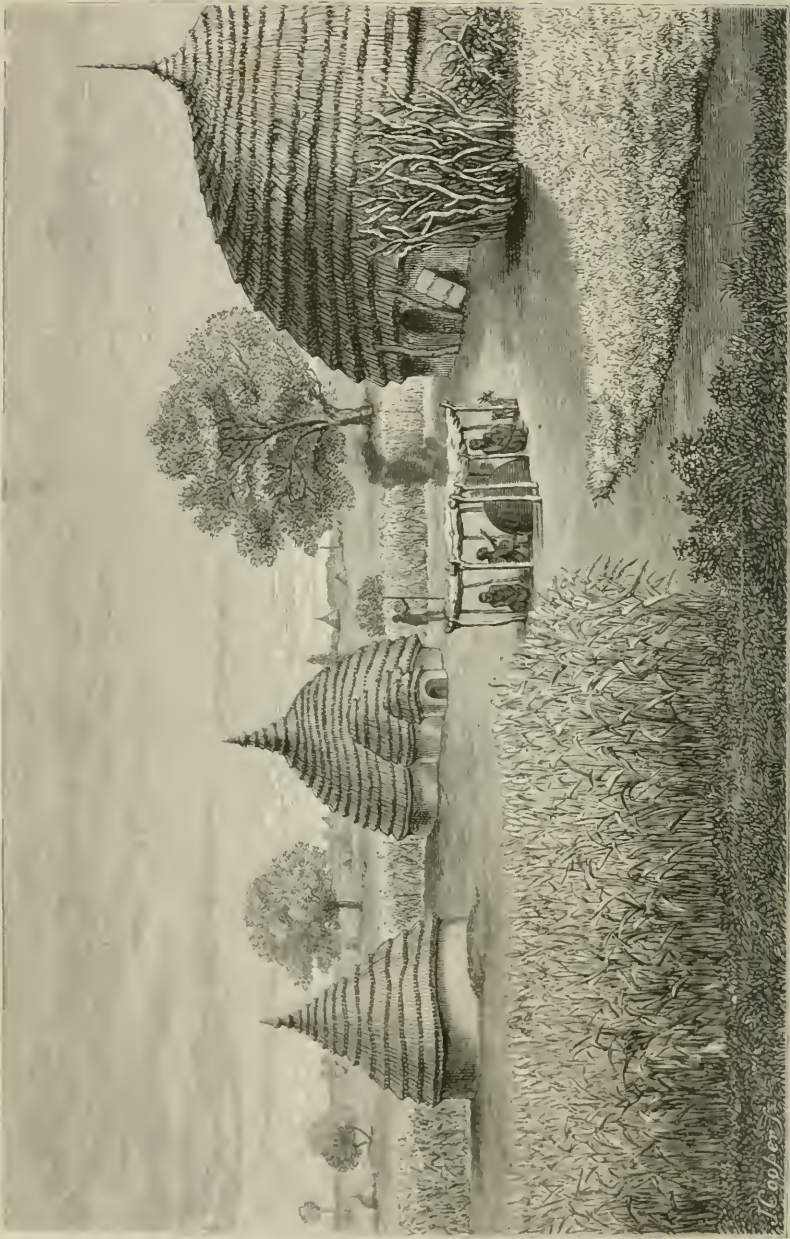












Cooper

THE  
HEART OF AFRICA.

THREE YEARS' TRAVELS AND ADVENTURES  
IN THE UNEXPLORED REGIONS OF CENTRAL AFRICA.  
FROM 1868 TO 1871.

BY  
*August*  
DR. GEORG SCHWEINFURTH.  
"

TRANSLATED BY ELLEN E. FREWER.  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY WINWOOD READE.

*IN TWO VOLUMES.*

VOL. I.

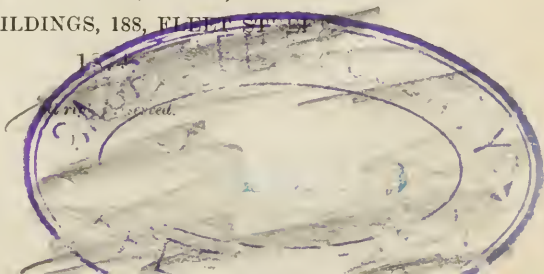
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## INTRODUCTION.

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ABOVE Assouan, the terminus of tourists is the Nubian Desert, a yellow arm of the Sahara, thrust between Central Africa and Egypt. When this desert is crossed, you come to the ancient Ethiopia, which consists of lowlands watered by the Nile, while a little to the left is Abyssinia, the Switzerland of Africa. The White Nile, which comes from the Equator, is hereabouts joined by the Blue Nile, or Black Nile, from the Abyssinian Wells; and near their confluence is the town, Khartoom. In the glorious days of the Pharaohs Ethiopia was colonised by Egypt, and there was a famous city, Meroe by name, possessing pyramids and temples. In the days of Egyptian decline Ethiopia became independent, conquered the mother country for a time, and was never entered by the armies of the Persians. The Ptolemies who afterwards reigned at Alexandria did conquer Ethiopia, even to its Highlands, carrying their arms, as they boasted, where the Pharaohs themselves had never been; but the Romans did not occupy the country; they followed the advice of Augustus,\* and the Nubian Desert was made their frontier.

In the same manner the Arabs under the caliphs did not attempt the conquest of Ethiopia, and it was perhaps owing to Buonaparte that Turkish Egypt advanced so far to the south.

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\* Gibbon, Vol. I. c. i.

The French expedition has always been stigmatised as a fruitless crime. But by the French the power of the Mamelukes was broken; by the French was displayed on Egyptian soil the superior genius of Europe, and thence may be derived a movement similar to that which in the days of the Pharaohs was produced by the Phil-Hellenes, or kings who were "lovers of the Greeks." Mehemet Ali organised an army in the European manner, and crossing the Nubian Desert, conquered the lowlands of Ethiopia or Soudan. At the same time he commenced the civilisation of Cairo. These two great projects, culture in the capital, and conquest in Soudan, have been carried out of late years with marvellous intelligence and energy by the reigning Khedive. To understand what has been accomplished, let us compare the Egypt and Ethiopia of the present with the past.

In the past, a European traveller who visited Egypt incurred contumely and considerable risk. He was not allowed to ride on a horse; he was called "dog" by the pious who passed him in the streets, and pelted by the playful gamin; the dogs barked at him; the women turned their eyes away as if they had seen an unclean thing. But now Cairo, like Rome and Florence, lives upon tourists, who, if they are not beloved, are welcome; the city is lighted by gas: it has public gardens in which a native military band performs every afternoon; an excellent theatre, for which Verdi composed *Aïda*; new houses in the Parisian style are springing up by streets, and are let out at high rents as soon as they are finished. No gentleman wears a turban; and few any longer affect to despise the blessings of a good education.

Let us now pass on to the south. In the olden time the Nubian Desert was infested by roving bandit-tribes. Since the days of Mehemet Ali they have earned an honest



livelihood by letting out their camels: and soon they will become navvies, railway porters, &c. Already there is telegraphic communication between Cairo and Khartoom, and a railway is about to be commenced. As for the Soudan, it was formerly divided among a number of barbarous chiefs almost incessantly at war. It is now conquered and at peace, and trade is seldom disturbed. Civilised opinion, all-powerful at Cairo, penetrates into the remotest recesses of this new African empire; the traffic in slaves is abolished, and those who perpetrated their crimes in the dark depths of the continent have lately been reached by the arm of the law.

It is my purpose in making these remarks to show what facilities for geographical research are afforded by the power and good will of Egypt. In former times the explorer began at the Nubian Desert or the Red Sea; he might be plundered of all that he possessed before he entered negro Africa at all. Supposing he arrived safely in Sennaar, he was at once exposed to those vexatious extortions and delays which so frequently robbed him of his money and his health before he had opened new ground. As it is, a firmam from the Viceroy obtains him men and boats from the governor of Khartoom, and therefore his point of departure is shifted many degrees to the south. He is now able to penetrate into the heart of Africa before he encounters an independent chief. The area of the firmam is immense, but beyond that area the dangers and difficulties of travel are perhaps increased by the aggressive policy of Egypt. The princes of Darfoor and Waday have a constant dread of annexation, and a European traveller, if he entered those countries, would find it difficult to obtain his congé. The west forest region which lies south of Darfoor and

Waday, and also along the main stream of the Nile, has always been a slave-hunting ground; annual raids are made from Darfoor and Waday, the hunters taking out licences from their kings,\* and the Egyptian company of bandits, whom Sir Samuel Baker recently dispersed, hunted the land south of Gondokoro. These wars unsettled the country and rendered it difficult for travel. The slave-hunters intrigued against the European, fearing that he would expose them to the government at Cairo; and the slave-hunted had learnt to regard all white men as their foes and oppressors. Thus it has happened that out of a host of men who have attempted to penetrate Africa from north to south only two have achieved success. The first and foremost of these is Sir Samuel Baker; the second is Dr. G. A. Schweinfurth, the author of this work.

He was born at Riga in December 1836, and was the son of a merchant. He studied at Heidelberg and Berlin, where he took his degree as Doctor of Philosophy, and devoted himself from his boyhood to the science of botany. At his first school one of the masters was a son of a missionary in South Africa; he used often to describe the wonders of that country, and perhaps it was in this manner that his mind was turned towards that country which afterwards created his career. But the proximate cause was a collection of plants placed in his hands to arrange and describe. In 1860, the young Freiherr von Barnim, accompanied by Dr. Hartmann, had made a journey in the region of the Nile, where he had fallen a victim to the climate. His collections were brought home, and as Schweinfurth day after day studied these dry corpses, a yearning came upon him to go to

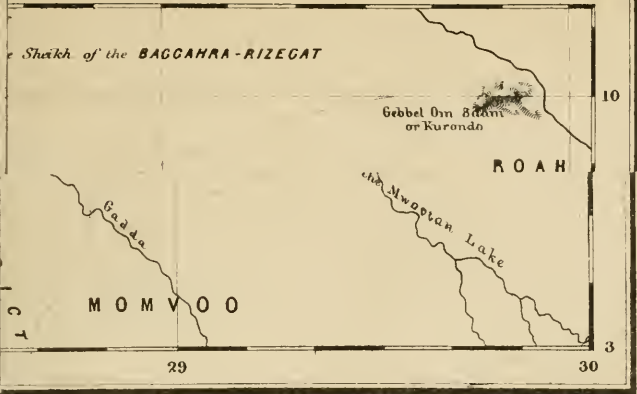
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\* Mohammed el Tounsy, Wadai.

the land where he might behold them in all their bloom and their beauty, and where he might discover new species—those *golden joys* for the explorer. In 1863, he left Berlin for Egypt, and having botanised in the Delta of the Nile, travelled along the shores of the Red Sea, skirted the Highlands of Abyssinia, passed on to Khartoom, and finally, his purse being empty, returned to Europe, after an absence of two years and a half, with a splendid collection of plants. But soon he languished for Africa again, and submitted to the Royal Academy of Science a plan for the botanical exploration of the equatorial districts lying west of the Nile. His proposals were at once accepted; he received a grant of money from the Humboldt Institution, and, in 1868, he landed in Egypt. During three years he was absent in the *heart of Africa*, and, even before he had returned, his name had already become famous in Europe and America. Travelling, not in the footsteps of Baker, but in a westerly direction, he reached the neighbourhood of Baker's lake, passing through the country of the Niam-Niam, and visiting the unknown kingdom of Monbuttoo. As an explorer, he stands in the highest rank, and merits to be classed with Mungo Park, Denham and Clapperton, Livingstone, Burton, Speke and Grant, Barth and Rohlfs. He can also claim two qualifications which no African traveller has hitherto possessed. He is a scientific botanist, and also an accomplished draughtsman. Park had some knowledge of botany, and Grant made an excellent collection, but both must be regarded as merely amateurs. In other works of African travel the explorer has given rude sketches to some professional artist, and thus the picture has been made; but Schweinfurth's sketches were finished works of art. In a geographical sense, this work is of importance as a contribution to the problem

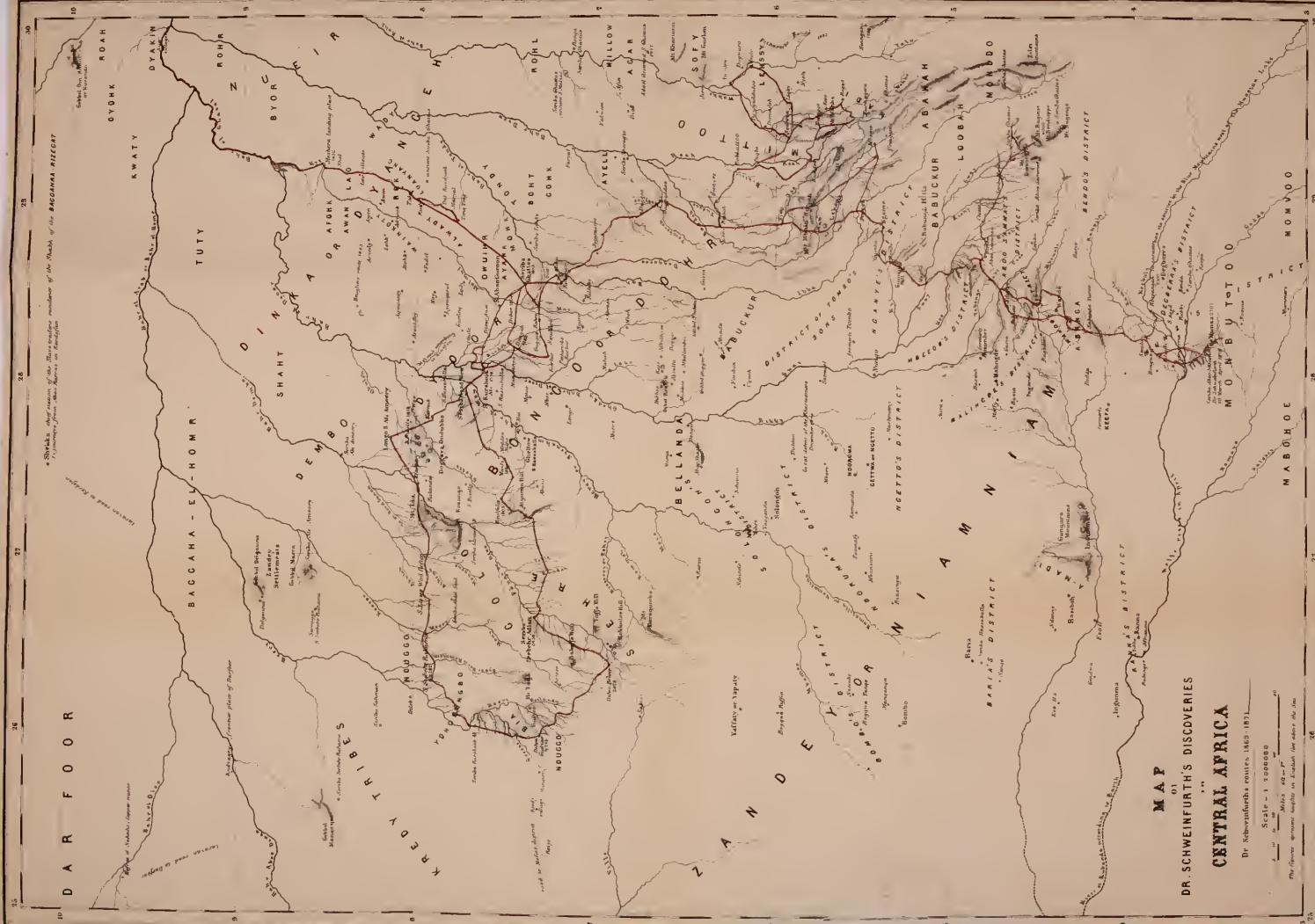
of the Nile; and ethnologically it sets at rest a point which has long been under dispute, viz., the existence of a dwarf race in Central Africa. These Pygmies are mentioned by the classical writers; much has been said about them by modern travellers on the Nile; Krapf saw one on the Eastern Coast; the old voyagers allude to their existence in the kingdom of the Congo, and Du Chaillu met them in Ashango Land. Yet still much mystery remained which, thanks to Schweinfurth, is now at an end. That such a race exists is now placed beyond a doubt; and it is probable that these dwarfs are no other than the Bushmen of South Africa, who are not confined, as was formerly supposed, to that corner of the continent, but also inhabit various remote recesses of Africa, and were probably the original natives of the country.

WINWOOD READE.



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MAP  
OF  
DR. SCHWEINFURTH'S DISCOVERIES  
CENTRAL AFRICA

Dr. Schweinfurth's routes 1860-1871.  
Scale = 1:500,000  
The names are written in English for sake of the map.

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# THE HEART OF AFRICA.

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WHEN, in the summer of 1868, I prepared for the great journey, of which the following pages contain the description, I was already no novice on African soil. In 1863 I had served an apprenticeship in the art of travelling in the sunny fields of Egypt and Nubia. For months together, in my own boat, I had navigated the Red Sea; and it was while I was exploring the untraversed mountains by its coasts that I seriously conceived my larger project. My curiosity was particularly attracted towards the district of the independent Bishareen. I had then repeatedly crossed the country between the Nile and the sea, and while sojourning on the lower

terraces of the Abyssinian highlands, I had learnt to appreciate the full enchantment of the wonders of nature in Africa.

In 1866, passing through Khartoom and Berber, I found my way back again to Egypt.

Once entertained, the project of the botanical investigation of these lands resolved itself more and more into the problem of my life. The splendid herbarium, too, which I had carried home as the reward of my labours, obtained though it was at the cost of repeated attacks of fever, contributed to intensify my desire. Altogether the result of my first attempt was an encouragement and happy omen for my success in a second. My experience hitherto was likewise advantageous to me so far as this,—it had afforded opportunity of cultivating the faculty so necessary to every explorer of unknown districts, of correctly generalising from details. Observations and impressions require to be surveyed from a comprehensive point of view, in order that the characteristic features of a country may be represented in their true proportions.

Besides this general information which I had practically gained, and which I could no more have learnt from books than I could have learnt the foreign habits and modes of thought, I had also acquired that fluency in the Arab vernacular which is indispensable to every traveller, and which, moreover, appears to suffice for the whole of the immense district which is commanded by the Nile and its host of tributaries.

Herbarium, topography, and language all seemed to favour me; the chief drawback was the state of my health. I suffered from a disorganised condition of the spleen, which gave me some uneasiness and misgiving; yet, after all, it appeared to be just the key that had unlocked the secret of the unexampled good fortune of my journey. The numerous attacks of fever had probably reduced it to such a state of inactivity, that it ceased to be affected by any miasma; or

perhaps it had assumed the function of a condensator, so as to render the miasma innocuous. Anyhow, it seemed to perform services which I could not do otherwise than gratefully accept as a timely gift of Providence. As a farewell on my landing in Alexandria, I experienced one slight twinge from my malady, and then it was quiet; it did not again re-appear even in the noxious swamps of the Upper Nile, which had been disastrous to so many of my predecessors. No recurrence of my disorder interrupted my activity or clouded my enjoyment, but fever-free I remained, an exception among a hundred travellers.

The time which elapsed between the completion of my first, and the commencement of my second journey, was occupied in studies which were directed to the scientific classification and analysis of what had been so abundantly secured.

Whoever knows the blameless avarice of a plant-hunter will understand how these studies could only arouse in me a craving after fresh booty. I could not forget that the greater part of the Nile territory, with the mysterious flora of its most southern affluents, still remained a fresh field for botanical investigations; and no wonder that it presented itself as an object irresistibly attractive to my desires. But one who has himself, on the virgin soil of knowledge in unopened lands, been captivated by the charm of gathering fresh varieties, and has surrendered himself to the unreserved enjoyment of Nature's freedom, will be prompted to yet keener eagerness; such an one cannot be daunted by any privation he has undergone, nor deterred by any alarm for his health: he recalls as a vision of Paradise the land he has learnt to love; he exaggerates the insalubrity of a northern climate; he bewails the wretched formality of our civilised life, and so, back to the distant solitudes flies his recollection, like a dove to the wilderness.

Of this kind were my impressions as these two years passed



away. I was prohibited from any immediate prosecution of my hope by the inadequacy of my pecuniary means. A welcome opportunity, however, soon presented itself, and enabled me to resume my investigation of the district of the Nile.

After the death of Alexander von Humboldt, there had been founded in Berlin, as a monument of gratitude and recognition of his services, the "Humboldt Institution of Natural Philosophy and Travels." The object of this was, without regard to nationality or creed, to assist talent in every direction in which Humboldt had displayed his scientific energies; and it was especially directed that the funds should be applied to promote travels in the most remote districts. The Institute contemplated a supply of means for the prosecution of those philosophical studies to which Humboldt dedicated himself with such unceasing ardour. The Royal Academy of Science of Berlin was vested alike with the power of deciding on the undertakings and of selecting suitable agents to carry out their designs.

To that eminent scientific corporation I ventured to submit a scheme for the botanical investigation of those equatorial districts which are traversed by the western affluents of the Upper Nile. My proposal met with a ready sanction, and I was rejoiced to receive a grant of the disposable funds of the Institution, which had been accumulating for the space of five years.

Thus it happened, that in July 1868 I was once more upon the soil of Africa.

During my first stay at Khartoom, which is the centre of government of the Egyptian Soudan, I had collected a variety of information about the ivory expeditions undertaken by the merchants of the place to the country about the sources of the Nile; I had likewise made certain alliances with the natives, and by these means I hoped to project a plan for a scientific progress over the district on a firm basis. There was no doubt that in the heathen negro districts of



the Upper Nile, the Egyptian Government exercised little influence and no authority. Under its direction, the Khar-toom merchants had indeed done something—for sixteen years they had traversed the land in well-nigh every direction, and they had established stations for themselves in the negro borders; but they had not made good any hold upon the territory in general. Nevertheless, I had no alternative than to conclude that without the countenance of the Government, and without the co-operation and support of the merchants, there was no reasonable expectation that the objects of a scientific traveller could be forwarded.

I was quite aware that various travellers had already attempted, at a large sacrifice of money, to arrange independent expeditions, and to engage an adequate number of armed men on their own responsibility; but no sooner had they reached the more remote regions, where the few channels of the river were all in the hands of the merchants, than they necessarily became dependent on the merchants for their supplies. There was, besides, no other quarter on which to rely for obtaining porters, who are indispensable in a country where all known beasts of burden are accustomed in a short time to succumb to the climate.

Upon the whole, therefore, I soon came to the determination of being taken in the train of the merchants of Khar-toom, trusting that the countries opened by them would offer sufficient scope for all my energies. It was probable that the ivory traders would never, of their own accord, want to thwart me; yet I would not rely entirely on this, as I knew that they were themselves subjects of the Viceroy. As matter of fact, probably, they were entire masters of the situation in the negro countries, and really irresponsible; but still their interests made them apparently subservient to an absolute government, and this was the handle that I desired to use accordingly. By diplomatic interest, I had secured the ostensible recognition of the Viceregal Govern-

ment, but from my own experience, I was fully convinced that mere letters of recommendation to the local authorities, as long as their contents are limited to ordinary formal phrases, are of very questionable advantage. I might refer particularly to Sir Samuel Baker's misadventure as affording an illustration of the insufficiency of such credentials. I considered myself fortunate, therefore, in obtaining from the Prime Minister of the Viceroy (although he was himself not in residence) special orders, which I knew were indispensable, to the Governor-General of Khartoom. The Governor-General was to superintend any contract which I might make with the merchants to secure that my journey through the district of the Gazelle River should be unhindered, and to ensure the due fulfilment of whatever obligations might be undertaken.

Thus the course appeared to be smooth, by which I might hope to reach the centre of the mysterious continent; but I was still far from my object, still far from the point which I could consider as the true starting-point of my real journey. Between Alexandria and Khartoom was a route familiar enough, but even Khartoom could hardly be deemed the beginning. In order to reach the cannibal and the pigmy there faced me, as perchance there does the reader, many a trial of patience. What I did in Alexandria and Cairo can afford little or no interest; I was there fully occupied in preparations and purchases for my equipment, at times feeling much depressed. Before me lay the uncertain future, and the perils, which I could not conceal from myself, of this inhospitable region; and behind me was Europe, in which to dwell was insupportable, without seeing my cherished designs accomplished.

In Suez the dejection of despondency yielded to feelings of a more lively nature, partly from vexation, partly from amusement. The custom-house afforded me vexation, whilst the Governor's divan was an unfailling source of amusement.

I arrived in Suez on the 16th of August, proposing to continue my journey to Djidda by the next steamer. Much gratified by the intelligence that a steamer belonging to the Sulphur Company would start in four days, I was proceeding to embark at once, when I was stopped by the custom-house authorities, who desired a strict investigation of the luggage, and insisted upon payment of the tariff duties for every article of my huge accumulation of baggage. Perhaps everything might have been arranged, but when my additional waggon appeared, although I explained that it had been furnished me by the Government, and notwithstanding that I was the bearer of letters directed to the Egyptian revenue officers, the director required an extra special order, and referred me to the Governor, who telegraphed back to Alexandria. In the meantime, for the next two days, I was compelled to take turns with my factotum, the Nubian servant, to sit in the sun on my baggage in order to protect my boxes which contained my money bags full of Maria Theresa dollars. As a refuge for the night I betook myself to a hotel, not much larger than a hut, in which I had already some years previously found the accommodation just suited to give me a foretaste of the privations of the desert.

My consternation may be imagined, when at last there arrived from the capital an order that I must pay precisely as any ordinary traveller. Hardly had I recovered my first surprise, when accidentally one of the Governor's clerks called attention to some contradictions in the despatch. Further inquiries were instituted, and the discovery was made that an important word had been overlooked, and that the tenor of the message was that I was "*not*" to pay.

Whilst this was going on, and I was kept in my suspense, I stayed chiefly in the Governor's divan. This officer, untroubled at the revolutions which were taking place around him, untouched by any development of the spirit of the age so perceptible here, where three-quarters of the world join

hands, ruled his people in simplicity and in the fear of the Lord. During the time which I passed sitting in his divan awaiting the issue of events, I was a witness of several incidents exhibiting this simplicity, and which struck me as being somewhat ludicrous. First stepped in a swarthy-looking fellow, with a knavish countenance, such as one meets but seldom even in the streets of Alexandria. He wanted to legitimatise himself in his character of a British subject, or "*protégé*," as he styled himself. To the Governor's inquiry where he came from, he said from Tarablus. "Tarablus! then how can you be English?" said the Governor. "Why, surely, because Tarablus is in the west," replied the rogue. It was objected that he was forging a lie, and that Tarablus was not in the west, and thence there ensued a tedious geographical discussion about Eastern and Western Tripoli. The rascal went on to assert that his father was a native of Malta, that after his death he had married, settled in Tripoli, and had become a Mohammedan; and then he cunningly added, "Allah be with you, and give you grace! I should hope I could be an Englishman and yet be a good Mussulman." Quite satisfied, the Governor gave a contented look, and let him pass. The order was given for the next applicant to be heard. With hesitating steps there now approached a little man, black and repulsive, bringing with him a veiled girl to the front. It was a scene which suggested the thought that he must be a slave-dealer, and it reminded me of one of Horace Vernet's famous pictures; but the circumstances were different. He proceeded to unroll mysteriously and display a splendid caftan of yellow silk. He was, it seemed, a tailor of the suburbs, and the veiled beauty was a slave-girl from Enarea, who had formerly been sold for filthy lucre, and was now bartering her honesty under the same inducement. The caftan was a gorgeous vestment lined with imitation ermine, and not unlike the night-dress of Ivan the Terrible, which is preserved in the Troitsky con-

vent near Moscow. The girl had ordered the dress, and now would not pay for it, and accordingly the tailor had brought her with him to the Governor, and so enforced his demand.

The next scene had a wonderful climax. It might almost remind one of the tedious campaign ending with the sudden collapse of Magdala. What the beginning of the contention was, I cannot tell. The Governor had apparently been trying to mediate between two Arnauts; but as the prolonged discourse was carried on in Turkish, I did not understand it. A quantity of apples were produced, and some of them laid for an evidently conciliatory purpose beside the Governor. All at once, however, some misunderstanding occurred, and there arose a furious storm of apples: they were hurled in every direction, the Bey himself being the originator of the bombardment; and the scene closed as effectively as though there had been a display of fireworks. For myself, I was happily protected by my situation; but I could see all, and am ready, if need be, to vouch for my representation in the presence of the great Sultan himself. If any one is inclined to suspect that such a sight is incompatible with the dignity or indolence of Turks, I can only remind him that their enlarged intercourse with temperaments less sluggish than their own has broken down much of their composure; and that now just as little patience can be expected from an African Bey when he is irritated, as from an excited Bavarian corporal. Although these details may appear to have no direct connection with what concerns Central Africa, yet they are significant as exhibiting how completely, for all purposes of administration, every institution which is Turkish or Mohammedan remains fixed on its ancient basis. Though Suez were to become a second San Francisco, or however much it might concentrate upon itself the traffic of the world, scenes of judicial practice such as these would be sure to recur until the last Pasha or Bey had taken farewell of this mortal state.



Since my first visit five years ago, in January 1864, the population of Suez had increased threefold. The Abyssinian campaign alone had been the means of almost doubling the number of its inhabitants. A portion of the camp formed for the marching troops, and an immense depôt for trusses of hay, seeming well nigh like a large village in itself, were now the sole relies of that successful enterprise.

The fresh-water canal, which had now been completed for five years, had not effected any marked improvement upon the melancholy environs of the town, where desolation still reigned as ever; no gardens, no plantations, no verdure relieved the eye, which sought its refreshment from the blue sky and the azure sea. The hopeful expectations which were entertained from that canal seem by no means to have been realised. The deposit of any fertilising soil proceeded very slowly, and hitherto had made no change in the condition of vegetation at Suez, except just at the foot of the Mokkatan mountains, where the boulder flats, unimpregnated with salt, are traversed by a separate side branch of the main canal. Large fields of vegetables are cultivated here, and, without the aid of man, many varieties of desert plants contribute to the verdure. The tourist who loves to inscribe fresh acquisitions in his diary, may here without trouble find the far-famed "rose of Jericho," which he would seek in vain around the suburbs of Cairo.

In order to reach Kliartoom, I had chosen the sea-route by Suakin, so as to avoid the heat and fatigue of a journey through the great Nubian desert. This sea-route, by Suakin and Berber, is quicker and altogether less expensive than that by Assouan and Korosko; but it is not advisable for merchants who are travelling with any quantity of goods, on account of the heavy duties which are levied both at starting from Suez and at landing at Suakin.

To save trouble and time I thought it would be best to proceed to Djidda, and there hire a sailing vessel to convey

our party across to Suakin. To reach Djidda, I made choice of a little French packet which was going thither in preference to one of the Egyptian Azizieh steamers which ply between Suez and Massowa. These larger vessels do indeed touch both at Djidda and Suakin, but they are not suited for general travellers. The name of our little steamer was 'Prince Mohammed Tawfik,' (the heir-apparent to the throne of Egypt): it belonged to the "Compagnie Soufrière," and was commissioned to supply the sulphur mines of Gimsah on the Egyptian coast with fresh water every fourteen days. Although it was in no way adapted for the conveyance of passengers, I was nevertheless quite comfortable on board. It was a vessel of only 300 tons burden, but by dividing the receptacle for conveying the Nile water into seven separate compartments, a great economy of space was effected, and a good hold reserved. The fact of the captain being a Dane, was a still farther recommendation.

It was a memorable morning, that 18th of August, on which the sailing vessel was prepared to leave the roadstead. Many a curious eye, in those early hours, was strained to witness the sun, as its disk rose darkened by the shadow of an eclipse. Above the flood of the Erythrean Sea appeared a golden sickle, its crescent light bearing resemblance to the moon. We were detained for yet two days in the roadstead; but at last we weighed anchor, and the little craft soon vanished from the midst of its more imposing neighbours, the great mail ships and men-of-war, which gave such a bright animation to the anchorage. A refreshing breeze from the north-east carried us across the gulf. Ever deepening violet shadows covered the shore, until the obscurity of night had completely hidden Mount St. Catherine and the Mount of Moses from our gaze. At dawn we were facing the grim shore of the sulphur mountain. Here we were greeted by the waving of the French tricolour, which, in the

monotonous grey that mantled the whole land, afforded a bright resting-place for the weary eye.

According to a treaty made with the Egyptian Government, the Company are enabled to carry on their operations over 160 miles of coast, south from Cape Seit, where the Egyptian territory forms a promontory opposite the peninsula of Sinai. The coast line is similar in outline to the adjacent Gimsah, whilst, with the group of islands which lie off it, it forms the entrance of the Gulf of Suez. We now passed down the narrow channel which divides the group of islands from the mainland, and there lay before us the bluff of Gimsah, a steep mass of pure gypsum, white as chalk. This peak is about 200 feet above the level of the sea: it faces nearly south, its aspect is bare, and like all the mountains contiguous to the sea on these dreary and uninhabited coasts, it presents hardly the faintest trace of vegetation. Since July, 1867, the mines have been worked by a gang of labourers, of which twenty-six were Europeans and 300 were brought from Upper Egypt. For a time they were yielding a rich produce, which afforded the best hopes for the future; but now, like so much else in the country, have fallen into decay. The mutual intrigues and corruption of the contractors have yielded a fresh testimony on the one hand, to the continual ill-luck of the Government, which seems fated never to be able to improve the bounty of its natural resources; and on the other, to the ruthless avarice of foreigners, which is ever stopping the progress of the country. A tedious lawsuit has laid bare a whole series of scandals, discreditable alike to the directors and to the administrators of the Viceregal Government. The state of affairs, even in 1868, was melancholy enough. The Egyptian Government had contracted to supply work in the mines at a stipulated daily rate of payment. For the protection of the colony, as well as for the maintenance of discipline among the workmen, a guard of twenty-five soldiers was kept at Gimsah; this was rather



a superfluity, since the Egyptian workmen, once taken into service, could not easily escape. They were hemmed in on one side by wide deserts, which could not be traversed in a day; and as for danger on the other from the Bedouins, none could be apprehended. A report about the Bedouins, which was current at Suez, could not fail to awaken my interest. The passengers of a mail steamer, which had lately foundered at the entrance of the Gulf, maintained that they had seen on the opposite mainland a body of wild men 200 strong, looking out for booty and for plunder. Assuredly by no exertions could the Bedouins collect such a force in the course of a few hours. Poor sons of the desert, I knew them better! An exhausted stomach, shrivelled up on their long wanderings till it is like an empty water-bottle, is the only voice in their naturally harmless character which could excite to violence.\* Give them a couple of handfuls of durra-corn, and you have made them the best of friends. Their desire for plunder is limited to the robbing of turtles' nests, and the taking of eggs from the neighbouring islands.

Protected by numberless coral-reefs, the coasts of the Red Sea everywhere afford to small vessels the most comfortable harbours and anchorage. Here a short stone quay sufficed as a mole for moorage, and close behind was a grotto-like cistern in the rock, into which the water could be pumped by means of pipes connected with the reservoirs in the ship. On the narrow border of land between the foot of the rock and the sea, were erected huts of planks for the workmen, and barracks of stone for the officials of the Company. Such was the little piece of land on which the colony, composed of representatives of many a nation, prolonged its deplorable existence. Bounded in front by the dreary expanse of sea, which was rarely enlivened by a solitary sail, shut in behind by the sun-scorched gypsum, they were thus exposed to a double share of direct and reflected rays. The atmosphere in which they toiled was burdened with the

stifling fumes of sulphur, and oppressed with the perpetual odour of burning petroleum; not alone the welfare, but the very existence of the colony, was dependent on the safe return of the steamer which provided them with food and drink. Whoever has lingered here can form some conception of the endurance of the poor beasts in our zoological gardens, which have been brought together from every zone, and caged in hopeless imprisonment. So monotonously and void of joy did the days of these wretched miners pass away; they led a life more gloomy than monastic, which might almost recall the first century of Christendom. Perhaps such a life belongs to the air, for it may be remembered that the renowned convents of St. Paul and St. Antony are distant but a few miles to the north-west; they are remnants of the oldest convents that are known, and to them, as often as a patriarch is required, does Egypt, according to ancient rule, ever turn to supply the vacancy.

In reality the colony of Gimsah, when approached from the sea, did present quite the appearance of a monastic settlement in the heart of a desert. Caverns were hewn in all directions, in order to work the veins of gypseous spar containing the sulphur, and amongst them lay a row of twelve hexagonal little houses, which were the kilns, built after the Sicilian fashion, and which might at first be mistaken for the cells of pious monks. To crown the denial and privation of this existence, the Company, under the pretext of maintaining discipline, order, and morality among the miners, had peremptorily banished all women from the sulphur coasts. This restriction was especially irritating to the French, and as a refinement of cruelty was as intolerable as those poisonous fumes of pitch and sulphur which were here set free from the bowels of the earth. Nevertheless it would seem to have answered well, for young and old, Arab and European, went through their work with a diligence such as is rarely to be observed in other tropical regions.

Only when the sun's heat after midday was most insupportable, was there a cessation of labour. At 12 o'clock, when the *employé* of the Suez Canal, in his period of repose, sauntered into the coffee-house to take an ice or to enjoy a game at billiards, the untiring director began his daily circuit of inspection; and seldom has a quotation seemed to me more apt than that in which he said that the hour was come in which he must surrender himself to the sulphurous and torturing flames.

After staying twenty-four hours in the harbour at Gimsah, the 'Prince Mohammed Tawfik' continued its voyage to Djidda, where it arrived on the fourth day. At that season, when no pilgrims were coming or going, we found the harbour all but deserted; only one French and two Egyptian men-of-war were in the security of the roadstead. I easily obtained an open Arab boat, which I hoped, under favourable gales, should convey me to Suakin.

On account of the prevalence of north-winds through the greater part of the year, navigation in the Red Sea is nearly always as easy in this direction as it is difficult in the contrary. This accounts for European sailing vessels so rarely reaching Suez; they proceed only as far as Djidda and that only when coming from India or at the time of the pilgrimage.

I had to spend two hot days on board while my baggage was disembarked. Whoever has been to India knows well enough what is the furnace temperature of the Red Sea, and how, south of the tropic of Cancer, it becomes insufferable. The thermometer stood at midday at about 95° Fahrenheit, and the air was like a vapour-bath. The sea water, a few degrees cooler, afforded us, nevertheless, some refreshment, and we did our utmost to enjoy it at all hours of the day. Still there was something very enervating and depressing about this amphibious life. Had the heat and sun-glare been less overpowering, we might have truly enjoyed the splashing

and sport in the bright green floods which spread over the shallows where coral banks ranged themselves below, and where the eye could detect a thousand marvels. Like terraces filled with the choicest plants, the sloping beds of coral descended with variegated festoons into the purple shades of the deep; strange forms were witnessed in these living groves, and conspicuous among others was the "bride of the fish," which is celebrated in the Arabian fishing-song, "O bride, lovely bride of the fish, come to me." Ever and anon on my voyage, which was to me as an Odyssey, did I delight to catch fragments of this song, as it was dreamily hummed by the man at the stern during the hot midday hour when the crew had sunk into slumber, and while, noiselessly and spirit-like, our vessel glided through the emerald floods. The enchantment, as of a fairy tale, of these waters with their myriad living forms of every tint and shape, defies all power of description.

Without entering the town, I lost no time in putting off to sea in my little Arab craft. At first we made little headway, but after noon a fresh breeze came from the north-east, which continued all night, so that by the following morning, after a voyage of nearly 100 miles in twenty hours, we slackened sail under the mountains which I had previously visited, in lat. 21° N. The Nubian coast was almost close in front of us. A very primitive kind of compass enabled us to steer to this goal. I was glad to find that no water had reached my baggage, for in the heavy sea the boat had rolled and pitched considerably. We ran along the coast, and each familiar scene revived in me pleasant memories of my former journey, which had been unmarred by a single trouble. Close in view was Cape Roway, where the formation of a lagoon had developed natural salt-works, from which is obtained the salt for the consumption at Djidda, and for export to India. The salt, however, is only secured during the eight hottest months of the year, when the Red Sea is reduced to its

lowest level, two or three feet below its altitude in the winter. The only explanation of this phenomenon seems to be the prevalent direction of the wind taken in connection with the position of the water. The bearings of the sea are such that the wind drives the waves with full force towards the straits of Mandeb, the narrowness of which retards the outflow of the water and produces an immense evaporation.

The flat shore between the mountains and the sea with its coral reefs was hidden from our view. A green carpet of samphire covered the coast for miles along the land. This botanically may be represented as coming under the genus *Suaeda*, the name of which is imitated from the Arab "sued," the original of our "soda." This plant has long been turned to a profitable account, and to this day Arab boats may be seen about the coast, engaged in the procuring and preserving of it.

Rising directly out of the water close to the shore grow in patches great clusters of *Avicennia*, so abundant in tropical seas, the beautiful laurel-leaf of which forms a dazzling contrast to the bare brown of the mainland.

Over considerable tracts at the depth of thirty feet the sea bottom resembles a submarine meadow, rich with every species of sea-grass: in these, turtles and dujongs, which are so numerous in this part of the Red Sea, find their pasture land. It must be a very protracted business for these cumbrous creatures to get their sustenance, bit by bit, from these tender leaflets; but they have time enough and nothing else to do.

The little islets in the height of summer are the resort of flocks of water-birds who go there to breed undisturbed. On one of these, in July 1864, we collected over 2000 eggs of the tern, although the dry area above the strand consisted of scarcely so many square feet. At the approach of night the wind failed us, and with fluttering sails we drifted into sight of a place called Durroor. Two antique Turkish guard-houses of small dimensions gleamed with their white walls far across the sea. They are not unlike the rough-walled watch-towers



of our fortresses, and are said to have been built by Selim II. when Yemen was subdued; they are the scanty remains of a past which continues to the present, isolated memorials of a barren, inhospitable coast, where all is changeless as the rolling waves.

I shall not easily forget the nights which I passed becalmed upon that sea. Sleep there could be none. Drenched in perspiration, one could only sit by his lamp and indulge the hope that the breeze at daybreak might be somewhat cooler. Air and sea combined to form an interminable mass of vapour through which the moon could only penetrate with a lurid silvery gleam. One bright strip alone cleaves itself a way over the silent waves; it stretches towards an aperture in the horizon, which would seem to be the origin of all the brightness: but all is full of strange illusion, for the moon is here above our heads. The boat floats as though it were an ærial vessel in a globe of vapour; the depth of the sea, illumined by the vertical beams of the moon, is like another sky beneath us, and hosts of mysterious beings, diversified in colour and confused in form, are moving underneath our feet. The calmness of the air and the unbroken stillness of this spectral nature increased the magic of these moonlight nights.

Late in the evening of the third day we ran into the harbour of Suakin. This town, formerly held directly subject to the Turkish power, had three years since, together with Massowa and the adjacent coast, been surrendered to the Viceroy of Egypt. In that short time it had remarkably improved. Formed by nature to serve as a harbour for the Egyptian Soudan, and even for Abyssinia, the place, as long as its administration came from Arabia and Constantinople, could inevitably never rise, and even now its prosperity is only comparative. The Egyptian Government still obstructs all traffic by the heavy duties which it levies even on the natural intercourse with Suez; it is desirous of transferring its interests as a centre to Massowa, watching continually

with attentive eyes the ungoverned condition of Abyssinia. Since the traffic on the Nile by way of Berber ever continues in uninterrupted activity, and this place lies but 200 miles from Suakin, whilst the distance between Massowa and Khartoom is twice as far, why any preference should be given to Massowa is altogether incomprehensible.

I was now visiting Suakin for the fourth time, and the Governor received me very graciously as an old acquaintance. He sent immediately for some camels, which I required for the continuation of my journey. He himself had to leave the town on the following day to visit his summer abode in the neighbouring mountains. There still remained to me four months before commencing my real journey from Khartoom, as the voyage up the White Nile could not begin until December or January; I resolved to fill up the interval by a tour through the mountains of South Nubia, for the purpose of accustoming myself to the heat and fatigue of a harmless climate, before exposing myself to the fever atmosphere of Khartoom and the Upper Nile districts. Just at this time of year, too, the valleys between the Red Sea and the Nile promised me a rich booty, and I hoped to obtain a remuneration for any toil on my part by the botanical varieties which were to be looked for on the elevated ridges. I could not do otherwise than rejoice in the prospect of escape from the glowing oven of Suakin towards the western horizon, where the mountain-chains, veiled in grey vapour, betrayed the refreshing rains which favoured the district and rendered it so preferable for my sojourn. At night was heard the roll of distant thunder, and the darkness was broken at intervals by flashes of lightning.

On the 10th of September at daybreak all was ready. After the lapse of two years passed in the domestic comforts of Europe, it is not altogether easy to remount the "ship of the desert." Our first day's march was through a trying country. The plain indeed was uniformly level, but for

twelve miles it was covered with such huge black boulders glowing with the heat, that progress was very difficult. After we had proceeded about nine miles from the town, we made a short midday halt under the miserable shade of some dry acacias, which were like the uncovered skeletons of parasols. As if in despair they stretched their leafless branches towards the sky, and seemed to implore for water. Exposed here in a leathern pipe to the wind, our drinking water soon cooled down to a temperature about  $18^{\circ}$  below the surrounding atmosphere.

The coast plains, although practically level, evidently slope very gradually down to the sea, for after a few hours march the town is seen like a white spot far below. Beyond is the expanse of sea, which melts into the horizon. The coast-ridges are on an average from 3000 to 4000 feet high, but occasionally single peaks may rise to an altitude of 5000 feet. At one time they appear like a lofty wall, rising abruptly from the slanting plane; at another like separate piles of rock picturesquely grouped behind and over one another. Our route awhile across the narrow promontory now lay along the enclosure of a valley bounded by sloping walls of granite. After twelve hours' perseverance, on the afternoon of the following day we reached the first mountain pass, about 3000 feet above the level of the sea.

Infinitely refreshing was it to ascend at every step higher into the mountain atmosphere, and to be raised above the vaporous heat of the suffocating shore. There seemed a requickening energy in every breath of air, as gratefully it circulated on the heights. The real charm of such a change could not be appreciated more than on the first night of camping-out. Comfortably stretched upon the clean smooth stones which form the valley, the weary limbs could find repose; through the silent night the stars shed a bright and kind encouragement; there was an aromatic odour floating refreshingly around, for, impregnated with camphor, mint,



and thyme, the air was laden with scents which the stores of the perfumer could not rival, and such as no quarter of the globe could surpass. The plants which exhale the welcome aroma are little obscure mountain weeds, amongst which a "pulicaria" plays an essential part. Noiselessly and like spectres glided the camels on their soft feet through the valley, rejoicing in the pasture, sweet and luscious after the scanty herbage of the shore, where for them all was dearth and salt and bitterness.

Solemnity reigned throughout nature; no discordant cry of mountain bird, no howling beast of prey, disturbed the traveller: there was only the delicate song of the desert cricket to lull him into peaceful slumber.

The mountains between Suakin and Singat afford a habitat for such numbers of remarkable plants that they appear for their variety alone well worth a visit. The most striking forms which arrest the attention of the uninitiated are the *Dracænæ* and *Euphorbiæ*, remarkable as both are for their fantastic shapes. They flourish on the loftiest heights, but are found 2000 feet below towards the valleys. The first belong to those types of vegetation which (as though they had been carried in the air and dropped from another world) are limited to extremely narrow sections of the earth. The first dragon-trees (*dracænæ*) which were observed in the African continent, are those which are to be found on these mountains alone, and even here only over an area of a few square miles.\* The Nubian *dracænæ*, being only from 15 to 20 feet in height, are dwarfish in comparison with their famous sister of Orotava in Teneriffe, but in other respects there are only minute and subtle distinctions between them and those which are found in the Canary Isles. In the language of the native nomad tribes of the Hadendoa and

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\* These appear to belong to the same species which Wellsted ('Travels to the City of the Caliphs,' vol. ii. p. 285) observed on the island of Socotra and ('Travels in Arabia,' vol. ii. p. 449) on the south coast of Arabia.

Bishareen, the dracæna is known as "To-Omba" or "T'Ombet." The leaves afford bast for cords, the long flower stalks serve in June as excellent food for camels, whilst for goats they are almost poison.\*

Another remarkable feature of this mountain-district is the large number of succulent plants, the fantastic forms of which here appropriately adorn the craggy walls of the valley, and supply a needed decoration to the more barren rocks of Southern Nubia.

In Abyssinia itself neither euphorbiæ nor aloes are ever found at an altitude of less than 4000 feet. Here, beside the giant Kolkwal, they are found much lower towards the valley. Four smaller kinds of the same species, as well as some remarkable Stapeliæ (which resemble the cactus type of the euphorbiæ), flourish to the very summit of the mountains. Found in company with them is a wild unearthly-looking plant called the Caraïb (*Bucerosia*), of which the branches are like wings, prickly and jagged round the edges like a dragon's back. They produce clusters of brown flowers as large as one's fist, which exhale a noxious and revolting smell, the plants themselves being swollen with a white and slimy poisonous juice.

No space may be found to enumerate all the varieties, but I must mention the Seyleb (*Sansevieria*), whose fleshy tender leaves provided the Nubian nomad with the ordinary material for the cords with which he binds their burdens on his camels. These leaves in shape are not unlike the Nile whips, and on that account may readily recall and stir up painful memories to the poor Nubian of the kurbatch of the Turks, whenever he may chance to see them. So richly burdened are the hanging rocks with the varieties of rarest

\* The accompanying plate gives a faithful representation of the stiff forms of the dracæne, surrounded by the still more rigid complications of rocks in the height of the pass. In the illustration, besides the dracæna, may be seen the Kolkwal-euphorbiæ, and in the right hand corner the Caraïb.





plants; so large and multiform is the exhibition of scarce and novel succulents—that the greatest enthusiast could hardly fail to be bewildered. As a most interesting development of structural peculiarity, the Lassav, one of the Capparids, demands some notice. It produces flowers which take a form quite unique. A drawing taken from nature



The Lassav (*Capparis galeata*).  
(Illustration two-thirds of natural size.)

shows the strange deformity of the petals, a double cluster of which is attached to the one broad sepal, so as to produce the effect of two handkerchiefs in one pocket.

This rich covering of vegetation is, however, confined to the side of the mountains towards the sea; on the other side, as soon as the second pass is left behind, the rocks are



bare, and only the lowest part of the valley is covered with anything of luxuriant verdure. Acacias, growing so closely as almost to form a hedge, and gigantic clumps of the grass-green *Salvadora*, shoot up like great dishes of green salad from the cheerless space around. The moistening vapour of the sea does not reach here to clothe the parched and naked rock. Such were the valleys through which on the morning of the third day we passed on to complete the first stage of our wanderings. Towards midday, after marching for nineteen hours, we had reached Singat, the summer retreat of the town Bedouins of Suakin.

The valley of Singat is about a league in breadth. It is enclosed by two lofty mountain chains running parallel to the coast, apparently joined by a number of projecting spurs. On the broad sandy bed of the valley were erected scarcely less than 500 of those Bedouin tents, of which the shape, in their drooping folds, may be compared to what we see in the breast of a roasted fowl. Here, at least a quarter of the population of the town, which reckons 3000 souls, passes the season of refreshing rains. Later, when the mountain valleys are again dry and destitute of pasture, these transient habitations are carried back again; and the camels and goats must find their pasturage on the slopes in the vicinity of the town, which are exposed to the action of the damp sea air.

Here, at his usual resort, I met Muntass Bey, the Governor of Suakin. His residence consisted of a *Sammor-acacia*, with foliage wide-spreading like a parasol. Under the shadow of this commodious and airy roof, common to all, was served the midday meal. Some tents in the immediate proximity were provided as places of refuge from the rain. A storm of unusual violence broke over us in the course of the day, and changed the centre of the valley into a foaming torrent, 200 paces wide, for three hours; the flood rushed onwards with unabated strength and sought the sea. I found shelter in a guard-room built of blocks of stone and clay, the quarters

of the garrison of 200 Bazibozuks. After the rain the temperature was lowered to a refreshing coolness, and on the following morning I rejoiced to register a temperature of 68° F.

Whilst I stayed in Singat, I always at dinner-time found an open table beneath the Governor's great tree. This was rendered enjoyable not more by the skill of the cook than by the harmony of the Egyptian singers, whom the Bey had in his suite. The camels, which I had hired in Suakin, were meanwhile sent away to the pastures in the neighbouring valleys, to be recruited against their approaching fatigues. The camel drivers were by no means in a hurry to start, as time was not of the smallest value to them. A trip of five days in the lofty mountains of Erkoweet, eight or ten leagues to the south-east of Singat, unclosed to my researches the vegetable treasures of this most northerly spur of the Abyssinian highland, hitherto unexplored; and was full of enjoyment, equally beneficial both to mind and body.

Erkoweet is another summer retreat for the people of Suakin. The valley in which the tents are pitched is called Harrasa, and discloses the whole flora of the Abyssinian highland in wonderful and complete luxuriance. Euphorbiae and dracænæ deck the mountains in masses which might almost be reckoned by millions, so that the slopes in the distance have the appearance of being covered with huge black patches. From amongst innumerable projections of granite, mostly dome-shaped and adorned with charming foliage, there juts forth one huge slanting mass of mountain, which is probably the highest elevation of the district of Suakin, if not of the entire chain which runs along the coast. I ascended this peak nearly 6000 feet in altitude, and was amply repaid for the exertion by the magnificent prospect before me. There was extreme enjoyment in the freshness of the air. The whole contour of the coast lay stretched in clear and perfect outline. The whole confused system of the mountains of the coast lay like a map below my feet. In a



circumference of seventy miles I plainly recognised single masses, so that the peaks known to me in my earlier visits served as landmarks to inform me of my true position.

As the result of several favourable meteorological combinations, there exists in these loftier elevations a more luxuriant development of vegetation than in any of the neighbouring mountain districts of South Nubia, which have a lower altitude. This is illustrated very plainly by the clusters of beard-moss (*Usnea*) which hang on every twig and branch, by the abundance of sulphur-coloured lichens on every mass of rock, and likewise by the formation of numerous luxuriant beds of moss. Mosses are generally deficient alike in Egypt proper and in Nubia, and are scarcely seen in the trenches and clefts of the Nile valley; their existence is dependent on a minimum of moisture throughout the year, which is there but rarely reached.

At Erkoweit I found again the wild olive tree, which I had already discovered some years previously on the mountains by the Elbe. I noticed that it assumes the same low bushy shape here, and bears the same box-like foliage, as it does on the coast ridges of the Mediterranean; when the two are compared they exhibit a general identity, so that I conclude the African and European are of the same family. The olive tree, it is well known, is reckoned, like the fig tree, as originally a product of the frontiers of Asia; in remote antiquity, it was revered by Semitic nations, and cultivated until it bore a rich produce. This type of vegetation fails completely in the interior of the continent. In the time of Homer the olive grew wild on the islands of the Grecian Archipelago, and it is still to be met with, though in an altered condition, on the coasts of Syria; but here on the Red Sea it has remained unchanged for thousands of years, and the famous classical tree of myth and song is still undisturbed in the dreams of its youth.

A bare boulder-flat of black hornblende stones, extending

several miles, divides the mountains of Erkoweet from those which bound the valley of Singat on the east. The broad water-courses which run between, show what must be the prodigious volume and violence of the currents which occasionally rush downwards to the sea. These deep water-courses are, however, only periodically filled, and then only for a few hours, in the course of the year, so that for some months they are adapted for the cultivation of corn. Notwithstanding, there was here but a very limited cultivation of sorghum, the Arabian durra, since there is a difficulty in securing labour. The idle nomads have no disposition for agricultural employment, although famine in dry seasons, when the flocks can nowhere find sufficient pasture, brings back its recurring calamity. In the year before my last visit, in the valleys about Singat alone, seventy men had died literally of hunger, after vainly endeavouring for weeks to subsist upon wild purslane.

All water-courses, with a supply of moist soil upon the ground just sufficient for a few months, although they are not enclosed by heights like valleys, are comprehended within the Arab designation "el wady." Cheerless through the dry season, after the first rain their level sand-flats are clothed with the most luxuriant flora; fresh springing grasses put forth their little cushion points, and give the sward the appearance of being dotted with a myriad spikes; then quickly come the sprouting blades, and all is like a waving field of corn. Halfway between Singat and Erkoweet we halted in a wady of this character, which bore the name of Sarroweet. What a prospect! how gay with its variety of hue, green and red and yellow! Nothing could be more pleasant than the shade of the acacia, nothing more striking than the abundance of bloom of the Abyssinian aloe, transforming the dreary sand-beds into smiling gardens. Green were the tabbes-grass and the acacias, yellow and red were the aloes, and in such crowded masses, that I was involuntarily

reminded of the splendour of the tulip beds of the Netherlands; but here gardens lay in the midst of a waste of gloomy black stone. One special charm of a desert journey is that it is full of contrasts, that it brings close together dearth and plenty, death and life; it opens the eyes of the traveller to the minutest benefits of nature, and demonstrates how every enjoyment is allied to a corresponding deprivation. Richly laden with treasures I returned to Singat, where I remained until the 21st of September, and during my stay I had once again repeated opportunities of studying my old friends the people of Suakin in their domestic relations.

The coast lands on both sides of the Red Sea offer a striking likeness to each other, which does not consist in physical resemblances alone. The people are the same in feeling and in manners, however much the true Ethiopians, such as the Bishareen, Hadendoa, and Beni-Ammer, may differ in language and descent from the true Arabs; I say from the *true* Arabs, because the term Arab has been at times too indiscriminately applied, and ought to be limited to the nomads in Arabia, as distinguished from the settlers. On both coasts the inhabitants follow the same character of life. They are people of the deserts, wandering shepherds, and procure whatever corn they may require from external sources. Even the town life of the Arabs is essentially half a camp life. As a collateral illustration of this I may remark that to this day in Malta, where an Arab colony has reached as high a degree of civilisation as ever yet it has attained the small towns, which are inhabited by this active little community, are called by the very same designations as elsewhere belong to the nomad encampments in the desert. Half Suakin is like a desert camp, and for this reason I have called its inhabitants town Bedouins.

These town Bedouins are people whose only distinction from the Bedouins of the mountains is that their dress almost always is of a spotless white; the true sons of the desert, in

consequence of their continual camp life, have long toned down the colour of their single garment, never washed, to a brownish-grey, quite in harmony with the general hue of the surrounding country. Many very beautiful faces, perfectly regular in feature, are to be found amongst these swarthy Bedouins, whilst a wonderful dignity and elegance mark their movements. Like the inhabitants of Hedjas and Yemen they chew tobacco, and find recreation in various amusements which are unknown to the mountain Bedouins. All alike, however, have in common the same single aim of existence: to do as little as possible, to sleep much, to drink goats milk, to eat sheep's flesh, and finally to scrape together all the Maria Theresa dollars that they can; the latter is a matter of some difficulty, on account of their natural idleness. Black female slaves instead of asses, which in Suakin would cost too much to feed, are indispensable to them for carrying water from the well to the town. Whoever possesses fifty dollars in his bag and has one slave besides his water-bearer, is quite a magnate, and spends much labour in the profuse adornment of his hair. When he is not sleeping, that is to say, in the cool hours of the morning and evening, he takes his walk, always bareheaded and with high-towering locks, here and there on the road joining in a conversation or conferring the favours of his weighty counsel. When it becomes too hot in Suakin, and the goats give no more milk, after the last weed has been devoured, and the last tundup (sodada) eaten to the roots by the camels, they leave the cob-webbed thorn hedges of their farms, pack together the acacia-rods and date-mats, the materials of the tent, and withdraw to the mountain pastures, which they retain by ancestral right. After them follow the Turkish soldiers, who roam through the valleys, switching their kurbatch, and proceed to collect the taxes levied in proportion to the number of cattle. The services of these officials in return are enlisted to re-capture any camel stealers who

may be seeking to escape to the remote solitudes of the mountains.

On the 21st of September I resumed my journey towards the Nile, a further distance of 175 miles. On the way my little party, which, besides the camel drivers, consisted of only a native of Berber and a dog which I had brought from Europe, was increased by falling in with two young pilgrims on their way from Mecca. I was unable to complete my proper retinue until I should reach Khartoom, since the men who had offered me their services in Egypt appeared so weakly that I considered them unfit for undertaking any journey into Central Africa. The addition therefore of these two blacks for the approaching march of sixteen days through mountain solitudes was very welcome. Their armour consisted of a Turkish sabre, and this, together with my gun, seemed completely sufficient protection against the natives, whom Sir Samuel Baker a few years before had so successfully mastered with the help of an umbrella, that a considerable number of them voluntarily laid down their arms. The vigilance of the dog was a security against any nocturnal attack, and indeed, at two different times he had given warning to my little caravan just at the right time.

Less welcome to me was the company of a disagreeable old fanatic, who, followed by two wives, was on his return journey from the Holy City of the East to his home in the far west. He was a priest from Kano in Haussa, and when he told of the wonders of the world which he had seen on his long journeys, I could always set him right, having really seen infinitely more than he had. I completely non-plussed him by my geographical knowledge of the Western Soudan, and after the details which I gave of that country, he was, however reluctantly, at last obliged to believe that I had actually been there. But any friendship between us was rendered impossible by the constant noise and contention caused by his wives. All amicable relations came utterly



to an end when I found myself driven as I did to come forward as the champion of the oppressed. Of the priest's two wives, one had faithfully followed her husband from his home, and now saw herself supplanted by the other, whom the priest had married at the tomb of the Prophet. The fellow had begun to impose on his first wife in the most shameful manner by the withdrawal of every choice morsel and of every harmless indulgence; consequently the two women were continually quarrelling, and literally laid on to each other by the hair. The man himself always took the part of the new wife, and cruelly maltreated the old. At last it became too much for me to be the daily witness of such revolting scenes, and I took the old sinner to task, and tried to inculcate in him due ideas of woman's rights and dignity, so that he could tell his countrymen in Hausa what we thought on such matters. The indifferent camel drivers and the still more indifferent camels, both alike as unmoved as the black rocks in their solemn stateliness, alone surveyed this little tragedy. Whoever has to travel through deserts should endeavour to be free from such rabble and useless retinue. A large company is troublesome on account of the scarcity of shade, since there is not always time at the halting-places to pitch a tent, and one must avail himself of the few larger trees which exist in the valleys.

A stiff ascent of the road at a short distance from Singat led westwards to the water-shed between the Nile and the Red Sea. The elevated pass is rather to the rear of the defiles on the Suakin side. We then descended to a very broad wady full of pasture, called O-Mareg, which was a third summer retreat for the natives of Suakin. In the middle of a green valley, two miles broad, some fifty tents were erected, all under the surveillance of a Turkish captain with some soldiers to look after the interests of the Government. Great herds of camels, cows, sheep, and goats, and amongst them several hundreds of asses, were grazing in every



direction. The Wady O-Mareg does not form, as might be expected, a tributary of the great mountain-river Langeb, which at its recurring period joins the Barka, but takes its course direct to the Atbara, as do all the larger water-courses of the ensuing road.

In consequence of the repeated storms of rain, at the time of my journey there was water in nearly all the valleys, and everywhere there was abundance of pasture for the camels. The drivers accordingly chose a more direct road running to the south of the ordinary route of the caravans. This enabled me to fill up my map with many new details. As a general rule the drivers followed the rule of never, if possible, encountering the native shepherds on the road. Although they were of the same race, they feared the conflicts which were frequently unavoidable in the neighbourhood of any wells. I was not surprised at their timidity, as I had myself experienced some difficulty in my former tour.

Having crossed the third chain, we reached the great wady Amet, which is bounded on the north by Mount O-Kurr, a colossal mass visible as a landmark in the west for a whole day's journey. The predominating rocks are greenstone in several varieties, although beautiful serpentine is far from infrequent. In one part of the valley rises a homogeneous mass of splendid porphyry nearly 1000 feet in height, brilliantly marked on its surface with veins of Indian red. From the prevalence in these mountains of greenstone, which no doubt often contains a grass-green stratum, the conclusion must not be drawn that green is at all a prevailing colour of the walls of rock. This is by no means the case; indeed, nearly all kinds of rock, however diverse they may appear when broken, are covered externally with an uniform dark brown, which obliterates all distinctive shades. In its interior the greenstone is unpolished and of bright colour. A superficial accretion, the cause of which remains hitherto unexplained, forms itself on every fragment and

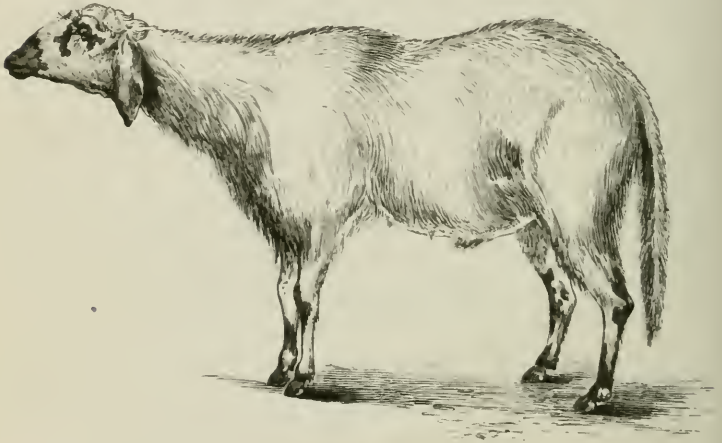
gives a coating about a millimetre thick, in colour not unlike a bright brown cake of chocolate.

In Wady Amet we lighted upon some sorghum-fields, which seem to have been planted out, like those at O-Mareg and Erkoweet, by way of experiment; but in reality they here represented the whole exertions of the idle inhabitants of the desert. Some primitive huts, heaped up in Cyclopean rudeness, bore witness to the stability of this rendezvous of native shepherds. We were here amply provided with milk and meat, goats and sheep being alike abundant in the neighbouring valleys. Camel-breeding is not carried on here so much as in the northern parts of Etbai, as the whole district of the Bishareen between the Nile and the sea is called; the breeders avoiding the proximity of the great roads through fear of the foraging and reprisals of the military.

The goats of the country form a small race of their own and belong to the comprehensive variety which is called the Ethiopian. Differing from those of the Nile valley, they are again found among all the nomad people in the interior; the goats of the Dinka being a larger kind of the same character. The Ethiopian goat may be reckoned among the most agile and elegant of the race, and it might be called the climbing goat, since it prefers to feed on the young shoots of the acacia, and for that purpose often climbs up the slanting stems or low-growing branches. A large flock occasionally groups itself round a tree with pendant branches; in that case, the animals are rarely seen in any other position than standing upright on their hind legs, and give at a distance an impression that they must be a crowd of men. Others may be observed in grotesque attitudes, with legs straddling, hanging in mid-air, and weighing down the boughs of an acacia.

The Bishareen keep larger flocks of sheep than of goats; the breed is very peculiar, marked by distinctions which

might almost constitute a nationality. The Etbai race is closely allied to the thick-tailed species in all general characteristics, but distinguished by the lissome condition of its long and bushy tail. The fleece is hardly worthy of being called wool at all, for it simply consists of rather long straight hair. Almost all are perfectly white, except (and this is the chief mark of distinction in the species) on the ancles and mouth, which are covered with black hair. The usual price in the country for such sheep never exceeds a Maria Theresa dollar (four shillings), whilst young lambs



A Bisharreen Sheep.

cost but half this sum. Cattle are found only in the environs of Suakin and on the road to Taka, lying further south than the one on which we travelled. On the route which we took, in consequence of the smaller rainfall, the pasture necessary for their maintenance is not permanent throughout the year, like it is in the lands adjacent to the Barka basin. In the next district we crossed a high level, intersected by numerous water-courses deeply worn amidst the stones and rubble. The most considerable of all these water-courses periodically flowing to the south-west, was the

Wady Arab. The dry bed of this was bounded by shelving banks from 40 to 50 feet in height, and the ascent was steep enough to demand no small exertion from our laden camels.

Here grew in great abundance the plant, a species of Scrophulariaceæ, to which my own name had been assigned (*Schweinfurthia pterosperma*). It met me as a greeting from my distant home. In itself it is but an insignificant little weed, but upon its discovery, Alexander Braun, the celebrated professor of the University of Berlin, had named it in my honour—a little token of remembrance, which, according to the tribute of Linnæus, may be more lasting than any memorial in brass or marble.

A hollow, as of a saddle-seat, between the mountains led us over the chain, unbroken by a pass, of the fourth of the parallel mountain ridges which, with many branches, traverse this part of Africa. To the right on the north we left Mount Wowinte and the peak of Badab in which it culminates at an altitude of 5000 feet. The road then descended into the wide plain spreading to the west of this height, where a magnificent panorama opened to the view. Next we reached the Wady Habohb, a watercourse of which the breadth was about 400 feet. Proceeding across Wady Kokreb, two miles wide, we arrived at length at the equally wide Wady Yumga. By this time we were on the next line of the mountain range, in which is situated the much frequented well of Roway, a rendezvous for all the nomads who wander in the neighbouring localities. Here, by order of the great Sheikh of the Hadendoa, a tribute, sanctioned by the Egyptian Government, is levied on every caravan that passes.

My lazy camel drivers used every available opportunity to prolong the duration of the journey. For my part I was indifferent to this, as I had time at my disposal, and my enjoyment of the flora fully occupied me; my companions,

however, were not so patient. They longed for their cherished Nile to put an end to this camp-life in dreary deserts. At length even my own forbearance was exhausted; the excuses became intolerable: at one time the camels had run away, at another they wanted food, so that it grew up to a regular fight between us four and the dozen Bedouins who were conducting us. Some sticks, the single Turkish sabre, and an indestructible pipe tube, which I swung in my hand, were our only weapons, but they sufficed to turn the victory to our side. My tube smashed a number of patriarchal shepherd staves, and thus an end was put to the eternal halts and feeds, and we went on towards the west at a better pace. I thought of the proverb that the European in India either learns patience or loses it.

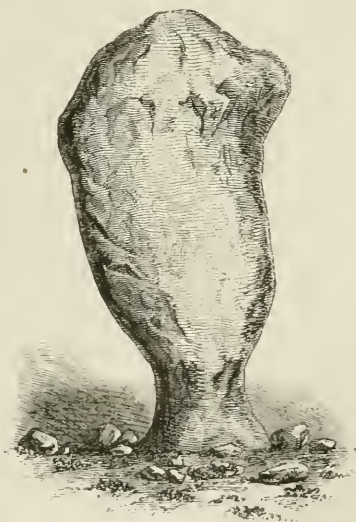
As we followed the Wady Laemeb with the water of its channel now replaced by verdure, we come to O-Fik, the last mountain on the route, beyond which a desert, unrefreshed by a single spring, extends as far as the Nile valley. The last well was that of O-Baek. We lighted here upon some Bishareen families, who were staying temporarily with their flocks in the neighbourhood of the well, and were accustomed after the first rain to sow a considerable piece of ground with sorghum. Amongst the men may be observed expressive features, well developed, unlike ours, yet less unlike them than the other inhabitants of the Nile valley. But more frightful creatures than the women of these nomads there surely cannot be on earth. Of course I speak only of those who have passed the spring-time of their life. They are lean beyond all conception, and as haggard as their goats would be if shorn of their hair, which alone gives any roundness to their gaunt frames. There is nothing about them even of that natural delicacy of many savages which makes the children of the desert appear like the gazelle, which is clean, though it never bathes. Physically and morally they are loathsome; toothless, mangy, inquisitive,



and chattering; in a word, they are the very incorporation of the infirmities of senility.

From this place it required an energetic march of twenty leagues to reach the first well on the confines of the Nile-valley. The road, now formed by numerous pathways running closely side by side like cattle-ruts, crossed a great boulder flat in a W.S.W. direction. The pack-camels proceeded side by side in phalanx, as upon the open lands they rarely march in single file. There were sandy watercourses ever and again intersecting our way, and groups of hills meeting the eye in the horizon.

On leaving O-Baek we had next to traverse the plains extending to the west of the wells; formed of the finest



Aboo-Olfa.

quicksand, blown up into hills often as high as a house, these sands were a considerable impediment to the camels. From the dreary waste of the plain with its loose black rocks, jutting up a solitary block of granite, to which the Bedouins give the suggestive name of "Eremit." An hour's journey



further on there appeared, above the plain by the right of the road, another isolated mass of granite, one of those landmarks visible from afar, which, after the weariness of the desert journey, is ever greeted gratefully by the eye of the long-tried traveller. It is a natural stone obelisk, 35 feet high, in its singular shape resembling an inverted pear or fig. The block is narrow at the base, and evidently in the course of time has been worn away by the action of the sand as it has been driven by the wind.\* This monument, the unhewn production of nature itself, is called by the natives Aboo-Odfa, Odfa being the name of a saddle covered with a canopy which is used for women on the camel. Smaller blocks of similar conformation are not unfrequently met with at other parts of the road.

On the grassy bottom of Aboo-Kolod, where, in consequence of the late rain, great pools had formed themselves, we made our last night camp but one. The slopes had all the characteristics of being on the level of the Nile at Berber, whilst the remainder of the road again ascends. The last wady is Aboo-Selem; it was at that time one unbroken sorghum-field, its fruitful soil was already cultivated by the industrious inhabitants of the Nile valley, although the recurrence of the rain would permit the culture only at intervals. At length on the 7th of October we entered the town of Berber. Without loss of time I found a boat on which to continue my journey to Khartoom.

Whilst I encamped at Berber, pending my embarkation on the Nile, I had been unconsciously put into a position of some jeopardy. The native of Dongola who accompanied me as my servant, in order to find the safest place he could to secure the prohibited wares of a Greek merchant from the eyes of the police, had, without my knowledge, concealed under my tent a considerable quantity of gunpowder and

\* The sketch on the preceding page is taken carefully from nature.

other explosive materials. Whilst the fellow was away on a visit to town, I had unsuspectingly kindled a fire on the loose sandy soil, in order to perform my cooking operations, little dreaming of the peril which happily I escaped.

My old acquaintance, M. Lafargue, who was settled in Berber as a merchant and presided over the French Vice-consulate, himself an experienced traveller on the Upper Nile, received me with that hearty hospitality which many other desert wanderers have proved besides myself. Sir Samuel Baker aptly compares such receptions to the oasis in the desert. No necessity of letters of introduction here as with us in Europe; no hollow forms of speech, exchanging courtesies which perchance mean the very reverse; no empty compliment of at best a tedious dinner; but here in Egypt the people receive us with free and genial amiability, all Europeans are fellow citizens and everything is true and hearty. "What pleases me the most is the ease with which you travel in this country; you come, you go, you return again, as though it were a walk." Such were M. Lafargue's cordial words to me. We parted well pleased with one another: I shall not see him again.

About the last part of the journey to Khartoom, which embraces the passage up the Nile, and which is sufficiently well known by the descriptions of other travellers, I have nothing new to relate. By the complete failure of wind, much of this portion of my journey was so exceptionally prolonged, that it took sixteen days to accomplish the whole. For the first part of the voyage, as far as Shendy and Matamma, the only considerable towns in this district, the shore offered nothing attractive. It reminded me of the Egyptian valley of the Nile only in two places; the mouth of the Atbara, and one spot where the renowned pyramids of Meroe formed a noble background.

Matamma is a populous town, but extremely slow and dull. The buildings, constructed of Nile earth, are insigni-

ficant in themselves, and irregularly crowded together in a mass like huge ant-hills; not a single tree affords its shade to the dreary streets, which are filthy with dirt.

The *ennui* and the calm which obliged us to lay-to here, suggested all sorts of unprofitable vagaries to my servant Arbab. He received from me part of his wages, and took a wife on the spot from amongst the circle of his kinsfolk. The bride, two days afterwards, was given back to herself and her relations, to await indefinitely, for a year and a day, the expected return of her husband. Arbab had already been several times married in Khartoom; and at every return he repeated the same usual, one may almost say, the becoming custom.

The second half of the Nile voyage was, however, rich in the charms of scenery. This is especially applicable to the views afforded by the river islands. These islands are so many throughout the whole extent of the sixth cataract, between the island of Marnad and the lofty mountain-island of Rowyan, that no one pretends to know their precise number, and the sailors call them, in consequence, the ninety-nine islands. This excursion offers to the traveller a most attractive prospect, and the landscapes on shore afford a treat which no other river voyage could surpass. Splendid groups of acacias, in three varieties, with groves of the holy-thorn, overgrown by the hanging foliage of graceful climbers, made the profusion of islands set in the surface of the water appear like bright-green luxuriant and gay tangles. Wildly romantic, on the contrary, reminding one of the Binger-loch, are the valley-straits of Sablook, where the Nile, narrowed to a small mountain stream, flows between high bare granite walls which rise some hundred feet.

So much the more surprising appeared the breadth which the Nile exhibits above this cataract, where it displays itself in a majesty which it has long lost in Egypt. Below their confluence, the waters of the Blue and the White Nile are

distinctly visible many miles apart. It is highly probable that at certain times the level of the streams might show a difference of several feet; the proposed establishment of a Nilometer should therefore take place below the confluence, in order that with the help of the telegraph accurate intelligence of its condition might be remitted to Cairo.

In the Nubian Nile-valley all charm is gone. Extremely wretched is the aspect of the country, and equally pitiable are its present social conditions. In the course of the last ten years, as a consequence, first, of the increased taxation, and secondly, of the diminished production, matters have continually become worse and worse. To the cursory glance of a traveller only a small proportion of this deep-rooted misery may be disclosed; he may perceive the consequences, without being able to assign the reasons; and from the contradictory statements of the inhabitants, he can hardly form a clear idea of the real condition of the country. On the other hand, the complaints of the people give him an incomplete representation of the circumstances, unless he at the same time takes notice of the objections which the Government appears justified in raising against them. Only a thorough knowledge of the country combined with local study would put him in a position to form an opinion. In spite of everything, the fact remains that the culture of the soil is declining, that scarcity is everywhere on the increase, and that distress is consequently more frequent. In the last two months of this year's harvest, the market price of a rup\* of sorghum-corn had risen to a Maria Theresa dollar. Three years before, large villages had been pointed out to me, lying completely deserted on account of the emigration of the inhabitants, and now again similar evidence of distress was forced upon my notice. In the district between Damer

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\* The rup is a measure equal in weight to seven and a half litres, or about five oka, and containing under two English gallons.

and Shendy, the population seemed utterly scared at the increasing emigrations. The unmarried men go to Khartoom, in order to be enlisted as so-called soldiers by the merchants on the Upper Nile. The elder people, on the other hand, leave their culture, and with a few sheep or goats endeavour to lead a meagre nomad life as shepherds in the steppes and deserts.

On the 1st of November, at midday, we at last reached Khartoom, and landed on the bank, which was all alive with hundreds of boats. The German Vice-consul, Herr Duisberg, who had shown me so much kindness at the time of my former visit, again received me most hospitably. In his elegant and commodious house, I had every opportunity for rest and refreshment in anticipation of my coming labours.

## CHAPTER II.

Kind reception in Khartoom. Dyafer Pasha, the Governor-General. Contract with Ghattas. Herr W. Duisberg. Ivory trade at Khartoom. Khartoom possessions in the negro countries. Departure from Khartoom. Manning of the boat. Construction of the Khartoom boats. First night on the White Nile. Character of the landscape. Washing away of the east bank. Fertility of the country on the west. Acacia forests. Herds of the Hassanieh. Numerous hippopotamuses. Geese and ducks. Beginning of the wilderness. The Ambatch-wood. First day of ill-luck. Running over a wild buffalo. Baggara Arabs. Brethren in the faith. The mountain Nyemati. Evening gossip about pygmies. Native Egyptian cultivated plants. Buffalos alarming the Baggara. Mohammed Kher, the robber chief. Impressions on the first sight of savages. Boat attacked by bees. Frightful agony. Gadflies. Giant snails. A man carries three canoes. Repair of the sail-yard. Fashoda the most southern military station. Fifteen Shillooks at a shot. Gay temperament of the people. Gun accidents. African giant snakes.

IN Egypt, in well-informed circles, it was a current opinion that the Government was trying, on principle, to throw impediments in the way of any explorers who might purpose penetrating the district of the Upper Nile. It was supposed that they were desirous of preventing the circulation, by eye-witnesses, of adverse reports, and of keeping back from the eyes of the world any undesirable details as to the position of matters with reference to the slave trade. They were unwilling to let it be seen that their influence over the people of Khartoom was insufficient for the suppression of the slave traffic amongst them. Under this impression I entered upon my journey with some misgiving, entertaining no very sanguine hopes as to the real utility of the order delivered to me for the Governor-General of Khartoom, who



at that time was administering affairs with considerable vigour in all the provinces of the Soudan under the Egyptian dominion above the first cataract.

So much the more grateful, therefore, was my surprise when, immediately after my arrival in Khartoom, I was honoured by a visit from the powerful Dyafer Pasha, and, after the first few words, satisfied myself that there was a reasonable expectation that, on this occasion, the local government would do all within their power to secure the most complete protection to a scientific expedition.

My letter of recommendation from the Academy was afterwards read in the Government divan. It was fluently translated, sentence by sentence, into Arabic by the physician in ordinary, and the Pasha at once declared that he would be the Vokil, that is to say, the manager of affairs, for the Academy of Berlin, and promised that he would not fail to afford me the necessary assistance for my journey. How faithfully he kept his word is well known, and on that account the thanks of the Academy of Science were formally presented to him. Dyafer had been an old captain of a frigate in the stirring times of Mohammed Ali; he was a man of considerable attainments, and had already become known to me on the occasion of my first journey, when he acted as Governor of Upper Egypt. In his house were seen piles of atlases and anatomical plates; he was not wanting in a clear comprehension of, nor indeed in an actual interest in, my undertaking. He expressed his hope that my journey might accomplish its aim, and if anything of material benefit should be discovered that it might not be reserved, but freely communicated to the State. I assured him that the Royal Academy had no narrow views, and that he might be certain that although I trusted by prosecuting science to gain credit for myself, I should not overlook anything that might be honourable to him, or for the advantage of his Government. The Pasha seemed gratified by my reply, and

referred me to the writers, who were to settle the various covenants of my agreement with an ivory trader, Ghattas, a Coptic Christian. The Governor-General himself had arranged the terms, and I could find little in their tenor that would be adverse to my interests.

Besides Ghattas, there were several other merchants in Khartoom, who possessed large settlements in the district of the Upper Nile, but he alone amongst them was not a Mahommedan; the others were, for the most part, true Osmanlis, whose reputation, with respect to slave dealing, did not stand too high. Thus the choice of the administrator fell upon the unlucky Ghattas, who, being also the richest of all, was required to become surety against any misadventure that might occur to the traveller in the interior. If he were betrayed to the cannibals, or if he were left in the lurch among savages and cut-throats, so much the better for the treasury of the Government, who would have the most legitimate reasons for proceeding to the confiscation of his estates.

I should fail to discharge a duty of gratitude if I were to omit to acknowledge the interest displayed in behalf of my enterprise by Herr Duisberg, who was at that time Vice-consul of the North German Confederation in Khartoom. Not only did he entertain me most hospitably for several weeks in his house, but likewise exerted all his influence on his friends the ivory-traders, so as to dispose them favourably to my undertaking, and to relieve them from any fear of interference on my part with their affairs.

Notwithstanding any prejudice which might attach to him as the leader of the Protestant mission, the Vice-consul had gained the esteem of all parties in Khartoom, and was especially in favour with the Governor-General, who very thoroughly appreciated his integrity. His conciliating manners availed to satisfy the Khartoom merchants that my plan was not adverse to their interests. Hitherto they had

looked upon every scientific traveller as a dangerous spy, whose visit only aimed at denouncing their transactions on the Upper Nile, and reporting them to the Consul-General in Egypt. On this occasion they consented to meet me at a sumptuous entertainment given by Herr Duisberg before my departure. All the gentry of the town, Pashas and Beys, glittering with their stars and orders, and merchants, in their gorgeous satin robes, gathered together at that feast of reconciliation between the representatives of African commerce and of European science.

The entire ivory trade of Khartoom is in the hands of six larger merchants, with whom are associated a dozen more whose business is on a smaller scale. For years the annual export of ivory has not exceeded the value of 500,000 Maria Theresa dollars. There has been a continual decrease in the yield of ivory from the territory adjacent to the river, so that last year, even that sum would not have been maintained, unless the expeditions had, season after season, been penetrating deeper into the more remote districts of the interior. It is a fallacy to suppose that the pursuit of elephants is merely a secondary consideration in these enterprises of the Khartoom merchants, or that it only serves as a cloke to disguise the far more lucrative slave trade. These two occupations have far less to do with one another than is frequently supposed. If it had not been for the high value of ivory, the countries about the sources of the Nile would even now be as little unfolded to us as the equatorial centre of the great continent: they are regions which of themselves could produce absolutely nothing to remunerate transport. The settlements owe their original existence to the ivory trade; but it must, on the other hand, be admitted that these settlements in various ways have facilitated the operations of the regular slave-traders. Without these depôts the professional slave-traders could never have penetrated so far, whilst now they are enabled to pour themselves into the

negro countries annually by thousands, on the roads over Kordofan and Darfur.

The merchants of Khartoom, to whom I have alluded, maintain a great number of settlements in districts as near as possible to the present ivory countries, and among peaceful races devoted to agriculture. They have apportioned the territory amongst themselves, and have brought the natives to a condition of vassalage. Under the protection of an armed guard procured from Khartoom, they have established various depôts, undertaken expeditions into the interior, and secured an unmolested transit to and fro. These depôts for ivory, ammunition, barter-goods, and means of subsistence, are villages surrounded by palisades, and are called Seribas.\* Every Khartoom merchant, in the different districts where he maintains his settlements, is represented by a superintendent and a number of subordinate agents. These agents command the armed men of the country, determine what products the subjected natives must pay by way of impost to support the guards, as well as the number of bearers they must furnish for the distant exploring expeditions; they appoint and displace the local managers; carry on war or strike alliances with the chiefs of the ivory countries, and once a year remit the collected stores to Khartoom.

Both the principal districts of the Khartoom ivory trade are accessible by the navigation of the two source-affluents together forming the White Nile, viz. the Bahr-el-Ghazal and the Bahr-el-Gebel. The name Bahr-el-Abiad is understood in Khartoom to include the entire domain of the Nile and its affluents above this town, but in its true and more limited sense it signifies only the united mainstream as far as the mouth of the Sobat, "White Nile." Two less important centres are approached by the channels of the Sobat and

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\* In the Soudan, every thorn-hedge, or palisade, is called a Seriba; in Syria, also, the cane-hedges, for the enclosing of cattle, are termed Sirb, or Serebe.

the Giraffe. The landing-places, called Meshera, are in all cases at a distance of some days' journey from the depôts. The trade winds and the rainy seasons both have their effect in determining the time of year in which progress can be made. They render the passage up stream practicable only from December to January, and limit the valley journey to June, July, and August. On the Bahr-el-Gebel the extreme point of navigation is the well-known Gondokoro in lat.  $5^{\circ}$  N., the termination of a series of voyages of discovery. On the Bahr-el-Ghazal a kind of *cul-de-sac* leads to the only existing Meshera. Beyond this, the Khartoom people have already advanced  $5^{\circ}$  in a southerly, as well as in a westerly direction. In the district of the Gazelle River, the Niam-niam countries form a great source of the ivory-produce; of the ways which were available, this was the direction which appeared to promise the best opening for the prosecution of my object. Accordingly, I determined to proceed by the Gazelle, and concluded my contract with the Coptic Ghattas. He engaged to supply the means of subsistence, and to furnish me with bearers and an adequate number of armed men. He also placed at my disposal a boat for the journey, and it was expressly stipulated that I should be at liberty to join all the enterprises and excursions of his own people.

The Governor-General laid similar obligations for my protection on all the other chief merchants who had possessions in the territory of the Gazelle. Duplicates of all the agreements were prepared; one copy being retained by me, the counterparts were deposited with the local government at Khartoom. After these necessary provisions for my security had been adjusted, there was nothing now to hinder me from commencing my real journey. Never before had the Egyptian Government done so much indirectly to co-operate with a scientific traveller; and it was with no little satisfaction that I regarded my budget of documents, which would unlock for me so considerable a section of Central Africa.



In order to have continually about me a number of people upon whose fidelity and attachment I might fairly rely under all circumstances, I took into my service six Nubians, who had settled in Khartoom with their wives and children, and who resided there, and had already travelled in different parts of the Upper Nile. All had previously served under other Europeans. Riharn, the cook, had accompanied the Consul Petherick on his ill-fated journey of 1863. Their conduct in no way disappointed me, and I had never any serious cause of complaint against any of them.

At last, all preparations had so far prospered that the journey to the Gazelle River might be commenced on the 5th of January 1869. A little concession had, however, to be made to the superstitious representations of the Khartoom people. Wednesday and Saturday, as days of ill-omen, were excluded from the times of departure. Somehow or other this introduced a parley which entailed a little delay. Protestations, I knew, availed but little, and my common sense suggested unconditional submission to the custom of the country. Not simply was it impossible to convince the people of the absurdity of any superstition of theirs, but what was of more moment, they would be sure, on the very first occasion of any mischance, to attribute it to the perverseness of the Frank. They would have looked idly and helplessly on if I had persisted in carrying out my will in opposition to the decrees of fate.

On board our little vessel we altogether counted thirty-two, a number small in comparison with that in the other boats. The total number, however, did not admit of much reduction. No boat's crew alone could suffice to overcome the obstacles which were to be expected in the waters further up the country.

The merchant Ghattas, to whom the boat belonged, had manned it with eight boatmen, and had also put on board fifteen hired men to serve, partly as a protection against any



attacks, and partly to assist in towing the boats. The soldiers, as they were called, were for the most part young, and were originally inhabitants of the valley of the Upper Nile, between Berber and Khartoom, but from whence they had been driven to escape on account of the heavy taxation. Since agriculture hardly kept them from misery and starvation, they preferred to hire themselves out as robbers, slave-hunters, cattle-stealers, or whatever could enable them to gratify the innate propensity for adventure which belongs to every Nubian. Besides the six Nubians engaged in Khartoom, my own retinue included two women slaves, whose hand labour supplied the want of mills; their office, performed by means of stones, was to convert our corn into the flour requisite for the maintenance of the crew. We were packed closely enough; cramped up, we appeared like cattle in a pen, yet our accommodation was comparatively spacious. Other boats I saw of which the dimensions were hardly larger than our own, and which were made to carry sometimes sixty, sometimes eighty human beings. But even this was a trifling repletion as compared with the boats we met, and which, in a hold of not more than fifty tons, often stowed away 200 slaves. The crew squat like hens on shelves outstretched upon deck between mast and mast; and in order to afford the soldiers rest by night, the vessels lie-to whenever the shore is safe.

A rough wooden partition erected at the stern of the bulky vessel was assigned to me as my special berth. I had arranged it as well as I could, and sat there surrounded, in charming confusion, by baggage and trunks, and the thousand articles which made up my equipment. The boats which are used upon the upper waters of the Nile are called "negger;" their construction, I believe, is unlike what can be seen in any other country of the world. They are as strong as they are massive, being built so as to withstand the violent pushings of the hippopotamuses, as well as the collisions with

the mussel banks, which are scattered in various directions. I am certain that one of these boats at any maritime exhibition would attract the attention of all who take any interest in such things. I am not aware that there is anything accurate to be found in any history of travel on this subject, and it may be permitted me therefore to insert a few particulars of the Khartoom ship-building.

There can be no question that the ship-building on the Red Sea, just like the architecture of the towns along its coast, is of Indian origin, all the timber required in Arabia being procured from India. At Khartoom, on the contrary, this art, although in many respects it has peculiarities of its own, has been derived from an Egyptian source. Taking their own special requirements into account, the boat-builders of Egypt have completely altered the structure and shape of their river boats. It must be borne in mind that the recurring cataracts, which interrupt the navigation of the Nubian Nile valley, rendered any ascent of the river a matter of difficulty, demanding indeed the most strenuous exertions. The cataracts are ten in number, and only recently have they been overcome by some small steam vessels of about 60-horse power. The only wood which is used in Khartoom for ship-building is that of the Sunt acacia (*A. nilotica*), which, though far heavier and harder than our oak, is the only wood which the soil of the Soudan supplies, which appears capable of being sawn into planks. But on account of the irregular texture and numerous branches of the trunk of this acacia, it is impossible to cut it into boards more than ten feet in length, and even these are rare. Masts and sail-yards, since those of deal seldom reach Khartoom, and then are of an exorbitant price, must be made by splicing together a number of small pieces. Externally these are bound with ox hide; but in violent gales they are extremely liable to start. Not only does the wood fail to be either straight or long, it is also so hard, that it requires to be

sawn while it is green. The saw is an instrument so rarely employed throughout Nubia, that it is handled most unskillfully by the carpenters; as a matter of course, there are neither steam-mills nor water-mills in Khartoom, and consequently the planks are cut without the faintest pretence to regularity.

All these defects are, however, cancelled by the unexampled toughness and indestructible nature of the wood; it might fairly be asked from what other material could boats 60 feet long and 20 feet broad be constructed without ribs or braces. The sides of the boat are a foot thick, and are formed of layers of different lengths, which acquire stability and firmness from their own support. An empty boat, seen from inside, has somewhat the appearance of an elongated shell of half a hazel-nut. The planks, where they overlap or are dove-tailed together, are fastened by iron nails driven in perpendicularly, the necessary holes being bored from the outer to the inner surfaces in such a way that the same nail holds together two, or occasionally more, thicknesses of wood. In this manner, with much trouble and more measuring, is obtained the proper curvature of the hull, which, as a whole, is marked by a complete symmetry. The cost of the stout iron nails, and the rapid wear of axe and saw, make the expenses of building these boats so considerable that they amount to five times as much as oak vessels of the same size in Europe. A mast about 20 feet high bears the giant-yard of the single lateen sail, which is generally half as long again as the boat.

Amid the farewell salutations of a large concourse, among which my people counted numerous friends and relations, we pushed off from the shore. Without delay we took our onward course to the mouth of the Blue Nile, doubling the Ras-el-Khartoom, that large promontory, which resembles in form the snout of an animal; it gives its name to the town, and is the partition land between the two arms of the Nile.

Bulky and ponderous as was our boat, the power of the north wind laid its hold upon our giant-sail, and carried us with the speed of steam towards the south. On the forenoon of the following day we found ourselves already 1° below the latitude of Khartoom. We sailed, without staying our course, through the night, which was cheered by the moonlight. I was sleepless with excitement at finding myself at last brought irrevocably to the attainment of my cherished hopes. The universal quiet was only broken by the rush of the bilge-water, and now and then by the cry of the water-birds. Shrouded like mummies in their white garments lay the crew, closely packed upon the narrow deck; and altogether there was something spectral in the stillness of the nocturnal voyage.

As the morning sun fell upon the low monotonous shores of the flowing river, it seemed at times almost as though it were illuminating the ocean, so vast was the extent of water where the current ran for any distance in a straight and unwinding course. Low levels, that seemed interminable, only marked out from the land beyond by narrow belts of trees, formed the framework of the scene. The borders of the desert rise and fall in gentle undulations, on which stand, sometimes scantily and sometimes thickly, groups of Haras and Seyal acacias. The vegetation which is visible demonstrates the complete desert character of Nubia. The shoosh-grass (*Panicum turgidum*), the most general of herbage for the camels, is here trodden down in masses.

The voyage up the White Nile has been very frequently described by various travellers. The districts along the shore mostly retain an unchanging aspect for miles together. Rarely does some distant mountain or isolated hill relieve the eye from the wide monotony. In spite of all, there was no lack of interest. There is much that cannot fail to make the progress ever striking and impressive.

The attention is soon attracted by the astonishing number

of geese and ducks which are seen day after day. The traveller in these parts is so satiated with them, fattened and roasted, that the sight creates something akin to disgust. The number of cattle is prodigious: far as the eye can reach they are scattered alike on either shore, whilst, close at hand, they come down to the river-marshes to get their drink. The stream, as wide again as the Nile of Egypt, is enlivened by the boats belonging to the shepherds, who row hither and thither to conduct their cattle, their dogs in the water swimming patiently behind.

Early on the third day we reached Getina, a considerable village inhabited by Hassanieh, and which is a favourite rendezvous of the Nile-boats. The flats here were bright with the luxuriant green of the sedge; growing abundantly as it does, it serves to impart to the banks the meadow-like character of northern tracts. Thousands of geese (*Chenalopez ægyptiacus*), in no degree disconcerted by the arrival of any stranger, waddled up and down. Although in places the right bank is bounded by sand-banks thirty feet high, the left appears completely and interminably flat, and occasionally admits of the culture of sorghum. This remarkable difference which exists between the aspect of the two banks, and which may be observed for several degrees, is to be explained by a hydrographical law, which is illustrated not only here, but likewise in the district of the Lower Nile. As rivers flow from southerly into more northern latitudes, their fluid particles are set in motion with increased velocity, the result of which is to drive them onwards so as to wash away the eastern bank, leaving a continual deposit on the west.

This phenomenon, which may be just as plainly perceived on several of the great rivers of Europe, is, as might be expected, presented here on a large scale, where the Nile retains its northerly direction along a course which extends over a third part of the earth's quadrant. Hence it has



arisen that the cultivated fields lie more generally upon the western shore, while the eastern gives a deeper fairway, and is found dotted at intervals with settled villages. Hardly ever does the fairway deviate from the eastern shore, and the evident depression of the shore has led several travellers to suspect that they have discovered a proof of the continuous sloping of the land, which, in truth, is only apparent.

It will be understood, therefore, how great a mistake is made in attempting to estimate, as many of my predecessors have done, the degree of productiveness of the country by the sandy levels and starving fields on the right bank. As matter of fact, the White Nile is enriched by an alluvium which would be quite as fruitful as that of the Blue Nile, except that it is wanting in the crumbling clay, which is the product of the volcanic mountains of Abyssinia, and which undoubtedly exercises a most beneficial influence on the results of Egyptian agriculture. Here the soil is not only rich, it is remarkable for its lightness; and, probably from the absence of chalk, it has a warmer, brighter colour than generally marks the Nubian or Egyptian land.

Towards midday the wind had so much increased that our Reis let the boat drift without sail against the stream. The progress we thus made was surprising: then as the gale gradually fell, we ventured to unfurl our sail, till the speed we reached was like that of an arrow over the waters. We drove through the midst of the flocks of geese which came athwart our course, and firing at random caught up as many of the wounded as came within our grasp. Towards the close of the day we reached Wod-Shellay.

Wod-Shellay is one of the favourite resting-places of all voyagers upon the Nile. Here, according to custom, an ox was slaughtered,\* and a formal leave was taken of the Mohammedan world, by liberal draughts of merissa beer.

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\* For five Maria Theresa dollars (1*l.*) I bought two fat bullocks.



This leave-taking had to be repeated more than once. We were told that higher up the stream there were no more villages, but somehow or other opportunities were found, either on pretext of making purchases or of looking at old friends, on which it became necessary to have some more parting cups of merissa beer. Subject to these delays, I lost considerable time frequently in insipid dreariness, where neither scenes nor men could excite my interest.

After making a complete day of rest at Wod-Shellay, I crossed over to the western shore on a brief excursion. I entered some villages at a distance from the Nile and gained some information as to the condition of their agriculture. Wide, though much thinned, forests of the Sunt acacia (*A. nilotica* and *arabica*) cover the districts near the shore; further on there was a wide extent of cultivated flat. The soil is a stiffish ash-grey clay, different from that of Egypt, but not inferior in fertility—an opinion which Sir Samuel Baker, not investigating the west and being acquainted only with the sandy east, has ventured to deny.

A large yellow-grained variety of *Sorghum vulgare*, known in the Khartoom markets as “soffra,” thrives here in such perfection that but few ears came under my notice which were not at least nine inches long and more than four in diameter; convincing evidence to me of the fruitful nature of the ground.

I was accompanied by Arslan, a great sheep-dog, which I had brought with me from Europe, and in all the villages through which I passed the inhabitants, as I advanced, scampered off in terror, crying “Hyæna, hyæna!” It was difficult to make them understand that the brown-spotted animal was only a dog. I do not think I know a country where the dread of great dogs is so universal as in the Soudan.

But a few years ago unlimited forests here met the stranger’s eye; the large demand for timber for ship-building purposes, however, has all but destroyed them. At

Wod-Shellay, in Mohammed Ali's time, the Government maintained a large dock, on which were built the numerous boats which that enterprising ruler sent out into the upper districts; at present there is a similar establishment higher up the stream upon the Isle of Aba, where the stores of wood are awhile secured to meet the demands of the future. Scarcely one tree out of a hundred yields timber suitable for building: and all along the bank the owners like to pay their taxes by means of wood instead of money; the consequence naturally is that the best trees are prematurely lost and that old trees are comparatively rare. The steamboat service on these waters is much assisted by the inexhaustible supply of fuel which is everywhere to be procured along the banks.

Our voyage was next continued, through the night, as far as a watering-place on the western shore, near which lay the village of Turra. We lay-to in sight of the neighbouring mountain Arrash-kol.

The hippopotamuses now became more frequent; their noise, gurgling, and snorting was heard far over the waters, and grated as harshly on the ear as the incessant creaking of our own rudder. The traveller up the White Nile must accustom himself to this, or he has no hope of an undisturbed night's rest.

The western shores, which are marked by rows of acacias almost as though arranged in avenues, have nothing African in their aspect, chiefly on account of the absence of the palm, that chief ornament of the tropics; they rather remind of what may be seen in the thinly-populated districts beside the Volga and other of the streams of Russia. The Arrash-kol is an isolated mountain some hundred feet high, of which the jagged steeps jut up from the uniform level. It is well known to botanists through the treasures which were gathered there thirty years ago by the traveller Kotschy. Time did not permit me to investigate the country from this interesting centre. I was obliged to content

myself with a trip to the village of Turra, two leagues away.

No idea can be formed of the number of cattle all hereabouts; the route leads over continual watering-places, where herds of cattle, varying in number from 1000 to 3000, are assembled, and form a most striking spectacle. The cattle of the Hassanieh are distinguished by a hump, and are of a race peculiar to the whole of the Soudan, having beyond a doubt some close affinity to the Indian zebu. The ox of the Egyptians, which, in consequence of the cattle-plague in 1863-64, has almost entirely died out, has no hump. Its horns are short, and it differs in the shape of its skull from the ox of the Soudan; the breed has survived only in Central Nubia. In girth and height, not only do the cattle of the Hassanieh exceed the Egyptian, but those which I shall have occasion to mention hereafter as belonging to the Baggara Arabs, surpass the breeds which are kept by the pagan negroes of the Upper Nile. Amongst the Shillooks and Dinka, for instance, the light grey colour predominates, whilst the marking of the skin in the majority of those of which we speak is like a spotted leopard, black specks on a lightish ground; but neither are the white and brown, the piebald, nor coats entirely dun-colour, at all unfrequent.

I was conducted through the fragrant wood of the flowering acacia to a place where a little weekly market had gathered the neatherds of the neighbourhood, and where milk flowed in streams. The Hassanieh do not differ externally from the score of other nomad races which, more or less Arabised, inhabit the steppes and deserts on both sides of the Nile. They appeared to me far more confiding than my old friends the Bishareen and Hadendoa, but perhaps for the reason that, speaking good Arabic, they were able to contribute their part to a good understanding on both sides. They crowded round me everywhere to gaze at my strange big dog, and I was repeatedly obliged to give a history in

detail of his genealogy, his qualities, and all about him. Being in possession of a splendid race of greyhounds, which they train for gazelle hunting, and of which they have a high opinion, their interest was raised to the highest pitch. The dogs smelt strongly; and it is no exaggeration to say, so did the men.

The graceful shade acacias (*A. spirocarpa*) here come once again into the front, soon to be finally lost sight of on the other side of the neighbouring desert. Along the right bank there were many masses of a large-leaved shrub, which covers the country, and for miles disputes the precedence with all the prevailing vegetation; it is the *Ipomæa asarifolia*, appearing in some places like rose bushes in the luxuriant adornment of its ample blossoms, a bright relief to the general dreariness of the shore.

Our voyage is again continued by night; the channel is broad and deep; freely we sail throughout the hours of darkness. The noise of the hippopotamuses is the chief disturbance; it seems as if there is no relief from their tumult. It almost seemed as if they were quite close about us, but one had but to look around, and their clumsy heads were visible in the distance, projecting like black points above the stream. By way of variety there came, at intervals, the roar of some lion prowling on the bank. Such were the novelties of Africa.

In the morning we passed Dueme, one of the largest villages in this district. Soon we reached the groups of little islands whose soil, naturally fertile, has been successfully subject to a recent cultivation. It is a cheering sign of the progress of cultivation in these regions, to see the fellahen of Nubia travelling continually further and further up the banks of the White Nile. The passive population of blacks on the river, at least in the space of a few decades, has been partly displaced, and partly spurred on to greater energy; and doubtless, therefore, there are many places in

Nubia itself capable of being cultivated, which have become desolate only as a consequence of the oppressiveness of a heavy taxation.

The flocks of geese were still unending, and every expedient was resorted to to make a variety in the way of cooking them; they were stuffed with rice; they were dressed with tomato sauce; they were served with mushrooms; and when every imaginable way of preparing them was exhausted, we had recourse, by way of variety, to the ducks (*Anas viduata*) which were obtainable. Then was the golden age of my *cuisine*. Our provisions were ample, and the inventive faculties of my cook Riharn turned them all to the best account. But different times were yet to come, times when Riharn must murmur that the three years of his life spent in Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo had all been sacrificed, and must repine that he could find no scope for his abilities in Central Africa. The result of all this was, that he was a terrible backslider in his art, and at the end of three years could never cook a dish of rice without burning it.

A few days after our departure I had made the unpleasant discovery that the prudent Ghattas, to whom the vessel belonged, with an eye to economy, had put on board, without due protection, all his powder and a year's supply of the cartridges necessary for the expedition. In order to save the expense of proper chests he had wrapped up several hundredweight of these combustibles loosely in sacks of matting and paper parcels only, and piled them up just under the entrance to my cabin, where I was accustomed to sit smoking my pipe and surveying the land. I had now thrown a cowhide across this explosive heap, and so secured that the smoking and the contemplation might be resumed with greater composure on my part.

On the same day we reached the Egyptian military station Kowa, or El-Ais, at which there is a large Government corn-store. El-Ais was for years the extreme southern boundary



of the State. Passing through it is a much frequented road, which crosses the White as well as the Blue Nile, and unites Kordofan with Abyssinia. Along this road the Baggara fetch most of their horses, which they buy by auction in the market of Gallabat.

Directly above Kowa begins the region of the Shillook Islands, which, as yet unthinned by the axe, are very valuable. A little further up the stream, following the outline of the banks, stretches a series of Nubian agricultural settlements. At one of these goodly islands, known as Om-mandeb, we stayed our course awhile. Mandeb is the name here given to the prickliest of prickly plants, the *Mimosa asperata*: transplanted by the stream, it is occasionally found even as far off as Egypt, but here it surrounds the island shore, and forms a hedge of impenetrable thorns. Here in a wild state is the water melon, and I have submitted proofs that the cradle of this nursling of culture lies in Africa, the original home of the domestic cat and of the ass.

A rich variety of animal life is developed in this wilderness; not only did the shore swarm with hippopotamuses, whose vestiges were like deep pit-holes, but the ground was scooped out in places vacated by rows of crocodiles, which now basked only thirty paces in our front. Great iguanas (*Varanus*) and snakes rustled in the dry grass. Everywhere under the trees were snake skins and egg shells; above in the branches was heard the commotion of the mischievous monkeys (*Cercopithecus griseoviridus*), whilst birds of many a species, eagles from giant nests, and hosts of fluttering water-fowl, gave incessant animation to the scenery of the shore.

What, however, most interested me, was the unlimited variety in the kinds of water plants which abounded on the floods, the sport of the winds and waves. Among them the *Herminiera*, known under the native name of ambatch, has already been the subject of general remark; it plays so



prominent a part in the upper waters of the Nile, that it might fairly be designated the most remarkable of the native plants.

My predecessor, Kotschy, who did not know that it had already been observed by Adanson in Senegambia, named it *Ædemone mirabilis*, which was corrupted into the still more wonderful name of *Anemone mirabilis*, and so appeared in many books which treated of Africa. The ambatch is distinguished for the unexampled lightness of its wood, if the fungus-like substance of the stem deserves such a name at all. It shoots up to 15 or 20 feet in height, and at its base generally attains a thickness of about 6 inches. The weight of this fungus-wood is so insignificant that it really suggests comparison to a feather. Only by taking it into his hands could any one believe that it were possible for one man to lift on to his shoulders a raft made large enough to carry eight people on the water. The plant shoots up with great rapidity by the quiet places of the shore, and since it roots merely in the water, whole bushes are easily broken off by the force of the wind or stream, and settle themselves afresh in other places. This is the true origin of the grass-barriers so frequently mentioned as blocking up the waters of the Upper Nile, and in many seasons making navigation utterly impracticable. Other plants have a share in the formation of these floating islands, which daily emerge like the Delos of tradition; among them, in particular, the vossia grass, and the famous papyrus of antiquity, which at present is nowhere to be found either in Nubia or in Egypt.

On the 13th of January, on one of the thronging islands, we had our first *rencontre* with the Shillooks. This tribe of negroes formerly extended themselves much further north than at present, having settlements on all the islands; but now they only exceptionally penetrate to this latitude (12° 30') in their canoes of hollow tamarind stems. The Baggara, meanwhile, are ever gaining a firmer footing on

the river banks, and have already with their flocks ventured far to the east of the stream into the land of the Diuka.

Some long islands of sand distinguished by stripes here gave a noticeable feature to the scene; they were covered with flocks of Balearic or peacock cranes, which had arranged themselves in five or six rows like a regiment of soldiers, their beaks turned to the wind and facing the north. When young this bird, thus plentifully supplied, has flesh more palatable than the goose, because it feeds on corn and beans; and, like the guinea fowl, it made a change in our bill of fare. On the western banks were large herds of antelopes (*A. megaloceras*), which we could see peacefully coming down to drink. In other places we passed close by trees with a lively population of monkeys swinging on the branches; and now for the first time we observed the troops of maraboo storks, which made their appearance in considerable numbers by the water's edge. All this diversity of life gave the fascination of romance to the loneliness of the forest.

The 14th of January was the first day of ill-luck, which I was myself the means of bringing about. Early in the morning another boat had joined us; and the people wished me to allow them to stay awhile that they might enjoy themselves together. Being, however, at a spot which seemed to me extremely dull, I urged them to go further, in order to land on a little island that appeared more full of interest. The excursion which I took was attended by a misfortune which befell one of the two men whom I took to accompany me. Mohammed Amin, such was his name, running at my side, had chanced to come upon a wild buffalo, that I had not the least intention of injuring, but which the man, unhappily, approached too near in the high grass. The buffalo, it would seem, was taking his midday nap, and disturbed from his siesta, rose in the utmost fury. To spring up and whirl the destroyer of his peace in the air was but the work

of an instant. There lay my faithful companion, bleeding all over, and in front of him, tail erect, stood the buffalo roaring, and in a threatening attitude ready to trample down his victim. As fate would have it, however, the attention of the infuriated brute was attracted by the other two men, who stood by looking on speechless with astonishment. I had no gun; Mohammed had been carrying my breech-loader in his hand, and there it was swinging on the left horn of the buffalo. The other man with me, who carried my rifle, had immediately taken aim, but the trigger snapped in vain, and time after time the gun missed fire. No time now for any consultation; it was a question of a moment. The man grasped at a small iron hatchet and hurled it straight at the buffalo's head from a distance of about twenty paces; the aim was good, and thus was the prey rescued from the enemy. With a wild bound the buffalo threw itself sidelong into the reeds, tore along through the rustling stalks with its ponderous weight, bellowing and shaking all the ground. Roaring and growling, bounding violently from side to side, he could be seen in wild career, and as we presumed that the whole herd might be in his train, we seized the guns, and made our quickest way to a neighbouring tree. All, however, soon was quiet, and our next thought was directed to the unfortunate sufferer. Mohammed's head lay as though nailed to the ground, his ears pierced by sharp reed-stalks, but a moment's inspection convinced us that the injuries were not fatal. The buffalo's horn had struck his mouth, and, besides the loss of four teeth in the upper jaw and some minor fractures, he had sustained no further harm. I left my other companion on the spot to wash Mohammed, and hastened alone to the distant boat to have him fetched. In three weeks he had recovered, and as an equivalent for each of his four teeth he had a backsheesh of ten dollars. This liberality on my part wonderfully animated the desire for enterprise amongst my companions,

and put them in great good humour towards me for the future.

After a long time a mountain once again appeared; it was the two peaks of the Nyemati, imposing masses of granite which rise aloft on the right. We took up our quarters on the opposite island, where a number of Baggara Arabs had pitched their tented camp. "Habbabkum, habbabkum, habbabkum, aschera" (good friends), again and again our people begin to shout as soon as they see their swarthy brethren in the faith upon the shore. Then from our side are heard demands for "semmem" and for "roab" (butter and buttermilk), whilst the Arabs cry for "esh, esh," that is, for corn. "Corn," we reply, "we have hardly enough for ourselves." And then once more ensues the mingling of the sounds "semmem" and "habbabkum." At last, on shore, we are embracing the "habbabkums" with wonderful emotion; but this does not quite go down; we find everything they offer us has to be paid for handsomely at Khartoom market-prices. As soon as it was seen that nothing was to be got out of them without payment, our crew was not long in conferring upon them the name of "Nas-batalin" (rascals).

The women were much more courteous, and vied in amiability, so as to entice as many visitors as possible to their merissa-shops. These they had improvised in their huts, eager to make a profit from the ever-thirsty Khartoomers as they sail along. With these women, who were ever actively employed at the hearth, though little accustomed to keep alive the sacred fire of Vesta, my party spent their holiday in rioting and revelry. I, for my part, lingered out my time on the neighbouring steppe, treating the children to bisnits, as I should to bonbons.

The Baggara Arabs possess the wide district which extends from Kordofan and Darfur on the south, as far as the river banks inhabited by the Dinka and Shillooks. Part of them

—indeed, in the east, a third of them—pay tribute to Egypt. The name Baggara means “neatherds,” and indeed their wealth consists simply of cattle; they are not, however, shepherds, as they are represented in the idylls of home, but mounted and warlike from their youth; they are bolder robbers than any other of the Ethiopian nomad races. They bring down elephants with lance and sword, a feat scarcely less free from risk than playing with lions and leopards as though they were kittens. Many of them hire themselves out to the Khartoomers to accompany their expeditions to the interior. Several came to offer their services to me, under the impression that my object was the capture of slaves. I confess that I could hardly restrain my admiration when I gazed upon their athletic, agile forms, although I had no call for their services.

The Baggara speak a tolerably pure Soudan-Arabic; they seem to extend themselves rapidly as an immigrant tribe over the pasture steppes, at the expense of other and less favoured races. Their countenances betray little of the Semitic expression, and I saw not a few whose physiognomy reminded me of some of my old friends at home. I can confidently maintain that they form the finest race of the nomad people dwelling on the Nile. I could not help being surprised at the love of ornament and finery which was manifested by this race, advanced as it is. The clothing of the generality consists of indigo-blue shirts, such as are worn by the peasants of Egypt, whilst the more wealthy array themselves in robes of scarlet and figured calico.

On the other shore I visited the mountain, which is almost contiguous to the river. Growing here I first found the tamarin<sup>1</sup>, which never failed me more throughout my entire wanderings. The thick shade of these bright green trees makes them a favourite rendezvous on all the roads of Central Africa. Every traveller in the Soudan can scarce be otherwise than quite familiar with the Hegelig (*Balanites*)



of which, like plums, the fruit falls off and thickly strews the ground below. By the people of Khartoom it is called Lalôb. It contains a sweetish pulp, tasting at first like gingerbread, but it leaves a bitter taste behind, and is purgative in its properties.

Climbing about 800 feet I reached the summit of the Nyemati, and had a fine view of the steppes intersected by the stream. The slopes consist partly of rough, massy blocks of granite, and partly of huge unbroken flats, some a hundred feet in length, which descend to the river and in places appear like sunken roofs. In the rifts and deeper clefts swarm multitudes of bats, and a fetid atmosphere exhales from these murky chasms. The Abyssinian rock-rabbit, creeping like a marmot over the stones, is ever to be seen among the mountains of the steppes. The eastern horizon is bounded by the mountains of the Dar-el-Fungi in Upper Sennaar, at a distance of more than thirty miles.

As we progressed further the river islands became more frequent, and the channels more and more narrowed by the surrounding masses of impenetrable grass. The ambatch is here almost excluded by the vossia grass, but only to reappear at the mouth of the waters. We came continually upon Baggara, with whom, without stopping on our course, we talked and discussed the market prices of provisions. A fine fat bullock was bought for only three dollars, a price at which it would pay to found here a company for the extract of meat; the skins are not exported, but are used in the country. The Baggara hold all the left bank, and visit it in winter when the steppes in the interior are dry and scorched. Wherever they settle, as now and then they do, either on the islands or on the right bank, they completely drive out the Shillook negroes. At various times in the day we landed to fraternise with the Baggara. The large flocks of ducks afforded entertaining and successful sport; and as for geese, there were still more than I and my people could



eat. To and fro, ever and again swept through the water a Shillock fishing in his fragile boat; he is not entitled to the "habbakkum," because he is a heathen; he is mocked with "Wod-e-Mek" (son of a king) for a greeting, made to tell where he comes from, and whither he is going, and if he has any fish, it is taken from him: such is the practice on every vessel. But the Shillocks are also subject to Egyptian rule, and there is no reason to doubt that in a short time they will enjoy equal rights with the other subjects of the Viceroy, however insignificant these may appear to be.

To a degree that created some misgiving as to what might be before us, the progress now began to be unalterably tedious. For a weary time all woodlands seemed wholly to have forsaken the shore; nothing was to be perceived but the desolation of a vast savannah. Dark brown widow-ducks (*Anas viduata*) and shovellers were shot, whose oily taste is only disguised by red pepper. At night the time was usually beguiled by stories of adventures in the Upper Nile district. Everyone has something wonderful which he delights to tell, something beyond all experience, and is ready to swear by the Koran and by the beard of the Prophet that what he says is true. "Africa," said Aristotle ages ago, "has always something new to show;" the latest tale was now about the pygmies, of whom I here received my earliest information. I had no idea that I should be brought into actual and close connection with such people. I laughed at the accounts which eye-witnesses gave of them, and, for my part, quietly put them into the category of men with tails. I took my share in dressing up a story for the entertainment of my party. Alexandre Dumas's tale, 'l'Homme à queue,' served my purpose admirably. It is so clever, and yet so pointed in its fine simplicity, that it thoroughly enlisted the attention of all who heard it.

Notwithstanding the undeniable sameness which prevailed in its outward character, I found every fresh landing-place

afford me some surprise or other. Rich was the reward of penetrating, as I did, a thorough wilderness on the right bank on the mainland. Buffaloes forcing their way along had beaten many avenues through thickets and creepers, and along these I went, followed by a group of armed men. The vestiges in every direction were so conclusive as to the number of the beasts that were about, that we might well expect a *rencontre* as dangerous as that which has already been related. Here in a wild state is found the Luffa, a plant of the gourd family. The dried fruit of this contains a fibrous skeleton, that answers the purpose of a bathing-sponge, and it is frequently cultivated in Egypt for that purpose. I could enumerate a whole series of plants, known in Egypt only under cultivation, which find their original and proper home in the primeval forests of the White Nile. Not unreasonably may an inference be drawn that, in ages indefinitely long ago, the entire Nile Valley exhibited a vegetation harmonising in its character throughout, much more than now. It was the upgrowth of civilisation in ancient Egypt which displaced the flora from its northern seat, and made it, as at present, only to be found hundreds of miles higher up the land. This assumption is in a measure confirmed by the traditions which survive with regard to animals. In remote times, the ibis, the hippopotamus, the crocodile, all existed in far more northerly latitudes than now. The papyrus, it may be added, gives its witness to the same theory.

After a while the southern horizon was again broken by the elevation of a mountain, which proved to be the Defafang, an extinct volcano, 1000 feet high, several miles from the river. Werne, one of the first explorers of the Upper Nile waters, the only European who visited this locality, collected a variety of specimens of the rocks, and they exhibited the volcanic nature of the basaltic lava, corresponding to similar formations in the Eifel. This mountain

stands as the boundary-mark between the first negro territory on the White Nile and the shepherd race of the Baggara.

As we were sailing in deep water close to the reedy shore, the roar and rustle of our great sail started up a herd of wild buffaloes, which disappeared from sight, before we had time to seize our rifles. When presently we were passing the last camp of the Baggara, our attention was attracted to a scene of excitement, at once vivid and picturesque. The entire population, alarmed by an attack of wild buffaloes on some cattle-drivers, was up and in hot pursuit. Hundreds of men armed with lance or sword, some of them mounted, were furiously hurrying to the scene, urged on by the frantic shrieks of the excited women. We could not resist the conclusion that the buffaloes, which we had disturbed, had proceeded to attack the neighbouring drivers. An impression seemed to prevail that we had fired at the Baggara, but in the tumult nobody exactly understood the circumstances. The gale was in our favour, and we glided rapidly out of reach without learning the precise issue of the disorder. We observed one poor fellow who had incurred a disaster similar to, and perhaps worse than, that which happened to my own Mohammed Amin. About Mohammed I may here mention that his upper lip had been held together by a couple of insect-needles; that he had been treated to plenty of pap and camomile-tea, and that after spitting out one little splinter of bone after another, he soon found himself getting all right again.

In the course of the afternoon the boat sailed for a wager with a flotilla of light-grey pelicans. Repeated small shot could not make them rise; but at last we outstripped them, and succeeded in shooting down several from the group. From the supple breast-feathers of this bird, the savages of the Upper Nile prepare close perukes, which make an excellent imitation of a luxuriant crop of grey hair, and would be a valuable acquisition to any theatrical wardrobe.

A hurried trip upon the left bank brought me upon the track of a large herd of elephants. According to the Baggara, this district is most prolific as a hunting-ground for these animals. The adjacent territories of the Shillooks, on the other hand, are too densely populated to allow elephants to be numerous, and they have to be sought at some distance, where, on account of the wide water-level, they are often reached in boats.

At sunset we reached a place on the right bank, which will always retain a certain notoriety in the history of the White Nile, as having once been the headquarters of the renowned robber chief, Mohammed Kher. The raised works, having on their interior traces of decayed walls of earth, and surrounded by deep trenches, mark the site of Mohammed Kher's seriba. To judge by the heaps of bones which still exist, the number of cattle slaughtered and feasted on must have been something enormous. Booty was plundered from far and near, but the Shillooks were the greatest sufferers. Mohammed Kher, with his contingent of well-mounted Baggara, was not only for many years a terror to the neighbouring negro races, but could defy the authority of the Governor at Khartoom. Yet principally it was he who taught the people of Khartoom how, by means of earthworks and regular ramparts, to intimidate the natives and bring them into subjection. Many human bones, the relics of slaves carried off by sickness, as well as the skulls of asses and horses, are found everywhere about. As a consequence of the burning of the steppes, they are frequently noticed in a half-charred condition. Throughout Africa burnt human bones are ever the marks which the slave trade leaves behind. Not far from this ill-famed place we lay-to alongside the village of Kaka, the most northerly place inhabited by Shillooks on the White Nile, and at which the Egyptian Government maintained a depôt for corn. Twenty years ago hundreds of Dinka villages stood on this side of the river.

From the descriptions of travellers who accompanied the expeditions sent out by Mehemet Ali to discover the sources of the Nile, it has been ascertained that the number of the population here was formerly as important as it now is in the very heart of the Shillook country. As a result of the incessant ravages of Mohammed Kher, the entire eastern shore has degenerated into a forest waste. The river still parts the separate districts of the hostile tribes; but the Shillooks have attempted to settle nowhere except at Kaka in the deserted district; the Diuka, on their part, having withdrawn some days' journey into the interior.

Soon after the arrival of the boat, a great crowd of naked Shillooks, prompted by curiosity, assembled on the shore, my dog still being the chief attraction. The first sight of a throng of savages, suddenly presenting themselves in their native nudity, is one from which no amount of familiarity can remove the strange impression; it takes abiding hold upon the memory, and makes the traveller recall anew the civilisation he has left behind.

One of the Khartoom men disturbed my pensive contemplations by pointing to the Shillooks, and making a remark that they looked like Christians. I punished him with the scornful reply to the effect that of whatever faith the savages were, I could answer for it that they had the good luck to be neither Jews nor Mohammedans.

A large *sombbrero* of Mexican cut which protected my head from the rays of the sun, excited the curiosity of the Shillooks. On their own heads they wore a similar covering, except that theirs was made from their own hair. I called their attention to the great likeness between black men and white men, but very great was their astonishment when they saw that my hair could be taken off and put on again, which would be to them very incredible. It might almost be said that they are hardly born without their crests, which sometimes resemble the comb of a guinea-fowl, and at other times seem to be



borrowed and designed from the aureoles which we admire in Greek sacred pictures. Even while they are infants at the breast, the hair is begun to be fastened into shape with gum-arabic and ashes, and in course of time is permanently brought into whatever form they please.

The dreary steppe in the neighbourhood of Kaka contained nothing that was worth the trouble of collecting. The dried-up remains of vegetation had been completely annihilated by fire. Accordingly I was anxious to proceed farther the same day, that I might botanise in some undisturbed spot of the primæval forest; my desire was, however, frustrated by an incident which I do not even now remember without a shudder. At the village the shore, as far as the eye could reach, forms a treeless steppe; but at some little distance the river is again bordered by a dense forest. A place was soon reached, where the stream takes a remarkable bend, and proceeds for eight miles in a north-easterly direction. This place has the singular name of Dyoorab-el-Esh, or the sack of corn. Now, as the north-east wind of course was adverse to any north-east progress, it was necessary that the boat should be towed by the crew. As the rope was being drawn along through the grass on the banks it happened that it disturbed a swarm of bees. In a moment, like a great cloud, they burst upon the men who were dragging; every one of them threw himself headlong into the water and hurried to regain the boat. The swarm followed at their heels, and in a few seconds filled every nook and cranny of the deck. What a scene of confusion ensued may readily be imagined.

Without any foreboding of ill, I was arranging my plants in my cabin, when I heard all around me a scampering which I took at first to be merely the frolics of my people, as that was the order of the day. I called out to inquire the meaning of the noise, but only got excited gestures and reproachful looks in answer. The cry of "Bees! bees!"



soon broke upon my ear, and I proceeded to light a pipe. My attempt was entirely in vain; in an instant bees in thousands are about me, and I am mercilessly stung all over my face and hands. To no purpose do I try to protect my face with a handkerchief, and the more violently I fling my hands about so much the more violent becomes the impetuosity of the irritated insects. The maddening pain is now on my cheek, now in my eye, now in my hair. The dogs from under my bed burst out frantically, overturning everything in their way. Losing well nigh all control over myself, I fling myself in despair into the river; I dive down, but all in vain, for the stings rain down still upon my head. Not heeding the warnings of my people, I creep through the reedy grass to the swampy bank. The grass lacerates my hands, and I try to gain the mainland, hoping to find shelter in the woods. All at once four powerful arms seize me and drag me back with such force that I think I must be choked in the mud. I am compelled to go back on board, and flight is not to be thought of.

In the cooling moisture I had so far recovered my self-possession, that it occurred to me to drag a sheet from my chest, and this at last I found some protection, but I had first gradually to crush the bees which I had enclosed with me within this covering. Meantime by great self-denial and courage on the part of my excellent people, my large dog was brought on board to me and covered with cloths; the other, an animal from Khartoom, was unfortunately lost. Cowering down convulsively, I lingered out thus three full hours, whilst the buzzing continued uninterruptedly, and solitary stings penetrated periodically through the linen. Everyone by degrees became equally passive as myself; at length a perfect silence reigned on board; the bees subsided into quietness. Meanwhile, some courageous men had crept stealthily to the bank, and had succeeded in setting fire to the reeds. The smoke rose to their assistance, and thus they

contrived to scare away the bees from the boat, and, setting it afloat, they drove it to the other bank. Had the thought of the fire occurred at first, our misfortune would have assumed a much milder character; but in the suddenness of the attack everyone lost all presence of mind. Free from further apprehension, we could now examine our injuries. With the help of a looking-glass and a pair of pincers I extracted all the stings from my face and hands, and inconvenience in those places soon passed away. But it was impossible to discover the stings in my hair; many of them had been broken off short in the midst of the fray, and, remaining behind, produced little ulcers which for two days were acutely painful. Poor Arslan was terribly punished, especially about the head; but the stings had clung harmlessly in the long hair on his back. I was really sorry for the loss of my nice little dog, which was never recovered, and in all likelihood had been stung to death. These murderous bees belong to the striped variety of our own honey-bee. A mishap like ours has been seldom experienced in the waters of the White Nile. Consul Petherick, as his servants informed me, had once to undergo a similar misfortune. Our own grievance was not confined to ourselves: every boat of the sixteen which that day were sailing in our track, was pestered by the same infliction. No imagination can adequately depict the confusion which must have spread in boats where were crowded together from 60 to 80 men. I felt ready, in the evening, for an encounter with half a score of buffaloes or a brace of lions rather than have anything more to do with bees; and this was a sentiment in which all the ship's company heartily concurred. I took my quinine and awoke refreshed and cheerful; but several of the ill-used members of our party were suffering from violent fever. My own freedom from fever might perchance in a measure be attributed to my involuntary vapour-bath. I had been sitting muffled up for some hours in my wet clothes through

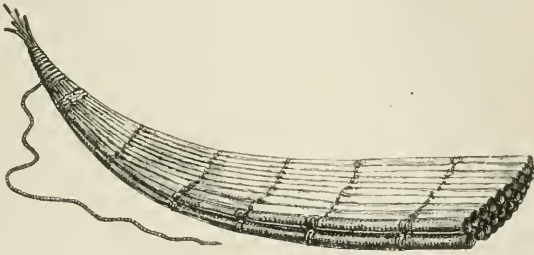
the heat of the day, and no vapour bath more effectual could be contrived. Among the crews of the boats which followed us there were two deaths, which ensued as the result of the injuries which had been sustained.

On the day of the bee-visitation another insect had likewise presented itself, which inflicted some sharpish stings, although they were not attended by any continuous annoyance. It was in itself an insignificant gadfly (*Tabanus*), which here appears to play the part of the tsetse-fly, the natives declaring of it that it injures the cattle. It is widely diffused in the regions through which I travelled, and where the tsetse seems to fail.

Our second day of misadventure came to an end; on the following morning we were again passing along banks void of trees. Towards midday we made a pause on the right bank by a charming grove, where trailing creepers (*Leptadenia*) dropped their pendants perpendicularly down, and bound the spreading boughs of the Shubahi acacias (*A. veru-gera*) to the ground, an apparatus admirably adapted to the gymnastic frolics of the little apes. Wherever anyone ventures to penetrate into the thickets he will not fail to find countless traces of animal life; snake-skins and feathers of many a species are scattered over the ground; tortoise-shells and fish-bones, the remains of the eagle's feast; bones of animals; occasionally even human skeletons, perfectly entire. On the shore are the shell-fish left by the high water, especially the homes of the Ampularia (*A. Wernei*) as large as one's fist, in its way a giant amongst the mollusks of the mighty river.

Warned by our experience we were ever on the alert against bees, keeping in readiness a bundle of straw and some faggots, in order to be able to kindle the dry grass immediately we had accomplished our excursion on the land. Towards midday we perceived with horror more bees in the shore-grass, and lost no time in getting across to the left

bank. Here we came across numbers of Shillooks fishing in their light canoes of ambatch; darting through the water almost as swiftly as the fish themselves. This speed does not, however, prevent them from having a waddling movement, something like a duck, in their light craft. So light are these canoes that one man can carry three of them on his shoulder, although each canoe is capable of holding three men. From a few dozen shoots of ambatch of about three years' growth, a canoe of this kind can be easily produced; at about six feet high the stem goes rapidly off to a point, so that a bundle of them needs only be tied together at the extremities, and there is at once attained a curve that would grace a gondola.\* To use these canoes adroitly requires con-



Ambatch Canoe.

siderable practice, as the least shifting of the centre of gravity is made at the risk of a capsizing. Nevertheless, they afforded me good service by taking me to the bank with dry feet, and by enabling me to make botanical collections from the floating bushes. When the Shillook has come to the end of his voyage, he seizes his gondola like an ancient warrior might his shield. He carries it, partly to ensure its safety and partly to allow it to dry, because the ambatch wood easily imbibes moisture and becomes saturated.

During our wanderings the crew had made a valuable

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\* The accompanying illustration represents a similar canoe, weighing about 40 lbs.

discovery to replace the cracked middle of our long sailyard. It consisted of a tolerably straight, though much knotted, stem of *Balanites*; it was only 10 feet long, but was doubtless found with much trouble, so rare are any trees that are straight. The portion of the sailyard which had become useless now fell under the axe; it was full of cracks, and could no longer be held together by cow hide; the old bit of northern pinewood, which had done service for years on no one knows how many vessels or in how many latitudes, had now reached the limit of its destiny here on the White Nile, and was to be committed to the flames. Peace to its ashes!

The width of the cultivated country appears to be about ten miles, the whole of the left shore being dotted with numerous small villages. We were not far from Fashoda the seat of the provincial government, and for the first time availed ourselves of our store of glass beads to open a lively trade with the Shillooks. But the beads had already so much deteriorated in value that we were obliged to buy eggs, fowls, and milk, quite at Khartoom market prices. The poor savages insisted upon this as only right and fair; it was in consequence of their transition from the monkey age of man—the termination, as it were, to them of the stone and bronze period—directly into the advanced condition of citizens and payers of taxes.

Towards midday on the 24th of January we reached Fashoda, and thus, after a prosperous progress, arrived at the limit of the Egyptian empire. Fashoda is the seat of a *Mudir*, provided with a garrison for the maintenance of Egyptian power. The complete subjection of the entire Shillook country did not, however, follow until two years later. The governor for a considerable time resided six leagues from the town, where he was quartered with 500 soldiers, in order to bring to reason the southern Shillooks, who were by no means inclined to submit. During this



time the armed force in Fashoda did not consist of more than 200 men.

The erection of anything like a town had only been begun within the last two years. The place was formerly called Denab, and now consisted of merely a large mass of conical huts of straw, besides the remarkable structure which constituted the fort. The long boundary walls of the fort, with their hundreds of waterspouts, looked at a distance as though they were mounted with so many cannon, and presented a formidable appearance. In reality the number of cannon which the fort could boast was only four, the rest of the field ordnance being in the camp of the Mudir. His deputy received me very courteously. As a present he sent me at once two fat wethers, and placed at my disposal his boats, mules, horses, soldiers—in short, everything that could assist me to inspect the neighbourhood in comfort.

On account of the shallowness of the water on the side on which the town is built, the boat was moored close by a narrow island which was connected with the mainland by a kind of jetty composed of faggots. This at the time of high water serves as a mole for any boats that may arrive, which are then able to lie close alongside the doors. Before the walls of the town, on a terrace left dry by the sunken flood, extend fields and vegetable gardens, which the Governor, following the Egyptian fashion, has caused to be planted.\* This is the southern limit of the wheat culture in the Eastern Soudan.

The neighbouring country consists of steppes, over which, as far as the eye can see, larger and smaller groups of Shillook huts rise from the grass. The demand of wood for the use of the troops has caused the larger trees everywhere to be miserably mutilated, and the few boats which are at the

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\* The illustration represents the different well-like Shadoofs used for irrigation.

disposal of the Government have enough to do in procuring fuel for the heating of the steamer stationed there. Every branch as it grows is immediately cut off, and the naked stems of the acacias, once so magnificent on account of their massive proportions, are alone able to defy the meagre tools Fashoda can supply.

For three years, it is said, there has been an undisturbed peace here, that is to say, in the environs of Fashoda; up to that time, outbreaks more or less violent, on the part of



View of Fashoda.

the negro settlers, had been the order of the day. Near a withered *Adansonia*, less than a mile from the walls, the spot was pointed out to me where the cannon of the fortress was for the last time called into action. A well-directed shot had mown down fifteen men at once from a single party who were taking advantage of the rainy season and the high grass to make an attack. The fatal shot was decisive, and the attack was abandoned. From among the bones of the Shillooks killed on that day I selected from a neighbouring

pit nine skulls in good preservation, the investigation of which has furnished some material evidence towards the ethnography of Africa.

All boats are compelled to stop for several days at Fashoda, partly to complete their corn-stores, and partly on account of the poll-tax, to submit to an inspection of the papers, which contain the lists of the crew and soldiers. Hence it happens that throughout January and February Fashoda life is pretty brisk. Egyptian galley-slaves, wearing no fetters—escape being as difficult as in Siberia—loitered on the shore begging, and pestered me with scraps of French and Italian. This I found by no means agreeable. After the cramped dimensions of my cabin, I longed for wider freedom to my limbs; accordingly I had a tent pitched upon the bank, but from fear of thieves it was obliged to be continually guarded by men with loaded guns. Many boats came and went, wending their way to the Upper Nile waters; all reported that more or less they had been sufferers from the bees in Dyoorab-el-Esh. I was told that the whole crew of one boat was obliged to remain in the water from noon till evening, now and then raising their heads to get air, but always under the penalty of getting some dozen fresh stings.

The weather during these days was very cool, for a strong north-east wind blew incessantly with such violence, that at daybreak we had usually a temperature of only 62° Fahr. Even the hippopotamuses seemed to find it over cool in the water, for at sunrise they appeared *en masse* on a neighbouring sandbank: amongst them I found a suitable target on which to try the effect of the full-sized ball which my large elephant gun carried.

I was continually bewildered by the jokes and buffoonery of the crews, for whom jesting seemed a necessity of life. Nothing was done without bad puns. There was an undying *esprit amusant*, whose flow was unchecked alike by day and night. Whenever any one did a thing which could be made

ridiculous, he was received with a volley of cheers of "Hue! hue!" (there he is). The merissa beer of Fashoda, served out in gourd-shells—pints and pots being here unknown—naturally is not without its influence in promoting this perpetual folly. The love of jocoseness among these people is not confined to the young, but makes them, even when advanced in years, as merry and as naïve as children.

Some Arab names are as generally common as our own Brown and Smith; on our boat alone we had six Mohammeds; for distinction, therefore, each of these had to be assigned his special nickname. One was called Abu-Asherah (the man with ten fathers); another Berdawily (the chilly one). The others were designated by epithets more or less poetical, as father of the virgin, or sheikh of the women. My Mohammed, who had the *rencontre* with the buffalo, was sufficiently distinguished by his appellation of Amin, the faithful, but he was also jocosely known as "the swimmer." He had once been the means of losing a boat which a merchant had entrusted to his care, and had only escaped by swimming to shore, a feat which acquired for him the satire associated with his name.

An occurrence, which I can hardly say surprised me, but which I had expected hourly from amongst the Arab idlers, alarmed us on the first evening of our arrival. The gun of one of our soldiers went off accidentally, and the ball whistled across our boat. On the following morning, through similar carelessness, a slave of one of the Government officials received a shot through his arm, for which the offender had to pay 150 dollars, a sum which had to be raised from the entire crew, because, as they said, they were all liable to the same accident. I had myself only narrowly escaped being hit by the first mishap, and the captain (although generally he was most considerate towards his crew), acting as Ghattas' agent, fell with great severity upon the offender. By the judgment of the majority, to which

the Nubians ever appeal, the fellow was assigned some dozen lashes of the kurbatch, which he was thrown down on the deck to receive, and which he bore without a murmur.

The right side of the main stream at Fashoda is not the mainland, but is a long island, which extends for several leagues above and below. Beyond the true eastern shore the Dinka are said to be settled in extensive villages, and at that time still furnished an inexhaustible supply of slaves to the marauding expeditions of the garrison of Fashoda. In 1870, Baker succeeded in putting an end to this disorder, the knowledge of which penetrated to the most remote tribes. The Dinka tribes of that region are called Dang-Yoht, Dang-Yahl, Behr, Nyell, and Abelang.

The shore opposite Fashoda contains wide bush-forests and unlimited supplies of wood. During one of my excursions thither I killed an enormous African boa, the Python Sebæ. It was about fifteen feet in length, not above the average size to which the species attains; in Gallabat I have frequently seen them over twenty feet. The speedy death of this huge reptile by a charge of heavy shot, of which only four grains hit, struck me as very remarkable. The skin was brilliantly spotted, and yielded admirable material for making a waterproof gun-case.



## CHAPTER III.

Camp of the Mudir. A negro king. Campaigns. Future of the country. A wise judge. The shrieking priest. Gun-arabic. The melodious tree. Mohammed Aboo-Sammat. Boats on the flight. Treachery of the Shillooks. General market. Excuse for plunder. First papyrus. Caesar among the pirates. Useless attempts to proceed. A world of grass. Hippopotamuses in a fright. The last obstacle. Depreciation of the Gazelle stream. *Bon-mot* of the Viceroy. Ghattas' namesake. The slipper-shape. Description of the Nueir. Analogy between man and beast. Cactus-type of Euphorbia. The Bahr-el-Arab a mainstream. Vallisneria meadows. Arrival in Port Rek. True nature of the Gazelle. Discovery of the Meshera. Deadly climate and its victims. Le Saint. Features of the scenery. The old queen and her princely consort. Royal gifts. Fishes and birds.

I REMAINED nine days in Fashoda, a residence to which the non-arrival of the boats bound for the Gazelle River compelled us, because our force was not sufficiently numerous to overcome by ourselves the obstacles which the "Sett," or grass-barrier, would present, and also inadequate for protection against an attack, which was not improbable, from the hitherto unsubdued residents.

A wider ramble, in which I inspected several Shillook villages, led me farther into the country, and gave me some conception of its thronging population. The Turkish officer, who welcomed me like a countryman because I was European, attended me, followed by a number of soldiers, all of us being mounted. Although throughout this tour, I was not offered even a bowl of fresh milk, and saw little beyond what had already come under my observation, viz., grey and rusty-red beings, innumerable conical huts, and countless herds of cattle; yet I could not be otherwise than im-

pressed by various details which appeared characteristic of this people, now incorporated as Egyptian subjects, and which I shall proceed to relate.

The Shillook tribe inhabits the entire left bank of the White Nile, occupying a territory about 200 miles long and about ten miles wide, and which extends right to the mouth of the Gazelle River. Hemmed in by the Baggara on the west, it is prevented by the river from extending itself farther eastward, and only the lower course of the Sobat has any of the Shillooks for its denizens. Their subjection to Egyptian government, which was completed in 1871, has caused a census to be taken of all the villages on the left bank of the Nile, which resulted in an estimate of about 3000. Taking the character of the villages into account this would give a total of above a million souls for this portion of the Shillooks alone. Now the Shillook land, which lies upon the White Nile, has an extent of hardly less than 2000 square miles, and when the number of heads upon this is compared with those in the populous districts of Europe we are justified in reckoning from 600 to 625 to a square mile; a result altogether similar is arrived at from a reckoning based on the estimate of there being 3000 villages, each village having huts varying in number from 45 to 200, and each hut averaging 4 or 5 occupants; this would give a total of about 1,200,000. This, in fact, is an estimate corresponding entirely with what the Mudir of Fashoda, who was conversant with the details of all state affairs, had already communicated to me in 1869.

No known part of Africa, scarcely even the narrow valley of the Nile in Egypt, has a density of population so great; but a similar condition of circumstances, so favourable to the support of a teeming population, is perhaps without a parallel in the world. Everything which contributes to the exuberance of life here finds a concentrated field—agriculture, pasturage, fishing, and the chase. Agriculture is

rendered easy by the natural fertility of the soil, by the recurrence of the rainy seasons, by irrigation effected by the rising of the river, assisted by numerous canals, and by an atmosphere ordinarily so overclouded as to moderate the radiance of the sun, and to retain throughout the year perpetual moisture. Of fishing there is plenty. There are crocodiles and hippopotamuses in abundance. Across the river there is a free and open chase over wildernesses which would advantageously be built upon, but for the hostility of the neighbouring Dinka. The pasture lands are on the same side of the river as the dwellings; they are just beyond the limits of the cultivated plots; occasionally they are subject to winter drought, and at times liable to incursions from the Baggara; but altogether they are invaluable as supplying daily resorts for the cattle.

Still further proof of the superabundance of population of the Shillooks is manifest from the emigration which goes forward in a south-westerly direction, where considerable numbers of them, the Dembo and Dyoor, have settled on the border-lands between the Bongo and Dinka. Of these, however, I will speak hereafter; I will only pause now to remark how, in vivid contrast to the monotonous uniformity of nature which ordinarily asserts itself throughout vast tracts of Central Africa, there are even exhibited diversities of human development, differences of dialect, and peculiarities of bodily conformation. In the Shillook territory there are probably no less than 600 residents to the square mile, whilst in Bongo-land, within 180 miles to the south-west, there would be found hardly a dozen occupants on an equal area. Again, between lat.  $5^{\circ}$  and  $1^{\circ}$  N., within a range of not more than 300 miles, are to be found examples of the largest and of the smallest races of mankind—the Bari and the Akkah, of which the former might rival the Patagonians in stature, the latter being scarcely taller than Esquimaux, and considerably below a medium height.

It should be appended to what has been said about the villages, that the entire west bank of the Nile, as far as the confines of the district reach, assumes the appearance of one single village, of which the sections are separated by intervals varying from 300 to 1000 paces. These clusters of huts are built with surprising regularity, and are so closely crowded together that they cannot fail to suggest the comparison with a thick mass of fungus or mushrooms. Every village has its overseer, whilst the overseers of fifty or seventy, or sometimes of 100 villages, are subject to a superintendent, who has the control of what may be called a "district," and of such districts there are well nigh a hundred, each of them distinguished by its particular name. One of the descendants of the ancient kings had been reduced to entire subjection under the Government; another at the period of my first visit was still resisting to the utmost.

In the centre of each village there is a circular space where, evening after evening, the inhabitants congregate, and, either stretched upon hides or squatting down on mats of ambatch, inhale the vapour from burning heaps of cow-dung to keep off the flies, or from pipes with enormous clay bowls smoke the tobacco of the country.

In these spaces there is frequently erected the great stem of a tree, on which according to common African usage kettledrums are hung and used for the purpose of warning the inhabitants of any impending danger, and of communicating intelligence to the neighbourhood. Most of the negro tribes are distinguished by the form of their huts. The huts of the Shillooks are built with higher walls than those of the Dinka, and, as an ordinary rule, are of smaller circumference; the conical roofs do not rise to a peak, but are rather in the shape of flattened domes, and in this way it is that they acquire the singular resemblance to mushrooms of which I have spoken. The villages are not enclosed externally, but are bounded by fences made of straw-mats

running between the closely-crammed houses, and which serve for shelter to the cattle of individual householders. Great grazing-plots, such as the larger villages combine to provide for the benefit of the community, and exist amongst the Dinka, cannot be secured for the Shillooks, because they are comparatively limited for space.

Now although these savages are altogether unacquainted with the refined cosmetics of Europe, they make use of cosmetics of their own; viz., a coating of ashes for protection against insects. When the ashes are prepared from wood they render the body perfectly grey, and hereby are known the poor; when the ashes are obtained from cow-dung they give a rusty-red tint, the hue of red devils, and hereby can be recognised the landowners. Ashes, dung, and the urine of cows are the indispensable requisites of the toilet. The item last named affects the nose of the stranger rather unpleasantly when he makes use of any of their milk-vessels, as, according to a regular African habit, they are washed with it, probably to compensate for a lack of salt.

The external appearance of the Shillooks, therefore, is by no means agreeable, but rather offensive to the beholder, who will hardly fail to notice amongst all the negro people who dwell in the plains of the Upper Nile a singular want of the lower incisor teeth, which in early life are always broken off. Their physiognomy hardly offers that decided negro type which their swarthy complexion would lead one to expect. To judge by the shape of the skull, this people belongs to the less degraded races of Central Africa, which are distinguished from other negro stocks by a smaller breadth of jaw and by a less decided narrowness of head. A comparison which I made with the skulls which I had collected and some which were taken from ancient Egyptian graves, and with the heads of living fellahs, established the fact of a remarkable resemblance. According to Professor R. Hartmann of Berlin, the similarity between the heads of



ancient Egyptians and the Shillooks rests on the projection of the nasal bones; to have these so deeply set as to appear compressed by the forehead, would seem to be discordant with the general type of negro races. Without pronouncing any decided opinion as to the actual relationship of the Egyptian to the Shillook, that eminent *savant* thinks that he at least discerns a fresh proof of an unquestionable African origin of the latter.

Entirely bare of clothing, the bodies of the men would not of themselves be ungraceful, but through the perpetual plastering over with ashes, they assume a thoroughly diabolical aspect. The movements of their lean bony limbs are so languid, and their repose so perfect, as not rarely to give the Shillooks the resemblance of mummies; and whoever comes as a novice amongst them can hardly resist the impression that in gazing at these ash-grey forms he is looking upon mouldering corpses rather than upon living beings.

The stature of the Shillook is very moderate, and, as a general rule, is short compared with that of the lank and long-legged Dinka.

Like most of the naked and half-naked Africans they devote the greatest attention to the arrangement of their hair; on every other portion of the body all growth of hair is stopped by its being all carefully plucked out at the very first appearance. As has been already observed, amongst the men the repeated application of clay, gum, or dung, so effectually clots the hair together that it retains as it were voluntarily the desired form; at one time like a comb, at another like a helmet, or, it may be, like a fan. Many of the Shillook men present in this respect a great variety. A good many wear transversely across the skull a comb as broad as a man's hand, which, like a nimbus of tin, stretches from ear to ear, and terminates behind in two drooping circular lappets. Occasionally there are heads for which one comb does not suffice, and on these several combs, parallel to

one another at small intervals are arranged in lines. There is a third form, far from uncommon, than which nothing can be more grotesque. It may be compared to the crest of a guinea fowl, of which it is an obvious imitation; just as among ourselves many a way of dressing the hair would seem to be designed by taking some animal form for a model.

Every now and then, however, one meets with heads of which the hair is closely cropped. However it may have happened, whether from illness or from some misadventure in dressing the hair, or perhaps from a fall of which the consequence has been an accident to the ponderous head-gear, I hardly know how, but something always seems wanting to such heads. In such cases there is frequently seen a comical-looking bandage fixed over the brow, forming a shade for the eyes, and which is made of a giraffe's foxy-red mane clipped short. This has been elsewhere observed, and is not unknown amongst the Kaffirs of South Africa. Thus much for the men.

As far as regards the women—I saw none except those whose short-cropped hair appeared stippled over with fresh-sprouting woolly locks, and resembled the skin of a new-born lamb, like the "Astrachan" of commerce. The women do not go entirely naked, but wear an apron of calf-skin, which is bound round their loins, and reaches to their knees.

Just like the Dinka, whose external habits, apart from their hair-combs, they would appear almost entirely to follow, every man amongst them ordinarily carries a club-shaped crutch, nearly three feet in length, with a heavy round knob at its upper end, but which tapers down to a point at the other extremity, so that it resembles a gigantic nail. Their only arms are their long spiked lances, of which (to judge from the equivalents taken in exchange) one is valued at a Maria Theresa dollar. Bows and arrows are just as unknown amongst them as amongst the neighbouring Dinka,

whilst, on the contrary, amongst the Nucir they are the chief weapons.

The domestic animals which the Shillooks breed are oxen, sheep, and goats, the same kinds as hereafter we shall find amongst the Dinka; besides these, they keep poultry and dogs; other animals are scarce, and probably could not endure the climate. Throughout the country dogs abound, in shape like greyhounds, but in size hardly equal to our pointers. They are almost always of a foxy-red colour, with a black muzzle, much elongated; they are short-haired and sleek, and have long tails, smooth as those of rats; their ears are tolerably long, the upper portion being flabby and ragged, and therefore drooping forward. Almost beyond example in their activity in leaping and running, so fleet are they that with the greatest ease they outrun the gazelle, and are everywhere of service in the chase; over the earth-walls ten feet high, and over ant-hills, they bound with the celerity of cats, and can jump three or four times the length of their own slim bodies. I kept a number of genuine Shillook dogs, which subsequently did very well in the farther interior, and increased considerably. Like all dogs of the Nile district, from the Egyptian pariah to the village cur of the Soudan, this breed is always found to be deficient in the dew-claws of the hind foot, which always exist in our European dogs. As a general rule, it may be said that the Shillook dog differs little from the races of the Bedouins of Kordofan and of Sennaar.

The only conception which the Shillook entertain of a higher existence is limited to their reverence for a certain hero, who is called the Father of their race, and who is supposed to have conducted them to the land which they at present occupy. In case of famine, or in order that they may have rain, or that they may reap a good harvest, they call upon him by name. They imagine of the dead that they are lingering amongst the living and still attend them.

It is with them as with other uncultivated children of nature that old traditions and veneration of ancestors supply the place of religious legends or ethic system.

Late in the evening of the 1st of February we left Fashoda, and proceeded, without using the sail, for the greatest part of the night along the left bank. At daybreak we arrived at the Egyptian camp. We were received with singing, shouting, and the braying of trumpets. I was conducted by the Governor to his tent, and whilst, hour after hour, we smoked our pipes in company, I related to him the most recent events in the political world. After talking to him about the sources of the Nile, and the campaign of the English in Abyssinia, I told him of the events of the "Seven Days' War," in return for which I was presented with a fine bullock and several sheep and goats. The encampment, as I found, consisted of some huts erected with straw in a very off-hand way, the irregular forms of which contrasted very disadvantageously with the symmetrical regularity which is so conspicuous in the dwellings of the Shillooks. Military tents and awnings of sedge completed the equipment of the camp. An ordinary thorn hedge with two loopholes, in which a cannon was always placed, protected the spot, which was close to the left bank of the river. In the Mudir's verandah I also made acquaintance with the Shillook chief, to whom I before alluded, who had entirely surrendered to the Egyptian Government, and was now, as the Governor expressed himself, "coming to his senses." There was no external indication whatever of his rank, except a miserable rag which hung about his loins, or the common sandals which he wore, might be considered such. His short-cropped hair had no covering; his neck had a row of beads, such as the heads of families are accustomed to wear, worth about a couple of groshen; and this was all the decoration he displayed. He retained now but a shadow of his former power; his better days were gone, days in which, attended by a council of

ancestral state, he had swayed the sceptre of patriarchal dignity. Of all the negro races which occupy the entire district of the Nile, the Shillooks used to uphold the most perfectly regulated government, and to appreciate them thoroughly it is necessary to refer back to the earliest registries, which those who accompanied the expedition of Mehemet Ali left on record. But now this condition is all changed, and everything has disappeared which gave this independent and primitive people their most striking characteristics.

In the immediate proximity of the camp all was generally at peace; the Shillooks apparently submitted tamely enough to a Government which did not exercise any very tyrannical power, and which contented itself with demanding a supply of bullocks and a stated levy of provisions to maintain the troops. Notwithstanding this usual semblance of concord, the Governor was notoriously on terms of open enmity and feud with the Shillooks in the south. Kashgar, another descendant of the ancient reigning family, still maintained himself as an uncontrolled sovereign, and was able to render that part of the river extremely unsafe for navigation. Ever and again the Governor with his force, never more than 600 strong, was undertaking expeditions against them; but, as he himself told me, they never came to an actual engagement. Although the blacks, he said, might muster 20,000 or 30,000 strong, the second cannon shot was quite enough to make them scamper off, and leave their flocks and herds in the lurch; upon these the mounted Baggara, in the service of the Government, descended and made them an easy spoil. This nomadic race, from time immemorial, has ever, as I have already mentioned, been addicted to the plunder of cattle, and has always exhibited a preference for that occupation.

In another respect the situation of the Government here is far from easy. Not only are the Shillooks at heart at



enmity to it, but it excites the hostility of the trading companies who ascend the river. Nothing indicates the circumstances better than the expression of a member of one of these companies. "The Mudir," he said, "doesn't like to attack the Shillooks; he takes care of them, and only wants a few of their bullocks; but we—we should just like to annihilate them, devil's brood as they are." In fact, as the Mudir said to me, he only wanted the best of the Shillooks; the Shillooks know well enough that their "best" is their cattle, and this they are not really resigned passively to surrender, and so they go on and continue to be defiant, till they feel the grenades and rockets scorching their skins. For the future fortune of this favoured country I cannot anticipate much that is good. Whilst the Viceroy refuses to appoint Europeans as governors, like Munzinger in Massowa, his officers must fail in those qualifications which would be adequate for the successful administration of a newly-acquired negro territory. The visible retrogression of the Egyptian Soudan with respect to cultivation, confirms this unfavourable foreboding. Ismail Pasha centres all his hope upon the stimulating influence of a railway which shall connect Egypt with Khartoom, and very likely he may witness commerce enlarged to an unsuspected magnitude; one thing, however, there is which he cannot prevent, and that is the depopulation of the Shillook lands. Since they remain closed to European civilisation, and since the husbandmen in Egypt are sufficiently engrossed in acquiring fresh soil for their own tillage at home, there is no prospect whatever for any advantage to these lands, except it can be found in a large immigration of labourers from Asia.

The Governor was a remarkably intelligent Kurd, and great was my regret that I could not spare a longer time to listen to the interesting information that he gave me about the habits of the Shillooks, which he knew accurately from many years' experience. I accepted all that he said with

the greater confidence, because it had seldom occurred to me to meet a Turkish officer, who could fluently speak the dialect of the country. He was continually being called upon to adjust the disputes of the natives, who appealed to his judgment, even in their most private concerns. One young girl there was who, abashed and dejected, had been crouching in a corner, and then ventured to present herself before him as adjudicator. With her speech half-choked by emotion, she besought him to interpose his authority to set aside the obstacles which her parents threw in the way of her completing her marriage engagement with a young Shillook, whose name was Yöd. The hindrance to the wedding was simply the fact that the young man possessed no cattle. The Mudir inquired whether Yöd was not the owner of some cows. Her reply was, "No; Yöd has no cows; but Yöd wants me, and I want Yöd." Although she urged her point over and over again, and pressed the Mudir to pronounce in her favour, because his judgment would constrain her parents, the Mudir did not yield. The girl kept saying "we must," and "we will;" the judge could speak only of bullocks. There seemed to be no settling the matter, when he said, "You must go and wait: wait till Yöd has bullocks enough to satisfy your parents." This was not a very comforting decision, but it showed me plainly how that it was ever his rule to recognise the customs of the country.

In order to attend to my European correspondence, which had fallen somewhat into arrears during my voyage, I prolonged my stay for three days. Fine forests of gum-acacias encompassed the spot as far as the extensive Shillook villages allowed them space, whilst the opposite shore presented an unreclaimed desert. At this season, when the waters had nearly reached their lowest level, the banks of the river were everywhere enlivened by numerous kinds of water-fowl. Ducks and geese did not preponderate, as in the northern districts, but the bird most frequently seen was the crowned

crane. Thousands of these in swarms were to be seen upon the level banks, nor was there much difficulty in getting at them. Protected by the tall grasses on the slopes of the bank, one had but to discharge a load of good-sized shot, and the destruction was marvellous. Besides the black and rose-coloured storks there is occasionally found the common stork, familiar to us at home; deeper onwards in the interior I have always looked for this in vain. In every region throughout Africa there exists the rapacious hawk, whilst the graceful grey falcon is not at all uncommon. The most remarkable bird of prey, however, is the large whitey-brown eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*), which, sitting apart on trees and shrubs in the proximity of the waters, startles the passer-by by its peculiar shriek.

The noise of this bird is very singular, and is unlike any other known note of the feathered race; its cry ever comes unexpectedly, and is prolonged on the waters. Sometimes it makes one think that it must be the cry of frightened women which alarms him; or sometimes it appears as if a lot of shouting boys were rushing from their hiding-place. The illusion is so perfect, that, for my part, I never failed to hurry off in the direction of the sound, whenever I chanced to hear it. The peculiar cry of the bird is so characteristic, that the inhabitants of the Soudan have given it the expressive name of Faki, the shrieking priest.

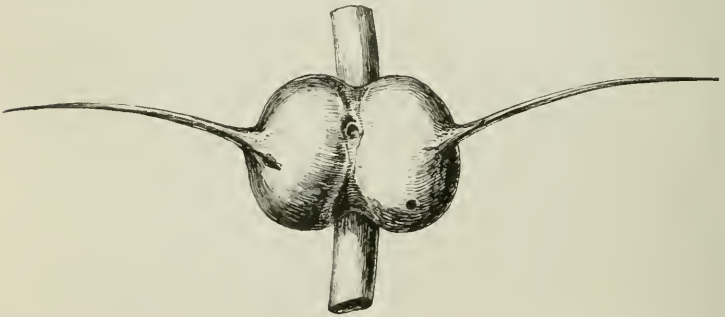
Of birds which attach themselves to inhabited parts, the white-breasted Abyssinian raven is most abundant; the trees around Fashoda are full of them. This species dwells in pairs, which are continually hacking away at the tree stems, the raven not unfrequently coming to associate with them. The Rahama, consecrated (as an emblem of parental affection) amongst the ancient Egyptians and Hebrews, collects in considerable numbers in Khartoom, where it does duty as a scavenger; but although it is ever to be found in the towns of Egypt and Nubia, it is never met with here; it shuns the

wilderness, and only feels at home in civilised places. In this district its place is supplied by the little carrion vulture (*Neophron pileatus*), which the people of the Soudan call "Nisr," although this is only the ordinary Arabian appellation of an eagle. The heaths, broken as they frequently are by low shrubs, notwithstanding the nearness of so many dwellings, afford a suitable resort for whole coveys of guinea-fowls. The herbage on the steppe itself appears for miles together to be covered with the Bamia (*Hibiscus esculentus*), a species of marsh-mallow, the seed-pods of which form a favourite vegetable amongst the Nubians. By the White Nile it grows perfectly wild, whilst in the north it requires to be cultivated.

The acacia-groves produce gum in such unlimited quantities that, in the interests of commerce, they are specially worthy of regard. In the winter time, with the greatest ease, in the course of a day a hundredweight of this valuable article could be collected by one man. Not once, however, did I see anyone gathering the gum, although the merchants of Khartoom are never in a position to supply sufficient to meet the demands of Europe. The descriptions of gum, which are hence brought to the Khartoom market, are those known as Sennaari and Talha, and are, in truth, only of a mediocre quality. Yet they do possess a certain marketable value, and through their abundance could be made to render a very large profit. The acacia-groves extend over an area a hundred miles square, and stretch along the right bank of the stream. The kind which is most conspicuous is the *A. fistula*, and which is as rich as any other variety in gummy secretions. I choose this definition of it from its Arabian appellation "soffar," which signifies a flute or pipe. From the larvæ of insects which have worked a way to the inside, their ivory-white shoots are often distorted in form and swollen out at their base with globular bladders measuring about an inch in diameter. After the mysterious insect has

unaccountably managed to glide out of its circular hole, this thorn-like shoot becomes a sort of musical instrument, upon which the wind as it plays produces the regular sound of a flute; on this account, the natives of the Soudan have named it the whistling-tree. It yields a portion of the gum known on the exchange as gum of Gedaref. It is often found in lumps as large as the fist; it is rarely colourless, and more frequently than otherwise tinged with the hue of amber.

Very striking is the sight afforded by the wood of acacias in the months of winter; the boughs, bare of leaves and white as chalk, stretch out like ghosts; they are covered with the empty pods, which cluster everywhere like flakes of snow; whilst the voices of a thousand flutes give out their hollow dirge. Such is the forest of the Soffar.



Prickles of Acacia.

The peculiarities which affect the growth of the acacia appear to be transmitted to a very remarkable extent. On a former journey I took some seeds to Cairo, which already had produced some trees of a very considerable size. These trees exhibited the special appearances of the parents; below the prickles were the same excrescences and insect-borings; not only was this the case in the park of Esbekieh in Cairo, but it also occurred in several other situations, which left the problem to be solved, how was it that the



insect survived in the seed, or how did it contrive to get to its tree in Cairo ?

On the 5th of February we finally left the Egyptian encampment, and directed our course up the stream towards the region of the papyrus. After sailing all night we stopped just short of the mouth of the Sobat, on the right bank close to a forest. The progress of the coming days would lead us through an insecure territory; we wanted to make up our supply of wood, and knew that the hostility of the Shillooks would, in many places, render any attempt at landing on our part quite inadvisable. Of the boats which were bound for the Gazelle, only one had arrived. In order to render us assistance, the Mudir had charged the owner not to leave my party in the lurch. This circumstance had a very important effect upon my whole journey, as it was the means of introducing me to Mohammed Aboo Sammat, who was proprietor of the boat. This magnanimous Nubian was destined to exercise a very considerable influence on my undertaking, and, indeed, he contributed more to my success than all the satraps of the Soudan. During my land journey I had first made his acquaintance, and now he invited me to be his guest until he should have accompanied me to the remotest tribes, a proposal on his part which made my blood tingle in my veins. A native of Dar-Kenoos, in his way he was a little hero. Sword in hand he had vanquished various districts large enough to have formed small states in Europe. A merchant full of enterprise, he avoided no danger, and was sparing neither of trouble nor of sacrifice; in the words of the Horaz, "he explored the distant Indies, and compassed sea and land to escape poverty." Yet all the while he had the keenest sympathy with learning, and could travel through the remotest countries at the bidding of science to see the wonders of the world.

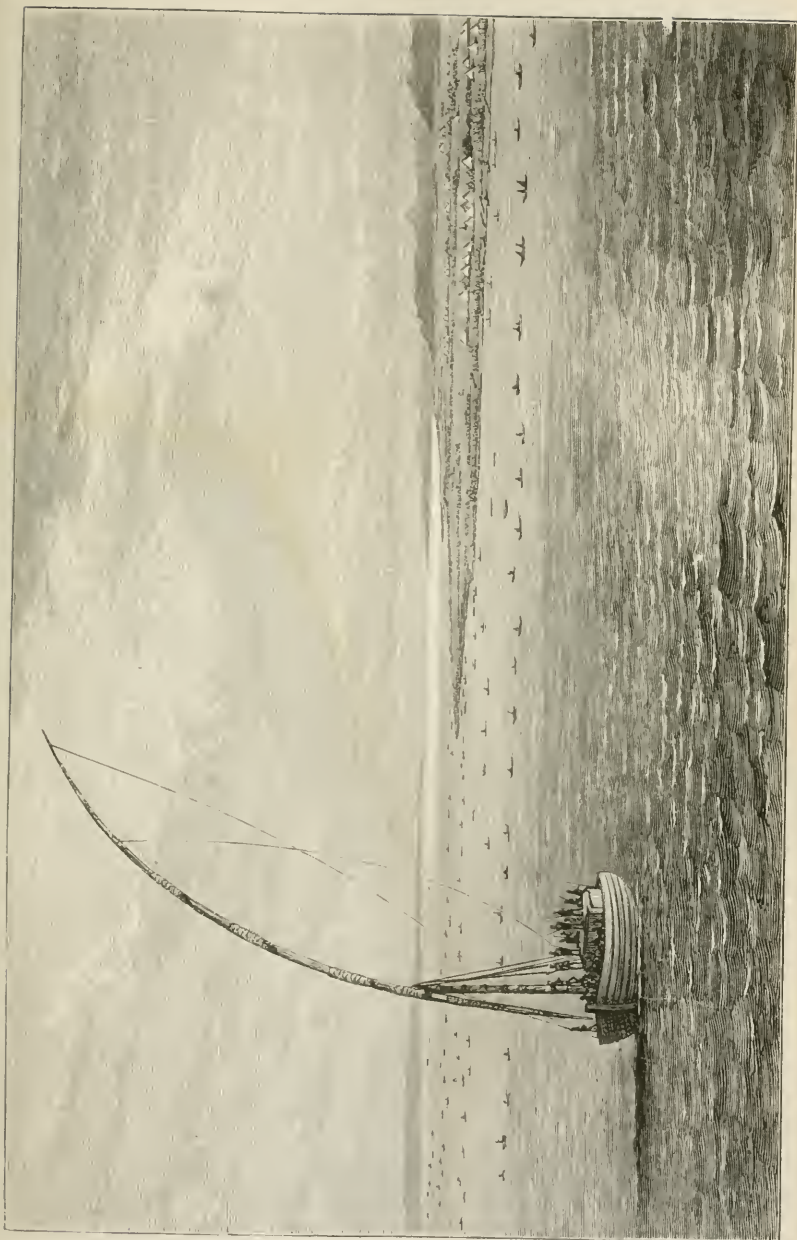
Far as eye can see, the Sobat flows between level banks bounded by unlimited steppes; where it joins the Nile it is

about half as broad as the main stream. For a considerable distance the cloudy milk-white waters, which indicate the mountain stream, can be distinguished as they roll into the deep azure of the White Nile. The Sobat water is, however, far preferable to the Nile water, which, after being strained as it were, through a filter of grass, emerges transparent in colour, but with a flat, earthy flavour, which is highly disagreeable to the palate. The effect of the commingling of the two streams can be distinctly traced as far as Fashoda, where the inhabitants fancy they enjoy some consequent sanitary advantage.

We kept quite close to the right bank of the uninhabited quarter, but on the same day we found ourselves in full flight before thousands of the native Shillooks, who, with their light canoes of ambatch, hastened to the bank, and in thick troops prepared to displace us. As fate would have it, just as we were within sight of the dreaded Shillooks, our sail-yard broke, and we were compelled to seek the land. Soon rose the cry, "They are coming! they are coming!" for in fact we could see them dashing over the stream with incredible celerity, and crowding their canoes as thick as ants. Hardly had we regained our craft, and made some speedy preparations for defence against an attack, when the foremost of the Shillook men, equipped for war, carrying their tufted lances in their hands, showed themselves by the banks which only now we had quitted. Apparently they came to offer some negotiation with us in the way of traffic; but ours was the ancient policy, "Danaos timentes," and we pushed on.

Although, including Aboo Sammat's party, we numbered full eighty armed men, we could not help suspecting that as soon as the north-east breeze should drop, by whose aid we were going along the stream without a sail, the savages would take advantage of our bad situation and inadequate fighting force to make an attack upon us.

This fear was not without reason; there were here, at a



I.

IN FULL FLIGHT BEFORE THE SHILLOOK CANOES.



guess, at least 10,000 Shillooks on their legs and 3000 ambatch canoes in motion on the river. Accordingly we pushed up the stream, and had an opportunity, from a more secure neighbourhood, to observe the Shillooks more accurately. My telescope aided me in my investigation. I saw crowds of men violently gesticulating and contending; I saw women burdened with baskets loaded with poultry clapping their wings. After a while the Shillooks, disappointed, began to vacate the bank which we had left, and on the river could now be seen a redoubled movement of the canoes, whilst opposite fresh multitudes poured in, and gave to the whole scene the appearance of a general emigration of the people.

Within the last three years the boats had been permitted with reluctance, and only when several were together, to approach the shore at this part of the stream, for here it had happened in one single season that five vessels, the property of Khartoom merchants, as they were coming down the river laden with ivory, were treacherously attacked one after the other. The stratagem was employed of diverting the attention of the crews by an exhibition of attractive merchandise; while the Nubians were off their guard, at a given signal the Shillooks fell upon them and butchered them without exception. Gunpowder, rifles, and valuable ivory, all fell into their hands; the vessels they burnt. Ghattas himself, the merchant who owned the vessel by which I was travelling, suffered the loss of a costly cargo, while eighty men on that occasion met with a violent death. Only the Reis and one female slave escaped to Fashoda. Betimes they threw themselves into the water, and concealing their heads with some water weeds, floated on till the stream carried them out of the reach of harm.

On the following morning, after we had passed the mouth of the Giraffe river, we were joined by a flotilla of six boats. As we reckoned now nearly 350 armed men, we felt that wo



could venture without risk to enter upon commercial transactions with the Shillooks. The disturbed condition of the country had interfered to prevent them carrying about their merchandise as usual, and they now were collected in unusual numbers at the mart.

A mile away from the river-bank there were rows of dome-palms bounding a broad level, on which was exhibited all the liveliness of ordinary market-clatter. Busy and bustling, there were thousands congregated together; but the fear this time was not on our side. From far and near streamed in the natives; many brought baskets full of corn, eggs, butter, beans, and ostrich-feathers; others offered poultry, tied together in bunches, for sale: there was altogether the bustle of such a market as only the largest towns could display. The area was hemmed in by a guard of armed men, whose lances, like standing corn, glittered in the sun. The sense of security raised the spirits of the light-hearted sailors, and their merry Nubian songs rose cheerfully in the air. Two hours slipped quickly away, while the necessary purchases were being made, the medium of exchange being white or red glass beads. Soon afterwards a favourable breeze sprung up. Everything was still active in the market; fresh loads came teeming from the villages; the outcry and gesticulations of the market people were as excited as ever, when suddenly there boomed the signal to embark. The confusion, the noise, the hurry which ensued baffled all description; the Shillooks were in a panic, and, imagining that it must be all up with them, scampered off and jostled each other in every direction.

The propitious wind did not, however, prevent our people from finding time to make a little *détour* into the country, where they had the luck to find some herdsmen who were trying to conceal a heifer amongst the grass. There was a report of a gun, and the beast was stretched upon the ground. A few minutes sufficed to quarter its carcass, and the hide

and the pieces were conveyed on board. Half-a-dozen kids and some sheep were added to the stock, and so we proceeded on our way. In the eyes of the people such plundering is deemed to be perfectly legitimate for various reasons: first, because the Shillooks are heathen; secondly, because some years before they had burnt five Nubian vessels; thirdly and chiefly, because mutton and beef are very choice eating, particularly after having been limited for a time to durrapap. My tawny companions seemed to think that they knew a fourth palliation for their proceeding, which consisted in this, that none but themselves were capable of making a proper use of the goods of the blacks. In the districts of the Upper Nile, wherever the breeding of cattle is carried on, it is a custom of the negroes never to kill an animal, but only to consume those which die naturally; the reason obviously being, that they look upon the possession of living cattle as the main object of their existenc. With them, steers do the duty of guineas and napoleons; the Nubians, therefore, jocosely affirm that they swallow the guineas, which in the keeping of the heathen are nothing better than so much dead capital.

We were not long in leaving the Shillook villages far behind. The inhabited region seemed to recede as our boat made its way along the water-course. The stream divided itself into a multitude of channels, which threaded their way amidst a maze of islands. The distant rows of acacias on either side were the only tokens to indicate the mainland. This was the day on which we first saw the papyrus. To me, botanist as I was, the event elevated the day to a festival. Here at a latitude of  $9^{\circ} 30' N.$  are we now first able to salute this sire of immortal thought, which centuries ago was just as abundant in Egypt as at present it is on the threshold of the central deserts of Africa. I was quite lost in admiration at the variety of production of the surface of the water, to which the antique papyrus gave a noble finish. It strikes

the gaze like the creation of another world, and seems to inspire a kind of reverence: although for days and weeks I was environed by the marvellous beauties which enrich the flora of the Nile, my eye was never weary of the vision of its graceful form.

The hindrances to our progress caused by the excessive vegetation began now to give us some anxiety. All day long we were bewildered not only by the multiplicity of channels, but by masses of grass, papyrus, and ambatch, which covered the whole stream like a carpet, and even when they opened gave merely the semblance of being passages. It is quite possible that the diversion of its course to the east, which, for sixty miles the Nile here takes, may check the progress of the stream, and be in a measure the cause of such a strange accumulation of water-plants. Certain it seems that neither any exceptional depth of water, such as may occur in particular years, nor yet any general overflow wider than usual, avails to exercise the slightest influence upon this exuberant vegetation. Were it a coating of ice it would split itself into fragments under the pressure of the stream, but here is a real web of tough tangle, which blockades the entire surface. Every here and there, indeed, the force of the water may open a kind of rift, but not corresponding at all with the deeper and true channel of the stream. Such a rift is not available for any passage of the boats. The strain of the tension, which goes on without intermission, has such an effect in altering the position of the weedy mass, that even the most experienced pilot is at a loss how to steer, consequently every voyage in winter is along a new course, and through a fresh labyrinth of tangle. But in July, when the floods are at their highest, navigation can be carried on along well nigh all the channels, since the currents are not so strong, and the vessels are able to proceed without detention to their destinations.

Thick masses of little weeds float about the surface of the

water, and by forming a soft pulp, contribute an effectual aid to bind together the masses of vegetation. Like a cement this conglomerate of weeds fills up all the clefts and chasms between the grass and ambatch islands, which are formed in the back-water where the position is sheltered from the winds and free from the influence of the current.

There are two plants, at a superficial glance hardly distinguishable, which perform the largest share in the formation of this compact web. One of them is the thin-membraned water-fern, the *Azolla*; the other (which is quite familiar to every visitor to the tank of the *Victoria regia*) being the *Pistia*, which can hardly fail to recall a head of lettuce. The sailors of the White Nile call it the "negro tobacco," probably with reference to the dwarfed growth of the two kinds of tobacco in the negro lands. Besides these, our duck-weeds (*Lemna*) and *Tussieua* of various sorts intertwine themselves with the mass, and the different African representations of our commonest water-plants play a part by no means unimportant.

It is remarkable that in Egypt nearly all the species of water-plants which abound in the stream of the White Nile are wanting entirely; whilst, on the other hand, all the shore-shrubs, which had their native home in the neighbourhood of the Equator, pass over the intervening districts and there find a settlement. Even the conspicuous ambatch is, in Egypt, not known by name; and it is quite an event when any of the fragments of the papyrus find their way so far north. Every bit of wood which the river carries in its flood is collected by the inhabitants of the Nubian valley, and not a scrap escapes the keen look-out of the people, who are eager to compensate for their lack of firewood. At the season when the waters are at their height, the chase after floating wood is a daily occupation and a favourite engagement of the boys.

On the 8th of February began our actual conflict with this

world of weeds. That entire day was spent in trying to force our boats along the temporary openings. The pilots were soon absolutely at a loss to determine by which channel they ought to proceed. On this account two vessels were detached from the flotilla to investigate the possibility of making a passage in a more northerly direction. Two hundred of our people, sailors and soldiers, were obliged to lug with ropes for hours together to pull through one boat after the other, while they walked along the edge of the floating mass, which would bear whole herds of oxen, as I subsequently had an opportunity of seeing.

Very singular was the spectacle of the vessels, as though they had grown in the place where they were, in the midst of this jungle of papyrus, fifteen feet high; whilst the bronzed, swarthy skins of the naked Nubians contrasted admirably with the bright green which was everywhere around. The shrieks and shouts with which they sought to cheer on their work could be heard miles away. The very hippopotamuses did not seem to like it; in their alarm they lifted their heads from the shallows in which they had stationed themselves for respiration, and snorted till the gurgling around was horrible. The sailors, concerned lest by their bulk these unwieldy creatures should injure the boats—not an unknown occurrence—gave vent to the full force of their lungs. This unearthly clamour was indeed the solitary means of defence at their command; in such a turmoil—men and boats in every direction—firing a shot was not to be thought of.

This extraordinary grass-barrier had already been met with at the time of Miss Tinné's expedition in 1863; here again in the summer of 1872 was it found, strong as ever, offering for months its serious impediments to navigation, and threatening to expose the crews to destitution, if their provisions should fail. The enterprising expedition of Sir Samuel Baker, in 1870–71, suffered repeated hindrances at







this spot. An attempt was made to employ machinery to penetrate the mass, but steam-boats proved to be even less successful than the ordinary boats in making any headway. The conflict in these waters by means of wind and steam recalls what is not unfrequently seen in Egypt when a lot of men try to drag a donkey through the mud.

In this laborious fashion we had to toil on for several days. It was only by one of the side-arms of the blockaded main-stream that it was possible to reach the mouth of the Gazelle River. To this backwater the sailors give the name of "Maia Signora," because the access to it is stated to have been discovered by the pilots who conducted Miss Tinné. Ever since the formation of the grass barrier (*el Sett*) there has been no approach to the river of Gondokoro, the Bahr-el-Gebel, except by a long side-arm called the Giraffe River, which is itself almost equally blocked up. Upon the whole we were more fortunate than our predecessors of previous years, because our journey chanced to fall during one of the periodical seasons when the growth of the ambatch is at a standstill. It happened therefore that of the three obstacles which (besides the current and the shallows) are generally to be expected, viz., grass, papyrus, and ambatch, one of the most important did not occur. The close of our first day's exertion found us at night-fall on the southerly side of an island in mid-stream, whence we witnessed a spectacle striking in its way. Through an immense grove of acacias seventy feet high (*A. verugera*), which were remarkable for their resemblance to pine-trees, there gleamed, with the glare of day, the light of huge bonfires of faggots, which the Shillooks had kindled on the opposite bank, and which gave to the tall trees the effect of being truly gigantic.

Here on the 9th we tarried, and as it was the last woody district upon which we could reckon until we arrived at the mouth of the Bahr-el-Arab, we set to work to repair our broken sailyard. We were close now to the region of the

Nueir: and on the steppes beyond the wood, we could see troops of them moving backwards and forwards; but they kept at a distance, and showed no disposition to open any negotiations with us. Footprints and various other indications leave no doubt but that this district is the playground of elephants, giraffes, wild buffaloes, and hyenas. Maraboo storks were abundant, and would often come tolerably close to the resorts of men, but as soon as they found themselves observed were careful to keep at a safe distance. During our progress along the river I brought down very many of these birds, and secured a quantity of their valuable feathers. These I sent to Europe, and at a bazaar for the benefit of the sick and wounded they realised a considerable sum. Maraboo feathers fetch higher prices than ostrich feathers, yet it is very remarkable that they are quite unknown in the commerce of Khartoom.

The temperature of the preceding days had been singularly fresh, and consequently the plague of flies, from which previous travellers had had to endure so much, did not at all molest us. We were, however, provided on board with all the appliances to protect ourselves from this nuisance, in case of need. Far into the night after these days of prolonged exertion resounded the songs of the Nubians, and the gourdshells of merissa beer went round amid the native strains of Berber and Dongola. As I did not thoroughly understand the dialect of Dongola, I continually lost the exact purport of the words which were sung. One with the other the Nubians often use this dialect, although they just as frequently speak Arabic. Every now and then as they sung I made them tell me the sense of separate sentences; my listening to them seemed to delight them all, and I heard them saying behind my back, "Pityt hat the man is not a Mussulman, or at least a Turk, then what a capital fellow he would be!" To which another replied, "Turk, indeed! who ever heard of a Turk troubling himself about our songs? The

Franks are worth a thousand of them!" The flattery took its effect upon me, and I was moved at once to deliver a regular homily to my people. Feeling like Cæsar among the pirates, I proceeded to say, "Did you ever hear, you rascals of cow-stealers, about those ancestors of yours, the Ethiopians of Meroë?" "Yes, indeed," rejoined the Nubians, "for many and many a verse did our ancient poets compose about them, to celebrate their virtue; and they used to declare about the ruler of the gods (for at that time we believed in many gods) if he couldn't be found in heaven it was because he was lingering amongst his darling Ethiopians on earth. But now, we have Allah, the great Allah; besides Allah we care for no other."

"All very well;" I replied; "but where is the poet who can sing about his love to you, incorrigible thieves as you are? Just mind then what you are about for the future, and try to show that you are not unworthy of your great ancestors."

The next day was again employed in unrelaxed endeavours to penetrate the grass-bound channels. The patches of papyrus became at once more frequent and more extensive, and here once again, after being long missed, is found the genuine Nile reed, the "shary" of the ancient Egyptians—the same as the soof of the Bible—which always grows on the shores of the mainland. Somewhat strangely the prevailing river-grass in the upper waters, the *Vossia procera*, is called in Arabic "Om-Soof," the mother of wool. This appellation it derives from the peculiar hairy character of its leaf-sheaths. These have the disagreeable quality of covering the entire bodies of those who may be at work in the grass with a thick down of adhesive bristles. The sharpness of these and the scratches they inflict increase the irksomeness of the daily labour at the grass barrier. Still the great prairies amidst which the flood pursues its course afford an inexhaustible pasturage; cattle, sheep, and horses, all graze



upon them, and no herbage is there that they prefer to the "Om-Soof." At the close of the day, we again arrived in open water, and laid up for the night by the left bank, which presented a wide steppe entirely bare of trees.

Up with the sun, with sails hoisted with a moderate breeze in our favour, off we were on the following morning; short-lived, however, was our propitious start. Too soon the open water branched out into a labyrinth of channels, and the bewildered navigators lost all clue as to the actual direction of the stream. The projections of the green islets were always crowned with huge clumps of papyrus, which here grows in detached masses. It probably delights most in quiet waters, and so does not attain to the form of a high unbroken hedge, as on the upper banks of the Gazelle, for here, on account of the numerous stoppages, the stream flows through the narrow channels with extraordinary violence. The strength of the stream often makes towing impracticable, and the sailors often have considerable difficulty in sailing through it to the papyrus bushes, when they want to attach to their solid stems the ropes which are thrown out from their boats. This was the way in which we from sheer necessity sustained the resistance of the current. The depth of the channel was quite sufficient in itself to allow us to proceed, as our vessels drew only three feet of water; but the passage had become so contracted that at sunset we fastened ourselves to the papyrus-stems, quite despairing of ever being able to make further progress in this direction.

It was one of those marvellous nights when the unwonted associations of a foreign clime seem to leave an indelible impression on the memory of the traveller. Here were the dazzling sparks of the glow-worm, glaring upon us like a greeting from our far-off home, and in countless masses glittering upon the dewy stalks of the floating prairie. In the midst of these were fastened our boats, hemmed in as firmly as though they were enclosed by polar ice. Loud

was the rushing of the stream as it forced a way along its contracted course; but louder still was the incessant splashing of the emerging hippopotamuses, which had been driven by the vessels, as it were, into a corner, and were at a loss, like ourselves, how to go on or to retreat. Until daybreak their disquietude continued, and it seemed as though their numbers kept increasing, till there was quite a crowd of them. Already during the afternoon they had afforded a singular sight: whilst about half of our men were wading in shallow water and straining at the ropes, they found that they had entirely enclosed no less than six hippopotamuses, whose huge flesh-coloured carcasses, dappled with brown, rose above the surface of the water in a way but rarely seen. A cross-fire was opened upon them from several vessels, but I could not make any use of my elephant rifle, because about 200 of our men were towing upon my line of sight. The clumsy brutes snorted and bellowed, and rolled against each other in their endeavours to escape; their ponderous weight bore down the tangle of the water-growth, and the splashing was prodigious.

Four days had now been consumed in this strain and struggle; after a final and unavailing effort on the fifth day, there seemed no alternative but to go back and make trial of another and more northerly branch of this bewildering canal-system. We succeeded in our retrograde movement so far as to attain an open basin, and found that we had only the distance of about 200 feet to get over, in order that we might reach the spot whereat the various streams of the Upper Nile unite. This place on the maps is distinguished by the name of Lake No, but the sailors always call it Mogren-el-Bohoor, *i.e.*, the mouth of the streams. The difficulties which met us here were apparently quite hopeless. Our boats were not only heavily laden with corn, but, formed of the heaviest wood, their build was unusually broad and massive. Yet heavy and unwieldy as they were there was

no alternative than literally to drag them over the grass. By dint, however, of main force, before the day was out the task was accomplished. The grass mass itself was lifted and pushed in front, whilst the men turned their backs against the sides of the boats, and pressed them on from behind. I was the only passenger to remain on board, because being fearful of a chill which might result in fever, I could not venture into the water.

What the maps call Lake No is merely the expanded mouth of the meeting waters. The current flowing from the south from the Bahr-el-Gebel passes along its apparent shores, which are projecting masses of papyrus. In order to reach the Gazelle it is necessary to bend westwards along the gradually narrowing lake-basin. At no season of the year is this water otherwise than shallow; even at the time of our retrograde voyage, when the floods were highest, we stranded more than once. Floating islands of papyrus of considerable extent were visible every here and there, and broke the uniformity of the expanse.

The passage which leads to the Gazelle has the essential properties of running water, although the stream itself is in winter scarcely perceptible. The river, however, is surrounded by such a multiplicity of backwaters and waters remaining in old river-beds, that the united volume of such a number of streams as I saw emptying themselves into it, at various times, through some hundreds of miles, could not possibly find its exit through this single channel alone. Petherick, in 1863, at the period when the water-floods were as low as possible, estimated the volume of waters to be rolling on at the rate of 3042 cubic feet a second; but he must have referred simply to the navigable channel at the mouth, without intending to represent that the calculation referred to the entire mass of the waters.

It remains still a matter of dispute which of the two currents should be considered as the main stream. Accord-

ing to analogy, as the Sobat is related to the Blue Nile, so the Bahr-el-Gebel is to the Bahr-el-Abiad, just as the Blue Nile is to the Nile of Egypt.

One of the objects contemplated in my journey was to show the importance of the western affluents of the Nile which unite in the Gazelle; and I have given evidence that, one way and another, they traverse a region of not less than 150,000 square miles. When I mention that in 1863 Speke called the Gazelle "an unimportant branch,"\* and moreover that Baker has spoken of its magnitude with great depreciation, in reply, I might allude to another interesting fact in geographical annals. Not only did Bruce, a hundred years ago, suppose that he had discovered the sources of the Nile in Abyssinia, just where a hundred years previously they had been marked upon the Portuguese maps; but he represented the Bahr-el-Abiad as an inconsiderable stream, which joined the stream of his discovery at Halfaya, Khartoom at that time being not in existence. But it is absolutely impossible that Bruce could have returned from Sennaar to Berber along the left bank of the Blue Nile, and could have crossed at its mouth from the very spot where Khartoom now stands, without being aware that close behind him there was rolling its waters a stream as broad again as the Blue Nile. The record of his travels does not contain one word about the White Nile. The plain truth is that the White Nile was overlooked and disparaged, because it would have thrown his Blue Nile in the shade.† Ismail Pasha was quite right in saying that every fresh African traveller had his own private sources of the Nile; but for

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\* Speke, p. 609: "We found only a small piece of water, resembling a duck-pond buried in a sea of rushes."

† The words of the far-famed traveller are:—"It runs from Sennaar past many considerable villages, which are inhabited by white men of Arabia. Here it passes by Gerri [now Khartoom], in a north-easterly direction, so as to join the Tacazze."—Bruce, b. vi. c. 14.

my part I am not at all ashamed to confess that I have not found them.

The wind was favourable, and so long as the course maintained a north-westerly direction we made a rapid progress. The main channel gradually contracted, however, and deviated into many abrupt meanderings, which had to be traversed by pushing and driving with poles. Here, too, the apparent banks consisted of floating grass-tangle, though further off the pasturing herds of the Dinka showed the true position of the mainland, whilst the ridge of forest beyond indicated the limit to which the inundations had extended. North of the mouth of the Gazelle the boundaries of the Shillooks and the Dinka meet each other, and the intervening territory is inhabited by the Nueir.

In some places amongst the grass-tangle I made an attempt to botanize, and out of the numerous holes I fished up a variety of most interesting plants. The Gazelle is specially noted for the beauty of its water-lilies (*Nymphaea stellata* and *N. lotus*). Blossoms of these, in every variety of hue—white, blue, and crimson—well-nigh everywhere adorn the surface of the water; rooted below they project their long stalks and leaves through the apertures, like fishes, in the winter, to catch the air through holes in the ice. Should any one make a grasp at a blossom and fail to make good his hold, it may happen that the entire plant will make an elastic rebound and disappear beneath the grass. During the afternoon our course was N.W. and W.N.W., which is the general direction of the Gazelle throughout its lower half. The stream became wider again, the banks continuing to be lined by an impenetrable grass jungle. Remarkable dark-coloured water-birds (*Plotus melanogaster*) are found in considerable numbers upon the shores, intent upon making prey of small fishes. They settle upon the bushes, and one may every now and then be seen to make a sudden dive into the water, bring up a little fish in its beak, and resume its previous perch. Amongst



the people of Khartoom this bird is called the "Ghattas," a name which invested it with a special interest to me as being the name of my temporary protector.

For some few days past, just before sunset, great masses of tiny green flies had made their appearance. Although these were in no respect injurious, yet the buzzing they made and the choking cough which was caused by their numbers were anything but agreeable. Shortly after dark they retreated, only to appear again in the early dawn. Much more pertinacious were the spotty-legged gnats, which now began to torment us when the nights were not cool enough to disperse them. Everybody on board had provided himself for protection with a sack made of calico in which he slept, the result of which was ordinarily a temperature of some 80° Fahr., about the same as a regular vapour-bath. These gnats did not buzz about with so loud a noise, but their sting was much more decided. They might not cause such a lasting itching as some of their northern kindred, but the knack they had of finding a way for their proboscis through the thickest cotton till it reached one's skin, made it only possible to keep them off by means of mosquito-nets. But altogether I reckoned this visitation as hardly worth the notice of a traveller who had grown up amongst the gnats of the teeming marshes of the north.

The Bahr-el-Ghazal may in some respects be compared to the Havel as it flows between Potsdam and Brandenburg; the two rivers are not dissimilar in their excess of floating vegetation, composed of plants which, to a great extent, are identical in their generic character. Frequently the breadth is not more than enough for a single vessel, but the depth could not be fathomed by our longest poles, and so revealed what was the enormous volume of water concealed by the carpet of grass for two hundred paces on either hand. What ordinarily appears to be land assumes at high water the aspect of an extensive lake. The general uniformity of level prevents

any extensive range of vision ; but I had only to mount the roof of my cabin, and, by observing the distance between the woods that skirted the prospect, I could approximately estimate the width of the river-bed. Nowhere did it appear



*Balaniiceps Rex.*

to me to extend, like the valley of the Egyptian Nile, to a breadth of eight miles ; and certainly, without further evidence, I cannot agree with former travellers, who describe it as being a lake or marsh of which the boundaries are unlimited.

Neither crocodiles nor hippopotamuses are here to be observed. The absence of settled river-banks prohibits the Upper Nile from being the resort of the former; the deficiency of sand-banks would permit no life to the latter, which therefore make good their retreat to the narrower streams of the interior.

The second day of our voyage along the river brought us to the district tenanted by the Nueir. We found them peacefully pasturing their flocks and herds beside their huts, and betraying nothing like fear. They had been represented to me as an intelligent people; seeming to know what they had to expect or to dread, they were disposed for friendly intercourse with the Khartoom people, who, in their turn, were not inclined to commit any act of violence upon their territory. Two years and a half later, at the period of our return, all this was unfortunately changed, and landing was impossible.

Most of the Nueir villages lie on a spot where the Gazelle makes a bend from a north-east to a south-westerly direction. As we were making our way past the enclosures which lie on either side of the stream, my attention was arrested by the sight of a number of some of the most remarkable birds that are found in Africa. Strutting along the bank, they were employing their broad bills to grope in the slimy margins of the stream for fish. The bird was the *Balæniceps Rex*, a curiosity of the rarest kind, known amongst the sailors as the Abu-Markoob (or slipper-shape), a name derived from the peculiar form of its beak. Its scientific name is due to the disproportionate magnitude of its head. Before 1850 no skins of this bird had been conveyed to Europe; and it appeared unaccountable to naturalists how a bird of such size, not less than four feet high, and of a shape so remarkable, should hitherto have remained unknown; they were not aware that its habitat is limited to a narrow range, which it does not quit. Except by the Gazelle and in the central

district of the Bahr-el-Gebel, the *Balæniceps* has never been known to breed.

The first that appeared I was fortunate enough to hit with a rifle ball, which wounded it in its back, and brought it down: we measured its wings, and found them to be more than six feet across. Another was struck, but although it was pursued by an active party of Nubians, it effected an escape. As generally observed, the bird is solitary, and sits in retired spots; its broad beak reclines upon its crop, and it stands upon the low ground very much as it is represented in the accompanying illustration: it rarely occupies the ant-hills which every here and there rise some feet above the vegetation. The great head of the bird rises over the tall blades of grass and ever betrays its position. Its general structure would class it between a pelican and a heron, whilst its legs resemble those of a maraboo; it snaps with its beak, and can make a clattering noise like the stork. This *Balæniceps* would seem to furnish a proof that not everything in nature is perfectly adapted to its end, for when the birds are full grown, they never have their beaks symmetrical. The upper part does not correspond with the lower; the two members fall apart, and, like an old woman's jaws, go all awry. The colour of their plumage in winter is a dingy light brown, their wings are black, and they seem to fly with difficulty, carrying their ungraceful heads upon their necks at full stretch, like a heron. They build in the rainy season, always close to the open water, forming their great nests of ambatch-stalks.

At the next groups of huts we made a stop, and did some bartering with the Nueir, who brought sheep and goats for exchange. Here, in the heart of the Nueir population, in a district called Nyeng, we fixed our quarters until the 16th. I made use of the time to spend the whole day in my ambatch-canoe, collecting the water-plants from the river.

The Nueir are a warlike tribe, somewhat formidable to the

Dinka. They occupy a territory by the mouths of the two tributaries of the White Nile, and are evidently hemmed in by hostile neighbours. In most of their habits they resemble alike the Shillooks and the Dinka, although in their dialect they differ from both. The pasturage of herds is their chief pursuit. The traveller who would depict their peculiarities must necessarily repeat much of what he has already recorded about the other tribes. With regard to apparel it will suffice to say that the men go absolutely naked, the women are modestly girded, and the girls wear an apron formed of a fringe of grass. Their hair is very frequently dyed of a tawny-red hue by being bound up for a fortnight in a compo of ashes and cow-dung; but occasionally it is cut quite short. Some of them weave cotton threads into a kind of peruke, which they stain with red ochre, and use for decoration where natural locks are not abundant. Their huts resemble those of the Dinka; always clean, the dwellings are surrounded by a trampled floor; the sleeping-place inside is formed of ashes of cow-dung, burnt perfectly white, and is warmer and better than any mosquito-net.

Nowhere in the world could a better illustration be afforded of the remarkable law of Nature which provides that similar conditions of existence should produce corresponding types amongst all ranks of animal creation. It does not admit of a doubt that men and beasts in many districts of which the natural features are in marked contrast to the surrounding parts do exhibit singular coincidences, and that they do display a certain agreement in their tendencies. The confirmation of this resemblance which is offered by the Shillooks, the Nuair, and the Dinka is very complete; these tribes, stationed on the low marshy flats which adjoin the river, are altogether different in habit to those which dwell among the crags and rocks of the interior. "They give the impression," says my predecessor Heuglin, "that amongst men they hold very much the same place that flamingoes, as



birds, hold with reference to the rest of the feathered race ;” and he is right. The dwellers in these marsh-lands would probably have a web between their toes were it not compensated by the flatness of their feet and the unusual prolongation of the heel. Another remarkable similarity is the way in which, like the birds of the marshes, they are accustomed for an hour at a time to stand motionless on one leg, supporting the other above the knee. Their leisurely long stride over the rushes is only to be compared to that of a stork. Lean and lanky limbs, a long, thin neck on which rests a small and narrow head, give a finishing touch to the resemblance.

Leaving the last dwellings of the Nueir behind us, we arrived on the following day at the first wood which is to be observed on the banks of the Gazelle. Ant-hills of more than ten feet high are here scattered in every direction, and alone break the universal levelness of the plain. They are not unfrequently found in the heart of a thicket, because originally the stem of a tree served as the central axis of the earthy structure. Dead and withered though this had been, it sprouted out afresh from the roots, provided that these had been uninjured by the passages of the ants. Vestiges of the floods are traceable upon them, and show that the average difference between the highest and lowest level of the water is from three to four feet.

The river wends its way through charming wood-scenery, meandering amidst groves gay with the red bindweed (*Ipomæa*), amidst which now and then a tall tamarind uprears itself. Here I met with a fresh representative of the flora of Central Africa in the tree-like *Euphorbia* with its arms outspread like candelabras. This can be distinguished from the *Euphorbia* of the Abyssinian highlands, mentioned in Chapter I., by the involved confusion of its branches. Its eccentric shapes would seem to fill a place in Africa which in America is supplied by the order of the *Cactaceæ*; it also

serves like the Mexican *Cereus* for the enclosure of estates, as slips taken from its branches readily take root in the ground. The sportsman could here reckon on a good bag, for the widow-ducks which swarmed upon the papyrus were brought down at every shot, and were serviceable for the table. Our people were all expert swimmers, and they continually fished out of the stream the birds which were struck, while their sport in no way ever hindered the progress of our craft.

The wind next day was not propitious, and the boats were obliged to stay beside a grass tangle by the bank. I made use of the detention to enjoy a little fishing for water-plants. The water-lilies surpassed all description, and would adorn any Victoria-house. Unfortunately I could not succeed in transferring to this region the queen of the waters. The *Victoria regia* seed, which I had brought for the purpose in pots, would never germinate; perhaps, although it was preserved in water, the heat of my cabin during my voyage was too great and destroyed its vitality. I can only boast of having naturalised in this district of Central Africa two plants as representatives of culture in Europe—the sun-flower and the tomato. The river, which is ordinarily about 300 feet wide, abounds in thick masses of potamogeton, trapa, and yellow ottelia. The seeds of this last plant much resemble the sesamum, growing like the seeds of the *Nymphæa* in a slimy gelatinous mass; they are collected by the natives, and, after being dried, are pounded down into a sort of meal, which the sailors of Khartoom assured me was a wholesome and excellent remedy for indigestion. It surprised me very much to learn that the eatableness of the water-nut (*Trapa*) was unknown to the Dinka, although it grew in such abundance on the river.

We landed, towards evening, close below the mouth of the Bahr-el-Arab in a forest of lofty trees, where the West African *Stephegyne* appears to find its extreme eastern

limit. The wood of this species of Rubiaceæ is somewhat soft and light, but its branches make masts for the boats of a strength and straightness unequalled by any other growth in these countries, where wood adapted for erections of any sort is so notably scarce.

The Gazelle, at the place where the Bahr-el-Arab empties itself, has a width of about 1000 feet. This mouth is itself not much less, but just above the mouth the condition of the Gazelle is so different that it must be evident to every sailor that the Bahr-el-Arab plays a very important part in contributing to the entire system.

What the sailors mean by the Bahr-el-Ghazal is really only the channel as far as they navigate it; to them it is not a stream, in a hydrographical sense, such as either the Bahr-el-Arab or the Bahr-el-Dyoor. It is only at the mouth of the Bahr-el-Arab that there first appears a measurable current, and the fairway, which up to that point is not above 15 feet deep, is subsequently never less than twice that depth. After getting every information I could in the remotest west, I come to the conclusion that the Bahr-el-Arab is the main stream. Even at a distance of 300 miles above its mouth it is found throughout the year as a stream which cannot be forded, but must be crossed in boats, whilst the Bahr-el-Dyoor cannot be traced at all at so great a distance from its union with the Nile. The plains through which the Gazelle flows are too level to allow of any recognition at first sight of the true limits of the territory subject to its inundations. Any one, however, who is familiar with the character of the vegetation of the country, will easily detect symptoms from which he could form a tolerably correct opinion. Accordingly, on my return journey in 1871, I gathered ample evidence to satisfy myself that the Gazelle, associated as it is with the Bahr-el-Arab and the Bahr-el-Dyoor, is a river just as truly as either of the others. The fall of the water in the Gazelle is only produced by the tor-

rent driven from the south and west, and may hardly admit of being estimated, since the entire difference measured between Khartoom and the Meshera (the termination of the navigable course) does not altogether amount to 100 feet.

An important change in the scenery of the shores supervenes upon a further progress. The lake-like surface of the water gives to the Bahr-el-Ghazal the semblance at first sight of being merely an extensive backwater. That just above the mouth of a stream so considerable as the Bahr-el-Arab there should be this abundance of water at the very time of the year when it is at its lowest ebb, is a circumstance which cannot fail to confirm the supposition which I entertained when I entered the Gazelle: I was certain that the narrow channel through which we travelled in the district of the Nueir could not possibly be the entire river; and there surely must exist to the north of the river other not inconsiderable arms, which are inaccessible on account of the denseness of the river grass.

Unhindered by any material obstacles, our course now lay between floating islands, which were partly adorned with variegated blossoms, and partly loaded with a luxuriant growth of splendid ferns. The poles sufficed to keep the boats from the floating vegetation, the masses of which were as unyielding as though they had been sheets of ice. It was evident by the motion of these masses, that the current, though it flowed languidly, had a continued progress towards the east. The river only varies in depth from about 8 to 14 feet. The bed presents the appearance of a meadow, in which little bright tortoises enjoy their pasture. This submerged sward is composed exclusively of the Ethiopian *valisneria*, of which the female blossoms, affixed to spiral peduncles, rise from a fathom deep to the surface of the stream, their coiling stalks extending far and wide. Very wonderful is this plant in its sexual development; its

northern sisters haunt the waters of the Po and of the Rhone, and have furnished a theme for the admiration of the poet.

Far away, on either side, beyond the flooded borders of the grassy river-bed could be discerned, at a distance of a league or two, large tracts of forest land; and between the river and the line of woods which stretched to the horizon there could be observed the cumbrous shapes of elephants going to and fro, and demonstrating that there at least the land was firm.

The channel, which we rapidly passed along under favourable breezes, became continually broader, and the nearer we approached the river source, the more the banks seemed to recede from each other. The sight of men, fishing out of canoes formed by a couple of hollow stems being fastened together, made us aware that we were approaching the dwellings of the Dinka, and soon after we came upon the enclosures for cattle surrounded by low thatch huts upon the left bank. Sailing on towards the south and south-east, we approximated to the limit of our voyage. A great cracking up in the air revealed to us that the sailyard had once more broken, so that it was only by main force, by pushing and pulling, that we managed to reach a large Dinka village, which lay on the west, almost at the extremity of the stream. Here was the *cul-de-sac*, to which the Dinka have given the name of the Kyt. We had quite recently passed the mouth of the Dyoor, which appears to separate into several streams; but if my attention had not been called to this circumstance by the Reis, I should certainly never have observed it, on account of the uniform features of that watery region. In our delight at having so quickly, and without misadventure, accomplished our passage up the Gazelle, we had a night of feasting and merry-making.

The remainder of the journey was soon completed, and in the early morning hours of the 22nd of February we found ourselves at the Meshera, the landing-place of all who resort



to the Gazelle. This place is marked in the maps as Port Rek, called so from the Rek, a section of the Diuka. These Rek people were the first allies among the natives that the new comers had acquired, and they had been accustomed to provide them with bearers long before the Khartoom merchants had established any settlements in the interior. Deducting the days on which we had not proceeded, our boats had taken thirty days in going from Khartoom to the Meshera. I had been anxious to make a good investigation of the river banks; otherwise the voyage might easily be accomplished in twenty days.

Above the mouth of the Dyoor, so difficult of access, the deep channel is continued for a space of sixteen miles, when it forms the *cul-de-sac* which I have mentioned: there is not the least current when the waters are all at their height; but in March and April there may at some places be observed a retrograde motion of the stream. It is manifestly an ancient bed of the Dyoor, or of some river which in the lapse of time has changed its course. It is not easy to explain it, but the stream seemed to me, as I think I could farther demonstrate, the navigable overflow of some inland liman, that is, the receptacle of a number of considerable rivulets meeting together, something like what the delta of the Canton river would be, if it could be levelled, filled up, and carried away inland. The uniform depth of the channel might seem to originate in some freak in the conformation of the ground, or of the masses of vegetation, which are irregularly scattered about; but really it is only an indication of a condition of things long passed away, when the mainstream flowed through better defined and more contracted borders.

Let us for a moment review the impressions we have gained. The volume of water brought by the Gazelle to swell the Nile is still an unsolved problem. In the contention as to which stream is entitled to rank as first-born

among the children of the great river god, the Bahr-el-Ghazal has apparently a claim in every way as valid as the Bahr-el-Gebel. In truth, it would appear to stand in the same relation to the Bahr-el-Gebel as the White Nile does to the Blue. At the season when the waters are highest, the inundations of the Gazelle spread over a very wide territory; about March, the time of year when they are lowest, the river settles down, in its upper section, into a number of vast pools of nearly stagnant water, whilst its lower portion runs off into divers narrow and sluggish channels. These channels, overgrown as they look with massy vegetation, conceal beneath (either in their open depth, or mingled with the unfathomable abyss of mud) such volumes of water as defy our reckoning. The Gazelle then it is which gives to the White Nile a sufficient impetus to roll its waters onward; subsequently the Bahr-el-Gebel finds its way and contributes a more powerful element to the progress of the stream. It must all along be borne in mind that there are besides two other streams, the Dyoor and the Bahr-el-Arab, each of them more important than any tributary of the Bahr-el-Gebel; and these bring in their own influence. To estimate aright the true relation of all these various tributaries is ever opening up the old question in a new light.

The ramifications above the mouth of the Bahr-el-Arab are very complicated, and must be very imperfectly traced on our present maps. The map issued by Lejean has many details, but must be accepted with caution, and requires us to remember that paper is patient of error as well as of truth. Whoever has traversed the lakes (so to call them) to the west of the Bahr-el-Arab, has, almost immediately beyond the mouth of the Dyoor, come upon the winding channel known as "the Kyt." The shores of the Kyt are firm; there are detached groups of papyrus driven by the wind sometimes to its one bank, and sometimes to the other; its waters rise and fall, but

have no other apparent motion ; it widens at its extremity into a basin of papyrus, which was now open, but which in 1863 was entirely choked by ambatch. Heuglin, at that date, discerned, as he thought, in the dwindled and distorted stems a prognostication of an approaching disappearance of the ambatch ; and from 1869 to 1871 there was no trace of it. Various openings are made by the water towards the west among the masses of papyrus, which enclose a labyrinth of little wooded islets.\* One of these islands is the resting-place for the boats, and close at hand the voyagers establish their temporary camp. Being surrounded on every side by the water, all is secure from any hostile attack. The regular landing-place is on the southern shore of the basin, and thence commence the expeditions to the interior.

Such is the channel which, from the times of the earliest explorers, which appear to extend from the date of Nero's centurions, mentioned by Seneca, up to the mercantile enterprises and voyages of discoveries of the last ten years, has always brought boats to that *cul-de-sac*, called by the Nubian sailors their Meshera. The first boat, which actually entered the Gazelle, was that of a Khartoom merchant, named Habeshy, in 1854 ; two years later followed Consul Petherick, the first to open mercantile transactions with the tribes resident in these remote regions.

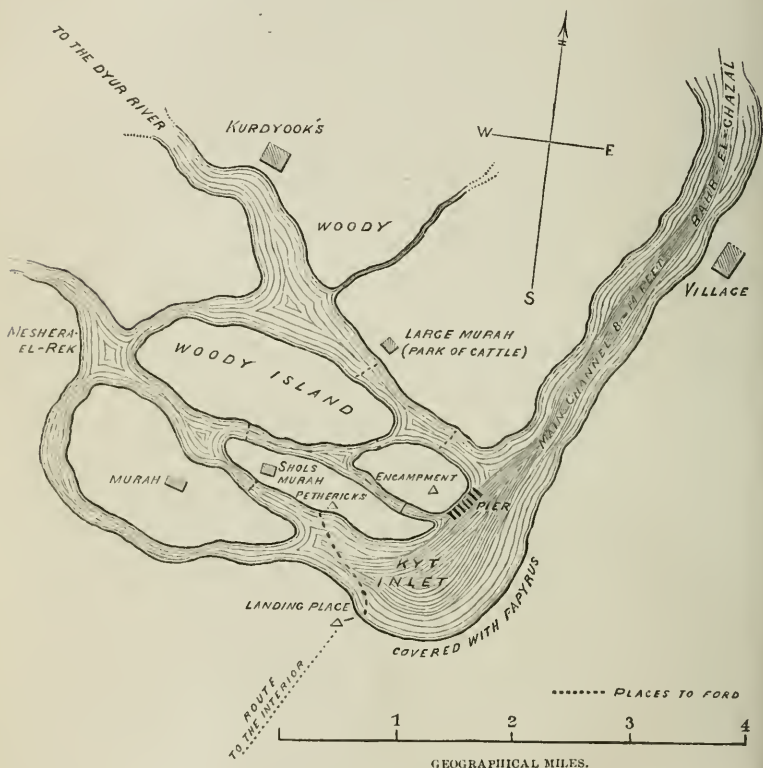
At that time, when nothing was known either of the Dyoor or of the Bahr-el-Arab, it must have been no small surprise to the first explorers to see a stream so large suddenly end amongst a labyrinth of small islands, without any navigable affluent. Only by the help of a native pilot was such a discovery possible.

I was compelled to linger out the remainder of February and the greater part of March in camp upon the little

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\* In the accompanying plan it is attempted to give some general idea of this confusion.

island, pending the arrival of the bearers who were to help me onwards to Ghattas's Seriba. I was happy in escaping any ill effects such as might be dreaded from a protracted residence by this unhealthy river. I attributed my immunity in great measure to the precautionary use of quinine.



The Meshera.

Although by my daily occupations, botanising in swamps and continually wading amongst papyrus clumps, I had been more exposed to malaria than many others, I experienced no sickness. I swallowed every day, in three doses, eight or nine grains of quinine, enclosed for that purpose in gelatine capsules; this method is to be strongly recommended to every

traveller, since the intense bitterness of the medicine taken in its undisguised form may excite a degree of nausea which, I can well believe, may contribute its part to a liability to fever. This treatment I continued, without its having any ill effect upon my constitution, until I could dispense with it in the purer air of the interior. I suppose, since this is not an universal experience, that the effects of the alkaloids may vary with different patients, and therefore it would be well for every one first to test the susceptibility of his individual constitution.

It is only too well known how many victims this treacherous climate has already claimed; it may without exaggeration be maintained, that half the travellers who have ventured into the swamps have succumbed to fever. The highest mortality was in the settlements of the Austrian mission in Gondokoro and St. Cross, now long since abandoned. Miss Tinné's expedition of 1863 suffered the loss of five out of its nine European members, among them my unfortunate predecessor in the botanical investigation of this district, Dr. Steudner, who died suddenly quite at the beginning of the journey. Heuglin, too, lost the greater part of his valuable time in continual relapses of fever. The foundations of these miserable attacks had probably been laid in the miasma, of which the traveller had inhaled the poison during a protracted sojourn in the Meshera. The latest Job's comfort, which had most unnerved me, had come just as I was embarking at Trieste. The French Geographical Society had, a few months previously, sent out *Le Saint*, a naval officer, on a voyage of discovery, having for its object the same district as myself, viz., the Niam-niam countries. His outward journey had been much lengthened by the grass obstruction in the Giraffe stream, and he died before he entered the country in which his more extended wanderings were designed to commence.

Before quitting the Meshera (the only landing-place for



expeditions starting from the Gazelle) I will make a few observations on the natural character, scenery, and inhabitants of the region of this unique island world.

The Meshera had been reached by eighteen different boats belonging to Khartoom merchants, and these now lay, half-buried in mud and clay, firmly wedged in the jungle of papyrus. Every new comer could only by great exertions procure a fresh resting-place. For that purpose they proceeded in the following way: they backed their boat a little into the open water, and anchored; then a rope was fastened to a strong mass of papyrus-roots, which it towed with its loosened clods attached into open water, until the breeze carried over the entire floating mass to the opposite side of the basin. Thus was obtained one artificial Delos after another. The access to the bank is, however, still left blocked up by the compact border of papyrus thus conveyed across. By means of fire and hatchet avenues are then opened, and the long roots of papyrus are piled upon the elastic sward of its stubble until an available pathway is complete.

Most of the islands are adorned by graceful masses of bushes and by light groves of the larger trees, but the hatchet of strangers every year is altering this condition of things. In spite of all the uniformity of the tall papyrus bushes, and notwithstanding the burnt and dry appearance of the steppe-grasses, there is no lack, even in the mild winter of this little island-world, of the charms of scenery. The dark crowns of the evergreen tamarind stand out in sharp outline against the bare rugged branches of the acacias in their grey winter garb, between which the eccentric shapes of the candelabra-enphorbiæ, closely interlaced, bound the horizon in every direction, and form, as often as the eye wanders over the neighbouring islands, a fine gradation of endless shades of colour. This is especially noticeable in the early morning, when at sunrise a heavy mist

hangs over the damp flats, and sometimes here, sometimes there, sets limits to the prospect, in a way that would lend enchantment to any scenery.

Protected by the endless ramifications of the marshes against any attacks of dangerous quadrupeds from the mainland, the sojourner here had only the most determined of all depredators to fear, namely, man himself. But even this fear was not really great. Nowhere on the face of the earth is a country more surrendered to robbery and lawlessness than this district of Africa; but still, as ever, one form of mischief balances another: man is a match for man; and so it results that the stranger may find repose and security here as much as elsewhere. The natives, who occupy the entire land in a wide circumference from the Meshera, form a portion of the great Dinka family, whose extreme outposts extend eastwards towards the Egyptian borders of Upper Sennaar, and whose tribes are counted by the hundred.

One of the most influential personages of the neighbouring race of the Lao was a woman, already advanced in years, of the name of Shol. She played an important part as a sort of chief in the Meshera, her riches, according to the old patriarchal fashion, consisting of cattle. As wealthy as cattle could make her, she would long since have been a prey to the Nubians, who carry on their ravages principally in those regions, if it had not chanced that the intruders needed her for a friend. They required a convenient and secure landing-place, and the paramount necessity of having this induced them to consider plunder as a secondary matter. They provided in this way, that single boats, even after all others had taken their departure, could safely remain in the Meshera throughout the rainy season without incurring any risk from the natives. The boatmen accordingly respect the bank of the river which is the resort of Shol's herds; whilst Shol, on her part, uses all her influence to retain her tribe on

friendly terms with the strangers. The smallest conflict might involve the entire loss of her property.

The old Shol did not delay, but the very first day came to my boat to visit me. On account of the colour of my skin, the Nubians had told her that I was a brother of the Signora (Miss Tinné). My pen fails in any attempt to depict her repulsiveness. Her naked negro skin was leathery, coarse, and wrinkled; her figure was tottering and knocked-kneed; she was utterly toothless; her meagre hair hung in greasy locks; round her loins she had a greasy slip of sheep-skin, the border of which was tricked out with white beads and iron rings; on her wrists and ankles she had almost an arsenal of metal, links of iron, brass, and copper, strong enough to detain a prisoner in his cell; about her neck were hanging chains of iron, strips of leather, strings of wooden balls, and heaven knows what lumber more. Such was old Shol.

A soldier, who had formerly been a Dinka slave, acted as interpreter. For the purpose of impressing me with a due sense of the honour of the visit and in the hope of getting a present, he began to extol Shol and to enlarge upon the multitude of her cattle. All the sheep-farms, of which the smoke rose so hospitably to the stranger, were hers; hers were all the bullock runs along the river banks; the murahs which extended in every direction of the compass without exception, were hers; she had at least 30,000 head of cattle; in addition to which I could form no conception of the iron and copper rings and chains which filled her stores.

After this introduction the conversation turned upon Miss Tinné, who remained fresh upon the memory of all. Her liberality in making presents of beads had secured her a fame like Schiller's "Mädchen aus der Fremde," the spring, who brought a gift for every one. The old Shol could not refrain from expressing her surprise that Miss Tinné should be unmarried; as an African she could not comprehend how a lady that was rich could be without a husband.

Very strange were the domestic and family relationships of Shol when considered in contrast with her public position, her present influence, and her excessive wealth. After the death of her first husband she had become the wife of his son by a previous marriage. She had thus raised this man, who was younger than herself, to the rank of prince consort. His name was Kurdyook. I had a visit from him on the



The old Shol.

following day. From his intercourse with the traders he could speak Arabic intelligibly. Like the rest, he was loud in his praises of Miss Tinné, and in her honour he had called the child of one of his concubines "the Sigñora." Plainly there was a longing after the culture of European refinement, and let us hope that it will not stop at the name.

Of course, in comparison with his wife, he was quite destitute of lands; he was a mere cypher as far as any influence on

the tribe was concerned, but yet he exercised a terror over Shol, which, under the circumstances, was quite incredible. He was accustomed to chastise this dame, who was at once his stepmother and his spouse, and to act towards her in the most brutal manner, although she was herself in the habit, perchance as a token of her dignity, of carrying in her hand several knotted thongs like a cat-o'-nine-tails.

With rambles in the neighbourhood and in receiving a succession of visitors, I found the days pass pleasantly away. On the mainland towards the north there were several more important villages, composed of permanent dwellings and fixed enclosures for oxen. To these I constantly resorted, and the concourse of so many men coming out of curiosity to look at me, entertained me very much. Failure alike both of water and food during the dry season had driven old Shol herself to one of the islands adjacent to the landing-place; here in some wretched huts not far from our boats she had taken up her residence in the midst of a quantity of her cattle. I occasionally paid her a visit, for the purpose of penetrating to the mysteries of her dairy.

On the 26th of February the old queen came to the tent which I occupied on the island, having been informed that the presents designed for her majesty there awaited her. On this occasion she had a costume somewhat different. She had made a fresh selection of her paraphernalia from her iron rings and chains, and so arrayed herself anew. I had prepared everything for a stately reception, as I was anxious to leave behind me an impression as favourable as Miss Tinné. There were beads as large as eggs, such as never before were seen in this country; there were marbles of green and blue from the Oriental plains: she was told they were for her. Next there were chains of steel; these, too, were hers: then that majestic chair of plaited straw; she could scarcely believe that she was to have it for her throne. But the crowning charm of all was an immense bronze medal, with a chain of



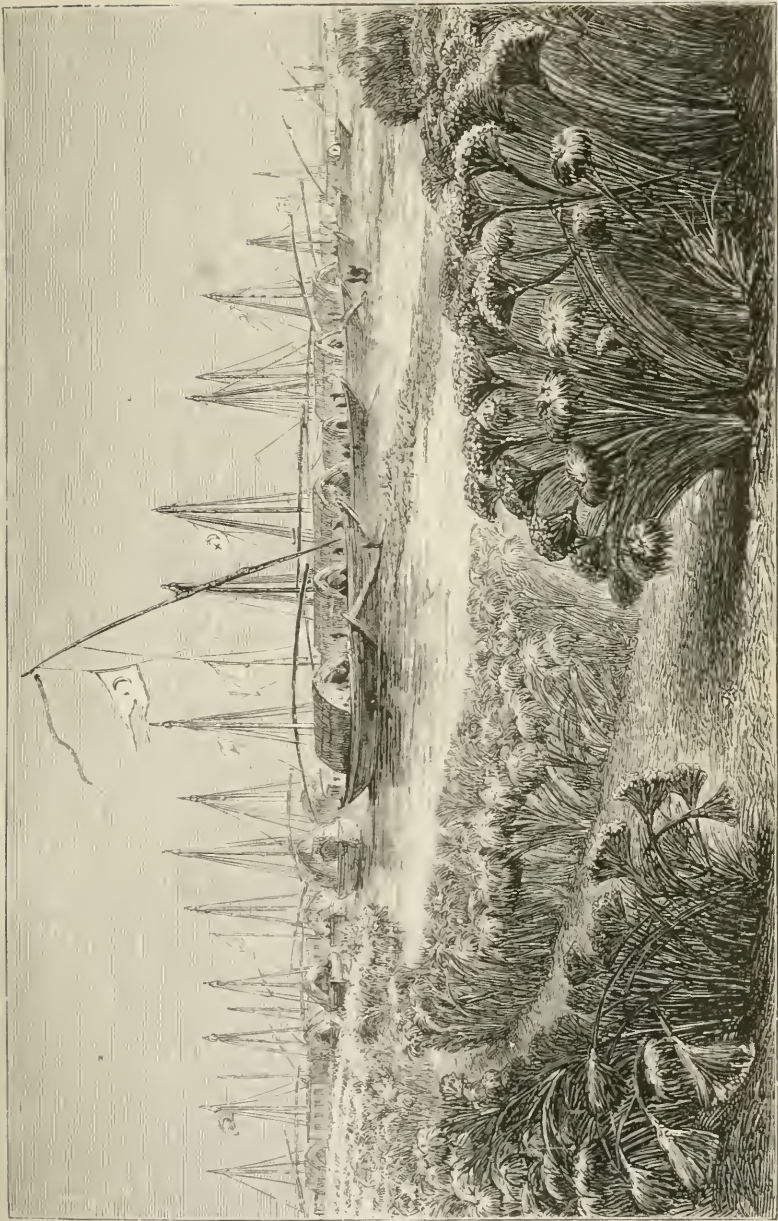
plated gold, which she could hang about her neck; it was in fact, a commemoration of a German professor's jubilee, with the Emperor's likeness upon it; but no one can conceive the admiration it excited. She was really touched, and the sailors and soldiers seemed to like the medal as much as she did. The gifts which were made to me in return consisted of a calabash full of butter, a goat, a sheep, and a splendid bull of a peculiar breed, without horns.

The most remarkable plant amongst the islands of the Meshera is a climbing passion-flower—the *Adenia venenata*, the bright green leaves of which are applied by the natives of Central Africa for the purpose of drawing blisters. These leaves have, however, a poisonous property, which has proved fatal to camels. Camels have but a feeble faculty of smelling, and eat freely of whatever looks green, so that all attempts to acclimatise them here have been without success. It is the same plant which deprived Sir Samuel Baker of his pack-ass in Latuka. The most noticeable thing about the plant is the large development of its stem, which grows half under the soil, and projects with a strange protuberance some cubic feet in content. At the end of this the stem breaks out into a number of long climbing stalks, which mount upwards to a considerable height. One example of these stems I packed in linen and sent to Berlin, where, after a period of ten months, it was found to retain its vitality, and in a palm-house soon developed a number of young shoots.

The waters furnished a variety of fishes; amongst these few were more frequently seen than a sort of harness fish (*Polypterus bichir*), of which a representation will be given in a later chapter. But the creature which most particularly arrested my attention was the salamander-like fish of Gambia (*Lepidosiren*), which, with its four slim feet projecting from its fish-like form, had a mouth like that of a shark. I saw specimens between three and four feet long. Its flabby

slimy flesh is disgusting to the Nubians, although Sir Samuel Baker, who found the same species in the Albert Nyanza, could not sufficiently praise its flavour. The whole family of the Siluridæ is here represented as much as in other sections of the Nile. Many of them share with the fish-salamander the practice of burying themselves in the bank, that they may await in the dry the rising of the stream; in the same way as an eel they can wriggle themselves through the soil, and even make a way over the dry ground.

Considering the circumscribed limits of land, the feathered race were found in great variety. I saw at least sixty kinds of birds upon the four or five islands which were nearest us. Conspicuous above all was the graceful rail (*Parra africana*), with its spreading claws and wiry legs stalking proudly, as if on land, upon a carpet of water-lily leaves. And not unheard were the familiar notes of our own home birds. Sparrows innumerable thronged about the papyrus plants, on which they settled for their evening roost. All this, however, is but the old story of ornithological travellers who have been before me, and hardly needs to be repeated here.





## CHAPTER IV.

Start for the interior. Flags of the Khartoomers. Comfortable travelling with bearers. The African elephant. Parting from Shol and Kurdyook. Disgusting wells in the district of the Lao. Wide sandflats. Village of Take. Fatal accident. Arabian protocol. Halt in the village of Kudy. Description of the Dinka. Peculiarities of the race. Dyeing of the hair. Nudity. "The Turkish lady." Iron age. Weapons of the Dinka. "People of the stick." Weapons of defence. Domestic cleanliness. *Cuisine*. Entertainment of the ladies. Snakes. Tobacco-smoking. Construction of the huts. Dinka sheep, goats, and dogs. Reverence for cattle. Degeneration of cows. Intestinal worms. Deficiency of milk. Large muraahs. Capabilities of the Dinka. Warlike spirit. Treatment of enemies. Instance of parental affection. Forest district of the Al-Waj. Arrival at Ghattas's chief Seriba.

It was not until the eighteenth day of our sojourn in the Meshera that Ghattas's second boat arrived, conveying the remainder of the newly-enlisted mercenaries and a year's provisions for the Seriba. The agent on board was commissioned to procure for me from the interior whatever porters were requisite for my progress. The shortest possible time that must elapse before he could get to the Seriba and back was eleven days; punctually at the end of that period he returned, and placed at my disposal seventy bearers. Thus fortunately I had time enough and to spare before the commencement of the rainy season to start for the interior.

By the 25th of March all arrangements for setting out were complete, and we were ready to turn our backs upon the damp air of the swamps with its nightly plague of flies.

Several smaller companies having joined Ghattas's expedition, the number of our caravan was a little under five hundred. Of these the armed men alone amounted to nearly



two hundred; marching in single file they formed a long column, and constituted a force with which we might have crossed the largest State of Central Africa unmolested. Our course for six days would be through a notoriously hostile country, so that this protection was quite necessary; but the caravan, extending fully half a mile, was of a magnitude to require great order and circumspection. Each division had its banner, and to each was appointed its proper place in the procession. The different companies of the Khartoom merchants were distinguished by the colour of their banners, all emblazoned by the star and crescent of Islam. Instead of this, Ghattas, as a Christian, had a white flag, on which were worked the crescent and a St. Andrew's cross. This compromise between the crescent and the true cross did not, however, exclude certain passages from the Koran, relating to the conquest of unbelievers, and which could not be permitted to be wanting on any Khartoom banner. The handsome flag of my own boat was lying wrapped away in a box. I confess I had no desire to make a display of it among savages, and in a region where its meaning could not be comprehended; but even if I had wished to exhibit it, I subsequently discovered that any attempt to do so would have been quite a failure. No Nubians would on any account have followed a flag which did not bear the crescent and the passages from the Koran. The boats on the Nile, it is true, when they carry or belong to Europeans, do not despise the European colours; but in the heart of the negro country, where no Egyptian authority exists, it is different, and consequently all European flags are worthless. The banner of Islam is to them a talisman, and they would consider it as sacrilege to replace it by the banner of any Christian country. Even the trading expeditions conducted by European merchants from Khartoom have conformed to this rule, and I have myself witnessed the flag waving on the Rohl River at the last settlement maintained by the brothers Poncet.

To a naturalist on his travels, the employment of men as a means of transport appears the perfection of convenience. Apart from the despatch and order in starting, and the regular continuous progress, he enjoys the incalculable advantage of being able to reach his baggage at any moment, and to open and close again without loss of time any particular package. Any one who has ever experienced the particular annoyances of camel-transport will be quite aware of the comparative comfort of this mode of proceeding. A few asses accompanied the caravan, and the governor of Ghat-tas's Seriba had been courteous enough to send me his own saddle-ass, but I preferred to trust myself to my own legs. Riding a badly-saddled donkey is always infinitely more fatiguing to me than any exertion which may be requisite to keep up with the forced marches of the light-footed Nubians; besides, I had other objects in view than mere progress: I wished to observe and take notes of anything that came in my way, and to collect plants and whatever else might be of interest. Thus entirely on foot I began the wanderings which for two years and three months I pursued over a distance of more than 2000 miles. Neither camels nor asses, mules nor horses, teams of oxen nor palanquin-bearers contributed their aid. The only animal available, by the help of which Central Africa could be opened to civilisation, is exterminated by fire and sword; the elephant is destroyed mainly for the purpose of procuring for civilised nations an article wherewith to manufacture toys and ornaments, and Europeans still persevere in setting the savages a pernicious example in this respect.

There is sufficient evidence to show that the African elephant, which at the present time appears to surpass the Indian species as much in wild ferocity as in size, was formerly tamed and trained in the same way as the elephant in India. Medals have come down to us which portray the considerable differences between the two species. They show

the immense size of the ear of the African elephant, and prove beyond a doubt that it was once employed as a domestic animal. The state of torpor to which, since the fall of the Roman Empire, all the nations of the northern part of Africa have been reduced, is sufficient explanation why the worth of this animal should have been suffered to fall into oblivion. The elephant takes as long as a man to grow to maturity, and it could hardly be expected of the Arabs that they should undertake the tedious task of its training; and certainly it could not be expected of Turks, who have hardly patience to wait for the fruits of one year's growth, and who would like the world to have been made so that they could pick up their guineas already coined on the mountains. It would be no unfortunate event for Africa if some of the European philanthropists, who now squander their homœopathic charities on the welfare of the negroes, were to turn their sympathy a little to the pitiable lot which has befallen the elephant. The testimony of Burton in his 'Nile Basin' is, that not only might elephants be made useful to man, but that they appear to possess an instinct which is quite a match for the reason not only of the natives of Africa, but of some other of the bipeds who visit its inhospitable shores.

Extremely toilsome, I must own, were the first few hours of the march. After being for months limited to the boat's deck and to short excursions from my little island, I now found myself forced to keep up with the sharp pace of the negroes, which would be a matter of difficulty to any one but a member of the Alpine Club. Towards evening, after a two hours' march, we made our first halt in Shol's village. Near the huts some giant *Kigeliæ*, in full flower, displayed their purple tulip-like blossoms; they still stand as landmarks on the spot, although the old Shol has gone to her rest and the last fragments of her burnt huts have vanished. This *Kigelia* is common throughout Africa, and is distinguished for its remarkable fruit, two feet long, which hangs from the boughs

like a string of sausages. The leaf is somewhat similar to our walnut, and in its *tout ensemble* the tree may bear comparison with a majestic oak. Trees of such marked peculiarity cannot do otherwise than make an impression on the memory of every traveller in equatorial Africa.

Shol had come expressly from her island to take leave of us, and to offer her hospitality to the caravan. Our course now lay in a tolerably straight S.S.W. direction across the western district of the extensive territory of the unsubdued Dinka. We rested occasionally in the deserted villages and amidst the empty cattle-pens belonging to the natives, who made their escape as we advanced. By their continual cattle-stealing, the Nubians have caused all the Dinka tribes to consider foreign interlopers as their bitter enemies; the intercourse, therefore, with the settlements in the Bongo and Dyoor countries, which are separated from the river by the Dinka district, can only be maintained at the expense of keeping an adequate number of armed men to protect the porters. Agriculture, although it is carried on to a certain extent, is quite a secondary consideration. The Dinka often possess large quantities of sheep and goats, but principally they are breeders of cattle. The number of cattle in the country is astounding, and seems as if it must be inexhaustible, even when it is remembered that thousands are stolen annually by the Nubians. There are tracts of grazing ground which take a whole day to cross; murahs are scattered throughout the land like villages in Germany, and many of them would contain 10,000 beasts, unless I err in my computation, which is made by reckoning the pegs to which the animals are tethered.

Before I parted from my old friend Shol I had to make one more offering of gratitude for the hospitality I had enjoyed; this consisted of an amulet which I had to compose at Kurdyook's request. I wrote him as a testimonial a recommendation to any future visitor to the country. The

Nubians and true Arabs, in a way that is not seen in Egypt, often wear round their neck and arms a number of ornamental leather sheaths, which contain passages from the Koran ; on being asked what is inside they reply, "It is the name of God." Such amulets are even bound round the necks of horses and valuable asses. It would never occur to a Nubian to ask a Frank for an amulet ; they have their Faki, who make a harvest of the business. But Kurdyook was no Mohammedan ; he was a pure, uncontaminated heathen, and Mohammedan prejudice had no part in his superstition ; in his eyes the white man was a being of a higher order, and was accordingly in a position to exercise greater authority over the invisible powers of fate than the swarthy priest of Islam.

We now passed on through a country covered by farmsteads, repeatedly crossing fields of sorghum-stubble. The stalks, fifteen feet in length, which lay everywhere scattered on the ground, were a great impediment to our progress. The corn here cultivated is the largest form of the species ; it takes nine months to ripen, and the stem in consequence becomes so hard and woody that it is no more like our European straw than their stubble-fields are like ours. At other places at this season the nature of the ground generally offered no hindrance, the clayey swamps being dry and hard as stone ; the high grass of the steppe trodden down by men and cattle, the woods everywhere thin as in Southern Nubia, and consisting of isolated thickets or scattered trees of no great size.

For the purpose of geographical investigation a journey in the rainy season would be more advantageous, because it is only then that the actual limit and importance of the periodical currents are to be estimated. The term *periodical*, however, so frequently used in connexion with the hydrographical conditions of Africa, perhaps hardly gives a correct impression, since the brooks and streams which more or less are



dried up after the rainy seasons are over, still exercise their influence on the conformation of the land, just as truly, if not so obviously, as our perpetual rivers, which are permanently limited to their proper channels. Many of the rivulets in this extensive level have no apparent bed; for in proportion as the water decreases, the bed by degrees resumes its aspect of being covered with grass; the turf rapidly grows afresh as the water recedes, and, independently of this, much of it is able to endure a flood of several months without rotting or dying away. This is a circumstance which quite easily explains the misconceptions to which various travellers in the dry season have been liable, who have gone along without recognising any river-beds at all. It is not in any way surprising that they have crossed the beds of even considerable streams without perceiving in them anything different to ordinary undulations of the ground, for there is nothing to arrest the attention but the same uniform growth of grass, the same dry stubble, the same scorched, trampled stalks. Ten miles from the Meshera we reached the first watering-place in the centre of the Lao district, an open cultivated plain, several miles in extent, diversified with numerous farms and hamlets. Two fine sycamores seemed to beckon from afar and invite us to the spot.

The water had to be drawn from a depth of fifteen feet, from wells which contained nothing better than a stinking, impure pulp. These wells are the residue of great pools formed in the rainy season, and subsequently developing a wonderful abundance of animal life, although they produce nothing in any way adapted for culinary purposes. Large water-scorpions (*Belostoma*), beetles, and other creeping things that are ever at home in stinking pools, whirl about in these muddy depths. Here it is, apparently, that the Dinka cows and sheep renew annually their progeny of intestinal worms (*Ampnistoma*) and cercariæ, of which the filthy beds are most prolific. Such was the drinking-water of Lao.

The natives had imagined that we should pass the night at the well; anxious, however, to take advantage of the coolness of the air, we resolved, by a forced night-march, to get quickly over the district, void of water, that lay before us. Marching on through the adjacent farms we noticed old and young hurrying off into the adjacent thickets, our arrival being unexpected. Many a smoking porridge-pot had been forsaken, and now fell into the hands of the greedy bearers, making them still more desirous of tarrying here for the night; but the orders were peremptory which had been given to our people to push forward without delay.

To the south the ground stretched uniformly for ten miles in sandy plains bare of grass, pleasantly broken at intervals by bushy shrubs and single trees. Onwards we went for five hours of the night over moonlit sands, the imagination giving a weird aspect to all around. The region strongly reminded me of the acacia-woods of Taka and Gedaref in South Nubia, which are seen in crossing the forests at the foot of the Abyssinian highlands. The character of the vegetation approximates to that of Kordofan. The commonest trees are the Seyal-acacia, hegelig, tamarind, Christ's thorn, capparis, and that remarkable thorn, the randia, the branches of which serve as models for the pointed lances which the inhabitants of Central Africa employ. One of the trees of Southern Kordofan finds here its southern limit: this is the *Albizzia sericocephala*, a tree of moderate size, of which the finely-articulated, mimosa-like leaf consists of from 5000 to 6000 particles; the thick clusters of blossom gleamed out from the obscurity like snow, and the air was laden with their balmy fragrance. Thus we wandered on as through a cultivated garden, our path as smooth as if we were on gravelled walks. Reaching at length a considerable village, we encamped on the deserted site of a large cattle-park. A sudden storm of rain put

the caravan into a commotion, and forced me to retire with my bedding into one of the wretched huts, which are not really dwellings, but are used for the nightly shelter of the cow-herds. Imbedded a foot deep in fine white ashes, and enveloped in a cloud of dust, I passed the remainder of the night, alternate coughing and sneezing making all sleep simply impossible.

On the following day we had to march for five hours without a draught of water, until a hospitable asylum was opened to us in a village of Take. We were now in the district of the Rek, a locality which formerly made a hitch in the traffic with the natives, before Petherick broke a way to the south through the Dyoor and Bongo, and opened a trade with the Niam-niam.

This Take was an old friend and ally of the Khartoomers, and had attired himself in honour of the occasion in a figured calico shirt, without regard to the prejudices of his countrymen, who despise all clothing as effeminate. Near this village in 1858 there existed a temporary establishment from which the brothers Poncet started on their elephant hunts in the Dinka territory. They called the place Mirakok, but Mirakok and its elephants are now alike unknown in this land of the past, where (transient as a shower or a tide) all the lives and deeds of men have been long forgotten. It has been a land without chalk or stone, so that no permanent buildings could be constructed; it has consequently only reared a people which have been without chiefs, without traditions, without history. Detached fan-palms (*Borassus*), 100 feet high, in default of anything more lasting, mark the abode of Take, a shelter which was destined to have its sad associations for the travellers.

Ghattas's standard-bearer, a most courageous fellow and the best shot among all our Nubians, killed himself on a hunting excursion, which he had undertaken with me and my servant. I had contented myself with bagging a lot of

remarkably plump wild pigeons, but he was resolved to get at some guinea-fowl; for this purpose he made his way into a thicket, where, as he was loading his piece, it accidentally went off, the charge entering his breast. This accident befell the one who was supposed to be incomparably the most skilful of our party in handling his weapons, and it may be imagined what was to be expected of the rest. Blundering accidents and wounds were of perpetual occurrence, so that I should only weary the reader by recounting them. The traveller who has to march with these so-called soldiers must be content to know that he could not anywhere more thoroughly be exposed to the danger of being killed by a chance shot; and I do not exaggerate the truth when I affirm that my life was over and over again seriously threatened.

The unfortunate Soliman, who was thus the victim of his own mischance, was the man who had saved my servant Mohammed when he had his encounter with the wild buffalo. Half the camp hastened to the ill-fated spot, to be enabled to testify to the accidental death of Soliman by his own hand. So quietly had he fallen that even my servant Osman, who was near, ascertained quite casually that he was dead; a dark mark, caused by the smoke from the powder, at the orifice of the gaping wound, showed that his gun had gone off while he was holding it. Sobbing and weeping, his friends and countrymen stood round his body, and even the stony-hearted cattle-stealers seemed as if, after all, they were not utterly devoid of all human emotion. One of them was touched with a strange remorse, the reason of which I afterwards discovered. It appeared that Soliman owed him a debt, which he declared he had paid; on the previous day, while Soliman had been emphatically persisting that the debt was discharged, his accuser, in his rage, cursed him with the heaviest imprecation he could command: "The dogs devour thee!" The disaster, there-

fore, was a manifest punishment from heaven; the man would indeed gladly have never uttered the curse, but yet he could not be reconciled with the dead. On the very next day, as we were about to start, another man shattered the upper part of his arm by carelessly taking his gun from a bush where he had laid it.

We left the unlucky spot, and proceeded two miles further to the village of Kudy, also an old friend of the Turks, as the Khartoomers are everywhere termed by the natives. Here we made another halt, in order to pass the day in slaughtering some cattle, in feasting on beef and goat's flesh, and in laying in a store of corn for our large party of bearers.

Here also a kind of affidavit or protocol, strictly conformable to Mohammedan rule, was taken of the previous day's accident, in order to be able to produce legal evidence at Khartoom, where the deceased Soliman had left a wife and child. The chief part of this important business was performed by the Faki, who accompanied the party as private slave-dealers, enacting at the same time their legal character as scribes. After the protocol was drawn up, it was sealed, according to Oriental custom, by the agents who were present. This was not done without great prolixity and circumstantial debate. The formality of the document was curious; its opening words were: "Osman the agent asks Osman the servant of the lord Musyu the question: Where is Soliman?" Osman in his turn had to give an account of the accident: "As we were hunting in the thicket, I heard a shot," and so on. They did not expect to be cross-examined; they did not look for even such mild reproach as the king gave Hamlet when he inquired, "Where's Polonius?" but they considered it quite as well to keep up the old-established form.

With Kudy I found a good opportunity of prosecuting my study of the Dinka, which I had already taken up in earnest



during my stay in the Meshera. My relations with this strange pastoral people were, throughout the two years which I spent in the interior, but rarely discontinued. Dinka were my cow-herds, and Dinka provided me with all the requirements of my *cuisine* as long as I stayed in Ghattas's Seriba; and even in the remotest limits of my wanderings I had dealings with them. I am only acquainted with the western branch of this people, whose territory altogether extends over an area of from 60,000 to 70,000 square miles, of which the length is close upon 400 miles; my knowledge, however, is accurate enough to enable me from my own observation to add much that is new to the descriptions which previous travellers have given of this people.

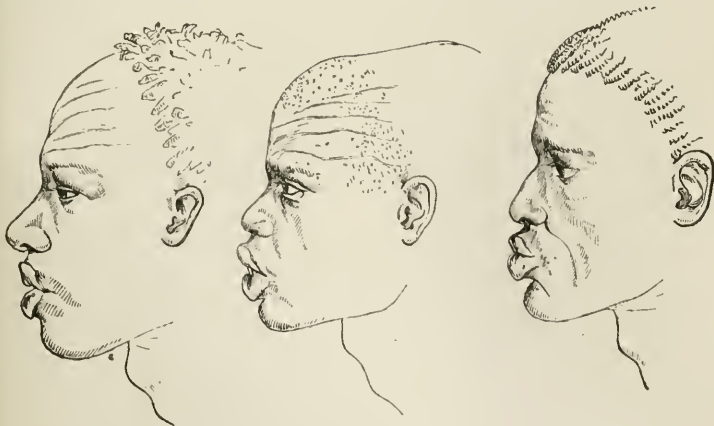
Although individual tribes of the Dinka, with regard to height and bodily size, stand pre-eminent in the scale of the human race, the majority of this western branch of the nation rarely exceeds a middle height. Of twenty-six representatives that were measured, the average height was about 5 ft. 7 in. According to this, the average size of the Dinka is inferior to that of the Kaffirs, but it exceeds that of Englishmen.

In their figure they are like the *swamp-men*, if such an expression may be allowed, presenting the same lankiness of limb which has been already noticed as characteristic of the Shillooks and Nueir. The upper part of the body appears shorter than among the less swarthy and more robust races who inhabit the rocky hills of the interior. The outline of their sinewy frame is very decidedly marked in the horizontal, angular shoulders; a long neck, slightly contracted at the base, corresponds with the head, which also gradually contracts towards the top and back, and which is generally somewhat flat and narrow. Ordinarily there is a strongly developed width of jaw. Altogether there is a general harmony pervading the whole figure, and the scientific student will hardly fail to recognise the evidence that nature has

pursued a definite end in the development which here exists. The Dinka must be reckoned amongst the darkest of races, but the deep black of their complexion gives place to a manifest tint of brown when the ashes are washed off with which they delight in rubbing themselves. When they have smeared themselves with oil, or taken a bath, their skin shines like dark bronze. The dull polish of chocolate may be taken as descriptive of the brighter hue; this, however, is seldom seen even when the ashes are cleared away, because the removal of the dead scales of cuticle, which then takes place, is followed by a greyish tint which spreads over the skin.

The blue tinge which has been attributed to the negro's skin is entirely a matter of imagination; it may be confidently asserted to be solely the reflection of the sky. This result of reflection is especially to be observed when we chance to see one of these swarthy fellows standing at the aperture of his gloomy hut, which gets no light but what enters by the door.

Any apparent uniformity of physiognomy is all an illusion: it originates more in the inexperience of the eye than in any positive resemblance of feature. The three profiles of which



Profiles of the Dinka.

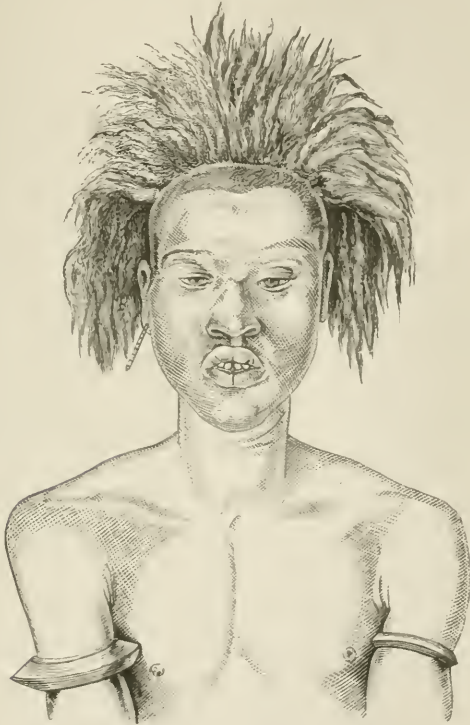
illustrations are given show a marked variety in form between nose and nose. Generally, however, according to our conventional æsthetic notions, the men are more comely than the women of the same age. Pleasant, not to say ordinarily human features, are rare: hideous contortions, increased by the grimaces to which the short eyebrows contribute by reducing the shallow foreheads to a mere nothing, give the majority an expression scarcely better than a baboon's. Still there are exceptions, and with regard to these it must at times be owned that they present a regularity of feature with which no fault could be found.

The hair of the Dinka is nearly always very meagre; it is generally closely shorn, except at the crown, where a tuft is left, which they ornament with ostrich feathers, in imitation of a heron. The helmet-shaped combs of the Shillooks are never seen, but tufts of woolly locks are much in fashion. Occasionally, but not often, the hair is plaited in fine braids, which run in parallel lines across the head. The women wear their hair either closely shaven or as short as possible.

The accompanying portrait represents what might be styled a Dinka dandy, distinguished for unusually long hair. He must be classed as belonging to that finer-formed race which has been mentioned. By continual combing and stroking with hair-pins, the hair of the negro loses much of its close curliness. Such was the case here: the hair, six inches long was trained up into points like tongues of flame, and these, standing stiffly up all round his head, gave the man a fiendish look, which was still further increased by its being dyed a foxy red.

This tint is the result of continual washing with cow-urine; a similar effect can be produced by the application for a fortnight of a mixture of dung and ashes. The beard never attains sufficient growth to be worth their attention. Their razors are of the most primitive description, consisting simply of carefully ground lance-tips.

Both sexes break off the lower incisor teeth, a custom which they practise in common with the majority of the natives of the district of the Bahr-el-Ghazal. The object of this hideous mutilation is hard to determine; its effect ap-



A Dinka Dandy.

pears in their inarticulate language, of which I suppose we could not imitate the sound, unless we submitted to the same ordeal. Some Africans file their incisor teeth to a point; others, like the Batoka of the Upper Zambesi, break out those of the upper jaw. The former of these practices appears comprehensible as increasing their capability for defence in single combat; and the latter is perhaps an imitation of their deified ruminants; but the reason why the Dinka should absolutely disfigure their lower jaw is quite beyond my

comprehension. The African races have commonly been reported as distinguished for their fine rows of teeth, and it was accordingly a matter of surprise that bad teeth were so often conspicuous. The aged on this account are little short of disgusting, for the upper teeth, from the deficiency of opposition from the lower, project far from the mouth and stick out like a finger-joint. So marked is this peculiarity that some of the people have acquired from the Nubians the *soubriquet* of Abu-Senoon, father jut-tooth.

Men and women alike pierce their ears in several places, and insert iron rings or little bars with iron tips. The women also bore the upper lip and fit in an iron pin, running through a bead, a custom which is common among the Nueir. Tattooing is only practised by the men, and always consists of about ten radiating strokes, which traverse forehead and temples, having for their centre the glabella or base of the nose: it is a symbol by which the Dinka are recognised at once.

The observation of Barth,\* that many heathen tribes consider clothing more necessary for men than for women is not applicable to the Dinka or any of the natives of the river plains. According to Dinka notions of propriety, it is becoming for none but women to wear any covering; any attire, even of the most moderate description, is considered unworthy of the men. The Nubians, who are always called Turks, do not certainly belong to the most carefully clothed of the human race, yet the Dinka always term them *women*, a designation which in this sense is quite common. I always appeared in a complete suit of clothes, and my apparel accordingly gained for me the ironical title of the "Turkish lady."

On the other hand the women here are scrupulously clothed with two aprons of untanned skin, which reach before

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\* Barth, vol. ii. p. 475.



and behind from the hips to the ankles, and are trimmed round the edges with rows of beads, small iron rings, and little bells. At that time, white beads, as large as peas, with blue spots, called "Genetotahdah" in the Khartoom market, and others an inch in diameter, called "Barrad" or hail-stones, which were principally worn by the men as necklaces, were all the rage, every other description being contemptuously rejected. In the course of a few years the fashions in beads change, and the store-houses in the Seribas of the Khartoomers get overstocked with supplies that are old-fashioned, and are consequently worthless.

The Dinka live in a veritable iron age—that is to say, they live in an age in which iron has still a high value; copper is not esteemed of corresponding importance. The wives of some of the wealthy are often laden with iron to such a degree that, without exaggeration, I may affirm, that I have seen several carrying about with them close upon half a hundredweight of these savage ornaments. The heavy rings with which the women load their wrists and ankles, clank and resound like the fetters of slaves. Free from any other domination, it is remarkable of this people how, nevertheless, they are not free from the fetters of fashion. The favourite ornaments of the men are massive ivory rings, which they wear round the upper part of the arm; the rich adorn themselves from elbows to wrists with a whole series of rings, close together so as to touch. An adornment for the neck of less distinguished character is formed of strings of plaited leather; the bracelets are cut out of hippopotamus hide; and the tails of cows and goats, in which every Dinka exquisite arrays himself, and with which he trims his weapons, are in common use.

Since the Dinka cannot do much with his miserable crop of hair, he turns his attention to caps and perukes in a way not unfrequent among Africans. Whilst I was with Kudy I often saw those strange specimens of head-gear which, in the shape

of a Circassian chain-helmet, are formed exclusively of large white bugle-beads, which in Khartoom are called "muria." This decoration is especially common amongst the Nueir.\* Another kind of head-dress is composed of ostrich feathers, and forms a light and effectual protection from the sun.

According to the custom, which seems to belong to all Africa, as a sign of grief the Dinka wear a cord round the neck; but amongst other nations we shall have occasion to notice several additional tokens to denote the loss of a member of a family.

Since the western territories of the Dinka in the alluvial flats nowhere produce any iron, their modes of manipulation of this metal are not so highly developed as among some other tribes which will subsequently come under our observation. Before the appearance of the Khartoomers, the Dyoor, who had settled within the limits of the Bongo and Dinka, in the vicinity of the soil which produced iron-ore, had performed all the smith's work which was required by the Dinka. At that time these Dyoor seem to have been brought by the Dinka to a similar state of vassalage as that in which they themselves now stand to the Nubians. The Bongo, although their land produces iron, were far too hostile to their neighbours to furnish them with a supply of iron in the way of commerce. The Dinka themselves, being exclusively occupied with their cattle-breeding, have no taste and find little time for any arduous work of the smithy; hence it happens that although their iron ornaments are numerous, the workmanship of them all is of the most primitive character.

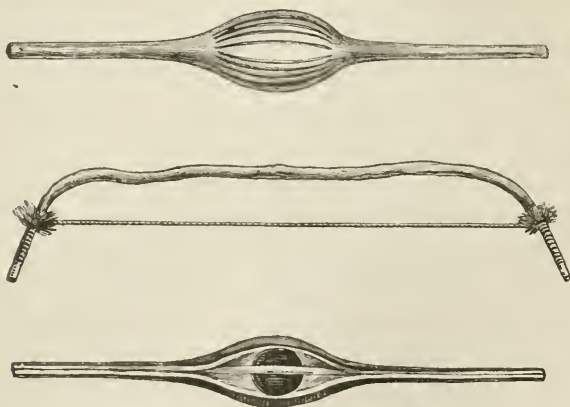
The most important weapon of the Dinka is the lance. Bows and arrows are unknown: the instruments that some travellers have mistaken for bows are only weapons of defence for parrying the blows of clubs. But really their favourite

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\* In Wood's 'Natural History of Man,' p. 522, there is an accurate illustration of these ornaments.

weapons are clubs and sticks, which they cut out of the hard wood of the Hegelig (*Balanites*), or from the native ebony (*Diospyrus mespiliformis*). This mode of defence is ridiculed by other nations, and the Niam-niam, with whom the Dinka have become acquainted by accompanying the Khartoomers in their ivory expeditions, deride them as "A-Tagbondo," or stick-people.

Similar conditions of life in different regions, even among dissimilar races, ever produce similar habits and tendencies. This is manifest in the numerous customs which the Dinka possess in common with the far-off Kaffirs. They have the same predilection for clubs and sticks, and use a shield of the same long oval form, cut out of buffalo hide, and which, in order to insure a firmer hold, is crossed by a stick, secured by being passed through slits cut in the thick leather. But the instruments for parrying club-blows depicted in the accompanying illustration are quite peculiar to the Dinka.



Dinka Instruments for parrying club blows.

As far as I know, no previous traveller has drawn attention to these strange contrivances for defence. They are of two kinds. One consists of a neatly-carved piece of wood, rather more than a yard long, with a hollow in the centre for the

protection of the hand: these are called "quayre." The other, which has been mistaken for a bow, is termed "dang," of which the substantial fibres seem peculiarly fitted for breaking the violence of any blow.

Everywhere, beyond a question, domestic cleanliness and care in the preparation of food are signs of a higher grade of external culture, and answer to a certain degree of intellectual superiority. I have travelled much in Europe, where the diversity of the external conditions of life is greater than in any other quarter of the world; I have had much opportunity of observation, and I am sure that I do not err in the conclusion that I draw. Not the size of the houses, nor the dimensions of the windows (for these are variously influenced by climate), not the clothing (for Sardis, Dalmatians, and Albanians, incontestably the least civilised of Europeans, are the most magnificently attired of all), but cleanliness and choice of food not only at once disclose a real distinction between nation and nation, but constitute a measure of the degrees of civilisation in individual provinces and districts. Now both these qualities, I aver, are found among the Dinka to a greater extent than elsewhere in Africa. First, as to the food.

In culinary matters the Dinka are certainly superior to the Nubians, and I should have little hesitation in pronouncing them even more expert than either the Arabs or the Egyptians. Their farinaceous and milk foods are in no way inferior to the most refined products of an European *cuisine*. The reaping, threshing, and sifting of the sorghum and penicillaria grain (the durra and dokhn of the Arabs) are brought to perfection by their female slaves, who subsequently granulate the meal like sago. In seasons of scarcity their talent for cooking has led them to the discovery of various novelties in the way of food. Like the tribes of Baghirmi, the Musgoo, and Adamawa, they make a preparation, very much in the Indian fashion, from the

farinaceous germs of the *Borassus* palm. They extract all its native bitterness by soaking and washing, and succeed in producing a fine meal, which is purely white. The substance procured from these germinating seeds has a look very similar to the root of the Florentine iris. They treat the tubers of the *Nymphæa* in very much the same way, and render them quite edible.

With the choice cookery corresponds also the decorum of their behaviour at meals. They certainly, in this point, more resemble ourselves than any Orientals. They do not all dip their hands at once into the same dish, like the Turks and Arabs, but assist themselves singly. A large dish of cooked farina is placed upon the ground, around which the guests recline, each with his gourd-shell of milk, or, better still, of butter, at his side; the first pours his milk only on the part which he touches, and when he has taken enough, he passes the dish to the next, and thus they eat in succession, but quite separately. The Dinka repudiate the Oriental superstition that envious looks can turn the food to poison, and have no fear of the "evil eye."

At times it greatly amused me to entertain Dinka ladies of rank in my tent, in order to pay them the compliment of my admiration of their perfection in the arts of cookery. On my folding table I laid out for them some European dishes, and they sat on my chairs. I was astonished at the readiness with which they fell into our mode of serving, for they handled our spoons and forks as if they were perfectly accustomed to them; but they nearly always carefully washed everything they had used, and returned it to its place.

In the interior of their dwellings, the Dinka are as clean as the Shillooks, sharing the same partiality for ashes as a bed. It ought to be mentioned that the traveller in this part of Africa is rarely troubled with vermin or fleas, which everywhere else, like desolation and slavery, seem invariably



to have followed the track of Islam. In the Western Soudan the torments of the night are represented as insupportable, so that the huts of the Hottentots are not worse. Among the Dinka it is entirely different. The only disquietude to a stranger in their houses arises from the snakes, which rustle in the straw roofs, and disturb his rest. Snakes are the only creatures to whom either Dinka or Shillooks pay any sort of reverence. The Dinka call them their "brethren," and look upon their slaughter as a crime. I was informed by witnesses which I had no cause to distrust, that the separate snakes are individually known to the householder, who calls them by name, and treats them as domestic animals. Their abundance here seemed to me very remarkable. Among the Bongo, on the other hand, I spent six months before I saw a single specimen, and it appears to be an established fact that, upon the whole, they are not generally common in Tropical Africa. Perhaps the species which is most frequent is the giant python (*Sebae*). Those which inhabit the Dinka huts are, as far as I could learn, not venomous; and, as evidence that they are harmless, I cite the scientific names of the three species: *Psammophis punctatus*, *Ps. sibilans*, and *Ahaetuella irregularis*.

The Dinka are far more particular than any other tribe in the choice of their animal food. There are many creeping things, which are not rejected by the Bongo and Niam-niam, which they loathe with the utmost disgust. Crocodiles, iguanas, frogs, crabs, and mice they never touch; but, connoisseurs of what is good, they use turtles for making soup. It is scarcely necessary to say that the accounts of the cannibalism of the Niam-niam excite as much horror amongst them as amongst ourselves. Nothing, likewise, is more repulsive to them than dog's flesh, which is enjoyed by the Mittoo—a fact which justifies us in the supposition that that tribe is addicted to cannibalism. Dinka, as well as Bongo, have declared to me in the most decided manner, that they

would rather die of hunger than eat the flesh of a dog. But a delicious morsel to the Dinka is the wild cat of the steppes, which is often found in this part of Africa, and is the origin of our domestic cat, to which it bears no slight resemblance. But more delicious than all they esteem the hare; and in order to illustrate their appreciation of it, a Dinka, to whom I was talking, naïvely asked me whether I knew what a Dinka did when he managed to kill a hare on the steppe by a lucky blow of his club? "He makes a fire," he added, "and roasts his game and eats it quietly, without saying anything about it at home."

Even before they had any intercourse with Mohammedan countries, a love of tobacco-smoking had been one of the traits of the Dinka, who use the same huge pipe-bowls as we have already observed amongst the Shillooks. A strong stem opens into a small calabash, which serves as a mouth-piece, and is filled with fine bast, to intercept the narcotic oils. Denarcotinizing, as it is termed, is quite an old African invention. Here, where tobacco does not grow at all plentifully, the process answers a double purpose, for, by taking off the top of the pipe, the bast can be removed, and, impregnated as it is with tobacco oil, it is subsequently chewed. The smoking apparatus is so ponderous that every one is obliged to sit down while he smokes.

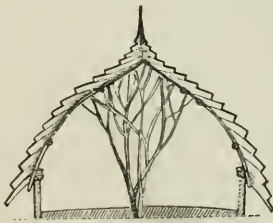
The Dinka dwellings consist of small groups of huts clustered in farmsteads over the cultivated plains. Villages in a proper sense there are none; but the cattle of separate districts are united in a large park, which the Khartoomers call a "murah."\* The accompanying drawing represents a Dinka farm surrounded by sorghum fields. Of the three huts, the one in the centre, with a double porchway, is set apart for the head of the family; that on the left is for the

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\* The derivation of "murah" would seem to be from "rah," rest, 'merah," a resting-place for cows, or "menah," a resting-place for camels.

women; whilst the largest and most imposing hut on the right is a hospital for sick cows, which require to be separated from the throngs in the murah that they may receive proper attention. Under an awning in the centre of the huts is the fireplace for the cooking, sheltered from the wind by a semi-circular screen of clay. The goats are kept within a small thorn fence, so that the daily supply of milk may be always at hand.

As a rule the huts of the Dinka are spacious, and more durable than those of other tribes who build their dwellings in the same conical form. They are not unfrequently 40 feet in diameter; their foundations are composed of a mixture of clay and chopped straw, and the supports of the roof are made of branches of acacia and other hard woods. Not content with supporting these with a single central prop, the Dinka erect a trunk with its spreading branches in the middle.



Sectional View, showing construction of Dinka Hut.

The roof is contrived out of layers of cut straw. These buildings endure for eight or ten years, and decay at length mainly through being worm-eaten. The huts of the Bongo, on the contrary, are built up much more rapidly, but rarely last as much as three years.

The principal plants that are here cultivated are sorghum and penicillaria, three kinds of beans, earth-nuts (*Arachis*), earth-peas (*Voandzeia subterranea*), sesame, yams, and Virginian tobacco; but we shall have a more ample opportunity of entering into the details of these crops when we speak of the Bongo, who cultivate nearly the same products of the soil.

The domestic animals are oxen, sheep, goats, and dogs; poultry was never to be seen, and the cause of its absence is inexplicable. The cattle belong to the Zebu race, and are

smaller than those of the Baggara and Hassanieh; they have a hump, their horns are slender, the fore part of the body prevailing so in size as to resemble an antelope. As to colour, the majority are nearly white, but it would be incorrect to say that either the speckled or the striped, the taw



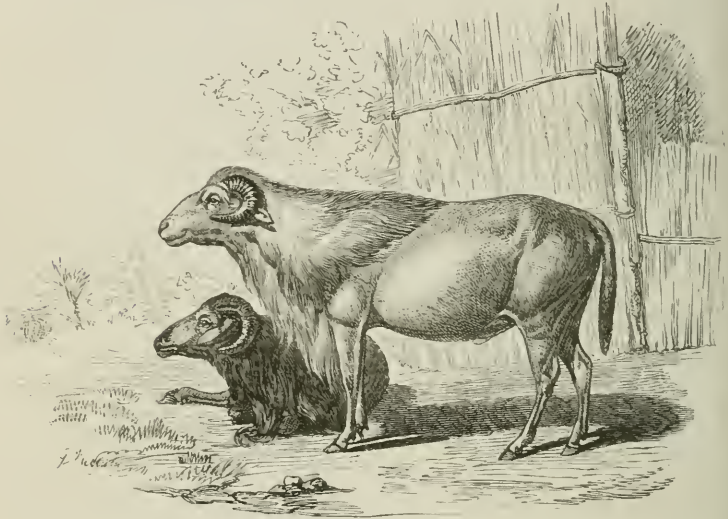
Dinka Bull.

or the brown, are wanting. The Dinka have separate expressions to denote every shade of colour of the breed, and indeed, their vocabulary for all that relates to cattle and cattle-breeding is more copious than that of any European tongue.

The sheep are of a peculiar breed, which is unique amongst the Dinka, Nueir, and Shillooks; farther on in the interior of the equatorial districts it is not known. Its chief characteristic consists of a shaggy appendage to the shoulders, breast, and neck, like a mane, whilst on the rest of the body, and on the meagre tail, the hair is quite short. This mantle of hair gives them an appearance like diminutive buffaloes, whilst their plump bodies and short legs increase the resemblance. Generally white, they are occasionally brown or

spotted, and in some rare cases I have seen them of quite a reddish hue.\* Like the pastoral people of Southern Africa, the Dinka have acquired the art of splitting the horns in their early growth, so as to increase their number at will.

The continual dampness of the pasture, especially throughout the rainy season, favours the development of revolting intestinal vermes, and the rain-pools in the dry months



Dinka Sheep.

become most prolific as breeding-places for *Cercariae*. I have frequently seen sheep suffering under disease, their ailment arising from their liver and gall-duets being choked up by these worms. The distoma, which is a denizen of every zone and extends even to Greenland, is found here an inch long.

The race of goats bred by the Dinka does not differ materially from the Ethiopian form, which we have already noticed † among the Bedouins of Nubia; its only distinc-

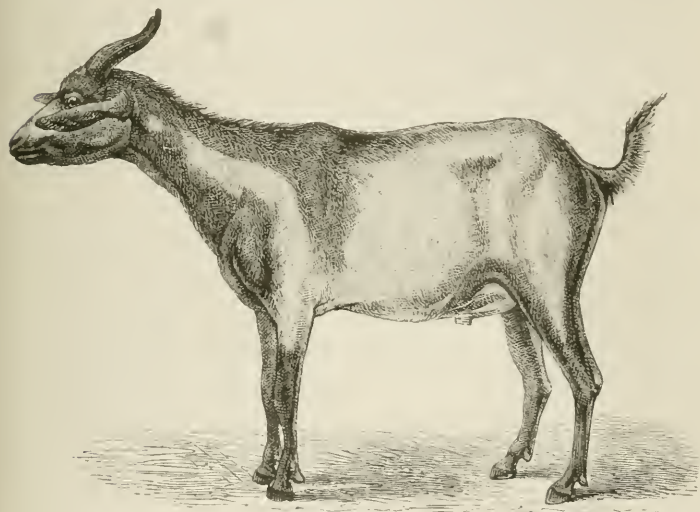
\* The illustration gives a likeness of a Dinka sheep, which must not, however, be confounded with the maned sheep of Morocco.

† Vide Chap. I., p. 33.



tion is being somewhat larger; in appearance it is always meagre, and its prevailing colour is that of a young grey colt, occasionally inclining to a dark iron-grey.

The dogs closely resemble the common village curs of Nubia, a cross between the greyhound of the Nubian steppes and the pariah of the streets of Cairo. It is not unusual for



Dinka Goat.

their colour to be brown, but by far the larger number are a tawny yellow.

Every idea and thought of the Dinka is how to acquire and maintain cattle: a kind of reverence would seem to be paid to them; even their offal is considered of high importance; the dung, which is burnt to ashes for sleeping in and for smearing their persons, and the urine, which is used for washing and as a substitute for salt, are their daily requisites. It must be owned that it is hard to reconcile this latter usage with our ideas of cleanliness. A cow is never slaughtered, but when sick it is segregated from the rest, and carefully tended in the large huts built for the purpose. Only those that die

naturally or by an accident are used as food. All this, which exists amongst most of the pastoral tribes of Africa, may perchance appear to be a lingering remnant of an exploded cattle-worship; but I may draw attention to the fact that the Dinka are by no means disinclined to partake of any feast of their flesh, provided that the slaughtered animal was not their own property. It is thus more the delight of actual possession, than any superstitious estimate, that makes the cow to them an object of reverence. Indescribable is the grief when either death or rapine has robbed a Dinka of his cattle. He is prepared to redeem their loss by the heaviest sacrifices, for they are dearer to him than wife or child. A dead cow is not, however, wantonly buried; the negro is not sentimental enough for that; such an occurrence is soon bruited abroad, and the neighbours institute a carousal, which is quite an epoch in their monotonous life. The bereaved owner himself is, however, too much afflicted at the loss to be able to touch a morsel of the carcase of his departed beast. Not unfrequently in their sorrow the Dinka remain for days silent and abstracted, as though their trouble were too heavy for them to bear.

The only domestic animal which is slaughtered amongst them is the goat, which scarcely represents the thirtieth part of the value of a cow. A heifer has three times the value, and a ewe that has calved double the value of a steer. In common with the other tribes of this part of Africa they use rather a singular method of butchering their cattle, proceeding, whenever it is practicable, by the way of making a violent stab in the nape of the neck by means of a spear. This causes immediate death, and is a method which gives but little trouble.

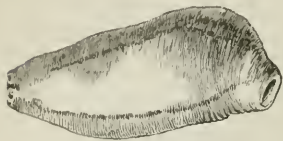
It is not difficult to understand how people like the Dinka should make their whole delight to centre in having thriving cattle-farms, but to us their profitless practice of emasculation must remain incomprehensible. The herdsmen cut their

bulls and bucks with the mere intention of feasting their eyes upon a development of fat which is always obnoxious to the stomach. Almost the third part of their bulls are submitted to the knife, and the same proportion of their goats and rams, and even their dogs, with the design of rendering them more agile, more enduring, and fitter for the chase; this also being the reason why their ears and tails are clipped. Ask the Dinka what good they get from their possessions of oxen, and they have ever the answer ready that it is quite enough if they get fat and look nice. Such is the way in which they express their satisfaction and their pride.

The failure of the beard amongst the male cattle so treated is a topic that suggests some observations. In spite of the anxiety and care which the Dinka bestow upon their herds, there is no mistake about the degeneration of the race. The way in which I chiefly account for this is that there is not enough crossing of breeds—in fact, that there is almost a total exclusion of any strange stock. I should say that hardly one in a hundred of the beasts is capable of either bearing a burden or going a journey, a purpose, however, to which none of the negroes of the Upper Nile ever seem to put them. But nothing is more remarkable than the entire absence of fat which characterises them; a single pound of fat could not be obtained from a whole ox; and not only does this deficiency extend to the parts that are ordinarily plump and fleshy, but the spinal marrow itself is so utterly dry that in a stewpan it runs off like white of egg, without depositing a particle of grease. Eye-witnesses have assured me that Miss Tinné, during her residence here, although she had whole herds at her command, could never get her supply of pomade replenished.

Again the cattle of the Dinka are not provided with salt in any form whatever, which may in a measure account for the degenerating; it may explain the prevalence, all but universal, of the worms known as “kyatt,” which cover

the first stomach or paunch, of nearly all their cattle. These worms in Europe are included in the genus of the *Amphistoma*; they are like an oval bag, something under half an inch long, and generally as red as port wine.



"Kyatt" Worm.

The sheep and he-goats that are left are quite devoid of fat; their flesh when it is cooked has an odious soapy flavour, and is

altogether more repulsive than the rankest roast antelope.

As an illustration of the degree to which the Dinka devote all their attention to cattle-breeding, and find their chief delight in it, it may be mentioned that the great amusement of the children is to mould goats and bullocks out of clay. Travellers have related the same fact about the children of the Makololo; and, for my part, I could not help having a kind of satisfaction when I saw these first efforts at sculpture in a land where there are no pictures and no images of deities.

The accompanying illustration is designed to exhibit something of the daily routine of the Dinka. It represents one of those *murahs* or cattle-parks, of which I have seen hundreds. It depicts the scene at about five o'clock in the afternoon. In the foreground there are specimens of the cattle of the country. The men in charge are busied in collecting up into heaps the dung that has been exposed during the day to be dried in the sun. Clouds of reeking vapour fill the *murah* throughout the night and drive away the pestiferous insects. The herds have just been driven to their quarters, and each animal is fastened by a leather collar to its own wooden peg. Towards the left, on a pile of ashes, sit the owners of this section of the *murah*. The ashes which are produced in the course of a year raise the level of the entire estate. Semi-circular huts erected on the hillocks afford the owners temporary accommodation when they quit their homes some





J. Cooper

PINKA CATTLE-PARK.





miles away and come to feast their eyes upon the goodly spectacle of their wealth.

The milking is performed in the morning hours. Truly miserable is the yield, and the most prolific of the cows does not give as much as one of our ordinary goats. This deficiency of milk is another witness of the deterioration of the breed, and no one would believe the quantity of milk it takes to produce a single pound of butter. The dew hardly goes off before ten o'clock, and it is not until that hour that the herds are driven out. It is quite rare for a *murah* to hold less than 2000 beasts, and some, as I have mentioned, are capable of holding 10,000. Upon an average I should reckon that for every head of the population there would be found at least three of cattle; of course, there is no lack of the poor and the destitute, and these obviously are the slaves and dependents of the rich. So large are the numbers of the Dinka, and so extensive their territory, that it must be expected that they will long perpetuate their existence amongst the promiscuous inhabitants of Africa. So far as regards their race, their line of life, and their customs, they have all the material of national unity; but where they fail is that their tribes not only make war upon each other, but submit to be enlisted as the instruments of treachery by intruders from outside. That the *Khartoomers* have not been able hitherto to make good their footing upon Dinka soil is due more to a general resistance to external control than to any internal condition of concord. Every attempt to bring this people into subjection has been quite a failure, and not at all the easy matter it proved with the *Bongo* and some other communities. The southern people are emphatically agricultural, for the most part devoted to peaceful pursuits, and so they are wanting in that kind of organisation which could unite them into a formidable body for mutual resistance. The marked peculiarity of the Dinka, as well as their adherence to all their wonted habits, renders them thoroughly useless as far

as regards the slave traffic. Although the people of Khartoom for fifteen years or more have traversed their country, they have never been able in any way to make use of the material which might be afforded by a regulated commercial intercourse.

The Bongo and the Niam-niam are alike greedy of bits of clothing, but the Dinka are utterly indifferent to anything of the sort. The women, on account of their proficiency in housekeeping, play a large part in the Khartoom slave-trade, but they give their masters infinitely more trouble than the slaves of any other race. The men that were captured, in days now gone by, were one and all converted into soldiers by the Government, and, even to this date, so large a majority of the dark-skinned troops of Egypt consists of men of the Dinka, that their well-formed persons, their tall stature, and their innate courage, would be missed very considerably from the ranks. Adam Pasha, who at the time of my visit had the military command in the Soudan, was himself a Dinka by birth.

I must be allowed to pass lightly over, as an equivocal topic, the religion of a people whose dialect I was unable adequately to master. It seems to me like a desert of mirages, or as a playground, where the children of fancy enjoy their sport. The creed of the Dinka apparently centres itself upon the institution to which they give the name of the Cogoor, and which embraces a society of necromancers and jugglers by profession. Other travellers have recorded a variety of marvels about their sleight of hand, their ventriloquism, their conjurations, and their familiarity with the ghosts of the dead ; but of these I shall defer all I have to say till I come by-and-by to speak generally about casting out devils.

Before we leave the Dinka we must not omit to recall their virtues, in order that we may fairly estimate the charge that has been laid against them of cruelty in war. It is affirmed that they are pitiless and unrelenting in fight, that they are never known to give quarter, and revel in wild

dances around the bodies of their slaughtered foes: a whole village will take their share in the orgies which one of the community will start, whenever, either by lance or club, he has prostrated an antagonist. But, for my part, I am ready to certify that there are Dinka whose tenderness and compassion are beyond a question. One of the Bongo related to me, as a matter of his own experience, that he had been severely wounded upon an expedition which the Nubians had set on foot against the Dinka to steal their cattle: he had laid himself down just outside a Dinka's house, and the owner had not simply protected him against all his prosecutors, who considered themselves amply justified in proceeding to every extreme of vengeance, but kept him till he had regained his health: not content with that, he provided him with an escort back, and did not abandon him till he was safe and sound again amongst his own people.

Notwithstanding, then, that certain instances may be alleged which seem to demonstrate that the character of the Dinka is unfeeling, these cases never refer to such as are bound by the ties of kindred. Parents do not desert their children, nor are brothers faithless to brothers, but are ever prompt to render whatever aid is possible. The accusation is quite unjustifiable that family affection, in our sense, is at a low ebb among them. In the spring of 1871, whilst I was staying in the Seriba of Kurshook Ali on the Dyoor, I witnessed a circumstance which I may relate as a singular corroboration of my opinion. A Dinka man, who had been one of the bearers who had carried my stores from the Meshera, was about to return to his own home in the territory of Ghattas, but he had been attacked by the guinea-worm, and his feet were so swollen that it was with the utmost difficulty that he could proceed a step, and he was obliged to remain behind alone. Everything was excessively scarce and dear, and he was glad to subsist on a few handfuls of durra and on what scraps we gave him from our meals;

in this way he dragged on, and, with a little patience, would have been all right: however, he was not suffered to wait long; his father appeared to fetch him. This old man had brought neither cart nor donkey, but he set out and carried away the great strapping fellow, who was six feet high, for a distance of fifteen or sixteen leagues, on his own shoulders. This incident was regarded by the other natives as a mere matter of course.

In what I have said, I have attempted to describe the leading features in the life of the Dinka, being desirous to exhibit such details as may allow a correct judgment to be formed of the true relations which exist between the Khar-toomers and this people, who are at once so pastoral and yet so prepared for war.

Here, at the village of Kudy, our caravan had accomplished about half its journey, which was altogether a little over 90 miles. It was on the afternoon of the 28th of March that we started afresh towards Ghattas's Seriba, immediately after the gun accident which I have related. On account of their late liberal diet, our bearers did not advance with their usual alacrity. We proceeded for three hours, and at a well called Pamog, 20 feet deep, we halted for the night.

On the next day our route led through forests, and we entered upon the territory of the Al-Waj. The inhabitants regarded us as enemies, and, seizing their bows and arrows, left their dwellings and, like frightened game, flocked to the adjacent woods. According to our Dinka interpreters, the Al-Waj do not belong to the Dinka race, but form an enclave, or isolated community, of unknown origin. As we entered the wood, for the purpose of botanising, the savages were continually starting up before us, causing no little uneasiness to my companions, who suspected a flight of arrows from every thicket. To say the truth, the natives had been so hardly treated that it could not be expected of them to meet their oppressors very hospitably.



We should have proceeded far more quickly, but that we were under the necessity at every halt to send to a distance all round to procure a fresh supply of corn for our numerous party. This continually caused the delay of several hours, as the farms were often very desolate and ill supplied. The Al-Waj district is an almost unbroken forest in the midst of open flats. Throughout the rainy season it is hardly better than one vast puddle. The vestiges of elephants are frequent at all times; and both right and left were giraffes trotting over the rugged grass and wagging their tall heads. The appearance of giraffes when they are running is very extraordinary, and, as they are seen through the grey twilight of the morning, they have a look half spectral and half grotesque; they seem to nod and bow like figures in the ill-managed drops of a second-class theatre.

After leaving the village of the Al-Waj we proceeded for three leagues through the forest, and found ourselves again on the extensive steppe. At noon on the following day we reached the district of the Dyuihr, a clay flat, devoid of trees. The Khartoomers cannot pronounce the native names correctly, and call this people the Dyeraweel. The large villages were now deserted, the population, on account of the scarcity of water and pasturage, having gone to the river-banks. For two nights we sacrificed our rest and hurried onwards by forced marches. It was just before sunrise that we reached the first rocky irregularity in the soil, a general ascent in the ground being quite perceptible. Bush-forests now took the place of the steppes, which we had long found to be but scantily relieved by thickets. A luxuriant foliage revealed itself, presenting one of those striking *limits of vegetation* which are so rarely to be met with in Africa. From this interesting locality I proceeded for another three leagues, thus accomplishing the preliminary object of my journey. I was in the chief Seriba of Ghattas, which for some months to come I proposed to make my head-quarters.

## CHAPTER V.

Reception at the Seriba. Population. Fertility. Salubrity. Management. Poor prospects of the ivory trade. Failure of European firms in Khartoom. Idrees, the chief agent. Domestic arrangements. Beauties of spring. The daughter Seriba Geer. Bit of primeval forest. Giraffe-hunt. Bamboo jungle. Negro festival and music. Trip to the Dyoor and to Wow. Desertion of bearers. Good entertainment. Marquis Antinori and Vaysière. Old servant of Petherick's. Hornblende. Height of the water of the Dyoor. Apostrophe to the river. A model Seriba. First acquaintance with Niam-niam. Trader from Tunis. The Wow River. Seriba Agabd in Wow. Edible fruits of the country. Wild buffaloes. Instability of dwellings. Caama and Leucotis antelopes. Numerous butterflies. Bear-baboons. Pharaoh palms. Daily life of the Dyoor. Their race. Iron-smelting. Formation of huts. Idyll of village life. Hunting with snares. Women's work. Graves. Care of young and old.

OF the character of the buildings, the arrangements and mode of life in the settlements of the Khartoomers, I had been able from hearsay to form a very imperfect idea. My curiosity was therefore very considerably awakened as our caravan approached the Seriba of Ghattas. Half a league from the place we came to a halt in order to give the customary warning by firing a salute, and without farther delay started afresh. Mounted on a donkey, and surrounded by my attendants, I went at the head of the *cortége*. All round the settlement for some distance the land is entirely cultivated, and the view as we proceeded was only broken by large trees dotted here and there, which in their summer verdure stood out in charming contrast to the cheerless grey of the desert steppe. Soon rising from the plain appeared the tops of the conical huts embracing nearly the whole horizon. I looked in vain for either fortifications, walls,

bastions, or watch-towers, with which I had imagined that a Khartoomer's Seriba must be provided. In fact, there was hardly anything to distinguish it from any of the villages of the Dinka which are scattered over the cultivated flats.

A motley crowd, relieved by many a bright bit of colour, presented itself and formed a lively spectacle such as was scarcely to be expected to break in upon the monotony of an African landscape. We were received with a rattling salute from a number of rusty rifles, and there was every disposition to do the honours of our arrival in a becoming manner. Elegantly attired in an Oriental costume, Ghattas's agent approached with the gestures of welcome, and proceeded to conduct me to the hut which for some weeks already had been prepared for my reception. For the first time I now observed that the area in the centre of the huts was surrounded by a lofty square palisade; through the narrow gateway of this, with lowered banners and amidst the sound of gongs and kettle-drums, our cavalcade passed on.

With this chief Seriba are associated five smaller settlements in the adjoining Bongo country, and four more in remoter spots. It lies on the border-lines of the three races, the Dinka, the Dyoor, and the Bongo. From an insignificant beginning it had, in the course of thirteen years, increased to its present importance. A number of Gellahba, Nubian, and other merchants, had taken up their abode on large estates within its precincts; and here it was that they completed their purchases of slaves in order to carry them on to Darfur and Kordofan. The garrison was composed almost exclusively of natives of Dongola; there were, however, a few Sheigeah and men of Kordofan among them, and these, including the numerous *employés* of Ghattas, made the resident armed force not much under 250 men. To these should be added some hundreds of slaves reserved for the market, or divided as part of their pay amongst the soldiers, and several hundreds more, male and female, who

are in actual service. The aggregate population therefore of this establishment almost equals that of a small town, and amounts to at least 1000 souls.

For two miles round the Seriba the land is partitioned into fields. Enclosed by dense bush forests, of which the trees rarely exceed forty feet in height, this wide expanse is industriously tilled by the natives who have settled in the vicinity, and furnishes the greater part of the annual supply of sorghum necessary for the garrison. Numerous little villages belonging to the three adjoining people are scattered all about, the fertility of the soil, so much above the average of the district, causing the proximity to the settlement to be held in high estimation. The surface-soil above the iron ore has a depth of three to four feet. The extreme productiveness of the luxuriant tropics is well exemplified in these fields, which for thirteen years have undergone continual tillage without once lying fallow and with no other manuring but what is afforded by the uprooted weeds. A like luxuriance is characteristic of the forests, which year after year, from the immediate vicinity, continue to supply the spreading colony with abundance of fuel.

In the rainy season the place is surrounded by pools, which disappear completely during the winter months; parts of the soil in and about the fields become for the time quite marshy, and at intervals large tracts of the lower steppes, for miles together, are little better than swamps. The Seriba is not elevated more than 100 feet above the mean level of the Gazelle, but in spite of everything the climate is far more salubrious and enjoyable than in many districts of the Egyptian Soudan. This may partly be accounted for by the fact that very few domestic animals are kept, so that the air is uninfected by their carcasses, whilst the reverse is generally the case in the large market towns of the Soudan. Camels, as I have said, are never seen; horses and mules are only used as signs of special

luxury on the part of the Seriba authorities; the ass alone manages to drag out a precarious existence in the unfavourable climate, and to defy the fate which has hitherto attended all efforts for its acclimatisation. Fevers indeed are common, though they rarely carry off new comers. Hitherto but few white men have come to make experience of the climate in this portion of Africa; and up to the time of my sojourn the visits of either Turks or Egyptians had been almost as rare.

The district between Ghattas's six Seribas in the northern Bongo country and immediately under his authority, extends over an area of about 200 square miles, of which at least 45 miles are under cultivation. The total population, to judge by the number of huts and by the bearers stationed in different parts, can hardly amount to much less than 12,000. This domain, worth millions of pounds were it situate in Europe, might, I believe, at any time be bought from its owner for 20,000 dollars: and this I mention as a proof of how small is the profit actually yielded by these settlements, which have been started by so magnificent a spirit of enterprise. I could show by reliable statistics that in some years the returns from the ivory have fallen far short of the expenditure. The year of my arrival may perhaps be considered as an average season, and in this the ivory sent to Khartoom realised scarcely 10,000 Maria Theresa dollars. The expenses of keeping up two or three well-manned boats, so as to insure uninterrupted intercourse with Khartoom, are considerable, while from any traffic in slaves the owner of the Seriba has little to expect. In one way, however, slaves do occasionally contribute a secondary profit to the expeditions. In times when hostilities break out and the proper stores from Khartoom cannot be obtained, the agents are induced to part with whatever slaves they have to the Gellahba for a mere bagatelle; they exchange them for calico or anything else they can get, and make use of the proceeds to pay the soldiers.



When affairs are prospering, a month's pay for a soldier is five Maria Theresa dollars. One of the great points with the agents is to spare the merchant any outlay of ready money: he therefore, as often as he can, pays the mercenaries in goods, charging them exorbitant prices for any articles obtained from his stores; on the other hand, he makes this up to them in a measure by allowing them a share in the plunder of slaves or of cattle; the soldiers in their turn can dispose of what booty they may get, all negotiations being generally conducted by the regular slave-dealers. It is very seldom that the men are wary enough to keep independent of the agent in their requirements, or are able, even in the course of many years, to lay by in Khartoom any considerable amount of money. The majority are pledged beforehand to continual service; nevertheless not unfrequently they contrive to escape and, without any intimation, join the company of some competitor, who (in the lawless condition of the country) quietly scorns all efforts to reclaim them. Such cases as these inevitably give rise to repeated contentions between the various Seribas. The annual cattle-plunder, moreover, does not nearly suffice either to attract or adequately to repay the hard services of the Nubian soldier, nor does it go far to remunerate the native bearers, who perform all the transport from the Niam-niam countries to the river. All matters of commerce even in these remote regions are ostensibly conducted in a legitimate mercantile way. For the opening of the ivory traffic with the Niam-niam, as well as for the purpose of buying supplies for the people during expeditions which often last six or seven months, huge bars of copper and beads of every description have to be provided. These are dear, on account of the commission which is paid in Alexandria. The bearers, it is true, are subject with the submission of serfs to the authorities at the Seriba; but as an encouragement to them in their work they can claim

a stipulated proportion of the goods, and this in the course of the year constitutes no unimportant addition to the outlay.

Altogether the Upper Nile traffic was carried on at great pecuniary risk, and its prospects were far from favourable. As I saw it, it was dependent for any amount of success upon the plunder which was made alike upon cattle and upon men, and upon the levies of corn and provisions which were exacted from the natives. Without the aid of the Nubian soldiers the expeditions could not be secure. These soldiers only come to escape the rigorousness of the Egyptian Government in their own land; they participate in the profits, and yet without them the monopoly could not be maintained. The Government could avail nothing to protect a legal business; neither could any European enterprise hope, for many successive years, to be able to work a profitable trade.

The few Europeans who ever really opened transactions in these countries did indeed pay their people in hard cash and refused to have anything to do either with the slave trade or cattle-stealing, limiting their operations exclusively to the purchase of ivory and to elephant-hunting in the districts adjacent to their settlements. Just as might be expected, however, they were soon compelled to withdraw from their undertaking—either because, on the one hand, the stock of ivory in their immediate vicinity was exhausted, or, on the other, because they found that they could not compete with the native firms, who were backed by the illegal means I have mentioned. Since their withdrawal, no new speculator has attempted to follow in their steps; and as year by year the Khartoom trade loses its European representatives, it appears as though, in course of time, the export business will pass out of European hands. Nothing will prevent this, unless some important modifications should occur in the southern provinces of Egypt. Sanguine of

success, Ismail Pasha has projected the formation of a railway to Khartoom; and, considering the general aspect of affairs as I have related them, this great undertaking deserves the unqualified support of all who do not despair of the ultimate victory of right.

A mere slave when at home, Ghattas's plenipotentiary, Idrees, was here an important personage, invested with absolute power, and swaggered about like an autocrat. By birth a negro, he had not on that account less influence over the Nubians than any other official—for it is not according to the law of Islam to allow national enmity to be antagonistic to personal rank. I was received with all the courtesy due to my credentials, and for the first few days found myself literally loaded with presents. Provisions of every sort were placed at my disposal, whilst my people had free board for a month in Idrees's quarters. Two neatly-built huts of moderate size, within the palisade, were prepared for me, but these were not nearly sufficient to accommodate me with all my baggage. The actual Seriba, about 200 paces square, was so crammed with huts, that not a spot could be discovered where it was possible to erect a more spacious residence. Outside the enclosure, where the buildings were more scattered over the fields, I was not permitted to lodge. I was told how it had happened, and was likely to happen again, that the natives skulked about at night and murdered people in their sleep. This statement I was forced, whether I would or not, to accept, and temporarily, at all events, to content myself with my cramped abode, eighteen feet across.

The huts are built of bamboo and straw; the conical roof rests on a kind of basket-work of bamboo, which is daubed inside with clay, in a way that is imitated from the almost petrified erections of the white ants. The pagan negroes lavish far more care upon their huts than the Mohammedan inhabitants of the Soudan, who, although the bamboo grows so abundantly among them, do not succeed in giving their

“tokkuls” nearly so much symmetry. Here they possess the art of erecting roofs which are perfectly water-tight, and which are so light that they do not require heavy posts to hold them together on the walls. The covering for the roof is formed, in the first place upon the ground, with handfuls of stalks laid side by side and knotted together. These are afterwards plaited into long strips, which are then laid one above the other, like the flounces of a lady’s dress—a comparison which is further the more appropriate, because the structure of the frame-work is exactly like a hooped petticoat.

I would not allow the walls of the tokkul, in which I generally passed my time, to be cemented with clay, partly because I liked the airiness of the basket-work, and partly because light was necessary for my daily occupations. There seemed to me two other advantages—first, on dry days, my goods would more rapidly recover the effect of the wet to which they had been exposed; and, secondly, I should be less plagued with rats than those who occupied the plastered huts. In stormy weather, it is true, I had to suffer a certain amount of discomfort. To increase my storage-room I contrived some shelves and stands out of bamboo-canes; I had also brought from Khartoom some deal planks, expressly for the manufacture of the tables which were necessary for my botanical pursuits. A traveller who is in possession of bamboos, cow-hide, bladder, and clay, will find himself not very inadequately supplied with representatives of nearly all the building materials of Europe.

My excursions about the neighbourhood soon began, and these, with the arrangement of my daily collections, occupied the greater part of my time. In unflinching good health, I passed the first few weeks in a transport of joy, literally enraptured by the unrivalled loveliness of nature. The early rains had commenced, and were clothing all the park-like scenery, meadows, trees, and shrubs, with the verdure of spring. Emulating the tulips and hyacinths of our own

gardens, sprang up everywhere splendid bulbous plants; whilst amongst the fresh foliage gleamed blossoms of the gayest hue. The April rains are not continuous, but nevertheless, trees and underwood were all in bloom, and the grass was like a lawn for smoothness. In Tropical Africa, after long continuance of rain, the grass may be considered more as a defect than an ornament in the landscape: the obstructions which it interposes to the view of the traveller considerably mar his enjoyment of the scenery; but throughout the period of the early rains its growth is remarkably slow, and it takes some months to attain a height sufficient to conceal the numerous flowering weeds and bulbs which display their blossoms at the same season.

The territory of the Dinka includes nearly the whole low ground, extending right away to the Gazelle. It is a vast plain of dark alluvial clay, of which the uniformity is not broken by a single hill or mass of rock, any tracts of forest being of very limited extent. As they approach the districts of the Bongo and the Dyoor, the Dinka steppes lose much of that park-like aspect which they here present. Indeed, very marked is the contrast in the character of the scenery which appears on entering those districts; for to the very borders of the Dinka reaches that enormous table-land of ferruginous soil which, unbroken except by gentle undulations or by isolated mounds of gneiss, gradually ascends to the Equator. This plain appears to cover the greater part of the centre of the continent, even if it does not extend as far as Benguela and the shores of the Niger. From my own experience, I can certify that the general geological features of the soil, as exhibited as far south as the latitude of  $4^{\circ}$ , are identical with those which were conspicuous here, where the latitude was between  $7^{\circ}$  and  $8^{\circ}$  N.

At the end of a fortnight I made a trip to the south-east, the first of a series of excursions to Ghattas's different Seribas, which lay four or five leagues apart. On this tour I learnt



something of the river Tondy, on which is established the Seriba known as Addai. The river was now at its lowest level, and was flowing north-east in a tolerably rapid current, between precipitous banks fifteen feet in height. In depth it varied from four to seven feet, and it was about thirty feet in breadth; in the rainy season, however, for three miles, the adjacent steppes are covered with its floods, which are always very prolific in fish. Before the Tondy joins the Gazelle, as it does in the district of the Nueir, it spreads irregularly over the low-lying country and leaves its shores quite undefined. In this way it forms a number of swamps, all but inaccessible, to which the Dinka, whenever they are threatened by plundering excursions from the Seribas, lose no time in driving their herds.

Although the Tondy is nearly as long as the Dyoor, it is very inferior in its volume of water. Like several of the less important rivers of this region, it flows for a long distance without any appreciable increase either in size or speed. These streams intersect the country and cut it up into narrow sections, which are rarely designated on the maps.

The second of the Seribas which I visited was called Geer, and was just four leagues to the south of the chief settlement. It was surrounded by bamboo-jungles, and was situated in a prolific corn-valley, watered by a tributary of the Tondy. It contained about 800 huts, occupied by Bongo, who had settled there.

The road to Geer, nearly all the way, was over a firm, rocky soil, through bush forests, swarming with wart-hogs (*Phaco-chærus*). About three-quarters of a league on the way, stood a dense mass of lofty trees, not unlike an alder grove. It was traversed by rain-courses, and surrounded by low swampy steppes, which in the rainy season are entirely under water. The wood consisted mainly of tall uncariæ and eugeniæ, 80 feet in height, of which the long, straight stems were crowned by spreading foliage: it was the first bit of the

primæval forests which fill up the valleys through which flow the rivers of the Niam-niam. I paid many visits to this interesting spot; by the people in the Seriba it was termed Genana, the Arabic word for a garden. In its grateful shade grew dense thickets of red-blossomed melastomaceæ, intermingled with giant aroidæ (*Amorphophallus*), and bowers of creepers. The character of the vegetation was in striking contrast to the other forests of the district, and for the first time reminded me of the splendour of our northern woods—it was like an enclave of the luxuriant flora of West Africa, transported to this region of bushes and steppes.

On the adjacent plains herds of giraffes were very frequently seen. To bring down one of these giraffes was a matter of but little difficulty. They pace unconcernedly from bush to bush, taking their choice amidst the varieties of herbage, and I was surprised to find that it required half-a-dozen shots before a herd of nearly twenty could be started into flight; but, once off, there was no gaining upon them, and, like the fleetest of sailing-vessels, they disappeared on the horizon. I was on this day treated to the rare delicacy of a giraffe's tongue; there was some trouble in finding a dish on which it could be served, and I suppose that the longest fish-platter would hardly suffice for the display of this dainty. I had formerly tasted the flesh in Gallabat, and as I had abundance of beef in the Seriba, the carcase was distributed between my bearers. Roast giraffe may be reckoned amongst the better class of game, and is not unlike veal.

Geer provides the whole neighbourhood with bamboos. The African species (*Bambusa abyssinica*) seems to possess a character superior to what ordinarily belongs elsewhere to that useful product of the tropics. It is common on the lower terraces of Abyssinia and in all the rocky parts of the Upper Nile district, where the climate is sufficiently moist; it is found generally on river banks, though but rarely on the open steppes.

The canes grow to a height of thirty or forty feet, and the stoutest specimens that came under my notice were between two and three inches in diameter. They are not so swollen at the joints as the Chinese and Indian sorts; but this is an advantage, since they are more easily split. Even after repeated boiling, the young shoots were never eatable.

For two nights and a day whilst I was in Geer, the natives were abandoning themselves to their wild orgies, which now for the first time I saw in their full unbridled swing. The festival was held to celebrate the sowing of the crops; and confident in the hope that the coming season would bring abundant rains, these light-hearted Bongo anticipated their harvest. For the preparation of their beer they encroached very lavishly on their present corn stores, quite indifferent to the fact that for the next two months they would be reduced to the necessity of grubbing after roots and devouring any chance bird or even any creeping thing that might come in their way. Incredible quantities of "legyee" were consumed, so as to raise the party to the degree of excitement necessary for so prolonged a revel. In honour of the occasion there was produced a large array of musical instruments, a detailed account of which shall be given hereafter, but the confusion of sound beggared the raging of all the elements and made me marvel as to what music might come to. They danced till their bodies reeked again with the oil of the butter tree. Had they been made of india-rubber, their movements could scarcely have been more elastic; indeed, their skins had all the appearance of gutta-percha. The whole scene was more like a fantoccini than any diversion of living beings.

By the end of April the vegetation was so far developed that I might fairly reckon on a larger botanical collection on a longer excursion. Accordingly, accompanied by my servants and a few bearers, I set out towards the west, designing to visit the Seribas belonging to Kurshook Ali and Agahd, and to explore the River Dyoor. I was everywhere received

most hospitably, and thus had every encouragement to make similar trips amongst the various Seribas. As a rule I did not produce my letters of introduction to the agents until the second day, that I might prove whether my welcome was a mere official service, or was accorded freely and by good-will. I had never cause to complain: the agents, one and all, showed me the greatest attention, entertained me handsomely, and placed at my disposal all that I could desire. Their courtesy went so far that, although the country was perfectly safe, they insisted on providing me with a guard of soldiers. In addition to this, the local governors of the negro villages always escorted my little caravan from stage to stage. I found that the whole country was occupied, at intervals of five or six leagues, with settlements of the Khartoomers, in their palisaded Seribas. The inhabitants interchange their visits as freely as any gentlemen in Europe.

On the third day after my start all my bearers, who had contracted to serve me for a sum which would be represented by half-a-crown a day, deserted; they were afraid, perhaps not without cause, that their burdens of pickings and pullings would daily increase. This little incident, for which I was quite prepared, had its effect on the remainder of my journey. I for my part was perfectly agreeable to their desertion, for I could obtain gratis as many bearers as I required. Of course, I had nothing to pay the runaways, and was free from all charges to bearers for the future. In this I had no compunction, knowing that I had every right to claim the same assistance and courtesy that is accorded to any ordinary traveller amongst the Khartoomers' Seribas, and to have my baggage conveyed from one place to another.

My people had glorious times in the Seribas. There was mutton without stint; and whole animals were slaughtered even for my dogs: to my hungry Khartoomers it was literally a land flowing with milk and honey. Reserved for me were all that they considered the greatest delicacies that Central

Africa could produce, and in the way of fruit and vegetables I could not catalogue the variety that was served, from the sour Pishamin (*Carpodinus acidus*) to the horse-bean (*Cana-valia*).

This excursion lasted from the 27th of April to the 13th of May. After leaving the chief Seriba we proceeded for about three leagues to the north-west, and arrived, first, at the Seriba owned by Abderahman Aboo Guroon. In 1860 this spot was visited by the Marquis Antinori, who, in spite of many privations, remained there throughout an entire rainy season. At that time a French hunter, Alexandre Vayssière, under the protection of the Dyoor chief, Alwal, with whose sons I made acquaintance, had founded a small settlement. Vayssière himself, to whose clever pen the *Revue des Deux Mondes* is indebted for some valuable articles on Central Africa, died the same year on the Gazelle River, falling a victim to a virulent fever. Aboo Guroon was formerly a servant of Petherick's, and had faithfully accompanied that praiseworthy traveller in his earliest endeavours to penetrate the Bongo country. He had obtained his name, Aboo Guroon (father of horned-cattle), from his noted courage and love of enterprise, and he was renowned amongst the traders as the first traveller to the Nian-niam.

The governors of the Seribas and the leaders of the Nubian expeditions may be divided into two classes: of these the one are hypocritical cowards, always saying their prayers, and yet always tyrannical to their subordinates; the others are avowed robbers. Far preferable, beyond a doubt, are the latter; they treat those weaker than themselves with a certain amount of generosity, not to say chivalry; to this class belonged Aboo Guroon. Close to his Seriba we had to cross the Molnull stream, which was for a long period represented on maps as an arm of the Dyoor, but I have proved that it is a collateral stream, which rises in southern Bongo-land. In the rainy season it is 70 feet wide, and is only



passable by swimming, but it was now nothing more than a series of pools, the intervals of which were marked by patches of gneiss.

Ten leagues further west flows the Dyoor. Our route in that direction was in every way tiresome. For four leagues and a half we traversed a barren steppe, without being able to obtain so much as a draught of water, and the rough clods of clay were a continual impediment. We halted for the night in a small Seriba of Agahd's, called Dyoor-Awet. It lies on the summit of the watershed between the Molmull and the Dyoor, and from the hill towards the west an extensive view of the latter river is obtained. Being still somewhat of a novice in Central African travelling, I resolved, in order to avoid the heat of the day, to take advantage of the moonlight nights for proceeding on our march. In the dark, however, my guides and bearers, inexperienced in their work, lost themselves in such a labyrinth of paths that we were obliged to halt in an open meadow and make inquiries on all sides for the proper route. At length we arrived at some little enclosures of Deemo, a Dyoor chief. The huts were built on the slope of a small eminence of hornblende, a formation that I never noticed elsewhere to the south of the Gazelle; it extended as far as the right bank of the Dyoor, which, now at its lowest condition, was flowing sluggishly towards the north through steppes about a league in width.

The sandy river-bed was bounded by clay banks, from 20 to 25 feet in height, the entire thickness of the alluvium of the valley. The breadth of the bed at this spot was rather more than 400 feet, but at this season the running water was reduced to 80 feet wide and 4 feet deep. I was told that a few days previously the water had been up to a man's shoulder, and that the stream would not now fall any lower. Ten days later, on my return, I crossed the river about three-quarters of a league to the south, and although I found that the whole bed was covered, yet its depth was not above three

or four feet. Heuglin had crossed the Dyoor at a spot about 20 miles north of where I was, and on the 8th of April 1863 he found the stream about 300 paces in width, with a depth varying from one foot to three.

Among the Bongo and Dyoor alike, the river goes by the name of "Gueddy," whilst the Niam-niam, in whose territory lies the whole of its upper course, call it "Sway." It is ascertained to be one of the more important tributaries of the system of the White Nile. I found its source in Mount Baginze, in the eastern portion of the Niam-niam country, in lat.  $5^{\circ} 35' N.$ , and in almost the same longitude as that in which it joins the Gazelle; its main course, omitting the smaller windings, extends over 350 miles.

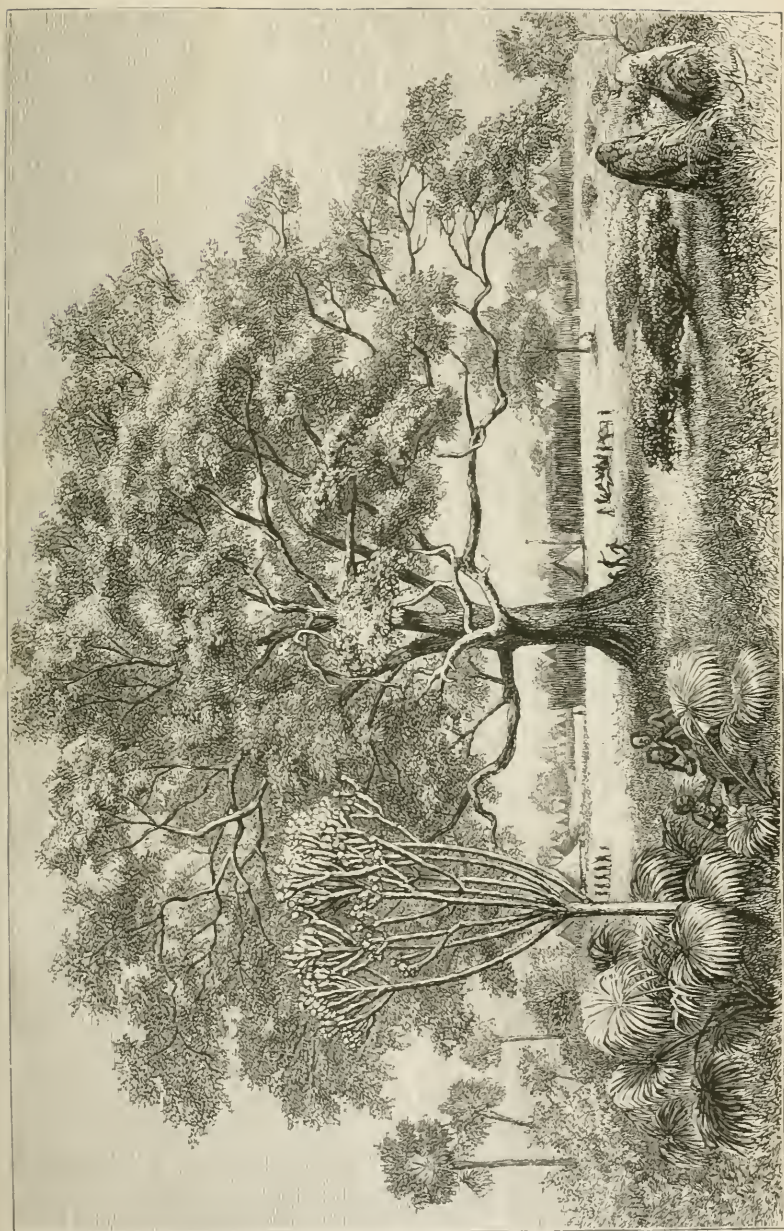
As we were wading across its clear waters, my servant, Mohammed Ameen, was suddenly attacked by a sentimental fit of home-sickness. He has been mentioned before as distinguished by the nickname of "the swimmer," and as a former Reis he was always more interested than anybody else in river-systems and hydrographical questions. Stopping midway in the channel, as though lost in contemplation, he suddenly apostrophised the waters: "Yonder lies Khartoom; yonder flows the Nile. Pass on, O stream, pass on in peace! and bear my greeting to the dear old Bahr-el-Nil!" An Egyptian would have been too stolid to be moved like this son of Nubia.

The bush-ranges on the opposite shore were enlivened by numerous herds of hartebeests and leucotis antelopes. I hurried on in advance of my caravan, hoping to enjoy a good chase, but my attempt only resulted in a circuitous ramble and in extreme fatigue. It was not until the middle of the day that I rejoined my people in a little village of the Dyoor, and by that time, inexperienced as I was, the heat, the running, and the fear of losing my way had conspired almost to deprive me of the use of my senses. The numberless herds that, without making a stand, continually scampered across

my path, still further increased my bewilderment. I was far onwards on my way back when a flock of domestic goats, startled by the apparition of a stranger came running athwart my way. They were of a reddish colour, and, had they been in the midst of a wilderness, might easily be mistaken for the little bush antelope (*A. madoqua*), so common in these parts. I was just about to send a last despairing shot amongst the harmless creatures, but discovered my mistake betimes. When I afterwards related my adventure for the entertainment of my people, one of them told a similar anecdote of a previous traveller, who, however, had actually shot a goat, and when the enraged owner insisted upon compensation, could not be induced, even in the face of the *corpus delicti*, to acknowledge his error. The man who told this had been an eye-witness of the affair, and described in the liveliest manner the contest that had raged over the zoological character of the hapless goat.

Rather more than a league from the Dyoor, in an irregular valley sloping towards the river and surrounded by wooded hills, was situated, but newly built, the chief settlement of Kurshook Ali. Khalil, the aged governor, received me most kindly. After the entire destruction of the former establishment by fire, he had erected in its place quite a model Seriba. This is depicted in the background of the accompanying drawing. In front is a majestic khaya-tree, which in years to come will probably be the sole surviving relic in the landscape. Several of the most important types of vegetation are also represented: on the left are the large candelabra-euphorbia and borassus palms, and on the right appear the little gardenia trees, of which the fruit resembles the wild pear or the crab-apple; by the side of these are two deserted white ant-hills.

Some of my most pleasant reminiscences of African life are connected with this spot. Here it was that, two years later, after experiencing the calamity of a fire, I was hospi-



I. THE CHIEF SETTLEMENT OF KURSHOOK ALLI. A MAJESTIC KHAYA-TREE.







tably received, and passed several months in hunting over the well-stocked environs. In no other Scriba did I ever see the same order and cleanliness. The store-houses and the governor's dwelling stood alone on an open space within the palisade; around the exterior, at a considerable distance, were ranged the huts assigned to the soldiers and other dependants. The unhealthiness of having a crowd of wretched dwellings huddled together, the contingent danger of fire amongst so many straw huts, and the disadvantageous lack of space in case of an attack, all had their effect in inducing Khalil to make these innovations.

On my arrival I was surrounded by a bevy of real Niam-niam,\* who had been conveyed hither by an expedition lately returned from their country. They stood and gaped at me and my belongings with far more curiosity than had been evinced by the stolid natives of the country. Whilst I was supposed to be listening to the performances of the resident Bongo on the guitar, it seemed as though these Niam-niam would never tire of examining my paraphernalia. My watch, breech-loader, revolver, my clothes, and even my lucifer matches had to be scrutinised separately. Nothing of equal wonder had crossed their experience; and what with my white skin and my appearance altogether, I looked to them like some being from another world.

Amongst the acquaintances that I made here I must not forget to mention a speculative slave-trader from Tunis, who was now making a second journey over Darfoor. He could speak a little French, and, to the astonishment of every one, he could read the names upon my maps. He was the most refined of his calibre that I had ever met, and to me was a sort of *deus ex machinâ*. Whenever I saw him I had always a vague feeling that he must be some distinguished explorer in disguise—perhaps a Burton or a Rohlf's. Our

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\* The word Niam-niam has the Italian pronunciation of "Gnamgnam."

complexions were alike, our education had been alike, and so in these distant regions we met like fellow-countrymen. In an unguarded moment I grasped his hand, drew him aside, and begged him privately to tell me who he was and where he came from. His loud laugh of surprise at my inquiry was quite enough, and in an instant completely dispelled any illusion on my part.

The fact of meeting a slave-trader from Tunis in this spot so completely remote corroborates the imputation of an unexpected extent of the slave trade in Africa. This polished Tunisian was, to say the least, in many respects superior to the adventurers who ordinarily come from Darfoor and Kordofan. Of them nothing can be said too bad. They pursue their revolting craft under every pretext; coming as fakis or priests, they make their iniquitous exchanges for that living ebony which consists of flesh and blood, and, altogether, they are as coarse, unprincipled, and villanous a set as imagination can conceive.

It is pleasant to turn from these incarnations of human depravity to the calm undeseccrated quiet of the wilderness around. Two leagues to the west brought us to the Wow, a river of inferior magnitude, but which was very charming. Meandering between rocky slopes, overhung with a rich and luxuriant foliage, and shadowed at intervals by stately trees, after a few miles it joins the Dyoor. Its bed, at its full measure, is 150 feet wide; but when I saw it, on the 1st of May, it exhibited merely two little rills trickling merrily over a rough sandy bottom. In proportion to its size it seemed to retain in the dry season less water than the Dyoor. It rises in the heart of the Niam-niam country, where it is called the Nomatilla; as it passes through the Bongo it is termed the Harey; whilst just above its confluence with the Dyoor, to which it contributes about a third of its volume, it goes by the name of the Nyanahm. It divides the people of the Dyoor into the two tribes of the Gony and the Wow.

On the banks of this, stretched beneath a noble tree, of which the age far exceeded any tradition of the natives, I enjoyed a noonday lounge. My dogs were never weary of awakening the echoes of the forest, which would give repeated answers to their cries. I was constrained to move on by the people who had come out to welcome me from the neighbouring Seriba of Agahd, known simply as Wow, at a distance of a league and a half to the west. The possessions of Agahd's company in this district are much scattered, and are interspersed amidst the territories belonging to other merchants. Their subordinate settlements extend far west into the lands of the Kredy, their expeditions reaching even to the western frontiers of the Niam-niam.

The further the advance towards the west from the Dyoor, the more rapid is the increase in the level of the country. The ascent indicates the progress from the basin of the Gazelle to the central highland. The Wow Seriba occupied the centre of a gentle valley sloping towards the west. The bottom of this valley, at the time of my visit, was traversed by a marshy strip of meadow, which, in the rainy season, forms a running brook that flows into the river. A steep descent of a hundred feet bounds the valley on the south-west. I was struck by the richness and diversity of the foliage—a peculiarity in this part of Africa, where vegetation seems very much to run to wood, and develops itself in bushes and in trees.

Of the trees which adorn the hanging rocks I may mention a few which are remarkable on account of their fruit. The Göll of the Bongo bears pods which, in appearance and in flavour, resemble those of the St. John's Bread, and on that account the Nubians, who use the skins as tan, call it the Caroob. Its wood, like palisander, is carved by the natives into pretty stools and benches. Then there was the Oncoba, from which are made the little round tobacco-boxes, known in the Arabian trade on the Red Sea; and there was

the *Strychnos edulis*, of which the fruit is not unlike a pomegranate, containing an edible pulp inclosed in a brittle woody shell. Together with these grew the *Ximenia*, a shrub common to the tropics of both hemispheres. The blossoms of this emit a soft fragrance as of orange flowers, and it bears a round yellow fruit about the size of a cherry, which is about as sour as anything in nature. The flavour is like a citron, and the soft nut-like kernel is eaten with the juicy pulp. Several kinds of sycamore, apparently of the Egyptian species, bear edible figs, but they are poor and insipid. A beverage refreshing as lemonade is prepared from the great creeper *carpodinus*. This plant is well known in the Guinea trade for its produce of caoutchouc. Its globular fruit (the sour pishamin of the colonists) contains a large number of kernels embedded in a fibrous pulp; its sourness exceeds that of the citron. The *sarcocephalus*, the wild original of the species that is cultivated in Guinea, does not here grow larger than a peach; in shape and colour it may be compared to a strawberry, though in flavour it resembles an apple: eaten to excess it acts as an emetic. The white flowers of this *Rubiacea* smell like orange-blossoms. The pericarp of the *cordyla* contains a green honey-pulp, and that of the *detarium* a sweetish yellow powder. Many species of *vitex* bear an olive-like fruit with a sweet aromatic flavour; and *spondias* offer great tempting plums of a bright yellow, which, however, leave a harshness in the throat. The ripe berries of the widely diffused *vangueria* taste like gingerbread, and this peculiarity, in a certain sense, belongs to nearly all the edible fruits of Central Africa: whatever is not sour and astringent, like unripe gooseberries, is somewhat sweet and dry to the tongue. With the exception of the plantain (*Musa sapientium*), which has every claim to be considered a native of Equatorial Africa, all other fruits are either sour and grating on the palate, or they are sweet with an after sensation of dryness.

The most perfect examples of each of these are the pishamin and the date; intermediate to them both is the tamarind.

On account of the numerous gnats and gadflies on the west of the Dyoor, cattle-breeding suddenly ceases, and even in the Seribas there are found only a few sheep and goats. On the other hand, wild buffaloes, after being entirely missing for a long way to the east of the river, now re-appear. We had not come across any since we entered the region of the Gazelle, and the first that we now saw were on the southern frontier of the Bongo territory. Only one kind of buffalo is known in this part of Africa, but the difference in the formation of their horns is so remarkable that cows and bulls appear quite like two distinct animals. In the bulls the roots of the horns meet at the top of the head, and cover the whole of the forehead, whilst in the cows they are separated by nearly the entire width of the brow. The habit of this animal is different from what is ordinarily found elsewhere; for in these regions buffalo-hunting is considered by no means a dangerous sport. After my recent experience on the White Nile I was surprised to find so many ready, without hesitation, to accompany me to the chase. For myself I had rather a dread of the animal, as my predecessor, Herr von Harnier, had fallen a victim to a wild buffalo, which had mutilated his body to such a degree that it could not be recognised.

On the morning after my arrival I had the luck to surprise a small herd in a swamp. They immediately took to flight, with the exception of two, a cow and her calf, which looked about, astonished, after their disturber. I and my companion fired simultaneously, and we should have secured the sucking calf, if the swamp had not been in our way.

In flavour, the best parts of the buffalo-meat almost rival that of a fattened ox: it is tougher and more stringy, but, in spite of everything, it is juicy and palatable. The flesh of the tame species of southern Europe is, on the contrary,



worse than camel's flesh, and may indeed be pronounced uneatable.

Gladly I should have extended my tour westward, to the Kosanga mountain, and as far as the Seribas of Zebehr, Bizelli, and some others. The agents were always courteous, and, unencumbered, I could easily have accomplished my desire; but my botanical collection had largely increased, and my supply of paper was exhausted, so that I was constrained to give up my project, and to return. The rapid development of vegetation, moreover, warned me that I ought to be back at my quarters in Ghattas's Seriba before the beginning of the rains, so that for the whole of the season, after they had decidedly set in, I might concentrate my energies on the investigations which were the proper purpose of my journey. Accordingly, after exploring the immediate neighbourhood of Wow, I returned at once to Kurshook Ali's Seriba, where I spent a few more days in some brief excursions.

Dense still were the woods around the settlement, although Khalil, in order to obtain arable land, was daily thinning them by fire. The small depth of soil in these parts, often barely a foot, is one of the causes of the instability of the dwellings which are run up on it, and which are also liable to destruction from worms above and from white ants below. When the inhabitants are compelled to rebuild, they prefer to settle on fresh territory—they choose virgin soil, and hence it arises that not only the villages of the natives, but even whole settlements of the Nubians, are continually changing their sites. Every place bears the name of the native chief; when he dies, therefore, the former name falls into oblivion. In consequence of this, it becomes very difficult to fix on the maps names and localities, which can rarely be permanent beyond a period of at most ten years. The only enduring landmarks are afforded by the water-courses: ages pass on, and these change but little as they fulfil their function in the economy of nature.

The environs of Kurshook Ali's Seriba abound in every variety of game. Genets, civets, zebra-ichneumons, wart-hogs (*Phacochærus*), wild pigs, cats, lynxes, servals, caracals, and the large family of the antelopes, all find here their home.

In this neighbourhood I killed my first hartebeest and a leucotis antelope. The hartebeest (*Antilope caama*) is common throughout the greater part of the continent, and varies in its form, its colour, and the shape of its horns, according to sex, age, and adventitious circumstances. In zoological collections two specimens are rarely seen exactly like one another.\* Called "karia" by the Bongo and



Central African Hartebeest.

"songoro" by the Niam-niam, the hartebeest is the most frequent of all the larger game. It is generally found in small herds, varying in number from five to ten, its haunts being chiefly uninhabited tracts of wilderness. In the cultivated districts it prefers the light bush forests in the vicinity of rivers, though it is never seen actually in the river valleys. It takes its midday rest by standing motionless against the

\* It may not be superfluous to give a picture of an old buck, nor to remark that the females also have horns.

trunks of trees; and by its similarity in hue to the background which it chooses, it often eludes all observation. Throughout the rainy season its colour is bright—a sort of yellow-brown, with a belly nearly white; but in the winter it tones down to a dullish grey. With the exception of the leucotis, its flesh is the best eating of any game in the country.

The leucotis antelope\* is the species that congregates in



Leucotis Antelope (male).

the largest number in any of the districts that have been hitherto explored. In the dry season they are often seen in the wadys in large herds, varying from 100 to 300 head; during the rains they resort to the more elevated forests. That is their pairing time, and they divide into smaller groups. These graceful animals have the same habit as the South African spring-bok; running at full speed, with outspanned legs, they often bound four and five feet high, and jump clean over one another. The female, which has no horns, in colour and size very much resembles the yalo (*A. arundinacea*), but it can be easily distinguished by the hair on the metatarsus being black, while in the yalo it is grey.

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\* Separate illustrations are given of the male and female.

Throughout the whole of this neighbourhood are numerous plains of ferruginous swamp-ore; only in the rainy seasons, when the rainfall is at its height, are these covered at all with grass, which at its best, compared to the luxuriant vege-



Leucotis Antelope (female).

tation around, is a meagre down, hardly equal to our poorest pasture lands. On this plateau the rains of March and April begin to fill the numerous clefts and chasms; the pools thus formed contain a variety of interesting water-plants, which disappear completely when the waters again subside. Wherever the red rock is exposed, its surface is adorned by the rosy blossoms of the dianthera, a species of capparid, which here supplies the place of our viscous catch-fly and cuckoo-flower. Nowhere in the exuberant tropics are we more vividly reminded of our own scenery than in such spots as these, where, on the edge of woody precipices and surrounded by the smiling green of the sward, gleam these gay patches of dianthera. The naked stone covered by a low detached overgrowth, in picturesque grouping, rivalled all that I had ever seen. The gardenia trees fill the air with the fragrance as of a bower of orange blossoms and jasmine.

The month of May here, as in Europe, is a month of flowers, amongst which the world of butterflies pass their ephemeral existence. As a rule, these lepidoptera were not

larger nor more diversified in form and colour than the European, but, in their aggregate, they were full of beauty. The dews of night were not sufficient for their thirst, and in motley masses they assembled round every puddle to enjoy the precious moisture. By a skilful swing of the butterfly-net I could catch a hundred at a time. They continue to swarm in this way till the beginning of July. At times I saw them thronging all amongst the foliage, and giving to many a plant the appearance of being covered with the most variegated blossoms; the bare rock, though destitute of vegetation, became as charming as a blooming meadow. The quantities of butterflies in this district are very large in comparison to what are found in the northern regions of Africa at this season.

Two leagues to the south of the new Seriba was the site of the one which had been burnt. But few vestiges remained, for nature here soon effaces what fire may have spared. The only surviving evidence of its ever having been the resort of men was a thriving grove of plantains (*Musa sapientum*). The shoots had been introduced from the Niam-niam lands. In the meagre households of the Nubians, fruits and vegetables are hardly considered necessities; indolence and distaste for work cause the gardens to be much neglected. By my own experience, I have found that all garden produce of the southern regions can be cultivated here at the outlay of very little attention. The plantain bears fruit within eighteen months of its first sprouting.

Copious is the river as it flows by the place, shaded by magnificent *afzelia*, *filæa*, and *syzygium*. The impenetrable jungles of bamboo, which extend on either side, are the abode of a large number of bear-baboons. It was in vain that for some hours I pursued one after another of these bellowing brutes: immediately they became aware of my approach, they were knowing enough to quit their exposed positions on the trees and conceal themselves amidst



the waving grass. The jungle swarmed, too, with great wart-hogs (*Phacochoerus*), which appear as ineradicable as the wild boars of Europe. The chase of these had small attraction for me, aware as I was of the extreme unsavouriness of their flesh.

On my way back to the Seriba I made a slight detour, in order to visit the village of the Dyoor chief Okale. This lies to the east, upon a small stream, the banks of which are shadowed by some splendid woods that display the glories of the Niam-niam wilderness. It was like an enclave of the south transported to the bushwoods of the north. I looked here that I might discover the palm-tree, which the Khartoomers call the Nakh-el-Faraon (or Pharaoh's date-palm), and of which they had given a wonderful description that roused my curiosity. I soon satisfied myself that they really meant the *Raphia vinifera*, which grows far and wide throughout tropical Africa, although probably, in this direction, this may be its limit. A considerable number of the trees and plants characteristic of the Niam-niam lands occurred to me in my rambles, and amongst them the blippo (*Gardenia malleifera*), with the inky sap of which the Niam-niam and the Monbuttoo delight to dye themselves.

Whether we advanced through villages or hamlets, we always found the overseers in their full state. Their official costume was everywhere a long chintz shirt. From their sparkling eyes beamed forth the delight with which they regarded my appearance, doubtless to them singular enough. Most readily they admitted me to every corner of their households, whence I procured one curiosity after another, and what I could not carry away I copied into my sketch-book.

Although I could not manage, in the course of an excursion not occupying three weeks, to traverse the entire district of the Dyoor, I nevertheless very much increased my familiarity with their habits, of which I will conclude this chapter with a concise account.

Dyoor is a name assigned by the Dinka, and is synonymous with men of the woods, or wild men. This designation is a name of contempt, and is intended to imply the condition of poverty, in which, according to Dinka ideas, the Dyoor spend their existence. Of course, it refers to their giving their sole attention to agriculture, to their few goats and poultry, and to their disregard of property in cattle. They speak of themselves as Lwoh. They use the Shillook dialect unaltered except in a few expressions which they have adopted, and are anxious to claim a northern origin, specifying their progenitors as O-Shwolo, or Shillooks. The area of their territory is quite small, and their number cannot exceed 20,000 souls.

On the north they are bounded by the numerically large tribe of the Dembo and some smaller kindred clans. Eighty miles to the south of them, but separated by the entire width of the Bongo country, reside the Belanda, a tribe of which the customs are modified by their intercourse with the Bongo, but which still make use, with very minor differences, of the Shillook dialect. These Belanda are partly under the surveillance of the Niam-niam king Solongho, and partly tributary to the intruders from Khartoom.

The chequered map of Africa suggests to every reflective mind many considerations as to how any advance in civilisation can be possible. There is an utter want of wholesome intercourse between race and race. For any member of a tribe which speaks one dialect to cross the borders of a tribe that speaks another is to make a venture at the hazard of his life. Districts there are, otherwise prosperous in every way, which become over-populated, and from these there are emigrations, which entail a change of pursuits, so that cattle-breeders become agriculturists and agriculturists become hunters living on the chase; districts again there are which shelter the remnant of a people who are resisting oppression to the very verge of despair: and there are districts, more-

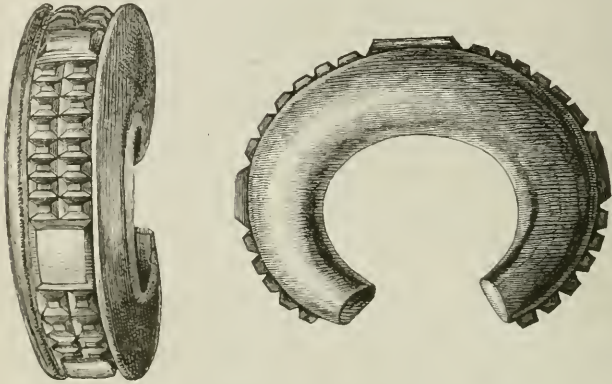
over, which have been actually reduced to a condition of vassalage and servitude; but the case is here altogether without example of a district which, whatever be its other fluctuations, has ever submitted to a change of race or of tongue.

Former travellers, although they have found their way to the Dyoor without concerning themselves with the origin of the people, appear to have made the observation that their complexion is a shade lighter than that of the Dinka. For my part I am convinced that this is so; not that I should feel justified in insisting upon this token as showing a difference between Dinka and Shillooks. Probably, the colour of the skin of the Dyoor loses something of its darker hue from their living in the shadows of their woodlands; but this is a question which involves meteorological and geographical considerations which are beyond our grasp.

In spite of their intercourse for many years, and their partial dependence upon the Dinka, the Dyoor have not departed from the Shillook mode of decorating themselves. Just on the extreme borders a few may every now and then be found imitating the radial stripes upon the foreheads; but it is quite uncommon for either sex to tattoo themselves. Neither does their daily familiarity with the Nubians induce them to adopt a modest dress. They only wear round the back of their loins a short covering of leather, something like the skirts of an ordinary froek coat; a calfskin answers this purpose best, of which they make two tails to hang down behind. Anything like the decorations of the hair which have excited our wonder amongst the Shillook and the Dinka is here totally rejected, and the Dyoor, men and women alike, have their hair close cropped.

The favourite ornaments of the men very much resemble those of the Dinka, consisting of a collection of iron rings below the elbow and a huge ivory ring above the elbow. One decoration peculiar to themselves consists of some

heavy circlets of molten brass, which are very elaborately engraved. Brass, as known amongst the people, is called "damara," and is about thrice the value of copper; it had been introduced into their traffic long before the arrival of any Khartoomers, having been brought as an article of



Brass Ornaments of the Dyoor.

commerce by the Dembo, who, as neighbours of the Baggara, were led into business relations alike with Kordofan and Darfoor on the one hand, and with the northern negroes on the other. Our fine metals, one and all, were quite unknown amongst them.

Their women, too, in hardly any respect differ from the Dinka women; like them burdening the wrists and ankles with a cluster of rings. Very frequently one great iron ring is thrust through the nose, the hole to admit it being bored indifferently through the base, the bridge, or the nostrils. The rims of the ears also are pierced to carry an indefinite number of rings. These deformities are especially characteristic of the Belanda, who sometimes attach to their nose a dozen rings at once.

One of the iron decorations which is most admired, and which is found far away right into the heart of Africa, I first saw here amongst the Dyoor; I mean the iron beads or per-

forated little cylinders of iron, strung together. These have some historical interest attached to them in connection with the development of trade in Africa, arising from the fact that they were earlier in use than glass beads, to which they must be compared. Glass beads, obviously, were only brought into the market after it had been proved that the natives would be willing to wear ornaments like in form but of a lighter material than the hard metal which they were wont to forge into shape piece by piece. The Japanese and other inhabitants of Eastern Asia are known to trick themselves



Portrait of a Dyoor.

out in steel beads, thus evidencing their long exclusion from all intercourse with Europe. In the Soudan these strings of



beads were principally made at Wandala, and Barth has specially noticed them at Marghi. Every tribe which I visited in proceeding inland from the Gazelle I found to retain the preference for beads made of iron.

The derivation of the stock from a negro race of the nobler kind, and one which has a small development of jaw, such as the Shillook, may be fairly understood from the accompanying portrait. The sitting figure is a likeness which I took at my leisure of one of my bearers. I thought it would illustrate the graceful slimness of the limbs, which nevertheless are all in due proportion. It may serve, too, in a degree to exemplify the appropriateness of the expression "swamp-man," which I have several times employed, and moreover may help to justify the comparison which has likened them to a bird.



Portrait of a Dyoor.

In recent times they have lost some of their ancient habits. For instance, the practice of mutual spitting, which was long

the ordinary mode of salutation, has fallen into desuetude. Throughout the entire period of my residence in Africa I was never a witness of it more than three times: and in all these cases the spitting betokened the most affectionate goodwill; it was a pledge of attachment, an oath of fidelity; it was to their mind the proper way of giving solemnity to a league of friendship.

The spot which the Dyoor inhabit is the inferior terrace of the ferruginous formation in the district. The consequence is that they are quite at home with all iron work. The Dinka, although they do not settle down close to them, because of the hostility of the Bongo, yet are glad to welcome the Dyoor, in order to avail themselves of their aid in getting at the iron, which would otherwise be unsecured. It



Spear Head.

might almost be said that every Dyoor is a smith by profession. The result of their toil, however, does not so much find its way to the underground stores of the Dinka as to the magazines of the Khartoom merchants.



Dyoor Spade.

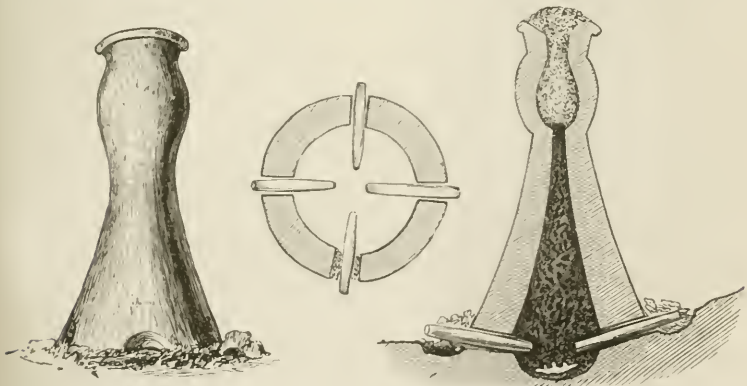
The accustomed shape in which the raw material is used as a medium of exchange is in spear heads\* or in spades.

\* The spear-heads, as represented in the engraving, are about three-quarters of a yard in length.

Throughout the whole district of the Upper Nile these answer all the purpose of our current coin. Although the superficial veins of iron ore, for hundreds of miles, do not differ much in their appearance, there are only certain localities which produce an ore that, under the primitive mode of smelting, yields a remunerative supply of genuine metal. One of these prolific veins is found in the proximity of Kurshook Ali's Seriba. With a perseverance for which I could not have given them credit, the natives have dug out trenches some ten feet deep, from which they have obtained a material very like our roe-stone. Considerable quantities of red ochre are discovered, but they are not turned to any account, through ignorance of a proper way of manipulation.

Just before the commencement of seed-time, in March, the Dyoor make a general move away from their huts, partly for the purpose of dragging the rivers for fish, and partly to busy themselves with iron-smelting in the woods. In the shaded centre of a very wooded spot they construct their furnaces of common clay, making them in groups, sometimes as many as a dozen, according to the number of the party. Their wives and children accompany them, and carry all their movables. In the midst of the wilderness, otherwise so desolate, they form a singular picture. The stems of the trees gleam again with their lances and harpoons; on the branches hang the stout bows ready for the buffalo hunt; everywhere are seen the draw-nets, hand-nets, snares and creels, and other fishing-tackle. There is a mingled collection of household effects, consisting of gourd-shells, baskets, dried fish and crocodile, game, horns, and hides. On the ground lie piles of coals, of ore, of cinders, and of dross. Petherick, the first explorer of this Dyoor district, has given a very accurate account of their primitive method of smelting iron, so that I may be repeating in a degree what has been related before: many things, however, there are which appeared to me under a somewhat different aspect.

The smelting-furnace is a cone, not more than four feet high, widening at the top into a great goblet shape. So little deviation was there in the form of any that I saw that all seemed to me to be erected on precisely the same model. One obstacle to the construction of larger furnaces is the extreme difficulty of preventing the mass of clay from cracking in the process of drying. The cup-shaped aperture at the top communicates by a very small throat with the cavity below, which is entirely filled with carbons. Into the upper receiver are thrown fragments of ore, of about a solid inch, till it is full. The hollow tunnel extends lower than the level of the ground; and the melted mass of iron, finding its way through the red-hot fuel, collects below in a pile of slag. At the base there are four openings: one of these is much larger than the others, and is used for the removal of the scoriæ; the other three are to admit the long tewel-irons, which reach to the middle of the bottom, and keep the apertures free for the admission of air. Without stoking,



Dyoor Smelting-furnace.

the openings would very soon become blocked up with slag. In reply to my inquiry I was told that bellows are never employed; it was said that too fierce a fire was injurious, and caused a loss of metal. A period of a day and a half, or

about forty hours, is requisite to secure the product of one kindling. When the flames have penetrated right through the mass of ore until they rise above it, the burning is presumed to be satisfactory.

Amongst the Bongo the furnaces are different, being generally constructed in three compartments, and fitted with bellows. They also place layers of ore and fuel alternately.

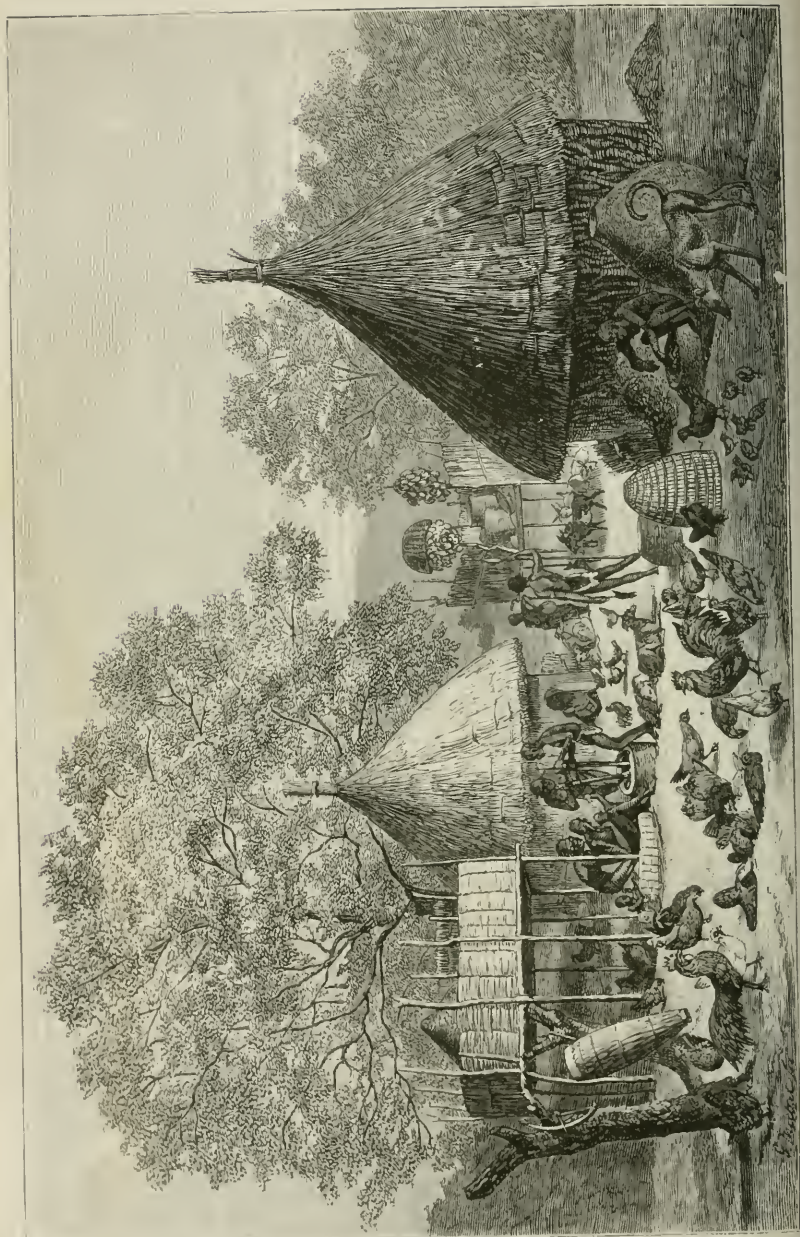
The deposit of metal and fuel is heated a second time, and the heavy portion, which is detached in little leaflets and granules, is once more subjected to fire in crucibles of clay. The particles, red-hot, are beaten together by a great stone into one compact mass, and, by repeated hammering, are made to throw off their final dross. Nearly half of the true metal is scattered about during the progress of the smelting, and would be entirely lost if it were not secured by the natives. In regard to its homogeneity and its malleability, the iron procured in this way is quite equal to the best forged iron of our country.

The Dyoor and the Bongo appear almost equally ignorant about charcoal-burning. They understand very little about the exclusion of air from the furnaces, or of burning their wood in piles: their science seems limited to the combustion of small fragments heaped up over one another till the fire below them is choked, or subdued by pouring water upon the top. I am not aware whether the other negroes have mastered the secret of charcoal-making; but if what has been said about the Dyoor holds good about Africa in general, it accounts at once for the remarkable fact that in spite of the abundance of the crude material, iron is so little employed. There is a universal absence of lime, so that stone erections are quite unknown.

If a comparison might be instituted, I should say that in Africa iron might be estimated to have a value about equivalent to copper with us, whilst the worth of copper would correspond to that of silver.







For fifteen years have the Nubians now been brought into contact with this region, but they have never taught the natives either the way of making bricks or any intelligent conception of the use of charcoal. Themselves too lazy to improve the treasures which a bountiful Nature has flung amongst them, they are too idle and too indifferent to stimulate even the people they have subjugated to put forth any energy at all. And this is but one proof out of many of the demoralising tendency of Islamism, which would ever give a retrograde movement to all civilisation.

Throughout Africa I have never come across a tribe that has not adopted a mode of building huts which, alike with respect to exterior and interior, is not peculiar to itself. The huts of the Dyoor do not resemble the mushroom shapes of the Shillooks, nor are they like the substantial huts of the Dinka, massive and distinguished by small outbuildings and porches. Again, they could not for a moment be mistaken to be dwellings of the Bongo, because they have no straw projections about the top of the roof. In a general way they are a yet more simple and unadorned construction—not that they are destitute of that neat symmetry which seems to belong to all negro dwellings. The roof is a simple pyramid of straw, of which the section is an equilateral triangle, the substructure being all of wickerwork, either of wood or bamboo, and cemented with clay.

Inside every hut there is a large receptacle for storing whatever corn or other provision is necessary for the household. These are made of wickerwork, and have a shape like great bottles. To protect them against the rats, which never fail to carry on their depredations, they are most carefully overdaubed with thick clay. They occupy a very large proportion of the open space in the interior; very often they are six or seven feet in height, and sometimes are made from a compound of chopped stubble and mud. After the huts have been abandoned, and all else has fallen into

decay, these very frequently survive, and present the appearance of a bake-oven gone to ruin. In the Arabic of the Soudan this erection is called a "googah." It is derived from the Dinka; the huts of the Bongo and the Niam-niam having nothing of the sort, because they build detached granaries for their corn.

The picture which is here introduced is a representation of the rural pursuits of this peaceful tribe. It is presumed to be winter time, when, for some months to come, no rain is to be expected. It may be taken as illustrating what might be witnessed at any time between October and April. The tall erections adjacent to the huts contain the various grain requisite for the next seed time, and may be supposed to be full of the sorghum, the maize, and the gourd.\* It is better to let these be exposed to the sun rather than to run the risk of having them devoured by rats or vermin in the huts. Underneath these structures the goats are hid; besides these, dogs and some poultry are the only domestic animals they keep.

The open space in front of the huts consists of a plain, most carefully levelled by treading it down. Upon this floor, which is perfectly hard, the corn is winnowed; and it serves as a common area for all domestic purposes. In front of the huts, too, sunk to some depth below the ground, there is a great wooden mortar, in which the corn, after it has been first pounded by the primitive African method of stones, is reduced to a fine meal by rubbing with the hands. The Dinka also use these sunken mortars, which are hewn out of some hard wood; but the Bongo and Niam-niam carry with them movable mortars of a smaller size.

To the right may be observed a man, who is collecting iron ore, and one of the wicker baskets which belong to the

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\* The Dyoor cultivate very nearly the same crops as the Bongo, and these will be described with reference to that people.

reserve of corn. Great gongs hang upon the posts towards the left, and some of the massive bows, of which the strings are ready stretched by a billet to serve as snares. This artifice is employed by several of the people of this district to facilitate their chase of the wild buffaloes. Very strong straps of hide are strained across the tall grass of the lowlands, where the buffaloes congregate. One end is fastened either to a tree or to a peg driven into the ground, the other end attached to the bow. This forms a kind of noose which, through the rebound of the billet, tightens itself about the legs of the buffalo when it strains it. The startled beast makes a bound, and is immediately fettered. The hunters, who had been lying in wait, seize this moment and, with their lances, strike at the prey, which, if not utterly entangled, is sure by the bow to be obstructed in its running. In a similar way all the larger antelopes are captured, especially the powerful eland, at which it is hard to get, even after it has been driven to the marshy levels.

Good large families have the Dyoor; and were it not that the Nubians come upon the land, and every year carry off at least half the corn that is grown, there would long ago have been, as with their kindred on the White Nile, a dense Dyoor population. They partake also of the skilfulness of the Shillooks in obtaining resources for livelihood in various ways: they pursue the chase, they practise fishing when they have the chance; they are industrious in tillage; they thoroughly appreciate the value of cattle, and would like to possess them, although in their new settlement they can boast little more than a few kids and goats. To have a well-stocked poultry-yard, and to possess that friend of man, a good dog, is essential to the satisfaction of a Dyoor household. Upon these the attention of the men is centred, and on these they make their largest outlay. If they escape servitude to the Nubians, and are not obliged to turn porters to convey their burdens, or builders to erect their dwellings,



they employ themselves with their fishing and hunting, or in practising the art of Tubal Cain. Labour in the fields is all done by the women, upon whom also falls the entire domestic superintendence as well as the actual work of the house; they make all the wickerwork and do all the manipulation of the clay; they trample down the level floor and mould the vessels of every size. It is remarkable how they manage with the mere hand to turn out immense vessels which, even to a critical eye, have all the appearance of being made on a wheel. In order to render a clay floor perfectly level and free from cracks they work in a very original way. They procure from the woods a piece of tough bark, about three feet long; they then kneel down upon the clay, and persevere in patting it with their pieces of bark till they make the surface of the soil as smooth as though it had been rolled. In a very similar way they prepare the graves for their dead, which they arrange very close to their huts. A circular mound, some three or four feet high, indicates the situation of the last resting-place of a Dyoor so long as the violence of the rain allows it to retain its shape; but a very few years suffice to obliterate the final vestiges of these transient memorials.

Affection for parents and for children is developed amongst the Dyoor much more decidedly than in any other Central African tribe which I have known. In a way that I have not observed among other pagan negroes, they place their infants in long baskets that answer the purpose of cradles. There is a kind of affection which even brutes can display to their offspring as well as human beings. In the very lowest grades of human society there is ever a kind of bond which lasts for life between mother and child, although the father may be a stranger to it. Such, to say the least, is the measure of affection which the Dyoor show to their little ones. Nor is this all; they have a reverence for age; and in every hamlet there are grey heads amongst them.

## CHAPTER VI.

Laying out a garden à l'Européenne. Hunting adventure with a bastard Gens-bok. Death of Arslan. Physiognomy of the vegetation. Character of the soil. Geography of plants. Destruction of a Seriba by natives. Seriba law. Cattle-raids on the Dinka. Tour round Ghattas's Seribas. Geography at Geer. Fish of the Tondy. Fear of ghosts in Koolongo. Caves of Gubbehec. Central African jackal. Bamboos in blossom. Triumph of Nature over her traducers. Joint-stock distillery in Gurfala. Nubian love of drink. Petherick's Mundo. Unsuccessful chase in the long grass. Two bush-antelopes. Cultivated plants of the district. Cereals. Large growth of sorghum. Leguminous fruits. Oily fruits. Tubers. Vegetables. Tobacco. Smoking in Africa.

I WAS again in Ghattas's Seriba on the 13th of May. The arrival of an ivory caravan on its return journey had brought an unwonted animation. But for me very soon the ordinary routine of life came back, and one day passed on just like another in the closest intercourse with Nature. Except during some temporary excursions to the Bongo, this Seriba would be my residence for some months to come, and I set to work to make my quarters as comfortable as I could in a good-sized hut which had been vacated for me.

The first thing I did was to lay out a large vegetable garden, a task which engaged not only all my own people, but gave occupation to not a few of the black slaves of the place. I had not only brought with me a good supply of pickaxes and spades, but I had likewise a capital collection of seeds. Thus I hoped at once to provide for my own necessities, and to prove to the natives the productiveness of their soil. The plot of ground was nearly 200 paces square, and the next thing was to enclose it with a hedge of straw,

and to lay it out with a series of parallel beds. The larger number of these beds I planted with the best sorts of maize, of which I had procured the original ears from New Jersey.

Seventy days after sowing I reaped the crop, and the ingathering did not simply answer my highest expectations, but surpassed in quality the original stock; the kinds which seemed to succeed best being those which after they are dry are horny and transparent.

Tobacco from Maryland grew to an immense height, and I gathered several hundredweights of it. There was not altogether so much of a deficiency of tobacco in the country as of the larger leaves, of which use could be made for rolling into cigars. In Egypt the Virginian tobacco can be made to grow leaves as large as the palm of one's hand, but in the negro districts the whole produce is quite diminutive. Negroes always sow tobacco under cover before they plant it out; the midday sun of Central Africa is too powerful for the seed, which infallibly perishes in a parched soil. I had always to guard against the same difficulty with all my European vegetables, especially in July, or at other times, when five or six days without a drop of rain would come in succession, and I only saved my young sprouts by having water brought twice a day by the women in their great pitchers. Worms did a vast amount of mischief amongst the germinating seeds, and no devastator was more destructive than the great millipede (*Spirostreptus*), which, as long and thick as my finger, penetrated the soil in every direction. The havoc made in this way amongst the beans before they were set was very considerable.

The hard, yet fertile soil, I feel certain, is quite suited for our cucumbers, cabbage, turnip-cabbage, and radishes. Of radishes, the European sort succeeds better than the Egyptian, which belongs to quite an anomalous variety. Melons and water-melons can only be ripened during the winter months, when they are artificially protected and supplied

with moisture. Any attempt to grow them in the rainy season always results in failure; either the fruit is eaten by worms long before it is mature, or the leaves are devoured by grubs. Here, too, I trained some tomatoes and sunflowers, which ever since have been quite naturalised in this part of Africa. Had my sojourn been longer, I should have made an attempt at establishing the plantain, of which indeed I saw some isolated plants now and then in the Seriba. This is a natural production of the land of the Niam-niam; it would doubtless thrive here, but the indolence of the Nubians is so great, and their indifference towards all produce that must be gained by toil is so indomitable, that garden culture amongst them remains fitful and unprogressive.

When I had seen all the labours of the kitchen-garden complete, I was free to abandon myself to the full delights of the flora. Up with the sun, I used to take one or two of my people with me to carry my portfolios and my arms, and in the safe proximity of the Seriba I explored the woods for hours together, returning about noon with a whole treasury of floral wealth. My table at meals never failed to be well supplied, and I was treated as bountifully as in Africa I could be. I enjoyed sitting in the shade of some spreading tree, while I proceeded to analyse, to classify, and to register, the various novelties which I was perpetually finding. Later in the day I was in the habit of wandering out alone over the plains, whilst my servants at home busied themselves in renewing the paper for my *hortus siccus*, and in pressing out the plants afresh. This labour of the day was often carried on till quite late at night: it was repeated so often that my collection increased to a very considerable extent; roll was piled up after roll; everything most carefully stitched up in hides ready to go along with me on my farther journey, and to be carried across deserts and seas until they could finally be deposited in the magazines of science.

One of these rambles into the woods led to a singular

hunting adventure, which could only occur in Central Africa. I had been sitting crouched up for half an hour or more under the shade of a butter-tree, in the midst of some tall grass, and, engaged in the dissection of my plants, I had quite forgotten where I was. My three attendants were enjoying, as they were accustomed, a peaceful doze; stillness reigned so supreme in the solitude that one could almost hear the tread of every emmet on the soil, as backwards and forwards it hurried to the laboratory within its hill. All at once a huge shadow came in sight, and looking up I saw, just within pistol-range, the great form of a buck antelope. I was struck as much with admiration as with surprise: the creature had seemed to come suddenly from the earth. My heart fluttered at the apparition, but I could not be otherwise than sensible of its beauty. It was a specimen of the bastard gems-bok (*Antilope leucophæa*). Except on the belly, which was white, its long hair was all of a brownish grey. It carried its head erect; its ears were long and pointed; its horns massive and very long; its black legs going off into white fetlocks. A stiff mane of bright brown crested its curved neck, and reached to its withers. It had a tail like the giraffe, with which it wisped off the flies—a tuft of hair of about nine inches in length appended to a long slim stem. There it stood, majestically, I might say, like a stately buffalo when it surveys the region all around before it trusts itself to feed. There it stood, in an attitude at once commanding and defiant. Whenever it moved the grass crackled beneath its tread, and ere long it shifted its place again and turned its full face towards me. I cautiously reached out my hand for a rifle that was lying near me, pushed back the guard, and, at the next movement of the beast, hit it with a ball right upon the shoulder-blade from a distance of about twenty paces. The creature reared itself up, then paused an instant, staggered, and let its head sink down as if amazed. I was just about to get hold of a second rifle when there came



a sudden crash, and, while I was still sitting, the animal had fallen just beyond the open portfolio which was lying outspread before me. Fortune had thus cast the noble prey right into my clutches.



Central African Bastard Gemsbok (*Antelope leucophaea*).

The sound of the rifle had hardly aroused my people, for this is a country where a stray shot does not attract attention for an instant; but my shout of surprise and delight brought them quickly to their feet. Some negroes were soon fetched from the neighbouring huts, who quickly completed the work of flaying and jointing the prey. Its head alone weighed 35 pounds. The natives informed me that the Mahnya (as the Bongo call this species of antelope) are among the rarest animals of the district, although they live as much in one quarter as another. They are ordinarily found singly and far separate from any other of their kindred race; and it is said that the largest of them will assail a huntsman, and are as furious when angry as a wild buffalo.

For a long time I was sorely depressed by the loss of my trusty Arslan, who had been with me ever since I left Berlin and had reached the remote wilderness. He had

accompanied me through all the hardships of travel; and here I hoped that all dangers were passed, and now that the heat of the desert and the privations of water had been overcome, I had no fear of losing him; but he sank a victim to the treachery of the climate. My dog had seemed to me almost the last link that bound me to my home, and when I lost him I felt as though a bridge had been broken down which connected me with my native soil. It would have been a grief to me to lose my dog anywhere, but to lose him here was doubly sorrowful—here, amongst circumstances where he more than ever replaced the lack of a friend.

Nature, pure and free, must ever be a great consoler amidst all the disappointments of life. The stillness and peace of the plant-world brought ease to my troubled mind. To that world, as I turned then, I may be permitted to return now.

Nothing could more completely witness to the great variety of vegetation in my immediate neighbourhood than the fact that during my residence of five months I made a collection of almost 700 flowering plants, which I duly classified. It would not be possible in Europe during a whole year to gather so large a number if one were limited to the environs of a single town. From my own experience I am satisfied that, notwithstanding all means of inter-communication, it would be beyond the power of a botanist to secure anything like 500 species in an entire season. This would arise very much from his having to change his position, and from the varying time at which plants come into bloom: but here, in the land of the Dyoor and the Bongo, Flora seems to delight in crowding all her profusion upon the earlier months of the rainy period: the autumn is left comparatively barren, and even at the height of the rains there is little to be found which was not already in perfection some time before.

The land itself seems decidedly less varied than in the most uniform districts of Germany. Woods indeed there are, and steppes; there are low grassy pastures and shrubby thickets; there are fields and coppices; there are marshes and pools; there are bare rocky flats, and occasionally a rocky declivity; very rarely, and only in the dry, out-drained river-beds, are sands to be met with; and from these ordinary characteristics there is little or no deviation.

The features of the woodlands are, however, very diversified. There are trees which run up to a height varying from 30 to 40 feet, and these alternate with dwarf shrubs and compact underwood. Many of the fields are marked by single trees, which stand quite apart, and which have been intentionally preserved by the natives because of their edible fruit. In some places there are low-lying grassy flats, which in the rainy months are quite impassable, because the grass grows taller than a man; whilst in others the grass is stunted, because there is but a thin layer of soil to cover the rock below, and consequently vegetation is comparatively weak. As to the pasture-lands, they seem to be interrupted every here and there with bushy and impenetrable thickets, which are either grouped around some isolated trees or luxuriate about some high white ant-hill. In the shade of these are found the splendid bulbs of the *Hemantus*, *Gloriosa*, *Clorophytum*, together with *Aroideæ*, ground-orchids, and the wonderful *Kosaria*. Upon the drier spots within the forests, or where the clay-soil happens to be mixed with sand, weeds and herbaceous plants are found which recall the flora of the northern steppes. Amongst these are the *Capparidææ*, which (existing as they do in the south of Nubia) make good their claim to be a bond of union between the two zones. Pressing further into the thickets which are formed in the forests, we come across great trees so thickly bound by the wonderful foliage of the large creeper *Carpodinus*, that a ray of sunlight can

never pass them. Here, too, are wild vines of many a kind, the festoons of which are further burdened as they hang by *Dioscoriæ* and *Aselepiads*.



*Kosaria palmata.*

Many are the comparisons that might be made by way of analogy between the numerous trees of this delightfully wooded district and those of our own home. Some of the trees at first sight have a considerable likeness to our common oaks: amongst these may be named both the *Terminalia* and the butter-tree (*Bassia* or *Buterospermum*). The fruit of the latter consists of a globular oily kernel, which looks something like a horse-chestnut, and which is as large as a good-sized apricot, and is enveloped in a green rind. This envelope can be kept till it is as enjoyable as a medlar, and is considered one of the chief fruits of the country. From the kernels of this widely-known tree an oil is expressed, which, under the name of "butter of Galam,"

is a recognised article of commerce in Gambia; it has an unpleasant flavour, which makes it not at all a desirable adjunct to the table, and so, for us, it has but an insignificant value; its most valuable property is that, at a temperature of 68° Fahr., it becomes as solid as tallow. The tree itself is very handsome, having a bark which is regularly marked by polygonal rifts in its surface, and which permits it to be likened to an oak.

A very common tree, which bears a somewhat striking resemblance to our white beech, is the small-leaved Anogeissus. Nut-trees are here replaced by *Kigelia* and *Odina*. Far spread as are trees of the character of our oak, so too we may say are trees which have the look of a horse-chestnut. Of this kind is the *Vitex Cienkowskii*, with others of the species, of which the sweet olive-shaped fruit is gathered as assiduously by the natives as by the wart-hogs, who relish it exceedingly. Another favourite fruit is the produce of the *Diospyros mespiliformis*. The plane-tree may here be said to be represented, equally with respect to its bark, its foliage, and the pattern of its leaves, by the splendid *Sterculia tomentosa*, which has established itself pretty generally throughout Tropical Africa. In the place of willows Africa offers the *Anaphrenium*; and over and over again the traveller may fancy that he sees the graceful locust-tree. The *Parkia* is another of those imposing trees which are met with; the leaves of this are not unlike the *Poinciana*, which is known also as the *Poincillade* or *Flamboyer*: its flowers are a fiery red with long stamens, and hang in a tuft; when they die off they leave a whole bundle of pods, a foot in length, in which the seeds are found covered with a yellow dust. The Bongo, as indeed do the *Peulhs* of *Footah Dyalon* in West Africa, mix this mealy dust with their flour, and seem to enjoy it, but it needs an African palate to conquer the repulsiveness of this preparation.

Many types of vegetation, however, abound, to which we



are altogether unaccustomed, and can exhibit nothing which appears to correspond. It is not only by the exuberance and dignity of their forms that these are marked, but still more by the novelty and grace with which Nature seems to have invested them. No European production in any way represents the *Anona senegalensis*, with its large blue-green leaf and its small fruit. This fruit contains an aromatic dark red pulp, and in a modest degree it displays something of that captivating quality which has exalted its kindred plant, the Cherimoyer of Peru, to its high repute as the queen of fruits. It must be owned, however, that it is difficult to secure a well-developed example of this fruit, for so keenly is it spied out and devoured by the birds that often for months together it may be sought in vain.

Much more singular is the magnificent candelabra-euphorbia, which follows the pattern of its prototype, the American cactus. Palms are not frequent enough to play any important part in the scenery, or to demand any particular specification. Groups of the *Borassus* are observed near the river-banks, and the *Phoenix spinosa*, the original of the date-palm, grows upon the marshes of the steppe. Next must be mentioned the varieties of fig-trees, with their leathery leaves, and, associated with them, those chief characteristics of African vegetation, the *Combreta* and the *Rubiaceæ*; tamarinds with their thick tubular corollas, and shrubby *Gardeniæ*, dwarf and contorted. It was the southern limit of the acacias of the White Nile; and only in isolated cases was the stem of the *Balanites* to be seen, lingering, as it were, on the steppes of Nubia. Even the tamarind had become scarce, and farther south I did not meet with it at all.

In its general character the flora of this district seems to conform very much to what has been discovered on the table-land of Western Africa, of which the lower terraces form a narrow belt along the shore, and are distinguished

for the wild luxuriance with which the African primeval forest seeks to rival the splendour of Brazilian nature. In contrast to this, the bush-forests in the higher parts of Tropical Africa, broken by the steppes, present in uniformity perhaps the most extensive district that could be pointed out in the whole geography of vegetation. Extending, as it does, from Senegal to the Zambesi, and from Abyssinia to Benguela, Tropical Africa may be asserted to be without any perceptible alternation in character, but that which is offered by the double aspect of steppe and bush on the one hand, and by primeval forest in the American sense on the other. On the west this is illustrated by the marked difference between the table-lands and the low coast-terraces, whilst in the interior it is exhibited by the distinction between the woods on the river banks and the flats lying between the river courses. Here, in the country of the Bongo and Dyoor, this, which may be designated as a duality, almost completely fails, on account of the small supply of water in the rivers and brooks; but in the land of the Niam-niam it is again very striking.

Limited as have been the botanical collections of the few who have explored this immense region, they are still sufficient to justify us in estimating the relative abundance of species. When the collections from Java and Brazil are compared with those of Tropical Africa, it is certain that the plants of Africa are not altogether half so numerous.

It is not in the least below the most abundant tropical districts of the New World in producing timber trees. Trees and shrubs constitute quite a fifth of the entire production, and in the woods of the Bongo the variety of foliage is everywhere astonishing. Any tracts covered by a single species are altogether rare, and would exist only within the most limited range. This uniformity of Tropical Africa in comparison with the enormous space which it occupies, and the striking want of provinces in the geography of its plants

which it displays, are the results of several agencies. On the one hand, it arises from the massive and compact form of the whole ; and on the other hand, by an external girdle which keeps it shut up, so that it is not penetrated by foreign types of vegetation. This girdle is made by currents of the sea and long tracts of desert (the Sahara and Kalahari), and encircles it entirely. In the direction towards Arabia there is, as it were, a bridge into the regions of India, and, indeed, the Indian flora has a great share in the characteristics of its vegetation. The greater number of the African cultivated plants, as well as nearly all their associated weeds, have been, beyond a doubt, derived from India—a conjecture, equivalent to a prophecy, which Rob. Brown had formed at a time when little was known of the vegetation of Central Africa.

Already have I expressed my happiness at having thus reached the object of my cherished hopes—my satisfaction at thus finding life to be with me an idyll of African nature. My health was unimpaired, and never before had I been less hindered in prosecuting my pursuits. I felt alone in the temple of creation. The people around me were somewhat embarrassing. Their wickedness, with its attendant impurity, stood out in sad contrast to the purity of nature ; but it did not much disturb the inner repose of this still life. In sickness everything is sad, and the craving for home is not to be suppressed ; but whoever, in the robustness of health, can imbibe the fresh animation of the wilderness, will find that it stamps something of its unchanging verdure upon his memory ; his imagination will elevate it to a paradise, and the days spent there will enrol themselves among the very happiest of his life.

One day in June there came back to the Seriba a company which had been sent out by the agent to fetch the ivory which had been stored in one of the minor Seribas of Ghattas on the Rohl, 130 miles away to the south-west. The proper place of embarkation for the Seribas on the Rohl, which are

under a separate agent, is the Meshera Aboo-kooka, on the Bahr-el-Gebel, which is nearer than the Gazelle; but during this year the natives were animated by such a hostile spirit, that the shorter route was impracticable, and thus it was necessary to proceed to the banks of the Gazelle. In April the chief Seriba in this territory had been abandoned by the few men who had been left, after nearly all their entire garrison of a hundred men had been killed during a raid against the Dinka tribe of the Agar. The remnant, who had been informed of the calamity by some friendly natives, found themselves in a great strait. They could see no prospect of defending themselves, and were compelled to surrender all their stores and ammunition, and to escape under cover of night to one of the dependent Seribas. The main body of the troops were still out on an expedition to the Niam-niam country, and it was only the fear of their sudden return which deterred the Agar from annihilating the very last of their foes. They plundered and burnt down the Seriba, which has never since been restored. It was formerly the property of the brothers Poncet, although they were never known to visit it. Petherick halted at it whilst he was on his desperate march to Gondokoro, and inserted it upon his map under the name of Adael. Bad tidings travel quickly, and so it chanced that the intelligence of this disaster reached Khartoom before my letters; the details were related very indistinctly, and my friends were for a while under some apprehension about my fate.

In another respect a star of ill-luck seemed this year to have risen over the enterprise of the company of Ghattas. The season had drawn near in which the agents usually commenced their annual depredations in the districts of the Dinka to replenish their stock of cattle. As the various associations were entering upon mutual competition, in order to prevent disagreements, there was laid down a kind of Seriba law, which was pretty well the same everywhere.

First of all, the territories immediately dependent were distinctly designated. Then it provided that the approaches to a meshera should only be used by those who could establish a claim to it. Nearly every Seriba has its separate avenues, upon which it levies a toll, and an avenue without tolls is not a legitimate highway at all. If any extraordinary companies desire to make use of these roads, they must first come to terms with the Seriba agents, who have the supervision of the right of way. Even chieftains who supply provisions to those who are on their transit, would be sure to attack them as foes if they were not first conciliated by being appointed as guides and dragomen.

Very similar was the arrangement that regulated all the expeditions which were undertaken against the Niam-niam. Each separate company had its own route and its own train of captains, who purchased the ivory and procured a market. No new-comers were allowed to intrude themselves into an established market, or to infringe upon its trade. Fresh marts could only be established by pressing farther onwards into the interior. These new establishments in their turn were subject to monopoly, and were rigidly protected. Wherever any violation of this rule occurred, there would be very serious conflicts—so much so, that amongst the Nubians the affray was very often fatal. This, however, would only happen while the contest was limited between one negro and another, for true Nubians at once renounce all allegiance to a leader who presumed to shoot a brother Nubian.

The Khartoom companies are most jealous of all their rights of cattle-plunder, alike in this region and in every other. The district over which the incursions of Ghattas ranged embraced the whole of the lower course of the river Tondy. During the previous year it was said that the total of the booty was no less than 800 oxen; but this year, although the aggressions were thrice renewed, the result was altogether a failure, and was quite a derision amongst the



neighbours, being barely forty head of cattle. In vain had they explored the country west of the Tondy; to no purpose had they scoured the territories alike of the Rek and of the Lao; everywhere they were just too late. The Dinka had got intelligence betimes, and off they packed their herds and families to the inaccessible marshes. Their mere superiority in numbers here gave them the advantage, and they could hold their own against considerable troops of armed marauders. The whole Dinka tribe amongst them could hardly boast a single musket which could go off properly. Other companies, which had been more fortunate in plunder, were now ready to avail themselves of the opportunity to dispose of their superfluous cattle in barter for what the country afforded. Sometimes it might be for slaves, or for copper-rings, or sometimes (and this was a very favourite method) for bills of exchange upon Khartoom. Thus those who lived upon robbery were glad mutually to make a market of each other.

The mode of carrying out these raids may be thus exemplified: On the last occasion 140 armed troops, accompanied by a recognised train of some hundred natives, followed again by a lot of people with a keen scent for cattle of any sort, had set out upon their enterprise. In this cavalcade they had proceeded exactly as though their intention was merely to reach some Scriba or other. Then, all of a sudden, when they saw that the chances were in their favour, just at night-fall (deviating to one side, or even retracing their steps), they marched on till, generally at break of day, they arrived at the devoted murali. Having surrounded it, they began to beat their gongs and to fire away vigorously. They were so alarmed at the likelihood of hitting each other in the legs (for that is the general result of their firing) that they merely discharged a lot of blank cartridges into the air. This, however, was quite sufficient to intimidate the natives, who lost no time in making their escape through the gaps which the

invading party were careful to provide in their ranks. In a general way the Dinka have no larger number of servants with them at their cattle-farms than is absolutely necessary, and, as I have mentioned, they leave their wives and children in outlying huts, so that these are very rarely exposed to the rapine of the invaders.

By the help of the negroes which they bring with them, the invaders soon make themselves masters of all the herds, and hurry back covered by the protection of the soldiers. To supply the requirements of a year it is necessary that they should secure by their raid at least 2000 head of oxen. Of the plundered property two-thirds belong to the authorities, the remaining third being assigned to the soldiers, who hawk it about and dispose of it as they please. A portion, however, is first allotted to the leaders of the negroes, to the overseers of the districts, and to the chiefs, which is ever an excuse for great rejoicing. The scandalous accomplices, abettors, and receivers of this odious commerce are those professed slave-traders, the Gellahba, who have succeeded in finding snug quarters for themselves in every Seriba, where they manage, like idle drones, to enjoy the produce of the toil of the industrious. Their transactions extend to calicoes, soaps, and head-gear; they deal in firelocks, looking-glasses, and onions; they can sell a few slaves, old or young, male or female; they find a market for rings and beads; they do something in amulets and verses of the Koran; very often they have on hand some bullocks, sheep, or goats; indeed there is hardly anything which chance does not occasionally throw into their line of business. Thus it came to pass that this year they carried on a thriving cattle-trade in our settlement. From the other marauding companies, whose luck had been better, they had acquired a considerable store of cattle, and they did not miss the opportunity of turning it now to their own advantage.

When I consider the ravages that are made year after

year on so large a scale upon the cattle of the Dinka, and the enormous consumption of the Nubians, I confess that it is quite an enigma to me how the supply is not exhausted. Although I am aware that they never kill their cattle, yet the murrain of flies every season decimates their herds; and, besides this, their cows very seldom ever calve more than once, and very frequently remain utterly barren. Observations of this kind somewhat assist us in forming an estimate of the vast numbers of the people, since for the mere oversight and custody of the myriads of cattle there must be multitudes of men corresponding to the hand-to-mouth population of our civilised communities.

From the 21st of July until the 4th of August I made a tour, which gave me an opportunity of inspecting the subsidiary Seribas of Ghattas. My acquaintance with the country was thus materially enlarged. A march of about four leagues towards the south-west brought me again, by a road which I had not hitherto traversed, to Geer, where the fields of sesame were already in bloom. The sesame in this district all had white blossoms, while in the Nile country it as uniformly blooms with a pale rose-coloured flower, and this is by no means an uncommon feature in the flora of the region. I could exhibit a long list of plants which elsewhere are either red or blue, but here are invariably white; but I could not offer any satisfactory explanation of the circumstance.

Like all my other wanderings in the interior, this little excursion was made entirely on foot. To get along through the tall grass was anything but easy. The negroes tread down a sort of gutter, the width of their foot, and along these we made our way, as in a wheel-rut, as best we could. It was quite necessary to keep one's steps verging inwards. Occasionally these gutters change their character and become water-courses, by means of which the adjacent steppes are drained. But the enjoyment of a luxuriant nature, with its perpetual change of scene, and the charms of novelty which

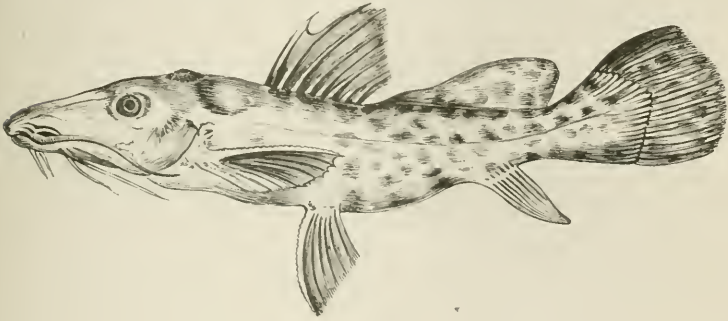
presented themselves in the foliage, compensated richly for a little toil; and day by day practice made the trouble lighter.

This tour contributed in various ways to my stock of information. In Geer I met with the clerk from the Seriba destroyed by the Agar, who related to me the adventures which the sufferers had endured upon their flight. With a Faki from Darfoor, who had formerly visited Bornu and the Western Soudan, I had a long geographical dispute as to whether the great river of the Monbuttoo emptied itself into the Tsad, or flowed direct into the sea. The foreigner argued justly for the Shary, whilst I, on the other hand, was referring to the Benwe. I succeeded in stirring him and all the other interested listeners to a state of considerable amazement at my acquaintance with localities of which they had no knowledge except by report and which they hardly knew even by name. I told them about the whole series of states right away from Darfoor to the ocean. For about the hundredth time I had again to answer the inquiry why Europeans want so much ivory. The curiosity on their part is quite intelligible, as ivory is the unseen incentive which keeps alive the system of plunder practised by the Nubians, and I endeavoured to make them comprehend something about the handles of knives and sticks and parasols, the pianoforte keys, the billiard-balls, and the variety of other uses to which the material is applied.

From Geer, with its questions of geography, history, and political economy, I proceeded another league and a half, and came to Addai, where the whole armed force was employing itself most peaceably in the art of tailoring. In nearly all Mohammedan countries needlework is the business of the men. A short league brought me to Koolongo, past which there flows a copious stream, bordered by thick jungles of impenetrable bamboos, and which, not far from Addai, flows into the Tondy. The stream is singularly abundant in fish, and the Bongo were busy in securing their chief haul.

They proceed very much in the European way of damming up the stream by weirs, and laying down wicker-pots of considerable size. The fishing, for the most part, is done twice in the year; first, at the commencement of the rainy season, and again when the waters begin to subside.

A large proportion of the fish captured in this stream is nearly the same as what is found in the Lower Nile and in Egypt; but some sorts are found which are peculiar; amongst which the fish-salamander (*Lepidosiren*) and some Siluridæ may be mentioned as representatives of the tropics in Africa. There is one kind of these called Kilnoky by



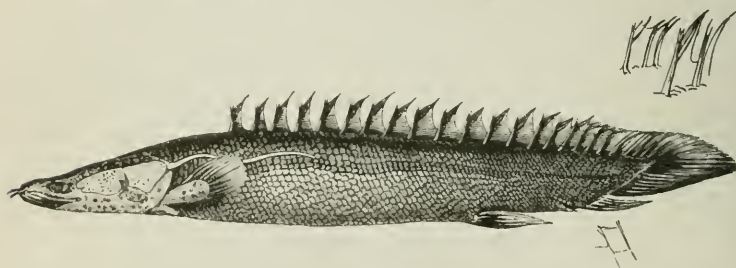
The Kilnoky.

the Bongo, and which is rather interesting. It reminds one of the species of the *Auchenipterus* or *Synodontis*, which are distinguished by their forked tail-fins. Another of the most frequent fish is that known as the "Besher" of the Nile, here called "Gurr" by the natives.\* The elegant, large-scaled *Heterotis niloticus*, which the Bongo style the "Goggoh," has a tender flesh and is of a good flavour. The river does not generally abound with fish which are desirable for food, but those which can be eaten generally belong to the section of the Characini; for example, the *Hydrocyon Forskali*,

\* The illustration on the following page represents a young fish, about nine inches long, and is remarkable for the long, thread-like spikes of skin on the lids of the gills. This peculiarity has been observed in Senegal, and probably is only seen whilst the fish is young.



which is here called "Kyalo." This is a grey-streaked fish, glittering like pearl, in shape not unlike a salmon; it has red fins and a regular dog's head, of which the lanky jaws, armed with conical teeth, amply justify the systematic name. Related to this is the "Raha" (*Ichthyborus microlepis*), which is noteworthy for its pike's head, and the small-scaled *Distichodus rostratus*, or "Heeloo," as it is termed. There is another sort which the Bongo call "Tonga." Besides these there are the "Kalo" (*Alestis*) and the "Dologoh" (*Citharinus*). Of the perch, which plays so prominent a part in these waters, the silver-grey *Lates niloticus*, known as "Golo,"



Young Polypterus.

is very abundant, and perhaps still more so the "Warr" (*Chromis*), about the length of a finger, and of which there are several descriptions. The "Warr," when first caught, is of a dark-green tint crossed obliquely by a number of broad dark stripes. The most common, however, of all the fish, and which seems never to fail in any of the marshes left by the retreating floods, are the sheath-fish, which belong to the *Clarias* species, the white flesh of which has a detestable flavour of the swamps; and the "Geegongoh," which while they are alive are so like in colour to the brown slime in which they roll that they cannot be distinguished from it. A rare sort of the smaller fish is that known as the "Banghey," and which belongs to the species of the Schilbe. Interesting, as being a representative in Africa of an Indian species, is the speckled grey and brown *Ophiocephalus obscurus*. It only remains to mention among the lesser sorts

“Ndeer” (*Ctenopoma Petherickii*), the “Labyrinthi” of the Marango (*Labeo Forskali*), and the “Möll” (*Mormyrus cyprinoides*).

There are two methods which the Bongo employ to preserve the flesh of their fish. Table salt they cannot get, but they substitute what they obtain from ashes. They cut the fish through lengthways, simply expose it to be dried in the sun, and afterwards hang it up to be fumigated in the clouds of smoke which fill their huts. Another way is to cut the fish up and dry it, and then to pound it all up in mortars until it is reduced to a jelly, which is rolled into balls about the size of the fist. These, with their high flavour, form a favourite ingredient in soups and sauces, which are entirely wanting in all other aromatic condiments.

In Koolongo so many ridiculous tales were dressed up for me about the wonders of the subterranean world, and of the abodes of evil spirits in the neighbouring caves, that I glowed with the desire to make their acquaintance. No one that I could find in the Seriba had ever ventured to visit the dreaded grottoes, and the alarm of the Governor was a great joke; after he had talked away for an hour, and declared he would accompany me, he ended by offering a handsome “backsheesh” to one of his subordinates to take his place; but his offer to go had been publicly made, and, as matter of honour, he was bound to attend me. We had to cross a stream ten feet in depth, and as, on account of an injury to his foot, he was riding an ass, the timid fellow found just the pretext he wanted to excuse his return; he could not allow his invaluable donkey to get a chill. In a party of eight, including myself, we set out towards the house of terror: three of my own servants, two of the *soi-disant* soldiers, and two of the natives who acted as guides. This company, however, could not help considering themselves inadequate to face the peril, and as we approached the caves some extra negroes from the adjacent fields were pressed into the service.

Uphill for a while was our way from Koolongo, and on accomplishing the ascent we had before us a wide plain, and about a league away we could discern the spot, shrouded in a thick coppice, which was the object of our march. Reaching the entrance to the cavern, we found it blocked up through a considerable fall of earth, which apparently had been caused by the washing away of the surface soil by springs bubbling up from beneath; and the outside was so choked up by masses of underwood, that no one could suspect that there was a grotto in the rear.

When, fourteen or fifteen years previously, the first intruders made their way into this district, the story goes that hundreds of the natives, with their wives and children and all their goods and chattels, betook themselves to this inaccessible retreat; and that having died of starvation, their evil spirits survive and render their place of refuge a place of danger. Just as we had contrived to push a little way into the thicket, an idea struck one of my servants that he could be as cunning as his master. Finding that I persevered in my intention, he bethought himself of the bees on the White Nile, and so there rose the shout of "Bees, bees!" from more than one of the party. But they got some stings they hardly looked for: one good box on the ear, followed up by another and another, made their cheeks tingle again, and they were fain to proceed. I can still laugh as I picture to myself those nigger rascals resigning themselves to enter the shrubs, and I see them heaving a sigh, and looking as if they were ready to send their lances through the first devil they should happen to meet. I followed them on through the hazardous pathway, the darkness growing ever deeper. Stumbling on, we made our way over blocks of stone, descending for more than a hundred feet till we reached the entrance of the cave, which, after a low kind of porchway through the rifle'd rocks, arches itself into a spacious grotto, capable of sheltering some thousand men.

In place of any heart-rending shrieks of wicked ghosts,

there was nothing more to alarm us than the whizzing of countless bats (*Phyllorhina caffra*), and thus at once the whole veil of romance was torn asunder. We reclined for a time in the cool shade, and then I invited the whole party to take part in a scene of conjuration, for which they were quite prepared. With the full strength of my voice I cried, "Samiel, Samiel, Afreed!" invoking the spirits of evil to put in an appearance; thus all pretext of fear from that quarter was put to rest; and now belief in ghosts took another shape, and the men pretended that they were terrified, because the cave was a lurking-place of lions; but as a fine brown dust covered the floor of the grotto, leaving it as smooth as though it had just been raked over, I asked them to show me some traces of the lions. They could detect nothing, however, but the vestiges of some porcupines, of which a few quills made it clear that other creatures besides ghosts and bats made the cave their home. That brown dust was a vast mass of guano that had gradually accumulated; I brought away a sack of it with me, and it worked wonders in making my garden productive, resulting in some cabbages of giant growth.

The rocky walls of the cave, dripping as they were with moisture, were covered with thick clusters of moss, which took the most variegated forms, and were quite a surprise in this region of Central Africa, where mosses are very scarce. A regular network of foliage, with long creepers and thorny brambles, filled up the entire glen upon which the grotto opened, so that no ray of sunlight could ever penetrate.

The Bongo give the name of "Gubbehee" (or the subterranean) to this cavern. I tried to creep into some of the crevices, but was soon obliged to desist, sometimes because the fissures were too narrow, and sometimes because the multitudes of bats came flying out in my face, and sometimes because the reeking ammonia choked me, and made further progress impossible. By some shots, however, which I discharged, I convinced myself of the magnitude of these rifts, which, within a few inches, were full of guano.

Full of spirits, we retraced our steps to the Seriba, and had some sport with the Governor about his pretence of the susceptibility of his donkey. When I asked him to accept a bet of 100 dollars that he would pass a night by himself in the cave, he was quite as bumptious as on the day before; but I moderated his enthusiasm by suggesting that his donkey, perhaps, was worth more than the 100 dollars, and that I was sure that the donkey could not stand the damp. The result was, that he declined the engagement, and cried off the wager.

These details will answer the purpose of showing what kind of heroes these cattle-stealers and men-hunters are. To them most literally applies Dante's verse, when he speaks of the saucy herds who, "behind the fugitives swell with rage, but let these show their teeth, or even stretch out their purse, and at once they are gentle as a lamb." Against the poor faint-hearted negroes they were valiant and full of pluck; but all their courage vanished into nothing when they came in contact with the Shillooks and Bari.

In Koolongo were wide plains covered with earth-nuts, which attract multitudes of the jackals of the country, which scratch up the nuts, and crack them with their teeth. The jackal (the "bashohm" of the Nubians, *Canis variegatus*) is one of the most common animals in Bongo-land. It is about the size of an ordinary fox, in colour being like a wolf, with black back and tail. They are pretty sure to be seen in the early morning, squatting comfortably down, and composedly enjoying the nuts. I knocked over several of them with heavy shot, and took care of their skins, which gave me some beautiful fur. The bashohm is very destructive among the poultry of the villages, doing even more mischief than the wild cat, which does not care to venture so near the huts.

From Koolongo I returned to Geer, from which it is distant about as far as from Addai. Half a league on the way we came to a spot where a deserted Seriba of Ghattas's exhibited its desolate remains. The sight here was very striking; after penetrating the tall masses of grass, we found



some self-sown sorghum, the stalks of which reached the astonishing length of 20 feet, being beyond question the tallest cereal in the world. The extraordinary growth was probably to be attributed to the manuring substances which, year after year, collect upon and fertilise the soil. The palisades of the old Seriba were still partially standing, and were hardly higher than the surrounding grass, and the ruins were overgrown with wild gourds, calabashes, and cucumbers. The bare frameworks of the conical<sup>3</sup> roofs had fallen to the ground, and lay like huge crinolines: they served as supports to the growing pumpkins, and formed in this condition a thick shady bower.

The extensive wilderness derived a weird aspect from the strange stillness that pervaded the deserted dwellings. There was not a song from a bird, there was hardly the humming of an insect; it seemed as if Nature were revelling in her undisputed sway, or as if the curse of a prophet had been wreaked upon the abodes of violence and of plunder.

By the end of July all the bamboos were in full blossom. The grains are not unlike rye, and are edible, and, in times of dearth, have been known to form a substitute for the exhausted corn. When the fruit is mature, the long, ramified panicles have a very remarkable appearance, and the ears, clustered together at their base, radiate like an ancient whirlbat. Very rarely, however, does the African bamboo bloom, so that it is not often that it supplies the place of ordinary corn.

At an equal distance of about a league and a half from Koolongo and from Geer lies the village of Gurfala. The way thither led through perpetual marshes and was so interrupted by deep masses of mud that I had repeatedly to change my clothes. When the naked skin is exposed to the filth of the bogs, it is not only annoyed by a number of insects, some of them harmless enough, many of them most disgusting, but it is terribly cut by the sharp edges of the grass. This not merely causes considerable pain, but the

wounds inflicted in this way are often very troublesome and slow to heal; they not unfrequently result among the Nubians in serious sores, and have been known to entail the loss of a foot. At every Seriba there will be found some who are suffering from this cause, and Baker observed the recurrence of the same evil amongst his people. As the same consequences do not occur in Nubia itself they are probably to be attributed to the effect of the climate. The backs of the negroes are not available for transport over any long distances of this fenny land, because of the insecurity of the footing; and in another respect this mode of conveyance offers little attraction; to mount one of the negroes is almost as disastrous to one's white summer garments as an actual tumble into the marsh. Soap is not a common article hereabout, and must be used economically, and the traveller has to put up with a general wash about once in two months.

All the minor Seribas are really established for the purpose of overlooking the Bongo, and the sub-agents are always in trepidation lest there should be a sudden disappearance of all their negroes. It has not unfrequently happened that whole communities of the Bongo, quite unawares, have taken up their baggage, started off from their state of subjection, and, escaping the hands of their masters, have established themselves amongst the neighbouring Dinka. If they wish to cultivate corn for themselves, who could venture to blame them?

The Bongo name for Gurfala is Ngulfala, which indicates an earlier tribe of this race, which is no longer separated into various clans. Gurfala, I found, had its amusing associations. As in Koolongo it was the fear of ghosts for which the people had been conspicuous, so here it was the effect of a great brandy-distillery upon the inhabitants that entertained me. This distillery was kept by an old Egyptian, one of the few of his race who resided in the district of the Seribas. Out of an "ardeb," or about five bushels of sorghum, he managed,

with his rude apparatus, to extract about thirty bottles of watery alcohol. The sallow old Egyptian, whom the enjoyment of his vile liquors had tanned till his skin was as dry as parchment, was, as it were, director of a joint-stock company, of which the sub-agents and the soldiers in the Seriba were the shareholders, contributing their quota of corn to the concern. The apparatus for distilling consisted of a series of covered clay retorts, connected by tubes made of bamboo; the establishment for working was made up of a party of fat-bellied, swarthy women slaves, who had to pound away at the grain in a mortar; and as often as they paused for a moment to recover their breath, after their grinding exertions, they invariably panted till they reminded one of exhausted Cybeles. The chief material used was sorghum; the produce was a vile spirit. All the Nubians who settle here would abandon themselves very much to the use of brandy, if it could be more readily procured and if a continual superabundance were at their disposal; their fanaticism, however, is irreproachable; they rigorously follow the prescription of their law, and most scrupulously observe the Fast of Ramadan.

Together with the fresh relays arrived rows of spirit-flasks in their original packing (mostly made at Breslau), which are stored away in the magazines. These find their way from Alexandria and Khartoom to this remote corner of traffic. The agents drink their spirits neat, and cannot get it strong enough to please them; everybody else dilutes it with two-thirds water or mixes it with his merissa. In their drinking-bouts they used to besiege me with applications for some of the sharp radishes from my garden, which on these occasions they seemed especially to relish. What was most revolting to me about their intoxication was that they always preferred the early hours of the morning for their indulgence, and for the rest of the day became incapable of standing upright. After they were tipsy they were just as pugnacious as Europeans, but the excitability of the South would break out,

so that manslaughter and death were not of unfrequent occurrence.

After a couple of days I took my departure from the huts of Gurfala, where a number of the Gellahba also have settled themselves, and I made my way over a short two leagues towards the west to Doomookoo, the fifth of the Ghattas Seribas. The route was over a firm soil, alternately bushwood and open steppe. The grass on the rocky level seemed to have a permanent character. All of one kind, and covering large tracts of country, it reminded me of the waving ears of our own cornfields. Although the region seems to be destitute of any continuance of trees, it far surpasses the European plains and meadow lands in the variety of its permanent grasses.

About half-way there was a pond made by rain on the rocky ground, which was covered with the large red-headed geese of the Gambia and a number of widow-buntings. Only during the rainy season do these birds quit the waters of the great Nile and find their way to the interior.

At Doomookoo I found the negroes all astir; an equipment was being made for an expedition to Gebel Higgoo, and, with the co-operation of Aboo Guroon, was to consist of a hundred armed men. Mukhtar, the captain of the troop, repeatedly assured me that he could reach his destination in about five days, and I was much disposed to accompany him. But there was in my way this obstacle, that I was obliged to get my correspondence off-hand; I had to write my letters for a whole year. The mountains Higgoo and Shetatah have been so denominated for some cause by the Nubians; Higgoo signifying a bandbox, and Shetatah being their name for cayenne pepper. They lie in a southerly direction from where we were, only a few leagues distant from that Mundo which is so often mentioned by Petherick; a spot which on every map is notoriously always pushed either backwards or forwards for several degrees, and originally, by those who professed to have visited it, was said to be situated on the

Equator. The fact is, that Mundo is the name ordinarily given by the Bongo to a small tribe calling itself Babuckur, which has contrived to wedge in its position between the borders of the Bongo and the Niam-niam. On the eastern limit the Bongo denote the Niam-niam themselves by this name of Mundo. To the isolated hills of this border-land, such of the Bongo as could maintain their independence made good their retreat, and only in consequence of the contemplated expedition of the Khartoomers were they laid under tribute. During the present year the trading companies had established a number of settlements here amongst them, these advanced colonies being necessary for the security of the highways for traffic into the Niam-niam territory. Hitherto all the avenues for transit had been found liable to attack from the uncontrolled Bongo and from the Babuckur; but now the entire region was sequestered, and made a kind of preserve, on which the two companies could meet and monopolise their slave-plunder.

In one of the more extended low-lying steppes, overgrown with its mass of vegetation, I lost a whole day in vain endeavours to secure an antelope of that large breed which is found here, but which seems to elude all pursuit, in the course of the chase learning to discriminate a considerable number of species. Fate was here unpropitious. Manœuvre as I would, I could not sneak up close enough to get a shot. More than once I saw large herds of *Leucotis*, grazing apparently in entire repose; but every movement of mine was so dependent upon the formation of the ground, and every disturbance of the tall grass resulted in such a crackling, that to meditate a surprise was out of the question. If ever I flattered myself that I was gaining some advantage, and was getting close to the herd under cover of a detached bush, I was sure to be betrayed by the keen vision and disquietude of some stray beast that was hanging on the flank. Still greater were the obstacles that occurred if pursuit were tried in the drier tracts by the border of the lowlands. Here were



seen whole troops of the Aboo Maaref (*A. nigra*), like great goats, with their sharp horns and their flowing manes, proudly strutting on the plain; but, times without number, on the first alarm they bounded off. No avail that their black wrinkled horns were right before us, rising and sinking in the grass, offering a mark indeed somewhat indefinite; no good that we crept on, three at a time, one taking the wilderness, another the thicket, and the third, step by step, getting through the marshy hollows—everything was ineffectual: just as we thought we were getting an advantage, either some one would fall into a hole, or would shake a bough that hung over his head, or would disturb the crackling stalks in the bushes, and all hope was gone; the signal of danger was circulated, and the herd were out of reach. These details will furnish an idea of the endless artifices by means of which the chase in the rainy seasons has to be practised to insure success. Wet through, and with clothes saturated with the mire of the marshes, extremely weary, and having only succeeded in sending one poor Aboo Maaref hopping on three legs after its companions, we returned at the close of our day of unsuccessful exploit.

The return to my headquarters from Doomookoo was a journey of about four and a half leagues. I found the way entertaining enough. Elevated dry flats of rocks came in turns with inundated lowlands; and after passing through pleasant woodlands the road would wind through open steppes. Game was everywhere most abundant. It was only necessary to withdraw for an hour from a settlement to get an impression that the whole of the animal creation had ceased to give itself any concern about the proceedings of man. Not one of the soldiers, whose lives are lavished by their employers in a hundred useless ways, finds the least enjoyment in the noble pleasures of the chase. They all shirk the trouble, and, even if they could get up the necessary perseverance, they are such bad shots that they could hardly recompense themselves for their

exertion. Besides this they prefer the very rankest of their goats' flesh to the choicest venison; partly it may be from the general uniformity of their diet, or partly perhaps from their religious aversion to eat of meat slaughtered in a manner that is not prescribed in their law; certainly it is very rare for them, in their wanderings, to partake of any game which they have captured.

There are two little antelopes which are here very common, and which roam about the country in pairs. One of these is the Hegoleh (*A. madoqua*) which appears to be found right through from Abyssinia to the Gambia; the other is the Deloo (*A. grimmia*), which is known also in the south. They are both pretty and lively bright-eyed creatures, of which the entire length is but little over three feet; they correspond very nearly to a small roe, or the fawn of a fallow deer.

The Hegoleh is all of one colour—a light tawny with a greyish throat, not so foxy as the *Leucotis*. The Deloo is of a fawn colour on its back, with a tinge of yellow in front; its flanks are nearly white, whilst its ankles are black. Its head is very expressive; a black stripe runs along it and terminates in a dark brown tuft; this gives to the female, which has no horns, rather a comical look, running up as it does into a stiff peak of about five inches long: in the males this growth is concealed by the short horns. Both kinds are distinguished by the glands of the lacrymal ducts.\* The *Madoqua* has two pair of these, one pair set under the roots of the ear, making a triangle of an area of half a square inch; the other pair in the tear-pits composing a sort of pouch, about an inch long, which consists of a deep fold of skin, and from which is discharged a viscous and colourless matter. Above the tear-glands, towards the nasal bone, there projects on each side from the frontlet a thick pad about three inches long, which seems to have an adenoid texture, almost like

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\* The head of the *Madoqua* is represented as accurately as possible in the accompanying illustration.

a tumour. In the same way as with the Cervicapra, these tear-glands during any excitement open themselves like the nostrils of a snorting horse. The Deloo has only one pair of these glands, which lie horizontally in a narrow streak across



The Madoqua.

the hollow of the eyes. Both kinds are alike in never venturing into the low grounds exposed to floods, and in preferring the rocky lands which are covered with bushwood. They often get into the middle of a thicket, and startle the huntsman by suddenly springing out, in the same way as the Ben-Israel or Om-digdig of Abyssinia (*A. Hemprichiana*). The flesh of both these antelopes is very indifferent for eating as compared with the larger kinds; that of the Deloo when roasted having a singular acrid flavour, which seems to suggest the unpleasantness of the glands.

Towards the end of August the sorghum-harvest commenced with the pulling of the light crop of the four-monthly sort, which had been sown in the latter part of April. But the general ingathering of the heavier varieties, which

contribute chiefly to the supply of corn, did not take place until the beginning of December, after the rainy season was over. In Sennaar and Taka, sorghum requires five or six months to come to maturity, but in this district it rarely takes less than eight months. Both the early and late sorts commonly attain a height of nearly fifteen feet; the stalks



The Deloo.

of the former remain quite green, but the reedy stems of the latter become so strong and woody, that they are used for fences to divide one enclosure from another. Some of the varieties are scarcely inferior to the regular sugar millet (*Sorghum saccharatum*) in producing an abundance of saccharine matter; these are known to the negroes as well as to the Arabians of the Soudan, who chew the straw and so express the juice. The Bongo and the Dyoor express the pulp by means of wooden mortars, and boil it till it has the consistency of syrup. From this concoction I was able to procure a spirit which was far more palatable than what I should have obtained by distilling the sorghum itself.

Both varieties of the common sorghum,\* which here

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\* In all descriptions of sorghum, as given by travellers, there seems to be a considerable confusion with respect to the distinctive names of this ordinary cereal. It is called promiscuously "Kafir-corn," "negro-cane," "bushel-maize," "Moorish-mille," or sometimes "durra." Durra is an Arabic defini-

abound in all their minor differences of colour, shape, and size of grain, yield well-nigh a dozen different descriptions for the market at Khartoom. The standard value is fixed by the Fatareetah, a pure white thin-skinned grain, which also is grown by the negroes in the Seriba.

All negro races that depend upon agriculture for their subsistence consider the cultivation of sorghum most important. Of the people among which I travelled, the Bongo, the Dyoor, and the Mittoo, were examples of this. On the other hand, among the southern Niam-niam and the Monbuttoo this cereal is quite unknown.

I could not help being astonished at the length of time which most of the kinds take to ripen. In some fields a portion of the stubble is left intentionally ungrubbed until the next season; this will die down, but, after the first rain, it sprouts again from the root, and so a second gathering is made from the same stem. No loosening of the soil is ever made, and this perhaps accounts in a degree for the tardiness of the growth. With the small spades, of which I have already spoken, shallow holes are sunk in the ground at intervals of about a yard: into these is dropped the corn, which then is trodden down by the foot. It is only during the first few months that any labour at all is given to the fields, just to remove from the surface of the soil the multitudes of weeds which will spring up. These weeds are gathered into heaps, and form the only manure which is em-

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tion, which can be traced in literature as far as the tenth century. The etymology of the Italian word *sorgho* is altogether uncertain. Peter de Crescentiis, about the year 1300, is the first author who definitely alludes to corn under this name; whether Pliny meant to refer to it is very doubtful. The Germans in the South Tyrol, who are very limited in their acquaintance with cultivated cereals, call it, in their Germanised way, "Sireh," whilst the Slavonians corrupt it further into "Sirek." In Egypt this sorghum is called *Durra belladi*, "durra of the country," to distinguish it from maize, which is known as *Durra Shahmi*, or "Syrian durra." In Syria itself, where the sorghum is little known, because rarely cultivated, it is simply called "durra." Throughout the Soudan it has exclusively the appellation of *Aish*, *i. e.*, bread."



ployed in this lavish laboratory of nature. Never more than once is this weeding repeated; it is done by the women and children; and the corn is then left entirely to take its chance until it is time to gather it. On account alike of its tall growth and of its luxuriant habit, the men are careful not to plant it too thickly. The country does not offer many materials for manuring the land; if, therefore, greater application of labour or of skill should succeed in doubling the yield of every stem, there would ultimately be no gain. The soil, which already in many places fails after the second year, would only be exhausted so much the sooner. Such being the case, every project of ameliorating the condition of this people by enlarging their crop is quite an illusion; the land could not sustain a larger number than that which already resides upon it.

In my garden I made several attempts to sow wheat, but without much success. Probably I should have prospered better if I could have obtained some European seed: mine was from Khartoom, and it is very likely that the conditions under which it had been grown, amidst the flooded fields of the Nile Valley, on a soil far more soddened than that of this district, had been very injurious to the grain.

Very unwisely, not one of the Seriba governors has ever made an attempt to introduce into the district the culture of rice, for which the low marshy fields, otherwise useless, seem very admirably adapted; but the people are not to be taught; vain the endeavour to initiate them even into a rational system of burning charcoal; and as to the culture of rice, nothing throughout the whole of Nubia was known about it. On the contrary, the expeditions which have set out from Zanzibar, and which have explored districts where the climate is not dissimilar to that of which we speak, have introduced the cultivation of rice over a very considerable area. The finger of nature itself seems to point out the propriety of not neglecting this product; in the whole district south of the Gazelle the wild rice of Senegal grows quite freely,

and this I always found of a better quality than the best kinds of Damietta. During the rains the wild rice (*Oryza punctata*) environs many a pool with its garland of reddish ears, and seems to thrive exceedingly, but it never occurs to the sluggish natives to gather the produce that is lost in the water; and it is only because the Baggara and some of the inhabitants of Darfoor had saved some quantity, that I contrived to get my small supply.

There yet remain three kinds of corn to which a passing reference should be made in order to complete a general survey of the agriculture of this district.

Next to the sorghum stands the penicillaria, or Arabian "dokhn," to which much attention is devoted, and which is cultivated here much more freely than in the northern Soudan. Sown somewhat later than the sorghum, somewhat later it comes to maturity.

A second substitute on the land for sorghum is a meagre grain, the *Eleusine coracana*. By the Arabians it is called telaboon, and by the Abyssinians tocusso; it is only grown on the poorest soils and where the ground is too wet to admit of any better crop. The grain of this is very small and generally black, and is protected by a hard thick skin; it has a disagreeable taste, and makes only a wretched sort of pap. It yields a yeast that is more fit for brewing than for baking; in fact, not only do the Niamniam, who are the principal growers of the Eleusine, but the Abyssinians as well, make a regular beer by means of it.

Midway between the sorghum and the penicillaria must be reckoned the maize of the country, which only grows in moderate quantity, and is here generally cultivated as a garden vegetable in the immediate proximity of the huts. The Madi tribe of the Mittoo are the only people who seem to cultivate it to any great extent.

There is one quality which pertains equally to all these varieties of grain which are grown in these torrid regions; it

is not possible from the flour which they provide to make bread in the way to which we are accustomed. All that can be made from the fermented dough is the Arabian bread, "kissere," as it is called—tough, leathery slices, cooked like pancakes on a frying-pan. If the fermentation has gone on far enough to make the dough rise for a good spongy loaf, when it is put into the oven it all crumples up, and its particles will not hold together; if, on the other hand, the fermentation has not proceeded sufficiently, the result is a heavy lump, and this is the ordinary daily achievement of the natives, who pack up their dough in leaves and bake it in the ashes. The wheats of the Upper Nile Valley, and even large Abyssinian kinds, have the same property, which may arise from the small proportion of *soluble* starch which exists in all corn of the tropics, however large the entire quantity of the starch may be. The presence or absence of gluten in the grain is irrelevant, and cannot be an adequate explanation with regard to sorghum, of which the better kinds are richer in gluten than our wheat.

Next, after the various sorts of corn, the leguminous plants play an important part amongst this agricultural population. Cultivated frequently alike by the Dinka and Dyoor is the catyang (*Vigna sinensis*), which is grown by the Shillooks more plentifully than by either; but the Bongo have a great preference for the mungo-bean (*Phaseolus mungo*), which they call "bokwa." The pods of these contain a little hard kernel, not unlike black pepper; in comparison with the catyang they are very poor eating. Wild representatives of both these classes of beans are almost universal throughout Africa, and demonstrate that they are indigenous to the soil. The best of all the beans is the *Phaseolus lunatus*, which is found of various colours, white, or brown, or yellow, and which in shape is like our own, although the legume is very short, and rarely contains more than two seeds. This is grown very freely by the Mittoo and the Madi, but the Bongo and the Dinka also give it their attention.

There are two kinds of these leguminous plants which are cultivated very extensively, and which fructify below the soil, that is, as the pods ripen the peduncles bend down and sink beneath the ground. These are the speckled pea-shaped voandzeia and the arachis, or earth-nut. Dispersed now everywhere over the tropics, the proper home of these is in Africa. The first is cultivated most of all by the Bongo; the single seed which its pod contains is mealy, but cooking does not soften it, and it is consequently very indigestible.

The earth-nut, on the contrary, is of an oily nature. It is seldom wanting amongst any of the tribes; in value it is almost a rival of the sesame, to the culture of which the Bongo give their care next to their sorghum.

Another oily vegetable product of the country is the *Hyptis spicigera*, which the Bongo named "kendee." Once sown among cultivated plants it becomes a sort of half-wild growth, and establishes itself as an important shrub between the stubble. The Bongo and Niam-niam especially store large quantities of it. The tiny seeds, like those of a poppy-head, are brayed to a jelly, and are used by the natives as an adjunct to their stews and gravies, the taste and appearance being very similar to the hemp-pap of the Lithuanians. Just as poppy and hemp to the people of the North, so here to the natives the sesame and the hyptis appear a natural product so enjoyable that, without any preparation whatever, it can be eaten from the hollow of the hand, according to Boccaccio's expression, "more avium."

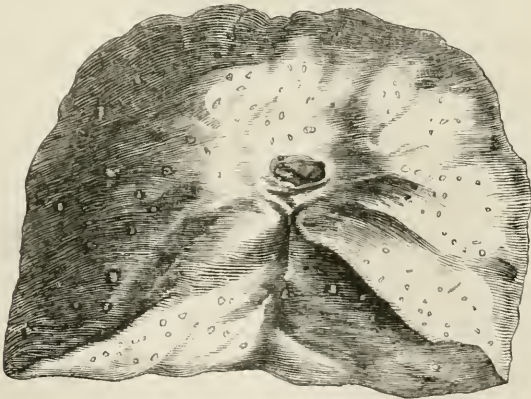
A very subordinate place is occupied in the cultural pursuits of these people by any of the tuberous vegetables. Various kinds of yams (*Dioscorea alata*, and *D.* or *Helmia bulbifera*) are found in the enclosures of the Bongo and of the Dinka, and are here and there cultivated in some measure like the maize, under the eye of the proprietor. The Niam-niam and the Monbutto, who devote more attention to the growth of tubers than of cereals, have a greater preference for the sweet potato (*Batatas*), the manioc, and the colocasia,

and other bulbs, which to the northern people are quite unknown. All the yams in these parts seem to exhibit the same form, which is reckoned the most perfect in this production, lavished by bountiful Nature on man with so little labour on his part. The tubers of the Central African species are very long; at their lower extremity they have a number of thick protuberances; they are similar to a human



Central African Yam.

foot, or rather (taking their size into account) to the great foot of an elephant. Some were brought to me which varied in weight from 50 to 80 lbs. The substance of the tuber, which is easily cooked, is light, mealy, and somewhat granulated; it is more loose in texture than our tenderest potatoes, and decidedly preferable to them in flavour.



The Nyitti.

The Nyitti (*Helmia bulbifera*), which are protruded from the axils of every leaf on the climbing sprouts, are in shape like a great Brazil-nut—a section of a sphere with a sharp



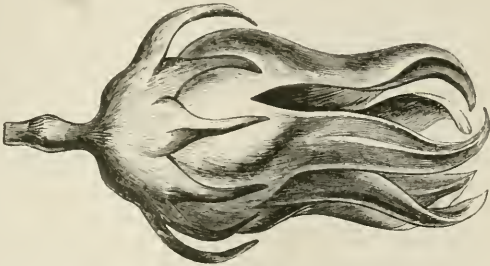
edge. In their properties they correspond much with our potato, particularly as regards their taste and their bulk; but they never develop themselves into such mealy masses as the ordinary yams. Their skin is remarkably like potato-peel, and altogether their colour, sometimes yellow, sometimes a thoroughly purple-brown, adds to the resemblance. Very frequently these plants grow wild, but in that condition the tubers are quite small, and have a taste so pungent that they are said by the natives to be full of a dangerous poison. To a kindred species which is found wild, and which produces a horn-shaped tuber, we shall have to allude hereafter.

Just before the sorghum-harvest commenced the gourds were ripening, and came on as a welcome boon to the natives, who at this season were suffering from the usual scarcity. They devoured incredible quantities of them, and I saw whole caravans of bearers literally fed upon them. Of the ordinary gourds (*Cucurbita maxima*) there are two kinds, the yellow and white, which succeed excellently and attain a prodigious size. There is a kind of melon with a hard woody rind, which the Dyoor and the Dinka cultivate: when half-ripe, they cook and enjoy it as a palatable vegetable; it is generally of a cylindrical form, and about a foot in length. As it grows it assumes the diverse shape of the *Cucumis chate*, the cooking-cucumber of the Egyptians, which they call "adyoor" and "abdallowy;" by its wild shapes it seems to reveal an African origin. The leaves of the gourds are boiled just like cabbages, and are used for a vegetable. The bottle-gourds do not grow anywhere here actually without cultivation, but in a sort of semi-cultivation they are found close to all the huts. From the edible kinds are made vessels, which are quite secure.

As actual vegetables the Bongo cultivate only the bamia or waka of the Arabians (*Hibiscus esculentus*) and the sabdarifa. The calyx of the latter is very large, varying in colour from a pale flesh to a dark purple, and is used as

a substitute for vinegar at meals. The bamia here is a larger variety of the Oriental vegetable; its seed-vessels before they are ripe are gathered and boiled.

Altogether unknown throughout the population of pagan negroes is the onion, which appears to have its southern limit in Kordofan and Darfoor. The equatorial climate seems to render its growth very difficult, and do what the Nubians



Calyx of the *Hibiscus Sabdarifa*.

will, they are unable successfully to introduce this serviceable vegetable into the districts of their Seribas. The tomato may well be considered as a cosmopolite, making itself at home in all warmer latitudes, but previously to my arrival it had not found its way into this region.

For the sake of its fibres the *Hibiscus cannabinus* is very generally cultivated here, as it is in the Nile Valley; but I observed that the Bongo have another plant, the crota-laria, an improvement upon the wild sort (*C. intermedia*), from which they make excellent string.

Compared with Africa in general, this district seemed very deficient in the growth of those spices which serve as stimulants to give a relish and variety to dishes at meals. Red cayenne pepper, for instance, is swallowed by Abyssinians and Nubians in incredible quantities in their soups, but the Bongo regard it as little better than absolute poison. Although the first-comers found the indigenous pimento growing in all the enclosures, yet the Bongo reckoned it as so dangerous that they carefully kept it in guarded spots,

so that their children might not be victims to the deleterious effects of its bright red berries. The natives had been accustomed to poison their arrows with pimento, and I may mention this as one of the numerous proofs which might be alleged that much of the arrow-poisoning of Africa is quite a matter of imagination. When the natives witnessed the Nubians come and gather up the suspected berries and throw them into their food, their astonishment was unbounded; they came at once to the conclusion that it was utterly useless to contend with a people that could gulp down poison by the spoonful, and accordingly they submitted unconditionally to the intruders.

Of all the plants which are cultivated by these wild people, none raises a greater interest than tobacco, none exhibits a more curious conformity of habit amongst peoples far remote. The same two kinds which are cultivated amongst ourselves have become most generally recognised. These kinds are the Virginian tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum*) and the common tobacco (*N. rustica*). It is little short of a certainty that the Virginian tobacco has only made its way into the Old World within the few centuries since the discovery of America. No production more than this has trampled over every obstacle to its propagation, so that it has been kept to no limits; and it must be matter of surprise that even Africa (notorious as it has ever been for excluding every sort of novelty in the way of cultivation) should have allowed the Virginian tobacco to penetrate to its very centre.

It is a great indication of the foreign origin of this plant that there is not a tribe from the Niger to the Nile which has a native word of their own to denote it. Throughout all the districts over which I travelled, the Niam-niam formed the solitary exception to this by naming the Virginian tobacco "gunde;" but the Monbutto, who grow only this one kind and are as little familiar with *N. rustica* as the Niam-niam, call it "Eh-tobboo." The rest of the

people ring every kind of change upon the root word, and call it "tab, tabba, tabdeet," or "tom." The plant is remarkable here for only attaining a height of about eighteen inches, for its leaves being nearly as long as one could span, and for its blossoms being invariably white.

Quite an open question I think it is, whether the *N. rustica* is of American origin. Several of the tribes had their own names for it. Here amongst the Bongo, in distinction from the "tabba," it was known as "masheer." The growth it makes is less than in Europe, but it is distinguished by the extreme strength and by the intense narcotic qualities which it possesses. It is different in this respect from what is grown in Persia, where it is used for the narghileh or water-pipes, and whence there is a large export of it, because of its mildness and aromatic qualities. Barth\* has given his opinion that the tobacco is a native of Logane (Mosgoo). At all events, the people of Africa have far surpassed every other people in inventing various contrivances for smoking, rising from the very simplest apparatus to the most elaborate; and thus the conjecture is tenable, that they probably favoured the propagation of the foreign growth, because smoking, either of the common tobacco (*N. rustica*) or of some other aromatic weed, had in some way already been a practice amongst them. To such a hypothesis might be opposed the important fact that on all the monuments of the ancient Egyptians that afford us so clear an insight into the details of their domestic life, there has never been found a written inscription or pictorial representation that could possibly afford a proof that such a custom was known to exist. In conclusion, it deserves to be mentioned that the pagan negroes, as far as they have remained uninfluenced by Islamism, smoke the tobacco, whilst those who have embraced Mohammedanism prefer the chewing of the leaf to the enjoyment of a pipe.

\* Vol. iii., p. 215.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE BONGO : Area, boundaries, and population of Bongoland. Subjection of the Bongo to the Khartoomers. Decrease of population by slave-trading. Red tinge of the skin. Width of the skull. Small growth of hair. No aridity in climate. Wild tubers as food. Races of goats and dogs. Hunting-weapons. Villages and huts. Smelting furnaces. Money of the Bongo. Weapons for display. Wood-carving. Penates of the Bongo. Musical instruments. Character of Bongo music. Corpulence of the women. Hottentot Venus. Mutilation of the teeth. Disfigurement of the lips. Arrow-poisoning. National games. Marriage premiums. Natural morality. Disposing of the dead. Memorial erections. Mistrust of spirits. Loma, good and ill-luck. Fear of ghosts. Belief in witches. Peculiarities of language. Unity of the people of Central Africa. Extermination of the race.

I PURPOSE in this chapter to describe a people which, though visibly on the decline, may still by its peculiarity and striking independence in nationality, language, and customs, be selected from amid the circle of its neighbours as a genuine type of African life. Belonging to the past as much as to the present, without constitution, history, or definite traditions, it is passing away, like deeds forgotten in the lapse of time, and is becoming as a drop in the vast sea of the Central African races. But just as a biographer, by depicting the passions, failings, and virtues of a few individuals, may exhibit a representation of an entire epoch in history, so we may turn with interest to scenes which have been enacted in this limited district of the great and mysterious continent, sure of finding much edifying matter in the course of our investigations. Like the rain-drop which feeds the flowing river and goes its way to replenish



the mighty ocean, every separate people, however small, has its share in the changes which supervene in the progress of nations; there is not one which is without an abstract bearing on the condition of primitive Africa, and which may not aid us in an intelligent survey of any perspective that may be opened into its still dark interior

To the antiquary, within whose province the description may lie in a degree, the material that is offered must be in a measure attractive. A people, as long as they are on the lowest step of their development, are far better characterised by their industrial products than they are either by their habits, which may be purely local, or by their own representations, which (rendered in their rude and unformed language) are often incorrectly interpreted by ourselves. If we possessed more of these tokens, we should be in a position to comprehend better than we do the primitive condition of many a nation that has now reached a high degree of culture.

Of all the natives with whom I had intercourse in my wanderings, the majority of those who acted as my bearers, and amongst whom I most frequently sojourned, were the Bongo. It was in their territory that I spent the greater part of my time in the interior; and thus it happened that I became intimate with many particulars of their life, was initiated into all their habits, and even to a certain extent mastered their dialect.\*

The present country of the Bongo lies between lat. 6° and 8° N. on the south-western boundary of the depression of the Bahr-el-Ghazal basin, and on the lowest of the terraces where the southern slopes appear to make a transition from the elevated ferruginous crust to the unfathomed alluvial flats which are traversed by all the affluents of

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\* Vide 'Linguistische Ergebnisse einer Reise nach Central Afrika,' by Dr. G. Schweinfurth. Berlin: Wiegandt and Hempel, 1873.

the river. In the extent of its area the land covers about the same surface as Belgium, but with regard to population, it might be more aptly compared to the plains of Siberia or the northern parts of Norway and Sweden; it is a deserted wilderness, averaging only 11 or 12 people to the square mile. The country extends from the Roah to the L'ango, and embraces the middle course of nearly all the affluents of the Gazelle; it is 175 miles long by 50 miles broad, but towards the north-west the breadth diminishes to about 40 miles. On the north it is only divided by the small Dyoor country from that of the Dinka, which, however, it directly joins upon the north-east. The south-east boundary is the Mittoo territory on the Roah; and that on the west is the country of the Golo and Sehre on the Pango. The eastern branch of the extensive Niam-niam lands joins the Bongo on the south; whilst, wedged between and straitly pressed, the Bellanda and the Babuckur have their settlements.

When, eighteen years ago, the Khartoomers first set foot in Bongoland, they found the entire country divided into a number of independent districts, all in the usual anarchy of petty African communities; there was nothing anywhere like an organised commonwealth such as may be found amongst the Dinka, where entire districts unite and form an imposing warlike tribe. Every village simply had its chief, who, in virtue of superior wealth, exercised a certain authority over the rest of the inhabitants, and who, in some cases, had an additional *prestige* from his skill in the art of magic. The Nubians, consequently, never had to contend against the unanimous hostility of a powerful or well-disciplined people, and only in a few isolated places had to encounter much resolute opposition. Their soldiers, not merely by the tenor of their religion, conceived themselves justified in perpetrating every sort of outrage upon heathen unbelievers, but they were taught to consider their acts

of violence as meritorious in the sight of God: it was, therefore, an easy matter for them to fall upon the weak authorities of the country, and in the space of a few years to apportion the entire territory amongst the few ivory merchants in Khartoom, whose spirit of enterprise, suddenly kindled by the exaggerated reports of the profits secured on the Upper Nile by Europeans, the first explorers, had developed itself into a remarkable activity.

The natives were without difficulty reduced to a condition of vassalage, and, in order that they might be under the close supervision and at the service of their oppressors, they were compelled to quit their homes, and to reside near the *Seribas* that were established in various parts of the land. By the application of this sort of feudal system, the trading companies brought about the realisation of their project for a permanent occupation of the country. Shut in by the *Niam-niam* on the south and by the *Diuka* on the north, *Bongoland* offered a twofold advantage for the establishment of headquarters for the expeditions: in the first place, it was in close proximity to the *Mesheras*, or landing-places; and, secondly, by its advanced position towards the interior, it afforded most ample opportunities for setting in operation the contemplated excursions to the prolific ivory districts of the south. The *Diuka*, hostile and intractable from the first, had never given the intruders the smallest chance of settling amongst them; while the *Bongo*, docile and yielding, and addicted almost exclusively to agriculture, had, on the other hand, contributed in no slight measure to maintain the *Seribas*. If ever, now and again, they had been roused to offer anything like a warlike opposition, they had only too soon succumbed to the motto of the conquerors, "*Divide, et impera.*"

The *Dyoor*, the *Golo*, the *Mittoo*, and other smaller tribes, shared the fate of the *Bongo*, and in the short space of ten years a series of more than eighty *Seribas* had arisen between

the Rohl and the Beery. Scarcely half the population escaped slavery, and that only by emigrating; a portion took refuge amongst the Dinka on the north, and others withdrew southwards to the Niam-niam frontiers, where the isolated mountains enabled them to hold out for a while. The Khartoomers, however, were not long in pursuing them, and gradually displaced them even from this position.

During the early years of their occupation, the Nubians beyond a question treated the country most shamefully; there are traces still existing which demonstrate that large villages and extensive plots of cultivated land formerly occupied the scene where now all is desolation. Boys and girls were carried off by thousands as slaves to distant lands; and the Nubians, like the *parvenu* who looks upon his newly-acquired wealth as inexhaustible, regarded the territory as being permanently productive; they revelled like monkeys in the durra-fields of Taka and Gedaref. In course of time they came to know that the enduring value of the possessions which they had gained depended mainly on the physical force at their disposal; they began to understand how they must look to the hands of the natives for the cultivation of their corn, and to their legs for the transport of their merchandise. Meanwhile, altogether, the population must have diminished by at least two-thirds. According to a careful estimate that I made of the numbers of huts in the villages around the Seribas and the numbers of bearers levied in the several districts, I found that the population could not at most be reckoned at more than 100,000, scattered over an area of nearly 9000 square miles.

On first landing from the rivers, the Khartoomers opened up an intercourse with the Dinka, who did not refuse to furnish them with bearers and interpreters for their further progress into the interior, and it was from them that they

learnt the names of the different tribes. In Central Africa every nation has a different designation for its neighbours than that by which they are known among themselves; and it is the same with the rivers, which have as many names as the nations through whose territory they flow. In this way the Nubians have adopted the Dinka appellations of Dyoor for Lwoh, Niam-niam for Zandey, and Dohr for Bongo. This last people always style themselves Bongo, and the Khartoomers, since they have made their headquarters in their territory, have discarded the Dinka name of Dohr, and now always use the native term Bongo. According to the Arabic form of expression, the plural of Dohr is Derahn, and of Niam-niam it is Niamahniam.

The complexion of the Bongo in colour is not dissimilar to the red-brown soil upon which they reside; the Dinka, on the other hand, are black as their own native alluvium. The circumstance is suggestive of Darwin's theory of "protective resemblance" among animals; and although in this instance it may be purely accidental, yet it appears to be worthy of notice. Any traveller who has followed the course of the main sources of the White Nile into the heathen negro countries, and who has hitherto made acquaintance only with Shillooks, Nueir, and Dinka, will, on coming amongst the Bongo, at once recognise the commencement of a new series of races extending far onwards to the south. As trees and plants are the children of the soil from which they spring, so here does the human species appear to adapt itself in external aspect to the red ferruginous rock which prevails around. The jet-black Shillooks, Nueir, and Dinka, natives of the dark alluvial flats, stand out in marked distinction to the dwellers upon the iron-red rocks, who (notwithstanding their diversity in dialect, in habit, or in mode of life) present the characteristics of a connected whole. Of this series the tribes which must be accounted the most important are the Bongo, the Mittoo, the Niam-niam, and



the Kredy, all of which are equally remarkable for their entire indifference to cattle-breeding. The whole of these, especially the women, are distinguished for the reddish hue of their skin, which in many cases is almost copper-coloured. It cannot be denied that this red-brown complexion is never entirely wanting, even amongst the darkest skins that are found in the lowlands; but the difference between their complexion and what is ordinarily observed among the Bongo is only to be illustrated by the contrast in colour between a camellia leaf in its natural condition and after its epidermis has been removed.

Although amongst every race the tint of the complexion is sure to deviate into considerable varieties of shade, yet, from a broad estimate, it may be asserted that the general tint remains unaltered, and that what may be denominated the "ground tint" constitutes a distinctive mark separating between race and race. Gustav Fritsch, in his work upon the people of Southern Africa, has bestowed great attention upon this subject, and by means of an ingenious table, arranged according to the intensity of various shades of colour, has very perspicuously explained the characteristics of the Kaffirs, Hottentots, and Bochjesmen. As matter of fact, among the Bongo may be seen individuals with their skin as black as ebony; but yet this does not prevent the true ground tint of their complexions being something essentially distinct from any example that could occur among the true Ethiopians, whether these might be light or dark. The evidence of the distinction of which I speak, I have no doubt is altogether very conclusive; and I have had many opportunities of testing its reality in my observations at the various Seribas where half-castes are very numerous, being the offspring of Nubians (including Bedouins in that category) and Bongo.

In taking a coloured likeness of a Bongo it is necessary to use the deep red pigment known as Pompeian red very freely. I was once in the studio of an artist at Rome who

was painting in oil the likeness of a Bongo whom I had brought to Europe. I could not help observing that he made the ground-tint of the flesh quite of a liver colour (hepatic) hue, whilst when he was portraying natives, either of Dongo or of Berber, or even when he was depicting the true Arabs, although their skins were equally dark, he did not make use of red at all, but employed a kind of yellow for the basis of the shades to follow. His proceeding appeared to me an involuntary attestation to the distinction which really exists.

Like the Niam-niam, Mittoo, and Kredy, the Bongo rarely exceed a medium height. They differ, however, in several respects from the Dinka and other people of the lowland plains. Their prominent characteristics appeared to me to consist in a more compact form of limb, a sharper development of muscle, a wider formation of the skull, and generally a preponderating mass in the upper part of the body. Of 83 men that I measured I did not find one who had attained a height of 6 ft. 1 in., whilst the average height did not appear to me to be more than 5 ft. 7 in. Dinka and Bongo alike afforded very striking samples of the two great series of races which they severally represented, and each displayed the principal characteristics of their particular race in their stature, their complexion, and their form of skull. I cannot recall a single instance among the Bongo where the skull was of the long but narrow shape that is all but universal among the Dinka. Of many of these Bongo that I measured, I should pronounce that they would require to be classified as hardly removed from the lowest grade of the Brachycephaly. They appear themselves to be aware of this characteristic. I remember a discussion that once arose about a little boy, too young to speak, as to whether he was a Dinka or a Bongo. One of the interpreters, after minute examination of the proportions of the child's head, came to an immediate, but decided, opinion that the boy was a Bongo,

and in answer to my inquiry as to the grounds on which he so confidently based his decision, he explained that he judged from the fact that the head was broad; he went on, moreover, accompanying his words by corresponding gestures, to say that the Bongo women, as soon as an infant is born, press its head downwards, but the Dinka mothers, on the contrary, compress the heads of their babies from the sides. Now, although it is hardly credible that this manipulation on the part of the mothers would have any permanent influence on the conformation of the skulls of an entire nation, yet we may accept the statement as a significant proof of the high estimation in which the natives hold this attribute and token of their race. It has been proved by experience that in the most diverse nations of the earth, mothers will always be ready to use external means to promote as far as they can any signs of nationality in their offspring, ignorant of the certainty that these signs would of themselves, without assistance, be manifested eventually. In order to effect an actual alteration in the shape of the skull, such as may be observed amongst the Mongolian and American Indian tribes, it is necessary to employ continuous and forcible pressure, and to bind the head with straps and bandages from the earliest infancy.

The hair of the Bongo offers no peculiarity, either with regard to its culture or its growth, that can be deemed of any special interest; it is short and curly; moreover, it is of that woolly nature at which, in default of anything better, the theorist who propounds the doctrine of the independent and yet of the mutual connection of the heathen races eagerly clutches. Corresponding to the numerous gradations in complexion and formation of the skull are the varieties in growth of the hair which are exhibited. Hair which is thick and frizzly is common amongst every race that has hitherto been discovered on African soil, and although there are a few unimportant exceptions among the Arab tribes

(the Sheigieh) who have settled in Nubia, and notwithstanding that the hair of the Ethiopians, as well as that of the North African people may be termed curly more appropriately than woolly, yet straight hair is nowhere to be found. The real distinctions, therefore, in the growth of the hair in the nations of Central Africa consist in the colour and length, which vary considerably in the different races; beards predominate with some, whilst with others they fail entirely. In common with most other people of the red soil, the Bongo have hair which is perfectly black, but in its length it is very different from that of the Niam-niam. On the Niam-niam frontiers the Bongo have often tried to imitate their neighbours by twisting and plaiting their hair, but their attempts have been always a failure. Whiskers, beards, and moustaches are cultivated in very rare cases, but the hair never grows to a length much exceeding half-an-inch.

Bongoland is traversed from south to north by five important tributaries of the Gazelle. With these are associated a number of smaller rivulets which are not permanent streams; nevertheless, from the pools which remain in their beds throughout the dry season, they furnish a sufficient supply of moisture to maintain the vegetation of the country. Water for drinking never fails, although from November to the end of March a fall of rain is quite exceptional. In cases of necessity water can always be procured without much time or trouble from those pools which survive the periodical water-courses in the marshes. Dearth as a consequence of prolonged drought appears to be a condition quite unknown; certainly it has not occurred for the last ten years. The crops are far more frequently injured by superabundant moisture than by drought, and the continuance of wide inundations has been followed by famine. Everything seems to suggest the thought how easily rice might be cultivated in the country.

The Bongo are essentially an agricultural people. With

the exception of some occasional hunting and some intermittent periods devoted to fishing, they depend entirely upon the produce of the soil for their subsistence. Their cultivated plants have already been noticed in a previous chapter. To agriculture men and women alike apply themselves, devoting their greatest attention to the culture of their sorghum. The amount of labour they bestow upon this cereal is very large. The seed is lavishly broadcast into trenches which have been carefully prepared for its reception, and when it has germinated and made its appearance above the ground, two or three weeks are spent in thinning the shoots and in transplanting them away from the spots where they are too thick; a system which experience has shown can very advantageously be applied to maize. Very few vegetables are cultivated, but for these the people find a variety of substitutes in the wild plants and tubers which abound. Everywhere throughout the tropics the *Gynandropsis*, the *Corchorus*, and the *Gieseckia* grow close upon the confines of the abodes of men, and the leaves of these, like the leaves of the gourd, are frequently used as an ingredient in soup. The fleshy leaves of the *Tulinum roseum* are served up in the same way as our spinach; and the tough foliage of the Tirna-tree (*Pterocarpus*), as it becomes soft in the process of boiling, is employed as a vegetable, and is really sweet and tender. The fruit of the *Hymenocardia*, not unlike that of the maple, has an acid flavour far from unpleasant, and serves a similar purpose.

During the rainy season the country is very prolific in many varieties of funguses. The Bongo have a great fancy for them; they keep them till they are on the verge of decay, and then dry and pound them. They use them for the purpose of flavouring their sauces, which in consequence are enriched by a *haut goût*, which without depreciation may perhaps be compared to rotten fish. Throughout the country I never saw any funguses but what were perfectly edible,



and some of them I must confess were very palatable. The natives call them all "Kahoo," while to the larger species they give the special name of "hegba-mboddoh," which is synonymous with the Low German "poggen staul," or with the English "toad-stool." "Hegba" is the name which the Bongo give to their little carved stools, and "mboddoh" is the generic term for all frogs and toads, and the proper designation for the *Bufo pandarinus* in particular. This "hegba-mboddoh," which has thus suggested the same idea in very remote parts of the world, is here a gigantic *Polyporus*; not unfrequently specimens may be found of it which grow to a height of nine inches, are a foot in diameter and weigh nearly fifty pounds. In form, size, and colour they are not unlike the grey clay edifices of the *Termes mordax*, of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. The fungus which are most common, and which moreover are the most preferred, are the different species of *Coprinus*, *Marasmius*, *Rhodosporus*, and the tough but aromatic *Lentinus*.

I have already mentioned the great abundance of edible, if not always palatable, fruit which is produced by the common trees of the country. In clearing the woods for their tillage the Bongo are always careful to leave as many of these trees as they can, and by thus sparing them they preserve many a noble ornament to their fields, which would otherwise be as monotonous as they are flat. The Butter-tree and the *Parkia* are very carefully in this way saved from destruction, and form a striking feature in many of their landscapes. It is a remarkable peculiarity of the flora of this region that all the species which are not essentially shrubby or arborescent strive for a perennial existence; and, as evidence of this, it may be observed that the roots and portions of the stem beneath the soil either develop into bulbs and tubers, or exhibit a determination to become woody. Annuals occupy a very insignificant place, and all vegetation seems to be provided with a means of withstand-

ing the annual steppe-burning, and of preserving the germs of life until the next period of vitality recurs. When their corn provision is exhausted, or when there is a failure in the harvest, then do the Bongo find a welcome resource in these tubers; they subsist upon them for days in succession, and find in them the staple of their nourishment whenever they go upon their marches in the wilderness.

Quite incredible is it what the Bongo are able to digest. Most of the bulbs and tubers are so extremely bitter that it is not until they have been thoroughly steeped in boiling water or have had their pungent matter mollified by being roasted at a fire, that they can be eaten at all; they are gall to the taste. Amongst these bitter bulbs there are two which may claim a special notice; these are the Mandibo and the Moddobehee. The Mandibo is a species of *Coccinea*, which is nearly everywhere very abundant; the Moddobehee (dog's gum) is one of the *Eureiandræ*; they are both *Cucurbitaceæ*, and both contain poisonous matter. Impregnated with the like bitterness are the rape-like roots of the *Asclepiadeæ*, the huge tubers of the *Entada Wahlbergii*, and of the *Pachyrrhizus*; so also are the various kinds of *Vernoniæ* and *Flemingiæ*, which are dug up from a foot below the surface of the soil.

The natives can make but little use of the plants which grow from any of these numerous tubers. The diminutive *Drimia* lifts its pretty red blossoms about a couple of inches above the rocky ground, and is a bulbous plant which becomes edible after a prolonged boiling.

Whenever a halt is made upon the marches across the wilderness, the bearers, as soon as they are liberated from their burdens, set very vigorously to work and grub up all sorts of roots from the nearest thickets. I can myself vouch for a fact, which might fairly be deemed incredible, that thirty Bongo who accompanied me on my return to Sabby, at a time when I had scarcely enough to keep me from

starvation, subsisted for six consecutive days entirely on these roots, and although we were hurrying on by forced marches, they lost neither their strength nor their spirits. Their constitution was radically sound, and they seemed formed to defy the treatment of their inhospitable home.

Already it has been mentioned that there is an entire deficiency of common salt throughout the district of the Gazelle. The alkali that is everywhere its substitute is obtained by soaking the ashes of the burnt wood of the *Grewia mollis*, a shrub common throughout Bôngoland, and which is notoriously useful in another way by the quantity of bast which it produces.

Tobacco is indispensable to the Bongo, and is universally cultivated. The species known as Mashirr (*Nicotiana rustica*) is very pungent; its small thick leaves are pounded in a mortar, and are subsequently pressed and dried in moulds. From the cakes thus formed, the natives break off fragments as they require them, grind them into powder by means of stones, and smoke the preparation in long pipes that have very pretty clay bowls. They are addicted to smoking quite as inveterately as many of the nations that live in the polar regions, and are not content until they are utterly stupefied by its effects. I had a circumstance brought under my notice which exhibited to me the extreme to which they can carry their abuse of the narcotic: upon one of our marches a Bongo man had indulged to such excess, and had inhaled the pungent fume so long, that he fell senseless into a camp-fire, and was taken up so severely burnt that he had to be carried by his comrades on a litter for the remainder of the journey.

The Bongo fashion of smoking is even more disgusting than that which has been already described as prevalent amongst the Dinka. In the same manner as with them, the pipe is passed from hand to hand, but the lump of bast that intercepts the pungent oil is not placed in the receptacle of

the stem, but is put in the mouth of the smoker, and together with the pipe is passed from one person to another. The habit of chewing tobacco is adopted as much by the Bongo as by the Mohammedan inhabitants of Nubia; but the custom is so universal that there would seem to be ample justification for the belief that it is indigenous rather than what has been acquired from foreigners. The practice in which the Bongo indulges of placing his tobacco quid behind his ear is very repulsive.

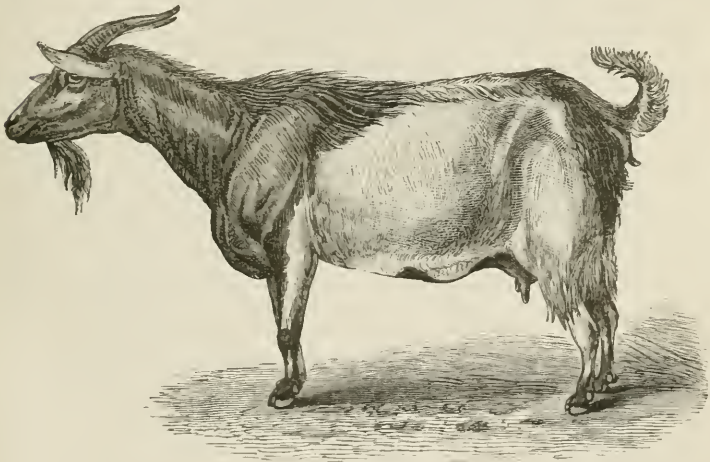
It is to their indifference to cattle-breeding, like what is practised so extensively by the Dinka, that the Bongo owe their comparatively peaceful relations with the so-called "Turks." It is to the same cause that the latter are indebted for the sluggish measure of opposition shown them by their vassals. The domestic animals of the Bongo are poultry, dogs, and goats; sheep being almost as rare as cattle. The



Bongo Goat.

goats are unlike those of the Dinka, but are of a breed quite common throughout these regions of Central Africa. Not only did I see them amongst the Mittoo and Madi, but like-

wise among the Babuekur, and even in the country of the Monbuttoo, whither they had been brought by the equatorial nations whom the Monbuttoo simply style the "Momvoo." These goats, like the Dinka sheep, are distinguished by a hairy appendage from the breast and shoulders, and by a short stiff mane, which runs right along the ridge of the back to the small erect tail. The frontal is round, and projects considerably beyond the base of the nasal bone, and the horns are very strong and but slightly curved. The ordinary colour of these pretty animals is a light fawn or chamois-brown, the mane being very dark. I occasionally



Short-bodied Goat of the Bongo.

found the Bongo in possession of another breed which I met with nowhere else, and which is probably merely a cross with the Dinka goat. It has a remarkably short and plump body, and is generally of a pepper-and-salt colour. The coat is somewhat longer and more shaggy than that of the other breed, and besides the mane-like appendage in front the hind quarters are also covered with long rough hair.

The Bongo dogs, with regard to size, are between the small Niam-niam race and the Dinka breed, which corresponds



more nearly to the common pariah of Egypt. On account of the indiscriminate crossing of the races, a dog of pure Bongo breed is somewhat rare; its chief characteristics are a reddish tan colour, short erect ears, and a bushy tail like a fox's brush. Their greatest peculiarity appeared to me to be the bristling of their hair, which at every provocation stands up along the back and neck like that of an angry cat. The bushiness of the tail distinguishes the breed from the smooth-tailed Dinka dog, and from that of the Niam-niam, of which the tails are as curly as pigtails.

Although the Bongo are not over choice in their food, they persistently abstain from eating dog's flesh, a practice to which their southern and south-eastern neighbours are notoriously addicted; in fact, they show as much abhorrence at the idea as they would at devouring human flesh itself. They have a curious superstition about dead dogs. I was about to bury one of my dogs that had recently died, and some of the men came and implored me to desist from my intention, since the result would assuredly be that no rain would fall upon their seeds. For this reason all the Bongo simply throw their dead dogs out into the open fields.

At some seasons, especially at the end of the rainy months, fishing and hunting offer productive sources for obtaining the means of subsistence. Hunting is sometimes practised by independent individuals going out separately; but at other times it takes the form of an extensive *battue*, in which the men belonging to a whole district will combine to take a share: Occasionally, too, a rich booty is obtained from the trenches and snares. Nets are used in all the *battues* for game, and the Bongo devote as much attention to the construction of these nets as they do to the weaving of their fish-snares and basket-pots. Their fishery is principally limited to the winter months.

Elephant-hunting has for the last twelve years been among the things of the past. It is only the oldest of the

men—and here the number of the men that are really old is very small—who appear to have any distinct recollection of it at all. The huge lance-heads, which are now only weapons of luxury in the possession of the wealthy, or upon some rare occasions used for buffalo-hunting, are the sole memorials of the abundance of ivory of which Petherick, as an eye-witness, has given so striking a description. The snares by which the Bongo succeed in catching the smaller kinds of game generally consist of the stem of a tree balanced horizontally by means of ropes.\* A spot which the game is known to haunt is selected for the erection of these snares; a hedge, or some sort of enclosure, is set up on each side of the tree so that the game may be obliged to run underneath; it is arranged so that the animals as they pass tread upon a kind of noose or slip-knot which slackens the ropes by which the tree is suspended, and the falling weight crushes and kills the game below. The numbers of snares of this description which are found in the bush-thickets is a sufficient proof of their efficacy. The smaller species of antelopes, ichneumons, civets, genets, wild cats, servals, and caracals, are all in turn caught by this stratagem.

Hunting on a minor scale is a very favourite recreation, and the children find a daily amusement in catching rats and field-mice. They weave baskets in the form of long tubes, which they lay flat upon the ground in the immediate neighbourhood of the mouse-holes; they then commence a regular *battue*, when the scared mice, scampering back to regain their homes, run through the stubble, and often rush into the open traps, where, like fish in a weir-basket, they are easily secured. In this way the Bongo boys catch considerable quantities of meriones, *Mus gentilis*, and *M. barbarus*, which they tie together by their tails in clusters of

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\* An illustration of this contrivance appears in Petherick's 'Travels in Central Africa,' vol. i. p. 255.

about a dozen, and barter them to each other as dainty morsels. "These are our cows," they would shout to me with great glee whenever I met them returning after their sport had been successful. Another use which is made of the mice which are captured by this simple artifice is to employ them for a bait for securing what they esteem the especial delicacy of roast cat. On the narrow paths which traverse the steppes like rifts in the long grass, they construct diminutive huts out of some twisted reeds; by placing the mice inside these they are very often able to entice the cats into a snare.

With the exception of human flesh and the flesh of dogs, the Bongo seem to consider all animal substance fit for eating, in whatever condition it may be found. The putrefying remnant of a lion's feast, which lies in the obscurity of a forest and is only revealed by the kites and vultures circling in the air above, is to them a welcome discovery. That meat is "high" is a guarantee for its being tender, and they deem it in that condition not only more strengthening than when it is fresh, but likewise more easy of digestion. There is, however, no accounting for taste, certainly not with the Bongo, who do not recoil from the most revolting of food. Whenever my cattle were slaughtered, I always saw my bearers eagerly contending for the half-digested contents of the stomach, like the Esquimaux, whose only ideas of vegetables appear to be what they obtain from the contents of the paunches of their reindeers; and I have seen the Bongo calmly strip off the disgusting amphistoma-worms which literally line the stomachs of all the cattle of this region, and put them into their mouths by handfuls. After that, it was not a matter of surprise to me to find that the Bongo reckons as game everything that creeps or crawls, from rats and mice to snakes, and that he is not particular what he eats, from the carrion vulture to the mangy hyæna, or from the fat earth-scorpions (*Heterometrus palmatus*) to the

caterpillars of the winged termites with their oily beetle-bodies.

Having thus dilated with more minuteness than elsewhere upon the external features of Bongo life, such as their agriculture, hunting, and fishing, I may proceed to call attention to those arts by which, even in this low grade of development, man seeks to ameliorate and embellish his existence.

First of all, the dwelling-place may demand our notice, that which binds every man more or less to the soil which affords him his subsistence—that family nucleus, from which the wide-branching tree of human society has derived its origin.

In the period when the Khartoomers first made their way into the country, the Bongo, quite unlike the other tribes, inhabited extensive villages, which, similar to the present Seribas, were encompassed by a palisade. Neither towns nor villages are now to be seen, and the districts which are occupied at all are only marked by scattered enclosures and little gatherings of huts, as in the country of the Dinka and the Niam-niam. Very rarely are more than five or six families resident in the same locality, so that it is almost an exaggeration to speak of their being villages in any sense. The communities in past times seem to have had a preference for gathering round some great tamarind, ficus, or butter-tree, which often still survives and constitutes the only relic of habitations which have long fallen to decay; and even to the present time the Bongo appear to retain this partiality, and more often than not they may be found beneath the natural shade of a spreading roof of foliage, enjoying the light and space which are prohibited to their cramped and narrow dwellings. The ground for a considerable circuit about the huts is all well cleared and levelled, its surface being the general scene of labour on which all the women perform their ordinary domestic duties. The corn is there thrashed and winnowed; there it is brayed in the wooden mortars

or pounded by the mill; there are the leaves of the tobacco plant laid out to dry; there stand the baskets with the loads of mushrooms or supply of fruit; and there may be seen the accumulated store of nutritious roots. Dogs and poultry alike seem to revel in security under the majestic covering, while the little children at their play complete the idyllic picture of life in Central Africa.\*

Upon the erection of their dwellings there is no people in the Gazelle district who bestow so much pains as the Bongo. Although they invariably adopt the conical shape, they allow themselves considerable diversity in the forms they use. The general plan of their architecture has already been sketched. The materials they employ are upright tree-stems, plaited faggots, canes of the bamboo, clay from the mushroom-shaped white-ant hills, and tough grass and the bast of the *Grewia*.

The diameter of the dwellings rarely exceeds twenty-feet, the height generally being about the same. The entrance consists of a hole so small that it is necessary to creep through in order to get inside; and the door consists of a hurdle swung upon two posts so as to be pushed backwards and forwards at pleasure. The clay floor in the interior is always perfectly level; it is made secure against damp as well as against the entrance of white ants by having been flattened down by the women trampling upon broad strips of bark laid upon it. The common sleeping-place of the parents and smaller children is on the floor. The bedding generally consists only of skins, the Bongo having little care for mats. For the pillow of the family they ordinarily use a branch of a tree smoothed by being stripped of its bark.

In every dwelling-place is found a conical receptacle for corn, named the "gallotoh," which is elevated on piles, varying in height, so as to protect the provision from the damp of

\* For a pictorial representation of this scene, vide vol. ii.



the soil or from the ravages of rats or white ants. Magazines of this kind for the reserve of corn are in general use throughout Africa, from the Rumboo of Damerghoo in the Central Soudan, right into the country of the Kaffirs and Bechuanas.

All the dwellings of the Bongo, whether large or small, are marked by one characteristic, which might almost be represented as a national feature. The peak of their huts is always furnished with a circular pad of straw, very carefully made, which serves as a seat, and from which it is possible to take a survey of the country, covered with its tall growth of corn. The name of "gony" is given to this elevation, which is surrounded by six or eight curved bits of wood projecting as though the roof were furnished with horns. It is peculiar to the huts of the Bongo.

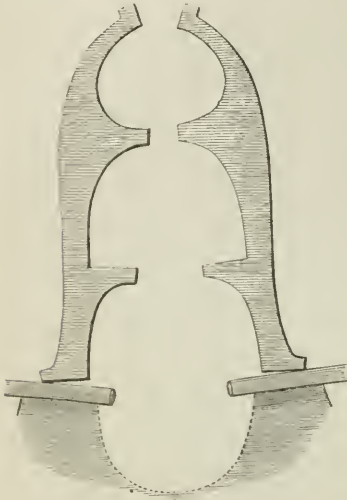
Iron is found in such quantities throughout the region that naturally the inhabitants devote much of their attention to its manipulation; its very abundance apparently secures them an advantage over the Dinka. Although, according to our conceptions they would be described as utterly deficient in tools and apparatus, still they produce some very wonderful results, even surpassing the Dyoor in skill. With their rude bellows and a hammer which, more commonly than not, is merely a round ball of pebble-stone (though occasionally it may be a little pyramid of iron without a handle) upon an anvil of gneiss or granite, with an ordinary little chisel and a pair of tongs consisting of a mere split piece of green wood, they contrive to fabricate articles which would bear comparison with the productions of an English smith.\*

The season when opportunity is found for putting the iron-works in motion is after the harvest has been housed and the rains are over. Already, in a previous chapter,† iron-work,

\* Vide Petherick, 'Egypt, the Soudan,' &c., p. 395.

† Vide Chap. V. p. 206, *seq.*

as produced by the Dyoor, has been noticed, but the Bongo have a system considerably more advanced, which appears worthy of a brief description. Their smelting apparatus is an erection of clay, generally about five feet in height,



containing in its interior three distinct compartments.\* These are all of the same size, that in the middle being filled with alternate layers of fuel and ore. This centre chamber is separated from the lower by means of a kind of frame resting on a circular projection; and it is divided from the chamber above by a narrow neck of communication. The highest and lowest of the divisions are used for fuel only. Round the base of the inferior chamber there are

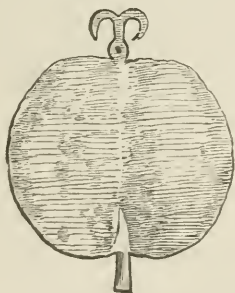
four holes, into which the "tewels" or pokers are introduced and to which bellows are applied to increase the intensity of the combustion; there is a fifth hole, which can be stopped with clay as often as may be desired, and which serves to allow the metal to be raked out after it has trickled down into the cavity below the frame.

The most important of the iron productions are designed for the trade that the Bongo carry on with the tribes that dwell in the north, and which some time since was very active. The raw iron is exhibited in three separate shapes: one is named "mahee," being spear-heads of one or two feet long, corresponding exactly with what has been mentioned as common with the Dyoor; the second is known as

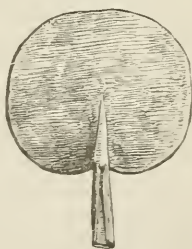
\* The woodcut represents a vertical section of one of these smelting-ovens.

“loggoh kullutty,” and is simply a lot of black, ill-formed spades; the third is called distinctively “loggoh,” consisting of regular spades, which, under the market appellation of “melot,” have a wide sale everywhere along the course of the Upper Nile.

The “loggoh kullutty” is the circulating medium of the Bongo, the only equivalent which Central Africa possesses for money of any description; but, rough-shaped as it is, it seems really to answer in its way the purpose of regular coin. According to Major Denham, who visited the Central Soudan in 1824, there were at that time some iron pieces which were circulated as currency in Loggon on the Lower Shary, answering to what is now in use among the Bongo; but at the period of Barth’s visit all traces of their use had long disappeared. The “loggoh kullutty” is formed in flat circles, varying in diameter from 10 to 12 inches. On one



Loggoh Kullutty.



Loggoh melot.

Iron money.

edge there is a short handle; on the opposite there is attached a projecting limb, something in the form of an anchor. In this shape the metal is stored up in the treasures of the rich and up to the present time it serves as well as the lance-heads and spades for cash and for exchanges, being available not only for purchases, but for the marriage portions which every suitor is pledged to assign. The axe of the Bongo consists of a flat, cumbrous wedge of iron, into the thick end of which is inserted a knobbed handle; it is an instrument

differing in no particular from what may be seen throughout Central Africa.

Besides these rough exhibitions of their craft, the Bongo produce arms, tools, and ornaments of admirable quality, and, at the instance of the controllers of the Seribas, have manufactured chains and manacles for the slave-traffic. Very elegant, it might almost be said artistic, is the work displayed on the points of their arrows and lances. The keen and (to use a botanical expression) the "awny" barbs and edges of these instruments, to any one who is aware of the simple means of production in their reach, must be quite an enigma. The lances are readily recognised by their shapes, and may be classified in a threefold way. First, there is the common lancet-formed spear-head, which is known as "mahee;" then, secondly, there is the "golo," a hastate sort of spear, with long iron barbs below the point extending along the stem to which the wooden stock is attached; whilst the third description is called



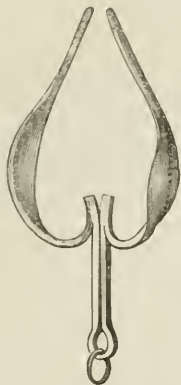
Bongo lances.

"makrigga," and consists of a spike, the stem of which is covered with a number of teeth symmetrically arranged along it, sometimes upwards and sometimes downwards. This makrigga is often merely an article of show, and the technical skill of the smith is concentrated upon its design. The name of makrigga is appropriated to it from the *Randia dumetorum*,\* a prickly shrub,

\* Petherick in his 'Travels,' vol. i. p. 164, refers to this shrub, and designates one of its branches by the name of "ebony."

which is quite common in the district: seeming to indicate that the pattern is derived from an object in nature, it affords a fresh illustration of the view, that all human arts are only imitations of what may be observed in the free fields of a wide creation.

Equal care is bestowed upon the production of the iron and copper ornaments which are worn and the cutlery which is used by the women. For the purpose of plucking out their eyebrows and eyelashes, they employ a pair of little pincers called "peenoh," of which an illustration is here in-



Pincers used by the Bongo women for plucking out their eyelashes.



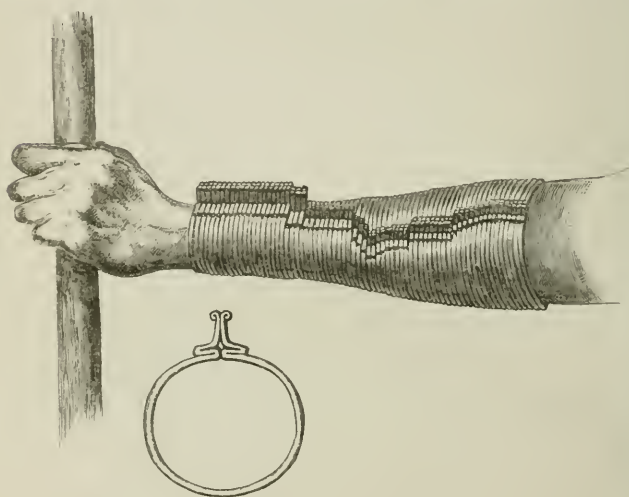
Knife of the Bongo women.

roduced. Quite peculiar to the Bongo women are their "tibbal," or elongated oval knives, with handles at either end, which are sharpened on both edges, and which are often very elaborate in their workmanship. These knives are in constant use for all domestic purposes, being of especial service in peeling their tubers and in slicing their gourds and cucumbers. The rings, the bells, the clasps, the buttons, whatever they affix to their projecting lips or attach to the rims of their ears, the lancet-shaped hair-pins, which



appear indispensable to the decoration of the crown of their head and to the parting of their locks, all are fabricated to supply the demands of the Bongo women's toilet.

The decoration of which the men are proudest is the "dangabor," which simply means "rings one above another." The Dinka and the Dyoor both have an ornament very similar to this, composed of accumulated rings, which cover the arm below the elbow; but the Bongo finish off their article with much more elaborate work. Each separate ring is fur-

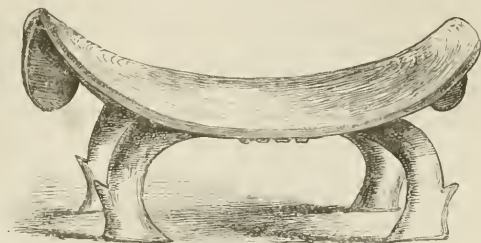


The Dangabor and a single ring.

nished with a boss of a height and strength to correspond with the ring next to it, the rings themselves being forged so as to become gradually larger in proportion as they are farther from the wrist. The arm is thus covered with what may be described as a sleeve of mail, each ring of which can be turned round or displaced at pleasure.

Hardly inferior to the skill of the Bongo in the working of iron is their dexterity in wood-carving. Perhaps the most striking specimens of their art in this way may be noticed in the little low four-legged seats or stools which are found in

every household, and are called "hegba." These are invariably made from a single block, the wood chosen for the purpose being that of the Göll-tree (*Prosopis lanceolata*, Benth.), which is of a chestnut brown, and after use acquires an excel-



Bongo stool.

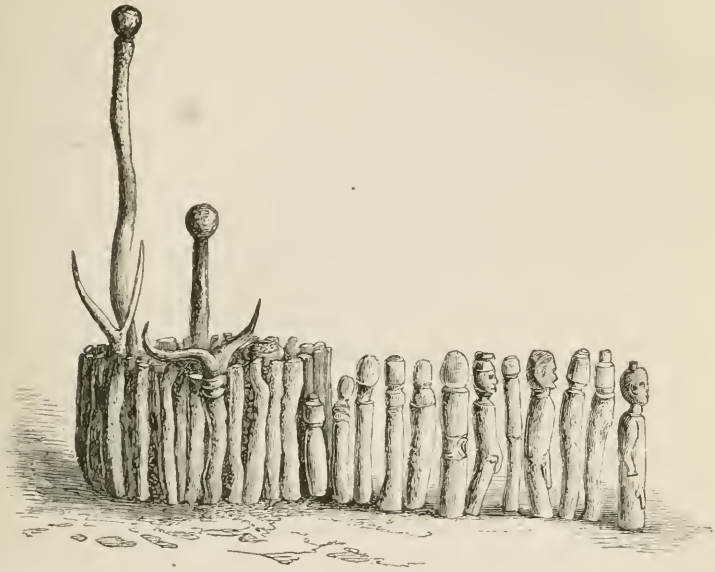
lent polish; they are used only by the women, who are continually to be seen sitting on them in front of their huts, but they are altogether avoided by the men, who regard every raised seat as an effeminate luxury.

Other articles of their fabric in wood are the pestles, the troughs for oil-pressing, the flails for threshing corn, and, most remarkable of all, the goblet-shaped mortars in which the corn is bruised before it is ground into flour upon the grinding-stones. Very graceful in shape are these mortars, not unlike a drinking-goblet with a cut stem; they are not sunk below the ground, as is ordinarily the case with those of the Dinka and Dyoer, but they can be removed whenever it is requisite from place to place. Their height is about thirty inches. Mortars of very similar design were noticed by Barth amongst the Musgoo, and they are also used by the Ovambo, the Makololo, and other negro nations. They are worked by two women at once, who alternately pound away with heavy pestles in a regular African fashion, which has been long immortalised by the pictorial representations of ancient Egypt. Very cleverly, too, do the Bongo cut spoons of very choice design out of horn, of the same shape as may be found in nearly every market in Europe.

Consequent upon the oppression to which the Bongo have now for years been subject, and the remorseless appropriation of all their energies by the intruders, very many of the primitive habits of the people were disappearing; and at the time of my visit my attention was rather arrested by what were memorials of a bygone and happier condition of things, than by anything that was really done under my eyes. Just as in the Central Soudan, in Bornoo, and in the Tsad countries, so here also the destructive power of Islamism has manifested itself by obliterating, in comparatively a brief space of time, all signs of activity and all traces of progress of any kind. Wherever it prevails, it annihilates the chief distinctions of race, it effaces the best vestiges of the past, and extends, as it were, a new desert upon the face of the land which it overruns. Those who have been eye-witnesses of the state of things when the intruders first broke in upon the country, gave me still further details of what had been the special industries of the people.

In the villages there are found very frequently whole rows of figures carved out of wood and arranged either at the entrances of the palisaded enclosures, forming, as it were, a decoration for the gateway, or set up beside the huts of the "Nyare" (chiefs), as memorials, to immortalise the renown of some departed character. In Moody, a district towards the west, I came across the remains (still in a perfect state of preservation) of an erection of this sort, which had been reared above the grave of the Bongo chieftain Yanga. Large as life, the rough-hewn figures represented the chief followed in procession by his wives and children, apparently issuing from the tomb. The curious conception of the separate individuals, and the singular mode in which they were rendered by the artist, awakened my keenest interest. The illustration which is subjoined may be accepted as a faithful representation of the first rude efforts of savages in the arts of sculpture.

Plastic representations of men are known generally by the name of "Moiogohgyee:" when I first saw them, I was under the impression that they must be idols, similar to what the Fetish-worship has introduced into the western coasts, but



Yanga's grave.

I soon satisfied myself of my misconception in this respect. The true design of these wooden figures is simply to be a memorial of some one who has departed this life: this is proved by the term "Moiagoh Komarah," *i. e.*, the figure of the wife, which is applied to an image raised by a surviving husband to the pious memory of his departed wife, and which is set up in the hut as a species of Penates. However rude these attempts must be pronounced, they nevertheless reveal a kind of artistic power certainly far from contemptible; at any rate, the very labour bestowed upon them indicates the appreciation which the artist entertained for his work. The Bongo, for their own part, regard their wooden images as incomparably superb, and persuade themselves that the

likenesses of those who are represented are perfect. To complete the illusion, they very often deck the figure with bead-necklaces and rings and affix some hair over the appropriate parts of the body. Travellers in Central Africa have narrated that they have seen figures of wood corresponding to what I have described, but although they have almost universally taken them for carved deities, I would venture to suggest that in all probability they are elsewhere monuments of the dead, in the same way as among the Bongo.

In addition it may be mentioned that a custom exists of raising a monument of this kind to preserve the memory of any *male* person who has been murdered. I was made acquainted with this circumstance by the mouth of one of the national authorities, who depicted to me the peculiar custom of his fathers in a narrative to the following effect. He said that murder and manslaughter used to be the order of the day at all their festivals and drinking-bouts; when the harvest had been abundant and the granaries were well-stored with corn, there used to be no bounds to their licentiousness; there was no respect for the Nyare, and his words were disregarded amidst the blows of the Nogarra. Now the "Turks" would punish a murderer by carrying off his wife and children, and compel him to pay a heavy fine in iron and make some compensation to the relatives: but formerly the friends would take the law into their own hands, and proceed to exact personal punishment, though they had to set to work very warily if they would keep themselves out of difficulty. When anyone discovered that either his friend, or it might be his brother, or perhaps his wife, had been killed, and the criminal could not be detected, it was no unknown device to prepare beforehand an image carefully representing the murdered person, and very often the likeness would be singularly perfect. He would then invite all the men to a feast, at which the spirituous "legyee" would be freely circulated; and then, when



the excitement was at its height, in the very midst of the singing and dancing, he would unexpectedly introduce the figure that had been prepared. The apparition would be sure to work its effect; the culprit would not fail to be betrayed, as he cowed and exhibited his wish to slink away. Having thus detected the offender, the injured party could deal with him as he pleased.

The Bongo, in their way, are enthusiastic lovers of music; and although their instruments are of a very primitive description, and they are unacquainted even with the pretty little guitar of the Niam-niam, which is constructed on perfectly correct acoustic principles, yet they may be seen at any hour of the day strumming away and chanting to their own performances. The youngsters, down to the small boys, are all musicians. Without much trouble, and with the most meagre materials, they contrive to make little flutes; they are accustomed also to construct a monochord, which in its design reminds one of the instrument which (known as the "gubo" of the Zulus) is common throughout the tribes of Southern Africa. This consists of a bow of bamboo, with the string tightly strained across it, and this is struck by a slender slip of split bamboo. The sounding board is not, however, made of a calabash attached to the ground, but the mouth of the player himself performs that office, one end of the instrument being held to the lips with one hand, while the string is managed with the other. Performers may often be seen sitting for an hour together with an instrument of this sort: they stick one end of the bow into the ground, and fasten the string over a cavity covered with bark, which opens into an aperture for the escape of the sound. They pass one hand from one part of the bow to the other, and with the other they play upon the string with the bamboo twig, and produce a considerable variety of buzzing and humming airs which are really rather pretty. This is quite a common pastime with the lads who are put in charge of

the goats. I have seen them apply themselves very earnestly and with obvious interest to their musical practice, and the ingenious use to which they apply the simplest means for obtaining harmonious tones testifies to their penetration into the secrets of the theory of sound.

As appeals, however, to the sense of sound, the great festivals of the Bongo abound with measures much more thrilling than any of these minor performances. On those occasions the orchestral results might perhaps be fairly characterised as cat's music run wild. Unwearied thumping of drums, the bellowings of gigantic trumpets, for the manufacture of which great stems of trees come into requisition, interchanged by fits and starts with the shriller blasts of some smaller horns, make up the burden of the unearthly hubbub which re-echoes miles away along the desert. Meanwhile, women and children by the hundred fill gourd-flasks with little stones, and rattle them as if they were churning butter: or again, at other times, they will get some sticks or dry faggots and strike them together with the greatest energy. The huge wooden tubes which may be styled the trumpets of the Bongo are by the natives themselves called "manyinyee;" they vary from four to five feet in length, being closed at the extremity, and ornamented with carved work representing a man's head, which not unfrequently is adorned with a couple of horns. The other end of the stem is open, and in an upper compartment towards the figure of the head is the orifice into which the performer blows with all his might. There is another form of manyinyee which is made like a huge wine-bottle; in order to play upon it, the musician takes it between his knees like a violoncello, and when the build of the instrument is too cumbrous, he has to bend over it as it lies upon the ground.

Little difference can be noticed between the kettle-drums of the Bongo and those of most other North African negroes. A section is cut from the thick stem of a tree, the preference

being given to a tamarind when it can be procured; this is hollowed out into a cylinder, one end being larger than the other. The ends are then covered with two pieces of goat-skin stripped of the hair, which are tightly strained and laced together with thongs. At the nightly orgies a fire is invariably kept burning to dry the skin and to tighten it when it has happened to become relaxed by the heavy dews.

A great number of signal-horns may be seen made from the horns of different antelopes; these are called "mangoal," and have three holes like small flutes, and in tone are not unlike fifes. There is one long and narrow pipe cut by the Bongo out of wood which they call a "mburrah," and which has a widened air-chamber close to the mouth-piece, very similar to the ivory signal-horns which are so frequently to be seen in all the negro countries.

Difficult were the task to give any adequate description of the singing of the Bongo. It must suffice to say that it consists of a babbling recitative, which at one time suggests the yelping of a dog and at another the lowing of a cow, whilst it is broken ever and again by the gabbling of a string of words which are huddled up one into another. The commencement of a measure will always be with a lively air, and every one, without distinction of age or sex, will begin yelling, screeching, and bellowing with all their strength; gradually the surging of the voices will tone down, the rapid time will moderate, and the song be hushed into a wailing, melancholy strain. Thus it sinks into a very dirge, such as might be chanted at the grave, and be interpreted as representative of a leaden and a frowning sky, when all at once, without note of warning, there bursts forth the whole fury of the negro throats; shrill and thrilling is the outcry, and the contrast is as vivid as sunshine in the midst of rain.

Often as I was present at these festivities I never could

prevent my ideas from associating Bongo music with the instinct of imitation which belongs to men universally. The orgies always gave me the impression of having no other object than to surpass in violence the fury of the elements. Adequately to represent the rage of a hurricane in the tropics any single instrument of course must be weak, poor, and powerless, consequently they hammer at numbers of their gigantic drums with powerful blows of their heavy clubs. If they would rival the bursting of a storm, the roaring of the wind, or the splashing of the rain, they summon a chorus of their stoutest lungs; whilst to depict the bellowings of terrified wild beasts, they resort to their longest horns; and to imitate the songs of birds, they bring together all their flutes and fifes. Most characteristic of all, perchance, is the deep and rolling bass of the huge "manyinyee," as descriptive of the rumbling thunder. The penetrating shower may drive rattling and crackling among the twigs, and amid the parched foliage of the woods, and this is imitated by the united energies of women and children, as they rattle the stones in their gourd-flasks, and clash together their bits of wood.

It remains still to notice some examples of the various handicrafts which are practised by this people. Compared with other nations, the Bongo are remarkable for the attention they give to basket-work. They make (very much after the fashion of a coffee-bag) a strainer to filter and clarify their "legyee," which is a drink something like ale fermented from sorghum. Baskets are roughly yet substantially made by twining together the stems of the bamboo. As their first efforts in this line, the natives are accustomed to make the circular envelopes in which they pack their corn for exportation. They take the coriaceous leaves of the *Combreta* and *Terminaliæ*, and by inserting the petiole of one leaf into the laminae of two others, they form strips of leaves which in a few minutes are made into

a kind of basket, equally strong and flexible, which answers its purpose admirably.

Woven matting is very rarely found in use. The walls of every hut are made of basket-work, as are the beehives, which are more often than not under the shadow of some adjacent butter-tree. Generally these hives are long cylinders, which midway have an opening about six inches square. The yield of honey, wild or half-wild, is very large, and of fine quality: the bees belong to the European species. The aroma of the Gardenia flowers is retained to a very palpable degree, but wherever the *Candelabra-euphorbia* happens to be abundant, the honey partakes of the drastic properties of its poisonous milk, and has been the cause of the natives being reproached with the intention of poisoning the Nubians.

In consequence of the people being so much engrossed at certain periods of the year by their hunting and fishing, the manufacture of fish-nets, creels, and snares, makes an important item in their industrial pursuits. For the most part all the twist, the bird-snares, and the fishing-lines are made from the fibres of bast, which are so plentiful in the cultivated *Crotalaria* and the *Hibiscus*. For inferior purposes the common lime-like bast of the *Grewia mollis* is made to suffice. The *Sansevieria guineensis* is not less abundant, but the bast which it yields, although very fine, is not very enduring. It is generally very black through having been left to lie upon the dark soil of the marshes, and is only used for making a kind of kilt like a horse's tail, which the women wear behind from a girdle about their waist. Cotton-shrubs are planted only by the Dinka, who make their fishing-lines of the material which is thus provided.

The manufacture of the pottery all falls to the care of the women, who do not shrink from the most difficult tasks, and, without the help of any turning-wheel, succeed



in producing the most artistic specimens. The larger water-bottles are sometimes not less than a yard in diameter. The clay water-pots are ordinarily of a broad oval shape, adapted for being carried on the head with the narrow end resting on a kind of porter's knot, which is made either of leaves or plaited straw. Handles are uniformly wanting: for, whatever may be the purpose to which the vessels are applied, whether for holding water or oil, for boiling or for baking, the material of which they are made contains so large a quantity of mica (which the natives do not understand how to get rid of), that it is very brittle, and the imperfect baking in the open air contributes to this brittleness. To compensate for the lack of handles by which the vessels might be lifted, their whole outer surface is made rather rough by being ornamented by a number of triangles and zigzag lines, which form all manner of concentric and spiral patterns. The gourd-platters and bottles are generally decorated with different dark rows of triangles. A large amount of labour is expended upon the manufacture of clay bowls for pipes, which are often really elaborate, and have generally quite a European character; very often their design consists of a human head, and these are so treasured as works of art, that their possessors cannot be induced to part with them at any price.

The preparation of skins for leather aprons and similar purposes has hitherto been limited amongst the Bongo, as probably amongst all the heathen negroes, to the simplest mechanical process of kneading and fulling by means of ashes and dung, which is followed up by a liberal application of fat and oil till a sufficient degree of softness and pliancy is attained. Recently from the Nubians the use of tan has become generally known, and it may not unreasonably be conjectured that the method of using it will gradually extend from the north of Africa towards the south, in the

same way as it has spread upwards from the Cape. Previous to their contact with Europeans, none of the southern people of Africa had discovered the use of tan, although the skins of their animals were a very important item in their economy. In Bongoland at present the bark of the Gere (*Hymenocardia Heudelotii*) is what is most frequently employed, and the red tan it yields is found to be very effectual.

We have now to notice the apparel and general external aspect of the people, which is as important in its way as the outline of any natural object, such as the growth and foliage of trees. In default of proper clothing, various disfigure-



Bongo.

ments of person play an important part, and the savage is voluntarily even more of a slave to fashion than any of the most refined children of civilization. Here, as in every

other quarter of the globe, the male sex desires to be externally distinguished from the female, and they differ widely in their habits in this respect. There is, however, one ugly custom which is common to both sexes throughout the basin of the Gazelle, which consists in snapping off the incisors of the lower jaw, an operation which is performed as soon as the milk teeth have been thoroughly replaced by the permanent. Upon the south borders of the country, near the Niam-niam, this custom ceases to be exactly followed, and there it is the habit, as with the Niam-niam themselves, instead of breaking them off, to file some of the teeth, and indeed sometimes all of them, into sharp points. Occasionally the natives file off the sides of the upper teeth as well as clip off the lower; nor is it an uncommon thing for gaps to be opened at the points of contact of the central upper teeth, whilst every now and then individual cases occur where interstices have been made in the sides of all the four front teeth large enough to admit a good-sized toothpick. Circumcision is unknown throughout the entire river-district.

The men do not go about in a condition so naked as either the Dyoor, the Shillooks, or the Dinka, but they wear an apron of some sort of skin, and recently have adopted a strip of stuff, which they fasten to the girdle that is never missing, allowing the ends to hang over before and behind. All the sons of the red soil, as the Bongo, the Mittoo, the Niam-niam, and the Kredy, are called "women" by the Dinka, because amongst them the females only are protected by any covering of this description. The Bongo women on the other hand, and especially those who reside on the highlands, obstinately refuse to wear any covering whatever either of skin or stuff, but merely replenish their wardrobe every morning by a visit to the woods; they are, therefore, in respect of modesty, less particular than the women of the Dinka; a supple bough with plenty of leaves,

more often than not a bough of the Combretum, and perhaps a bunch of fine grass, fastened to the girdle, is all they consider necessary. Now and then a tail, like a black horse-tail, composed of the bast of the Sansevieria, is appended to the back of the girdle in a way that has already been mentioned. The rest of the body is allowed by both sexes to be entirely unclad, and no addition to the costume is ever seen, except we should reckon the feathered head-gear which is exhibited on the occasion of a feast or a ball.

As a rule the hair of both men and women is kept quite short, and not unfrequently is very closely shorn, the principal exception being found in the south, where the habits of the Niam-niam have extended their influence into the Bongo territory, and both men and women wear tufts and braids of a length approximating to that of their neighbours.

It may possibly be imagined that the extremely primitive covering of the Bongo women irradiates them with something of the charm of Paradise; but a very limited experience will soon dispel the rapture of any illusion of the kind. All full-grown women attain such an astounding girth of body, and acquire such a cumbrous superabundance of flesh, that it is quite impossible to look at them without observing their disproportion to the men. Their thighs are very often as large as a man's chest, and their measurement across the hips can hardly fail to recall the picture in Cuvier's Atlas of the now famous "Hottentot Venus." Shapes developed to this magnitude are no longer



Bongo Woman.

the exclusive privilege of the Hottentots; day after day I saw them among the Bongo, and they may well demand to be technically described as "Steatopyga." In certain attitudes, as for instance when they are carrying their heavy water-jars upon their heads, they seem to assume the shape of an inverted S. To their singular appearance the long switch tail of bast very much contributes, and altogether the profile of a fat Bongo woman is not unlike that of a dancing baboon. I can vouch for it that women who weigh twenty stone are far from scarce.

Very few are the people of Central Africa amongst whom the partiality for finery and ornaments is so strongly shown as with the Bongo. The women wear on their necks an accumulation of cords and beads, and not being fastidious like their neighbours, will put on without regard to shape or colour, whatever the market of Khartoom can provide. The men do not care much for this particular decoration, but prefer necklaces, on which they string some of those remarkable little fragments of wood which are so constantly found in every region of Africa. With the bits of wood hang fragments of roots, which are in form something like the mandrake, which, in Southern Europe, has been the subject of so strange a superstition. Alternating with the roots and wood are the talons, of owls and eagles, the teeth of dogs, crocodiles, and jackals, little tortoise-shells, the claws of the earth-pig (*Orycteropus*), and in short any of those objects which we are accustomed to store in the cabinets which adorn our *salons*. They appear to supply the place of the extracts from the Koran which, wrapped in leather sheathes, the Nubians wear by dozens about their person; anything in the shape of an amulet being eagerly craved by every African.

Not unfrequently the men deck themselves out in females' ornaments. Many cover the rims of their ears with copper rings and crescents; others pierce the upper lip like the women, and insert either a round-headed copper nail or a



copper plate, or, what is still more general, some rings or a bit of straw. The skin of the stomach above the waist is often pierced by the men, and the incision filled up with a bit of wood, or occasionally by a good-sized peg. On the wrist and upper part of the arm they wear iron rings of every pattern; some rings are cut out of elephant and buffalo hide, and look almost as though they were made of horn. The "dangabor," an ornament composed of a series of iron rings, and worn on the lower portion of the arm, has been already described.

The Bongo women delight in distinguishing themselves by an adornment which to our notions is nothing less than a hideous mutilation. As soon as a woman is married the operation commences of extending her lower lip. This, at first only slightly bored, is widened by inserting into the orifice plugs of wood gradually increasing in size, until at length the entire feature is enlarged to five or six times its original proportions. The plugs are cylindrical in form, not less than an inch thick, and are exactly like the pegs of bone or wood worn by the women of Musgoo. By this means the lower lip is extended horizontally till it projects far beyond the upper, which is also bored and fitted with a copper plate or nail, and now and then by a little ring, and sometimes by a bit of straw about as thick as a lucifer-match. Nor do they leave the nose intact: similar bits of straw are inserted into the edges of the nostrils, and I have seen as many as three of these on either side. A very favourite ornament for the cartilage between the nostrils is a copper ring, just like those that are placed in the noses of buffaloes and other beasts of burden for the purpose of rendering them more tractable. The greatest coquettes among the ladies wear a clasp or cramp at the corners of the mouth, as though they wanted to contract the orifice, and literally to put a curb upon its capabilities. These subsidiary ornaments are not however found at all universally among the women, and

it is rare to see them all at once upon a single individual: the plug in the lower lip of the married women is alone a *sine qua non*, serving as it does for an artificial distinction of race. According to the custom of the people, there need only be a trifling projection of the skin so as to form a flap or a fold, to be at once the excuse for boring a hole. The ears are perforated more than any part, both the outer and the inner auricle being profusely pierced; the tip of the ear alone is frequently made to carry half-a-dozen little iron rings. There are women in the country whose bodies are pierced in some way or other in little short of a hundred different places.

The Bongo women limit their tattooing to the upper part of the arm. Zigzag or parallel lines, or rows of dots, often brought into relief by the production of proud flesh after the operation has been accomplished, are the three forms which in different combinations serve as marks of individual distinction. The men tattoo themselves differently, and some of them abstain from the operation altogether. At one time the lines run across the breast and stomach to one side of the body; at another they are limited to the top of the arm, whilst it is not at all unusual for the neck and shoulder-blades to be tattooed.

Besides the ornaments that I have mentioned, the toilet of a Bongo lady is incomplete without the masses of iron and copper rings which she is accustomed to wear on her wrists and arms, and more especially on her ankles. These rings clank like fetters as she walks, and even from a distance the two sexes can be distinguished by the character of the sound that accompanies their movements. That human patience should ever for the sake of fashion submit to a still greater martyrdom seems almost incredible, though hereafter we shall have sufficient proof when we delineate the habits of the Mittoo, the neighbours of the Bongo, that such is really the case.

In Bongoland, as in all the northern parts of the territory

that I visited, copper of late years has attained a monetary value, and has become an accustomed medium of exchange. Glass beads are annually deteriorating in estimation, and have long ceased to be treasured up and buried in the earth like jewels or precious stones, being now used only to gratify female vanity. In former times, when the only intercourse that the Bongo held with the Mohammedan world was by occasional dealings with the Baggara Arabs, through the intervention of the Dembo, a Shillook tribe connected with the Dyoor, cowrie-shells were in great request, but these also have long since fallen out of the category of objects of value. Gold and silver are very rarely used as ornaments, even in the Mohammedan parts of the Eastern Soudan; it is therefore hardly a matter of surprise that to the Bongo, whose soil is singularly uniform in its geological productions, they should be all but unknown. The Bongo, moreover, have but little value for brass, differing greatly in this respect from their neighbours, the Dyoor.

Their weapons consist mainly of lances, bows and arrows, shields being very rarely used, and even then being appropriated from other neighbouring nations. Although the greater part of the population is at present quite unaccustomed to any warlike occupation, except when any of them chance to be employed in the raids upon the Dinka or in the Niam-niam campaigns, yet they still maintain a wonderful dexterity in the use of the bow and arrow, and we shall have occasion in another place to notice their performances in this respect. The large size of their weapons is remarkable; I saw many of their bows which were four feet in length, their arrows are rarely under three feet long, and on this account they are never made from the light reed-grass, but are cut out of solid wood. The forms of the arrow-heads also have a decided nationality stamped upon them. In the course of time I was easily able to determine at a glance the tribe to which any weapon belonged by certain characteristics, the

details of which would now engross more time and space than are at our command. It may be mentioned that the Bongo, like the negroes above Fesoglu, on the Upper Blue Nile, imbue their arrows with the milky juice of one of the Euphorbiæ. This species, of which I now for the first time collected some specimens, has been erroneously represented by Tremaux in the atlas of his travels\* as *Euphorbia mammillaris*, but it is in fact one of the many Cactus-euphorbiæ for which the flora of Tropical Africa, and especially that of the drier regions, is distinguished, and is entirely distinct from the South African species. It is a branching, straggling shrub, varying in height from five to eight feet, at one time growing in large masses in the light woods, and then failing altogether for the space of several days' journey. Not only the larger branches, nearly two inches thick, but also the smaller boughs, are encrusted with a snowy white rind, covered with thick spiny protuberances, which stand singly under the eyes of the leaves. At the extremity of each bough is a bunch of fleshy succulent leaves, shaped like lances, and six inches in length. This species of Cactus-euphorbia (*E. venefica*) is termed by the Bongo "bolloh," in contradistinction to "kakoh," their name for the larger sort (*E. candelabrum*), which is common in the country, but of which the milky juice is far less dangerous than that of the "bolloh," for if this be applied in a fresh condition to the skin, it results in a violent inflammation. It is, however, my opinion that this juice, as it is used by the Bongo, being spread in a hard mass over the barbs and heads of the arrows, can do very little harm to the wounded, as when it is once hard it is difficult to melt, and there cannot possibly be time for it to commingle with the blood after a wound has been made by an arrow.

We may now turn our attention to the Bongo games,

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\* Tremaux : 'Voyage Pittoresque au Soudan.' Tab. XIV.

which are as original and primitive as their music. One of these games, as forming excellent training for the chase, deserves some especial notice. A number of men are provided with pointed sticks made of hard wood, which they use as lances. They form a large ring, and another man who has a piece of soft wood attached to a long string, runs round and round within the circle. The others then endeavour with their pointed sticks to hit the mark whilst it is being carried rapidly round. As soon as it is struck it falls to the ground, and the successful marksman is greeted with a loud cheer. Another game requires no less calmness and dexterity. A piece of wood bent into a crescent has a short string attached to the middle; this wood is then hurled by the one end of it with such violence to the earth that it goes spinning like a boomerang through the air. The players stand face to face at a distance of about twenty feet apart, and the game consists in catching the wood by the string, a performance that requires no little skill, as there is considerable danger of receiving a sharp knock. Both games might, under some modifications, admit of being adopted into our rural sports.

Turning now to the national manners, customs, and ideas, I profess that<sup>2</sup> they are subjects of which I must treat with considerable reserve, since my residence as a stranger for two years amongst these savages only gave me after all a very superficial insight into the mysteries of their inner life. Since, however, the accounts of eye-witnesses, who knew the land in its primitive condition, seem to accord with and to corroborate my own observations, as well as the information I obtained from the Bongo themselves, I am in a position to depose to some facts, of which I must leave the scientific analysis to those who are seeking to cultivate the untried soil of the psychology of nations.

Elsewhere, and among other nations with whom I became acquainted, the number of a man's wives was dependent on



the extent of his possessions, but amongst the Bongo it seemed to be limited to a maximum of three. Here, as in other parts of Africa, a wife cannot be obtained for nothing, even the very poorest must pay a purchase price to the father of the bride in the form of a number of plates of iron; unless a man could provide the premium, he could only get an old woman for a wife. The usual price paid for a young girl would be about ten plates of iron weighing two pounds each, and twenty lance tips. Divorces, when necessary, are regulated in the usual way, and the father is always compelled to make a restitution of at least a portion of the wedding-payment. If a man should send his wife back to her father, she is at liberty to marry again, and with her husband's consent she may take her children with her; if, however, her husband retains the children, her father is bound to refund the entire wedding-gift that he received. This would be the case although ten years might have elapsed since the marriage. The barrenness of a woman is always an excuse for a divorce. In cases of adultery, the husband endeavours to kill the seducer, and the wife gets a sound flogging. Whoever has been circumcised according to the Mohammedan law, cannot hope to make a good match in Bongoland.

A Bongo woman, as a rule, will seldom be found to have less than five children: the usual number is six, and the maximum twelve. In childbirth she is supported with her arms on a horizontal beam, and is in that position delivered of the child; the navel-cord is cut very long with a knife, and always without a ligature. No festivities are observed on the occasion of a birth. The infants are carried on the mothers' backs, sewn up in a bag of goat's-hide, like a water-bottle. The children are kept at the breast until they have completed their second year, weaning being never thought of until they can be trusted to run about. In order to wean a child, the mother's breast is smeared with some acrid matter, and the

bruised leaves of some of the *Capparidæ* are mixed with water to a pulp, and have the effect of drying up the milk.

Among the Bongo and the neighbouring nations there is a custom, manifestly originating in a national morality, that forbids all children that are not at the breast to sleep in the same hut with their parents ; the Bongo in this respect putting to shame many of those who would boast of their civilization. The elder children have a hut appropriated to themselves, but take their meals with the rest of the family. In addition to this custom there is the universal rule, as with ourselves, that no matrimonial alliance takes place until the youths are about eighteen and the girls about fifteen years of age.

In the disposal of their dead, the customs of the Bongo are very remarkable. Immediately after life is extinct, the corpses are placed, like the Peruvian mummies, in what may be described as a crouching posture, with the knees forced up to the chin, and are then firmly bound round the head and legs. When the body has been thus compressed into the smallest possible compass, it is sewn into a sack made of skins, and placed in a deep grave. A shaft is sunk perpendicularly down for about four feet, and then a niche is hollowed to the side, so that the sack containing the corpse should not have to sustain any vertical pressure from the earth which is thrown in to fill up the grave. This form of interment is also prescribed in the law of Islam, which, in this and many other cases, has probably followed an African custom. The Bongo have a striking practice, for which, perhaps, some reason may be assigned, of burying men with the face turned to the north and women to the south. After the grave is filled in, a heap of stones is piled over the spot in a short cylindrical form, and this is supported by strong stakes, which are driven into the soil all round. On the middle of the pile is placed a pitcher, frequently the same from which the deceased was accustomed to drink his water.

The graves are always close to the huts, their site being marked by a number of long forked branches, carved, by way of ornament, with numerous notches and incisions, and having their points sharpened like horns. Of these votive stakes I saw a number varying from one to five on each grave. The typical meaning belonging to these sticks has long since fallen into oblivion, and notwithstanding all my endeavours to become acquainted with the Bongo, and to initiate myself into their manners and customs, I could never discover a satisfactory explanation. The sticks reminded me of the old English finance-budgets in the time of William the Conqueror. In answer to my inquiries, the Khartoomers merely returned the same answer as they did to my predecessor, Heuglin; they persisted in saying that every notch denoted an enemy killed in battle by the deceased. The Bongo themselves, however, repeatedly declared that such was by no means the case, and quite repudiated the idea that they should ever think of thus perpetuating the bloodthirstiness of the dead. The neighbouring Mittoo and Madi adopt very much the same method of sepulture. The memorial-urns erected over the graves of the Musgoo remind the traveller of those of the Bongo. Whenever a burial takes place, all the neighbours are invited to attend, and are abundantly entertained with merissa. The entire company takes part in the formation of the grave, in the rearing of the memorial-urn, and in the erection of the votive stakes. When the ceremony is finished, they shoot at the stakes with arrows, which they leave sticking in the wood. I often noticed arrows that had been thus shot still adhering to the sticks.

The Bongo have not the remotest conception of immortality. They have no more idea of the transmigration of souls, or any doctrine of the kind, than they have of the existence of an ocean. I have tried various ways and means of solving the problem of their inner life, but always without success. Although the belief in immortality may be indi-

genous to Africa, I should question whether the ancient Egyptians did not in their religious development obey the promptings of the Asiatic East. At any rate, those statements are incorrect which would endeavour to explain the dull resignation displayed by the victims of human sacrifice in Dahomey by a theory of their belief in immortality. All religion, in our sense of the word religion, is quite unknown to the Bongo, and, beyond the term "loma," which denotes equally luck and ill-luck, they have nothing in their language to signify any deity or spiritual being. "Loma" is likewise the term that they use for the Supreme Being, whom they hear invoked as "Allah" by their oppressors, and some of them make use of the expression, "loma-gobo," *i. e.*, the superior, to denote the God of the "Turks." The almost incomprehensible prayers of the Mohammedans are called by the Bongo "malah," which has evidently some connection with the word "Allah" that is generally repeated over and over again in all the devotions of the Nubians.

If any one is ill, his illness is attributed to "loma," but in the event of anybody losing a wager or a game, or returning from a hunting adventure without game, or coming back from war without booty, he is said to have had "no loma" (*loma nya*), in the sense of having no luck.

Quite amazing is the fear which exists among the Bongo about ghosts, whose abode is said to be in the shadowy darkness of the woods. Spirits, devils, and witches have their general appellation of "bitaboh;" wood-goblins being specially called "ronga." Comprehended under the same terms are all the bats (especially the *Megaderma frons*, which flutters about from tree to tree in broad daylight), as likewise are owls of every kind (*Strix leucotis* and *Strix capensis* being here the chief); and besides these the Ndorr (*Galago senegalensis*), a kind of pseudo-simia, with great red eyes and erect ears, which drags out a gloomy existence in the cavities of hollow trees. There are, too, prowling beasts of night, for

which they entertain the utmost dread, regarding them with superstitious awe. To ward off the evil influences of these spirits, the Bongo are acquainted with no other means except the magical roots in which the professional sorcerers trade, in a similar way as the Mohammedan priests of the Soudan in their amulets and sentences from the Koran. Very seldom are any attempts made to expel the spirits by the means of exorcism, which is turned to great account by the Dinka magicians. The institution of the "Cogyoor" is here called "belomah," but whenever it is necessary to have an invocation over a sick patient, they more often than not send for a professional wizard from the neighbouring Dinka.

Good spirits are quite unrecognised, and, according to the general negro idea, no benefit can ever come from a spirit at all. They affirm that the only thing they know about spirits is that they do mischief, and certain it is that they have no conception either of there being a Creator, or any kind and ruling power above. They assert that there is no other resource for obtaining communication with spirits, except by means of certain roots, which may be of service likewise in employing the powers of evil to inflict injury on others. To their knowledge of this magic may be attributed much of the influence which the native chiefs, independently of their authorised rule, exercise over the mass of the people in their districts. This may be witnessed among the Bary on the Bahr-el-Gebel, and a hundred other tribes, who yield the greatest deference to the controllers or captains of their communities. The practice of fetching down rain is never pretended to by the Bongo chiefs, and may be said to be absolutely unknown; but probably this may rise from the climate so rarely making it necessary to put their skill in this respect to the test.

All the very old people of either sex, but especially the old women, are exposed to the suspicion of allying themselves to wicked spirits, for the purpose of effecting the injury and



detriment of others. Old folks, so the Bongo maintain, wander through the forest-glades at night, and have only to secure the proper roots, and then they may apparently be lying calmly in their huts, whilst in reality they are taking counsel with the spirits of mischief how they can best bring their neighbours to death and destruction. They dig for roots, it is continually said, that they may have the means of poisoning those around them. Whenever any case of sudden death occurs, the aged people are held responsible, and nothing, it is taken for granted, could be more certain than that a robust man, except he were starved, would not die. Woe to the old crones, then, in whose house the suspected herbs and roots are found ! though they be father or mother, they have no chance of escape.

A genuine and downright belief in witches has long been and still continues as deeply seated here as in any spot upon the face of the earth, and nowhere are prosecutions more continually being instituted against them. As matter of fact, I can affirm that really aged folks among the Bongo are comparatively scarce, and that the number of grey-headed people is, by contrast, surprisingly large amongst the neighbouring race of the Dyoor, who put no faith at all in any witchcraft. The Nubians are not only open to superstitions of their own, but confirm the Bongo in all of theirs. In the Eastern Soudan, which is a Mohammedan country, the conversation will constantly turn upon the "sáhara" (*i. e.*, the witches), and no comparison is more frequent than that which likens the old women to hyænas: in fact, many of the people hold hard and fast to the conviction that the witches are capable of going out at night, and taking up their quarters inside the bodies of these detestable brutes, without any one being aware of what is happening. It chanced, during my stay in Gallabat, that I killed one out of a herd of hyænas that was infesting the district; my fate, in consequence, was to be loaded with reproaches on the part of the

Sheikh, who informed me that his mother was a "hyæna-woman," and that I might, for all I could tell, have shot her. After this I was not so surprised as might be expected when Idrees, the governor of Ghattas's Seriba, boasted in my presence of his conflicts with witches, bragging that in one day he had had half a dozen of them executed. An occasion shortly afterwards arose, when Idrees was contemplating putting two old women to death at the desire of some Bongo, and the only scheme I could devise to make him desist from his purpose, was by threatening him that, in the event of the women being executed, I would poison his water-springs.

But, in this dread of witches, the whole superstition of the Bongo culminates and exhausts itself; and we Europeans may well ask what real right have we, with all our advancement in knowledge, to presume to reproach them? We cannot resist the impression that these poor Bongo are infinitely more free from hundreds of superstitious fallacies than many of those who boast of their civilization; much more so, for instance, than the Mohammedans of the Soudan, where the idlest of superstitions prevail in every household. Let nature be free, and the germs of energy in man's spirit will develop themselves, without overstepping their proper limits, in trustful dependence upon the presiding spirit which controls all thought. That the spirit of man, moreover, revolves in a circle, is demonstrated by the old man becoming again a child. A philosopher might fairly speculate (in the spirit of Bernardin de St. Pierre, when he advocated a worship of Nature) whether this land would not have been happier if the Moslems had never set foot upon its soil. They brought a religion that was destitute of morality; they introduced contagion rather than knowledge; they even suppressed the true doctrines of Mohammed their prophet, which would have enfranchised the very people whom they oppressed, and have raised them to a condition of brotherhood, and of equality.

The method of proceeding among the Bongo with the sick and wounded is invariably of the very simplest character. When the disorder is internal, and the origin cannot be detected, the treatment consists merely in liberal applications of very hot water. The patient is stretched upon the ground, and sprinkled by means of leafy boughs with boiling water from vessels that are placed close by. Somewhat more expert is their proceeding in the case of the wounded. It once chanced that I saw a group of sufferers brought back from one of the raids that had been made into the territory of the Dinka. The wounds had nearly all been inflicted by the lances of the adversary. With remarkable fortitude the patients all submitted to the practice of the country, which consisted in the introduction of a number of setons, made of the strong and fibrous bast of the *grewia*, into the injured parts, in order to reduce the inflammation. Amongst others, I saw a knee, which was immensely swollen, subject to the operation of being pierced in every direction by setons of this sort, until it was larded like a roast hare. With the exception of red ochre the Bongo, like most of their neighbours, are not acquainted with any mineral which they can apply to a wound, either as a reducent or an antiseptic. As medicines to accelerate the natural processes of cure, they make use of the astringent bitter barks of certain trees like the *Hymenocardia*, the *Butyrospermum*, and the *Prosopis*, which are here known as the "gere," the "kor," and the "göll." Syphilis, which now makes its insidious progress, was quite unknown amongst these poor savages previous to the settlement amongst them of the Nubians, and against its mischief the only specific employed is the bitter bark of the Heddo-tree (*Anogeissus*), one, however, which undoubtedly is utterly useless for the purpose.

The misshapen and crippled are entirely unknown amongst these unsophisticated children of Nature. But in a country where, even with the best attention on the part of a mother,

every child must be exposed to the perils which necessarily are associated with existence in a wilderness, how should it be possible for a cripple to stand out the battle of life? As freaks of nature, every now and then there may be seen some dwarfs, and I presume that some mutes may occasionally be found, as there is a word ("mabang") in their language to express the defect in the faculty of speech.

The insane ("bindahko") are shackled hand and foot; and avowedly with the design of cooling and soothing their passions, they are thrown into the river, where they are immersed by practised swimmers. If this remedy should prove of no effect, the patient is put into confinement, and dieted by the relatives; but generally the lot of a maniac is far happier than that which befalls an aged man, however innocent. To maintain the strength of invalids, certain kinds of flesh are prescribed, and a particular value is attributed to the flesh of the Gullukoo (*Tmetoceros abyssinicus*), a kind of rhinoceros hornbill, which has a detestable flavour, as odious as hemlock.

The dialect of the people throughout the whole country exhibits very little diversity; the best evidence for this is afforded by the perfect uniformity of expression in every part of the land for all natural objects whatever; whilst even in dealing with conceptions of an abstract character, there is little fear of being misunderstood. The language altogether has a harmonious ring, abounding in the vowel sounds of *a* and *o*, as the name of the people indicates; it is very simple in its grammatical structure, and at the same time it presents a great variety of terms for all concrete subjects. The vocabulary that I compiled contained nearly one thousand distinct expressions.

The etymology of connected words and the analysis of separate idioms afford considerable interest, and transport the student right into the ingenuous world of their natural life. The more common of our abstract ideas such as *spirit*,

*soul*, *hope*, and *fear*, appear to be absolutely wanting, but experience shows that in this respect other negro tongues are not more richly provided by nature. The labours of missionaries in translating the Scriptures have notoriously introduced into the written language a number of elevated idioms and of metaphorical ideas which very probably in a few generations may be more or less incorporated into the tongue, but to the student of language who shall make the gleanings these introductions will be a mere refuse, and the only subject of any scientific interest will be the speech of the people as it was while it remained intact and unaffected by innovation.

Instances of the indirect method which is employed on the part of the Bongo to express any abstract idea may here be given. The monosyllable "firr," for example used in combination with other words, answers the purpose of expressing any of the following ideas: will, love, pleasure, taste, or speech. The true conception which would appear to be the original force of the little word, is first the will, and then the expression of that will by means of the tongue. The phrase for "I wish it," would be "firr nahamah," which is literally, "The will is in my stomach."

Nor is it uninteresting to notice the various equivalents which are found of one and the same word. "Mahee" means "lance" and "meat" in general, and is a collective expression for antelopes of every kind; "attamatta" is employed equally for what is "bitter" and what is "annoying;" "dill" implies either a "shadow" or a "cloud;" "gimah" is used indifferently for either "a son" or "a boy," and "goah" for either "a pit" or "deep." "Helleleh" simply means "wind" or "air," but by reduplication "helleleh-helleleh," implies whatever is "light." Either "rain" or "the sky" may be indicated by the word "hetorro," and "ndan" not merely signifies "night," but is used for "to-day." This last mode of expression has been transferred from the African to



the Arabic of the Eastern Soudan," where "fee lehle" means either "by night" or "this very day."

The disposition which is ever manifested amongst the untutored children of nature to represent certain animals by imitating the sounds they utter, is extended amongst the Bongo to describe a variety of inanimate objects. As examples of this kind of nomenclature I may mention "golongolo" as their name for a "bell," "gohi" as their name for a "cough," "kulluluh" for a "ball," and "marongonn" for "snoring." The name they give a "cat" is "mbriow" differing little in its pronunciation from "mew."

There is a kind of poetry which underlies many of their expressions, and which invests some objects with a certain charm of indefiniteness; thus for example they call a leaf "mbillee-kaggah," "an ear of the tree," and a man's chest they name "doah kiddi," or "the capital of the veins."

The speech of a people is very often indicative of the predominating character of their pursuits. By the name of "mony," which originally meant the common sorghum, which is the staple of their produce, the Bongo, being an agricultural people, have come to denote not so much the particular corn, as eatables of any description. They have, moreover, adopted this word as the root of a verb which is conjugated. In a way corresponding to this the Niam-niam, who are mainly addicted to hunting, give a very comprehensive meaning to their word "push-yo," which signifies "meat." Of almost infinite variety are the names of the different individuals among the Bongo. I had opportunities of making inquiries whilst I was measuring nearly a hundred of the people, and I do not think that I found more than five names that occurred more than once. As a regular rule parents name their children after trees or animals, or some object in nature, and it is quite exceptional for any personal peculiarity to be associated with the appellation.

In the labyrinth of African culture it is very difficult to

disentangle the hundred threads which lead up to the centre from which they have been all unwound. Not a custom, not a superstition is found in one part which is not more or less accurately repeated in another; not one contrivance of design, not one weapon of war exists of which it can be declared that it is the exclusive property of any one race. From north to south, and from sea to sea, in some form or other every invention is sure to be repeated; it is "the thing that has been." The creative hand of Nature alone produces what is new. If we could at once grasp and set before our minds facts that are known (whether as regards language, race, culture, history, or development) of that vast region of the world which is comprehended in the name of Africa, we should have before us the witness of an intermingling of races which is beyond all precedent. And yet, bewildering as the prospect would appear, it remains a fact not to be gainsaid, that it is impossible for any one to survey the country as a whole without perceiving that high above the multitude of individual differences there is throned a principle of unity which embraces well nigh all the population.

Such a conclusion has been amply borne out by the preceding delineation of the Bongo, who form an element in that unity. We cannot take a retrospect of the particulars which have been now detailed about them, without the question arising as to which of the other races of Central Africa most nearly resemble the Bongo. Any answer to this question that could not be invalidated would afford hints invaluable for the investigation of the latest movements among African nations; but I must confess that I am only hazarding an opinion which I cannot establish, when I name the countries about Lake Tsad as being those in which the most marked similarity in habit to the Bongo might be expected, and the tribes to which I would more particularly allude are the Musgoo, the Massa, the Wandala, and the Loggon.

I conclude by repeating the comparison which I made at the beginning between the existence of a people and a drop of water evaporating in the sea. Ere long, the Bongo as a people will be quite forgotten, superseded by a rising race. The time cannot be far off when this race, so gifted and so impressionable, shall be known no more. The domination over the people which is contemplated in Egypt cannot fail to effect this result, and it is a destiny that probably awaits all the rest of the African races. However much the Nubian may tyrannize, he still leaves the poor natives a portion of their happiness. But there is still a more distant future: after the Nubian comes the Turk, and he takes all. Truly it is not without reason that the proverb circulates in every district, "Where the Turk has been no grass will grow."

## CHAPTER VIII.

Calamities by fire. Deliverance and escape. Six women-slaves burnt. Barterings. Domestication of wild-cats. Plague of cockroaches. Pillen-wasps. Agamæ and chameleons. Fever. Meteorology. Solar phenomenon. A festal reception with an unfortunate result. Disturbance of rest at night. Murmuring of prayers. Jewish school. Orgies and drum-beating. Casting out devils. Resolve to follow Aboo Sammat. Start towards the south. Passage of the Tondy. Character of the forest. The water-bock. Scenery by night. Sherefee's attack. Seriba Duggoo. Consequences of the steppe-burning. Seriba Dagguddoo. Burnt human bones and charred huts. Tropics in winter. Two kinds of ant-hills. Arrival in Sabby. Nocturnal festivities of the Bongo. Desolation of the country. Goat-suckers. Abundance of game. The zebra-ichneumon. The spectral mantis. Lions. Wonderful chase after hartebeests. Snake and antelope at a shot.

So satisfactory was the condition of my health that it appeared to me entirely to confute the opinion entertained by Europeans that a prolonged residence in the tropics is destructive alike of physical and moral energy. For those probably who live in indolent repose, and who are surrounded by all the appliances of domestic comfort, who, so far from undertaking the trouble of a journey, have scarcely the activity to take a walk, there may be some ground for the presumption; and more particularly may this be the case in Mohammedan countries where slothfulness and *laissez faire* are as contagious as gaping is all the world over. But nothing of the kind is to be found for a traveller whose elasticity is kept at all on the stretch, and who is conscious of not having a minute to spare; the exercise of his faculties will keep them in vigour as full as though he were still on his native soil. For my own part, I could not help thinking

of the contrast between the rainy season which I spent here and that which, in 1865, I had passed in Gallabat; now all was animated and cheerful; life seemed free from care; my health was unimpaired, and I enjoyed the most intimate converse with Nature; but then, on the contrary, it had been a perpetual struggle between getting well and getting ill, and I had never ceased to be haunted by the depressing influences of a weary spirit.

However happily my time in the Seriba glided on, still it was not altogether free from peril. An incident full of alarm occurred to me on the night of the 22nd of May. The rain was coming down in torrents, and about two hours after midnight a tremendous storm ensued. The thunderclaps rattling through the woods sounded like an avalanche, and coming rapidly one upon another, seemed to keep pace with the lightning which gleamed through the darkness of the night. Suddenly there was a shrieking of women's voices, and at the same instant the blackness of night was changed to the light of day, as the blaze of a burning hut flared up aloft. The flaming structure was only separated from my own quarters by my single granary. Aroused by the outcry I sprang up; for to be caught asleep in an edifice constructed of straw and bamboo is to be enveloped in fire, and is almost certain death. The hazard was very imminent; in a very few minutes my hut must apparently be in flames; the work of demolition began at once; my powder was conveyed without delay to a place of safety; my chests and my herbarium were then secured; all the smaller articles of my furniture were thrown into great waterproof coverings and dragged out *en masse*. Perhaps about half of my property had thus been placed out of jeopardy when we observed that the wind bore the flames in a different direction, and fortunately the light framework of the burning roof gave way and it soon fell in; saturated as the straw was with the rain it put a check to the further spreading of the flames. Now was the



time to draw our breath and look around; we could now give over our hurry and scurry, and examine the real condition of things. I stood almost petrified at the reflection how narrowly I had escaped coming to utter grief on this unlucky night; I thought how deplorable had been my lot if I had been reduced to a condition of nakedness and want in this inhospitable land; I became alive to the sense of shame with which I should have retraced my way back to Khartoom within a year, and with my task unfinished; I was dispirited; I knew not what might happen, and perhaps this fire was only a prelude to yet more bitter experience.

The tokkul which had been burnt down was hardly five-and-twenty paces from my very bed. There, struck by lightning, six female slaves had met their simultaneous death; a seventh had been untouched by the electric fluid, and had contrived, half dead from burning, to effect an escape from the flaming pile. When a clearance was made on the next morning, after the ashes had been removed, the bodies of the ill-fated women were found completely charred, lying closely packed together just as they had gone to sleep in the hut around its centre support, which had been the conductor of the lightning. They formed a ghastly spectacle, at which even the native negroes could not suppress a shudder, whilst the recently imported Niam-niam slaves made no disguise of the relish with which they scented the odour of the burnt flesh, as they helped to clear away the *débris*. Scarcely any incident could befall a traveller more disquieting than this; it had haunted me in my dreams all through my sojourn in the Soudan; forebodings of it had stuck to my fancy, and now it appeared to be well-nigh on the very point of literal fulfilment.

One of the Nubian soldiers had, amongst the six victims of the conflagration, to bewail the loss of his sweetheart. To such a degree did this bereavement prey upon him that he entirely lost his reason, and so gave a considerable amount of

trouble to the occupants of the Seriba. An instance of affection like this never came to my knowledge elsewhere in these districts.

As far as regards danger from fire, the settlement here was at a disadvantage when compared with various Seribas in which the huts are not crowded so closely together; but in other respects, such as the more complete security of the territory itself, the abundance of provisions, the rareness of mosquitoes, and the small number of white ants, this Seriba had recommendations which put every other in the shade. Very advantageous was the appearance at my door, morning after morning, of the neighbouring Dinka, who brought every variety of their productions for me to purchase. In this way I was kept amply provided not only with yams and earthnuts, the purest of oil and the finest of honey, but I was able readily to obtain all the corn I required for my retinue. Moreover, it happened not unfrequently that I had some natural production offered me of considerable rarity, and thus the edge of my botanical curiosity was kept continually sharpened. In the very depth of the rainy season by getting the eggs of some geese and bustards, and even of some ostriches, I managed to counterbalance the meagre produce of my poultry-breeding.

Of these opportunities of seeing considerable numbers of the natives gathered round me, I made the best use I could to obtain the measurements of their bodies, an achievement on which I had set my mind with some degree of pertinacity. At the end of one year's residence in the interior I had made a synopsis (under about forty heads) of the measurements of nearly two hundred individuals, but unfortunately very few of my memoranda are now forthcoming. During my intercourse with the natives I very often allowed what pictures I had to be exhibited, in order to satisfy their repeated inquiries. All they saw stirred up their unfeigned delight, and continually prompted them to ask in astonishment why they

had not learnt the same things from the "Turks," and to express their conviction that that must be a wonderful country where tools and guns were made. The indolent Nubians, too, would pay me visits most assiduously till I was absolutely weary of them. They would often make their appearance quite early and I could only disengage myself from them by letting them have my books and pictures about Africa to look through. The illustrations in 'Le Tour du Monde,' in Speke's 'Travels,' and in Baker's 'Hunting Adventures,' all alike furnished them with inexhaustible material for question and answer. They shouted their approbation aloud, and crowned their admiring estimate of any picture by crying out "bazyatoo" (the very facsimile), again and again. The name which Speke's book acquired in the Seriba was 'The History of King Kamrasi,' while they called Baker's work 'The Book of the Elephant Hunter.'

In the beginning of September I was able to make a despatch to the river of my treasures I had collected, and to forward them by way of Khartoom to Europe. I had upwards of forty packages, and to put them together and make them secure was the business of a good many days. Particularly laborious was it to sew them all upon skins, and still more laborious, I do not doubt, to rip them up again when they reached their destination; for during their transit across the parching desert, the hides are not unfrequently so dried up that they become as hard as tin. For the protection of my packages and to prevent the botanical contents being invaded by insects or gnawed by rats, I had no difficulty in providing the caoutchouc substance of the *Carpodinus*, the "Mono" of the Bongo. This I obtained in a fresh condition, when it has the appearance of a well-set cream, and washed it lightly over the linen or the paper like a varnish. Not an insect found its way through this coating, and my packages all arrived thoroughly uninjured in spite of their being a twelvemonth on their way. Less adapted for the purpose I

found both the milky sap of the fig and of the butter tree, because it is not so uniform in its character and does not admit of being spread so readily.

The produce of Ghattas's Company was this year four hundred loads, being somewhere about 220 cwt., which would be worth in Khartoom nearly 4000*l*. In order to reach this amount, certainly not less than three hundred elephants had been destroyed, and probably considerably more.

Although the ants at this spot did not abound in the wholesale way in which they did in many other Seribas, there were nevertheless plenty of inconveniences in my quarters, and like every other traveller I had to get accustomed to them as soon as I could.

My want of space was a great difficulty. I was hardly at all better off in the hut where I ordinarily lived than in an old overcrowded lumber room. I had no cupboards and no small chests, and consequently I was compelled to be ever packing up and unpacking my thousand bits of property. The framework, of my own construction, which reached up into the circular roof did something to increase my accommodation, and I hung bags upon it containing my clothes and my linen, and a whole host of little things besides I stuck into the straw thatch above. Under such circumstances, no wonder that I had perpetual conflict with rats, crickets, and cockroaches, and that they were a constant source of annoyance.

The only method which was really an effectual guarantee for the protection of any articles from being gnawed to bits was to hang them up; but whenever at nightfall I had any packages which could not be suspended there was one device of which I made use, and which was tolerably successful in keeping rats at a distance. One of the commonest animals hereabouts was the wild cat of the steppes (*Felis maniculata*). Although the natives do not breed them as domestic animals, yet they catch them separately when they are quite

young and find no difficulty in reconciling them to a life about their huts and enclosures, where they grow up and wage their natural warfare against the rats. I procured several of these cats, which, after they had been kept tied up for several days, seemed to lose a considerable measure of their ferocity and to adapt themselves to an indoor existence so as to approach in many ways to the habits of the common cat. By night I attached them to my parcels, which were otherwise in jeopardy, and by this means I could go to bed without further fear of any depredations from the rats.

Quite helpless, however, did I appear with regard to the devastations of the crickets, which found their way through my stoutest chests, ate holes into all my bags, and actually fretted my very wearing-apparel and body-linen. Subsequently I received a supply of borax, and this turned out to be an adequate security against their mischief.

The encroachment of the wood-worms in the bamboos which composed my hut developed itself into a nuisance of a fresh sort. To myself it was a matter of great indifference whether the building collapsed sooner or later, but just at present it was a great annoyance to me that all day long there should be an unceasing shower of fine yellow dust, which accumulated on everything till it lay as thick as my finger, and almost exceeded the bounds of endurance.

Another noxious insect which was to be found in every hut was the Pillen-wasp (*Eumenes tinctor*). This was nearly two inches long, and had a habit of forming its nest in the straw right at the top of the circular roof. Associated with eight or ten others it made a huge cell, and flying in and out through the narrow doorway, which was the only avenue for light, it came into constant collision with my face. Its sting was attended by distracting agony far worse than the sting of any bee. Throughout the entire year I was baffled by these wasps, which were beautiful in colour, having wings of a fine violet blue. I made many attempts to destroy their



ingeniously-constructed nest, and only succeeded after catching them in a butterfly-net and killing them one by one.

Throughout the tropics the harmless kinds of lizards may invariably be reckoned amongst the settlers in every house. Prettily marked skinks (*Euprepes quinquelineatus* and *E. pleurostictus*) enlivened my abode, whilst the graceful gecko (*Hemidactylus verrucalutus*) clambered up and down the walls just as frequently as in Egypt and in Nubia. But more numerous than all were the sociable agamæ (*Agama colonorum*), which kept nodding their heads in a way that was extremely irritating to the Mohammedans, who fancied that it was the devil making fun of their prayers. I had previously repeatedly seen this species of the lizard in the overhanging rocky crags of the desert valleys on the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea; but here it appeared to lodge itself quite as freely in the huts as in the woods. The head of the male is of an orange-colour, and is easily detected from a considerable distance. Very ridiculous are their movements when any one approaches a tree upon which they are running up and down. They betake themselves to the farther side of the stem, and keep stopping at intervals, peeping out cunningly first from one branch and then from another, their large eyes beaming with a most knowing expression. Their favourite resort, however, in this district was the old woodwork of the palisades, and there they mustered in thousands.

I was very much surprised, at the beginning of the rainy season, at the large number of chameleons which at intervals clustered themselves upon the sprouting foliage. The common African sort grows to a very unusual size, and I saw several which could hardly be less than ten inches long. Scarcely less abundant is the smaller and slimmer species (*C. lævigatus*), which does not exhibit quite to the same extent the changes of its colour. Rolling its eyes in a very remarkable manner it answered the same purpose as the

agama, with its nodding head, of getting up a joke against the Mohammedan fanatics. "What is a chameleon like?" I used to ask them, and not over delighted were they when they were told that the chameleon, with its one eye up and the other eye down, was a faki looking up to God in heaven, but at the same time keeping a sharp look-out upon the dollars of earth.

Thoroughly free, as I have said, from fever, during March and April, I persevered in taking my daily dose of ten grains or more of quinine; but as the heat diminished, and as the rainy season at its height was not so full of miasma, I gradually diminished, and in June and July entirely gave up my uniform administration of the tonic. But quinine still remained my sole medicine, my only resort in every contingency. If ever I got a chill, if ever I was wet through, or was troubled with any symptoms of indigestion, I lost no time in using it, knowing that for any traveller in a region such as this, any indisposition whatever is simply a doorway through which fever insidiously creeps and effects its dangerous lodgment. Any sudden giddiness in the head, or any spasm between the shoulders, or any failure in the functions of the limbs were all, I do not doubt, warnings of the ill-omened visitor, which I accepted in time to avert. Not only, as I have remarked, were fevers here quite common, but my own attendant, who had accompanied me from Alexandria, was prostrated some days by a very serious attack, and his condition of health was so much impaired that he had to be sent back on the next return of the boats. There were others, too, of my own people who had to endure attacks of less severity.

Expecting, as I had been, a much larger fall of rain, I could not be otherwise than much surprised at the meteorological facts which were actually exhibited. Although the rainfall extends over a longer period, the total average fall of water is less here than it is either in Gallabat or in

Upper Sennaar, where the rain lasts only from the beginning of May to the beginning of October. There the rain, almost without exception, fell every night, and all night from sunset till daybreak; but here it was the result of experience that the rain ordinarily was to be expected between noon and night. All travelling consequently has to be accomplished before midday, and the journeyings are necessarily shorter than in the dry winter months. It may be taken as a rule that holds good very generally throughout the tropics that if the sun rises clear or becomes clear shortly after rising, there will pretty certainly be no rain for some four or five hours. In Gallabat it was considered rather a feat to walk during the rainy season from one house to another either in slippers or in Turkish shoes, but here, day after day, such protection for the soles of the feet was quite sufficient, even where the ground was not at all rocky.

European vegetables in Gallabat had generally been found to suffer from the excessive wet, and others had either run into weeds or in some way degenerated, but here, from May till August, we cultivated many sorts successfully, and made good use of the intervals which, sometimes for four or six days together, passed without any rain whatever. To confirm what I have said, I adduce the facts that in March 1869, in the centre of Bongoland (lat.  $7^{\circ} 20' N.$ ), the "Khareef" was opened by four little showers; in April there were seven considerable pourings; in May seven fall of rain, lasting several hours; in June ten, in July eleven, and in August twelve. These must not be reckoned as days of rain, for the truth is, an entire day of uninterrupted rain never once occurred. The rainfall only up to June was attended by tempests or thunderstorms, after which date the violence of them gradually and almost entirely abated. Heuglin in 1863 had made the same observation. At the end of July there ensued an entire change of temperature, and only in exceptionally hot afternoons did the heat ever

again reach the extreme point which it had done previously ; but even at its maximum it had never exceeded  $95^{\circ}$  Fahr. in the huts, whilst in the open air it was ordinarily  $2^{\circ}$  lower. I could now rejoice in a degree of heat scarcely above what is common in our northern zone, and seldom registered a temperature above  $77^{\circ}$  Fahr. in my own quarters. This fall in the thermometer is very beneficial and refreshing to the European, whose skin, exhausted by repeated perspiration, is very often distressed by a perpetual nettlerash.

The earliest rain which I observed this year fell while I was still at the Meshera on the 2nd of March ; and the 16th of that month was the date on which the wind altered its course, and for the first time deviated from its long-prevailing north-easterly direction.

The uniformity of climate in equatorial Africa contributes very much to extend the range of particular species of plants. To this may be added the absence of those mountain systems which elsewhere, as in Asia, traverse the continent in all directions. Without let or hindrance the trade-winds exert their influence over the entire breadth of this region. Any interruption of the rainy season between the two zenith positions of the sun, which in Bongo-land are some months apart, has never been authenticated. Although upon the north-west terraces of Abyssinia the rainy season might appear, through the influence of the mountains, to be obliterated or obscure, yet it could always be traced ; but nevertheless the whole aggregate of circumstances which contribute to these precedents is not to be estimated during the transitory observations of one short sojourn.

Neither during the continuation of my wanderings towards the south did I find any indication which seemed to evidence that two rainy seasons had anywhere coalesced so as to become one continuous period of rain, which sufficed throughout the year to maintain an uninterrupted renewal of vege-

tation. Nowhere in the equatorial districts which I visited (not even in the territory of the Monbutto, of which the latitude is between  $3^{\circ}$  and  $4^{\circ}$  N.) did it appear that there ever failed a uniform period for foliage to develop itself. Apparent exceptions might be found where the condition of the soil is never otherwise than wet throughout the year; but even in this low latitude there is a dry season and a wet season, just as decided as in Nubia, twelve degrees further to the north.

Between five and six o'clock on the afternoon of the 18th of May, while I was absorbed in my writing, I was suddenly startled by the outcry of a number of my people calling me to make haste out and witness the singular appearance which was arresting their attention on the south-west horizon. Great masses of clouds were covering the declining sun, whilst all below the heavy cumulus the heavens gleamed with the golden shimmer of a glorious sunset. Like a pile from the mighty Alps, stern and imposing, surrounded by dazzling glaciers and by many an avalanche, the central clouds of this great gathering massed themselves in ponderous layers which rolled majestically to the north. Starting out abruptly from the brilliant glare of the setting sun, these layers on their upper edge distinctly assumed the form of three vast swellings, while around the margin of each of these there gleamed the light of an unearthly glory; colours of the richest hue combined to give an effect as though each of the projecting accumulations were circled by a rainbow. Midway between the vanishing violet of the bow and the sombre ridge of cloud streamed a flood of light which repeated itself upon the superior margin of the wondrous spectrum. In three directions (issuing not directly as from the sun in the centre of the mass, but as though two parhelia besides contributed their power) there rose separately from each of the three tumescent rolls of cloud shadowy beams of light embracing the whole





PHENOMENON ON THE 14<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 1888. HALF PAST FIVE P.M. LAT. 27° 25' N.



firmament above, whilst in addition to all this, there were secondary groups of beams diverging from the angles where the rainbow arches intersected. An appearance somewhat similar to these shadowed rays or streaks of alternate light and shade, resulting from the unequal masses of the floating clouds, has been recorded by Professor Tyndall as witnessed in Algiers. The colour of the rainbows on their edge nearest to the sun, and in consequence approximate to the clouds, was so remarkable that it could not fail to excite my attention. Altogether it was a spectacle not to be forgotten. The rainbow-like phenomenon had not the appearance of being an ordinary arch repeated thrice, but was one scalloped bow composed of three distinct but successive limbs: it continued for about five minutes, and allowed me ample time to make a sketch of its striking features.\*

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
\* The phenomenon here depicted is closely allied to those tinted halos which are seen in so much diversity and under so many modifications around both sun and moon. In Schumacher's 'Astronomische Jahrbücher' (Altona, 1823) Fraunhofer has detailed the theory of these halos, and has proved his assertions by many examples that had fallen under his own observation. Whenever the sun or the moon is surrounded by a halo, the sky is ordinarily veiled in light vapours. If the phenomenon is perfect, the rings of this halo are seen to be of the colours of the rainbow. Fraunhofer divides these halos into two classes: viz., halos of a small and halos of a large diameter. If the red tint is outside and away from the luminous body, as in the present case, he calls it a halo of the smaller kind; but if the red is inside and next to the luminous body, it is a halo of the larger kind. This latter case is closely allied to the phenomenon of parhelia. The cause of these tinted halos is to be found in a diffraction of light through globules of vapour, and Fraunhofer has given proof that the light, in passing across the edges of these globules, would assume an appearance of diffraction similar to that which would be caused by its passing through minute apertures. For the formation of a tinted circle it is necessary that the globules should be equally diffused and of an equal magnitude. If the globules were very irregular, there would be only a bright glare, because the eye would receive rays of various colours from one and the same spot in the atmosphere; then the result would be that the light would be white, as in the case under our notice it appeared directly round the outline of the cloud, and also beyond the outside ring of red, so that the coloured circle was bounded on each side by a rim of white light. The smaller the globules of vapour, the larger are the tinted rings, for according to the theory the diameters of the rings are in inverse ratio to those of the globules. According to another theory represented by Galle (Poggendorf's 'Annalen,' vol. xlix.), one

During September I found an opportunity to make a third excursion to the Tondy, and had the good fortune to make some valuable additions to my botanical store, but apart from this my days glided on without variety, and I have no episodes of interest to relate.

Fastened down as I was for the present to one spot, I had to limit my observations to its immediate neighbourhood, and accordingly with considerable perseverance and at the cost of some trouble, and, I may be permitted to add, of a good deal of soap, I went on taking the measurements of many of the natives, who I thought might render me service. There were hundreds of bearers, and after diligently reckoning them up and instituting comparisons based on written estimates and on a variety of portraits, I was able to satisfy myself as to the characteristic features of their nationality which they exhibit. I moreover devoted a considerable time to learn the dialects of the district, and found that the facility with which the different slaves had mastered Arabic in their intercourse with the Nubians was of great assistance to me in my endeavours.

Now and then there would occur incidents that were somewhat ludicrous. One day a visit from the superintendent of a distant Seriba was announced, and Idrees was all on the alert to give his colleague a fitting reception. The arrival was expected of Ali, the Vokil of Biselli, under whose guidance Miss Tinné had passed the most memorable year of her life. In readiness for the entrance of Ali into the Seriba, the whole armed force was drawn up in double

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cause of these tinted halos is the presence in the atmosphere of ice-crystals of microscopic minuteness; but this hypothesis seems confuted by the fact that similar phenomena have frequently been witnessed within the tropics (Alex. von Humboldt, *Voyage II.*, p. 309). This phenomena of the 18th of May, 1869, was remarkable for the form of the tinted circle, which corresponded exactly with the accidental outline of the clouds, which presented a threefold curve, thus . Thus the entire rim of the cloud became a series of luminous sunlight points formed of globules of vapour, making a halo of the smaller class, and sending forth their own shadows.

line before the gate. Ali was not only Ali ("tall and strong") by name, but he was in fact a head taller than any of his retinue. Full of state, with majestic mien, with the turban of the believer upon his head and the splendid hezam of Tarablus around his loins, he was just entering the military avenue when the soldiers fired their salute. The discharge was rendered, and they all mutually smothered each other in smoke. But the echoes of the salute were hardly silent, and wreaths of smoke still hovered in the air, when all of a sudden the solemnity was interrupted by the cry of "Russahs! russahs!" (bullets, bullets), and one of the soldiers rushed from the ranks, dashed down his musket, and seemed bereft of his senses. In truth, his *vis-à-vis* had forgotten to remove the charge from his rusty old gun, and the shots that had been designed for the geese in some neighbouring marsh had terribly punished the legs of his unfortunate comrade. The poor fellow applied to me for assistance, but I could not help him otherwise than by a kind word. I had not in my possession any instruments to extract the shot, and so I did the best I could to pacify by quoting mysterious texts, and by commending him to the mercy of Allah.

Rarely did a week elapse without the repetition of some such mischance as this. Perpetually in peril myself of being shot, I was ever being called upon to exercise my surgical skill either in bandaging fractures, or in extracting balls great or small; but as most frequently the shots found their way into the legs of the sufferers, in the legs most frequently I allowed them to remain.

Although my fatigue by day made repose by night very essential to me, my rest was sadly disturbed by the habits of my people. Quite intolerable at times was the eternal babbling of their prayers, which, beginning in the evening hours, were wearily prolonged, and nothing could accustom me to the clamour which they made. They seemed at times



to drive me in my impatience well-nigh to distraction. Some priests had arrived from Darfoor, who surpassed all else in the clamour they raised. With a lot of gibberish utterly incomprehensible, through their antiquated pronunciation, to any of the Nubians, they proceeded to recite the verses of the Koran with the grinding monotony of a mill. My own people, however, devoted Mohammedans as they were, on these occasions took my part, and warned off the disturbers of my rest from the proximity of the hut. I cannot tell whether they were not such enthusiastic believers, or whether their animosity was excited by the bombastic erudition of the Foorians, but they set to work in earnest, and made a clearance as effectual as I had once seen accomplished by the officers of the liberal-tyrannical government of Muntass Bey in Suakin. That ruler, when I had last been residing in his town, had had the unparalleled audacity to send his Khavasses into the neighbouring mosque, and to threaten to make a free use of the kurbatch if the prayers at night were not promptly stopped. He sent a message to the effect that if the priests wanted to pray they need not shriek, for Allah could hear just as well without the outcry. The daring of such an intrusion had never been matched from the day of creation onwards.

Idrees, the superintendent of the Seriba, had eleven sons all nearly of the same age, a circumstance readily explained by his plurality of wives. For these youths, whom the children of other residents were allowed to join, he had instituted something like a regular Jewish school, and no one who has ever had the chance of witnessing the proceedings of such an institution can forget the sensation they left upon his ears. Four times in the course of the four-and-twenty hours, at intervals of four hours apart, does the chorus of voices in these Nubian schools break out in alternate humming, and buzzing, and shouting, occasionally varied by the didactic hammering

of the master, by the switch of his rod, and the consequent screams of the youngsters, which were invariably followed by a louder and livelier articulation. There is one school time just before sunset and another very shortly after, so that every attempt at repose is certain to be thwarted. However, I could always endure this disturbance with much more equanimity than the humbug of the prayers; for, however erroneous, according to our ideas, might be the method of instruction in school, yet its object at least was laudable.

Occasions there were when nightly orgies were all the rage, and the idle pretext under which these were maintained was that the plague of flies permitted no rest. The Nubians, when they had made themselves tipsy with their detestable merissa, had the habit of finding an outlet for their hilarity in banging on the kettle-drums which hung at the entrance of the Seriba. To me this abominable noise was a very thorn in the flesh, and as the huge drums were very near my quarters, and had broken my sleep often enough, I took the liberty of sprinkling the parchment with a sufficient quantity of muriatic acid, so that the next time they were drummed they split across. Till some new kettle-drums were provided I could slumber in peace.

Another interruption to a quiet night occasionally arose from the native wizards, who practised the mystery of casting out devils. I told them that they must be very indifferent charmers if they were unable to expel the devils by day as well as by night; but they did not appear to see matters at all in that light. One occasion there was in which, out of pure compassion, I permitted the proceedings to go on, although the noise was so extreme that it would never have been tolerated in the daytime. The wife of the Dinka interpreter in the Seriba had been long suffering under some chronic disorder, and he had undertaken a long day's journey to fetch a very celebrated conjuror or "Cogyoor" to treat her case. The incantation began in a strain which would try the

very stoutest of nerves: the strength of the wizard's lungs was astounding, and could have won a wager against a steam-trumpet. The virtue of the proceeding, however, centred upon this, and ventriloquism was called in to assist in producing a dialogue between himself and the devil which possessed the patient. I say the "devil," because the Biblical expression has accustomed us to the phrase, but I disapprove of the translation, and would rather say the "demon."

In the most penetrating tone, something like the cackling of frightened hens, only a thousand times louder, the sorcerer began the enchantment, which consisted of several acts. The first act lasted two hours without intermission, and unless it were heard it could never be imagined. I was assured that this introduction was quite indispensable—as a means of intimidating the devil and compelling him to reply, it could not by any means be omitted from the execution of the charm. The dialogue which followed between the wizard and the devil was carried on by the artifice of ventriloquism. The wizard made all kinds of inquiries as to the devil's name, the period of his possession of the woman, his proceedings, and his whereabouts, and then went on to ask about his lineage, his kinsfolk, and acquaintances. When for an hour or more the wizard had interrogated him till he had got all the answers he wanted, he set to work to provide the real remedy. Hurrying away into the wood, he got some root or herb, which perchance in many cases contributes to a cure. It all vividly reminded me of the clap-trap which advertisers and quacks are accustomed to employ, and how it may happen that they get hold of some simple and long-known material, which, under some marvellous name, they impose as a novelty upon the public. Puffing is part of their trade, and without a good deal of noise their business will not thrive in Europe any more than in Africa.

The rainy season in due time came to its end. For seven

months and a half I had now been quietly quartered in the Scriba of Ghattas; but a change was now impending, as I had resolved to quit my limited range and to attach my fortunes to the care of Aboo Sammat, whom I have already mentioned. Repeatedly he had invited me, at his own expense, to visit with him the Niam-niam lands, and I had determined to follow the advice of my people, who knew his character, and to accept his offer. I discovered that he had penetrated considerably further to the south than any other, and that he had more than once crossed that problematic stream of the Monbuttoo which was said to flow quite independently of the Nile system towards the west. The prospect of visiting the Niam-niam would be much more restricted if I were to remain attached to the expeditions of Ghattas's Company, as they had hitherto been confined to those nearest and most northerly districts of that country of which the first knowledge in Europe had been circulated by Piaggia.

I could not be otherwise than aware of the questionableness of giving up my safe quarters, and exchanging my security for the uncertain issues of a wandering life in Central Africa, but irresistible was the inducement to enlarge my acquaintance with the country and to find a wider field for my investigations. The season of the year was, moreover, quite in favour of pushing farther on than I had previously contemplated. Full of expectation, therefore, I turned my hopes towards the south, in an eastern direction, towards that untraversed region between the Tondy and the Rohl, which already is just as truly subject to the Khartooners as that in which I had been sojourning.

In my immediate neighbourhood I had tolerably well exhausted the treasures of the botanical world; after the rains were over there was a comparative barrenness in the productions of nature. I made, indeed, my daily excursions, but they reached only to places which I had previously inspected. A sense of irksomeness began to predominate, and every tree

of any magnitude, every ant-hill had become so familiar that they had entirely lost the charm of novelty.

Aboo Sammat, in the most complimentary way, had made me a variety of presents: by special messengers he had conveyed to me animal and vegetable curiosities of many sorts. He once sent me the munificent offering of a flock of five-and-twenty sheep; and at my own desire, but at his cost, he furnished me with a young interpreter to teach me the dialect of the Niam-niam. In the middle of November, on his return from the Meshera, he would take our Seriba on his way, and I resolved to join him.

The people at Ghattas's quarters endeavoured, but to no purpose, to dissuade me; they represented in very melancholy colours the misery to which I should inevitably be exposed in the desert life of Aboo Sammat's district, which was every now and then threatened with starvation. There would be no lack of monuments of antiquity ("antigaht," as they called them), or of hunting, or of wild beasts, but I must be prepared for perpetual hunger. Against all this, however true it might be, I consoled myself with the reflection that Aboo Sammat would certainly manage to keep me in food, and the difference of one more or less in number could not be very serious.

Another important reason which weighed with me was the saving of expense in the way of travelling. The mere cost of bearers for a journey through the Niam-niam lands would be some thousand dollars, which, according to contract, would go into the pocket of Ghattas: this would entirely be avoided if Aboo Sammat fulfilled his promise, and there was nothing to induce me to suppose that he was otherwise than a man of his word.

Nothing now seemed longer to detain me in the Dyoor or Bongo countries: accordingly, resolved to make a start, I packed up my goods without delay, and made the Governor acquainted with my intention. A regular commotion followed



in the Seriba: the clerks and notaries produced the contract which had been signed at Khartoom, and attempted not only to demonstrate that Aboo Sammat had no right to receive me, but that Ghattas had the sole responsibility of my weal and woe, and must answer, at the peril of his head, for any misfortune that might befall me while I was under the tutelage of Aboo Sammat. The distorted character of their logic was manifest as soon as the evidence was shown that Ghattas was under obligations to me and not I to him.

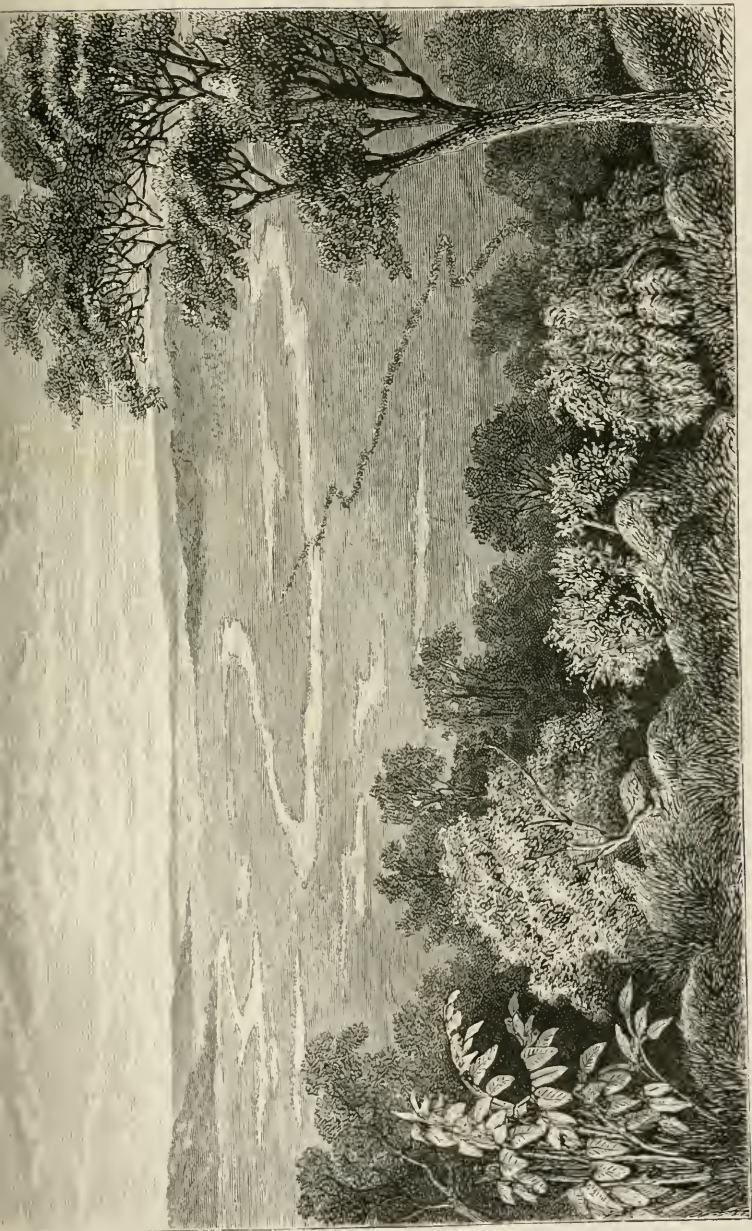
After I had made all my arrangements to store the collections which had accumulated since my last despatch, I prepared to quit my bountiful quarters and to start by way of Koolongo over the desolation of the wilderness towards the south. The baggage which I found it necessary to take, I limited to thirty-six packages. The Nubian servants, three slaves, and the interpreter, composed my own retinue, but Aboo Sammat's entire caravan, counting bearers and soldiers, consisted altogether of about 250 men. I myself joined the main body at Koolongo, where preparations had just been completed for the passage of the Tondy, which was then at high flood.

The regular progress began on the 17th of November. A march of an hour brought us to the low plain of the Tondy, where four Bongo bearers were ready for me with a kind of bedstead, on which I reclined at my ease as they conveyed me upon their shoulders above the many places which were marshy or choked with rushes, till they reached the ferry that Aboo Sammat had arranged. This ferry consisted of a great raft of straw, upon which the packages were laid in separate lots, and to which most of the bearers clung while it was towed across by a number of swimmers who were accustomed to the stream. The Nubians floundered like fish in the strong current, and had some work to do in saving many a "colli," which, in the unsteadiness of the passage, was thrown out of its equilibrium. The river, by its right

bank, was running at the rate of 120 feet a minute and was about 200 feet across. Nearly exhausted as I was by the violence of the stream, when I approached the further side I was grasped hand and foot by a number of the swimmers, who brought me to land as if I had been a drowning man.

Beyond the river the land was less affected by any inundation, and after a few minutes we came to a steep rocky highland which bounded the way to the south. Rising to an elevation of little more than 200 feet, we had a fine open view of the depressed tract of land through which the Tondy meanders. Its windings were marked by reedy banks; the mid-day sun gleamed upon the mirror of various backwaters, and the distance revealed a series of wooded undulations. In a thin dark thread, the caravan wound itself at my feet along the green landscape, as I have endeavoured to depict it in the annexed illustration. The height on which we stood was graced by a beautiful grove, where I observed a fresh characteristic of the region, viz., the alder-like *Vatica*, a tree of no great size, but which now appeared in detached clumps. In the foreground of the picture are represented some of the most charming types of vegetation in the bushwood; on the left is the large-leaved blue-green *Anona senegalensis*; on the right, the *Grewia mollis*, a shrub with long twigs that supplies an abundance of bast and string wherever it grows. The little tree of the pine genus is the willow-leaved *Boscia*, which is a constant inhabitant of the Upper Nile district.

It was getting late in the day before we had assembled our whole troop upon the plateau. Very short, consequently, was our march before we halted for the night. The spot selected for the purpose had formerly been a small *Seriba* belonging to *Ghattas*; but in consequence of the *Bongo* who had settled there having all deserted, and of the difficulty of maintaining any intercourse with other *Seribas* during the rainy season, it had been abandoned. It was a district of utter desolation, far away from any other settlements.



THE DEPRESSION OF THE TONDY.





A brook, which in July and August becomes swollen to a considerable stream, flowed past our quarters for the night, and joined the Tondy at the distance of a few leagues. To this rivulet, which has its source in the Madi country, in lat.  $5^{\circ} 10' N.$ , the Bongo give the name of the Doggoroo, whilst it is known as the Lehssy in the districts which divide the territories of the Bongo from the Niam-niam. Up the stream we followed its course for two hours, keeping along the edge of a pleasant park-like country, till we arrived at some thickets, which we had to penetrate in order to reach the banks of the stream. Sluggish here was the water's pace; its breadth was about thirty feet, and it was sufficiently shallow to be waded through, scarcely rising above our hips; on our return in the following year the passage involved us in considerable difficulty. Beyond the Doggoroo the ground made a gradual but decided rise, and for more than forty miles the ascent was continuous. It was the first elevation of the ground of any importance which I had yet seen anywhere south of the Gazelle; for here was a broad offshoot of the southern highlands, which, according to the statements of the natives, serve as a watershed for the coalescing streams of the Tondy and the Dyau (Roah).

After we had proceeded in a south-easterly direction till we had accomplished about a third of our journey to Sabby, the Seriba of Mohammed Aboo Sammat, we had at no great distance the territory of the Dinka upon our left. The adjacent clan is called the Goak, and a large number of the Bongo have taken refuge amongst them to escape the aggressions and stern oppression of the Nubians. The Dinka, for their part, impressed the strange intruders with such awe that, since Malzac (the well-known French adventurer, who for several years took up his quarters on the Rohl), no one has repeated the attempt to establish a settlement in their district. It is simply their wealth in cattle that is a temptation to occasional raids, which are studiously accomplished



as far as possible without bloodshed. On the last stage between the Tondy and the Doggoroo we repeatedly came across the traces of elephants; but the trenches which had been designed to catch them had not as yet been a success. Elephants seem to prefer to make their way along the narrow paths which have been already trodden by the foot of man through the high grass, notwithstanding that they are not sufficiently broad to admit a quarter of their huge bodies.

After the rains are over and the steppe-burning accomplished, the landscape reminded me very much of the late autumn-time of our own latitudes. Many trees were entirely destitute of foliage; the ground beneath them being strewn with yellow leaves or covered with pale sere grass as far as the conflagration had spared it. One charming tree, a kind of *Humboldtia*, was conspicuous amidst the shadowy groves. It has seed-vessels a foot long, the seed itself being as large as a dollar, whilst its magnificent leaf is a beautiful ornament to the wood-scenery wherever it abounds. The gay colours of the young shoots, sprouting directly from the root, crimson, purple, brown, or yellow, contribute in a large degree to this effective display. The foliage generally is so light that it was quite easy to penetrate into these woods, which constantly and agreeably relieved the barren aspect of the region.

A considerable number of antelopes from various quarters had been killed by the hour in which we encamped for the night in a forest glade. These antelopes belonged to the Waterbocks (*A. ellipsiprymna*), of which the head is very remarkable, on account of the large excrescences which obtrude from the side of the nostrils, in the same way as in the wild buffalo. It has a fine sweeping pair of horns, which crown its brow. The hair of this species of Waterbuck is extremely long and soft, and its skin is a very favourite decoration of the Niam-niam. There is but little difficulty

in getting an aim at this animal, as its white haunches soon betray it amid the gloom of the forest, where it is more frequently found either quite solitary or in very small groups. I very much relished the tender flesh of the kids, although it was somewhat deficient in fat.



The Central African Waterbuck.  
(*Antelope ellipsiprymna*)

When morning dawned the only remnant of our supper was a pile of crushed bones; for neither skin nor gristle had been spared by the greedy negroes. The beast of prey disdains what a voracious man will devour; the beast rejects what is tough, and gnaws only about the soft and supple joints, whilst man in his gluttony roasts the very skin, splits the bones, and swallows the marrow. Splintered bones, therefore, here in the lines of traffic, just as they do in the caverns of antiquity, afford a distinctive evidence of the existence of men, whilst bones that have been gnawed only attest the presence of lions, hyænas, jackals, and the like.

Few there are who have not read of the glory of the southern heavens; rare is the traveller in the tropics who has not revelled in the splendid aspect of the great arch above when illumined by the shining of the moon. After a long hot march it may indeed happen that the traveller is far too weary and worn-out to be capable of appreciating the charm of any such beauties; in passive indifference, stretched upon his back, he turns a listless eye unconcerned upwards to the sky, till sleep overpowers him; and thus unconsciously he loses the highest of poetic ecstasies. Soon the heaven bedecks itself with countless numbers of fleecy clouds, which separate as flakes of melting ice, and stand apart: the deep black firmament fills up the intervals, and gives a richer lustre to the stars; then, circled by a rosy halo, rises the gentle moon, and casts her silver beams upon the latest straggler.

Meanwhile, far in the lonely wood, there has arisen, as it were, the tumult of a market; the gossip of the chatters is interrupted now and then by the authoritative word of command of some superior officer, while many a camp-fire is kindled and illuminates the distant scene. To protect himself against the chilly air of night, each separate bearer takes what pains he can, using what ashes he can get for his covering. Wreaths of smoke hover over the encampment, a sense of burning oppresses the eyes and makes sleep all but impossible, and thus the attention is ever and again arrested by the moving orbs in the heavens above. To the traveller it well might seem as if the curtain of a theatre had been raised, and revealed a picture of the infernal world where hundreds of black devils were roasting at as many flames. Such were my nightly experiences as often as I journeyed with a large number of bearers.

About noon on the third day, after marching about sixteen leagues from Koolongo, we arrived at Duggoo, the chief Seriba of Sherefee, who maintained some small settlements in this remote wilderness. Notwithstanding the almost un-

limited scope with regard to space, he was on the bitterest terms of hostility with Aboo Sammat, his neighbour in the south. A regular mediæval feud had broken out between them, the nominal cause of the quarrel being that one of Shereefee's female slaves had been maltreated, and, having taken refuge with Aboo Sammat, had not been restored; but the interchange of cuffs and blows had been the actual ground of the discord. When two months previously Aboo Sammat was despatching his ivory-produce of the year, consisting of about 300 packages, to the Meshera, it was seized by the negroes as it was being conveyed across Shereefee's district. These negroes attacked the defenceless bearers and massacred several of them; others they wounded with arrows and lances, till the whole caravan was overpowered, and every one throwing down his valuable burden made a precipitate flight. The Khartoom soldiers belonging to Aboo Sammat looked quietly on throughout the fray, for no attachment to their master would have induced them to fire a shot against any of their brethren.

Aboo Sammat, with all his property, was now in the desert, 150 miles away from the boats. To enter into action against Shereefee he hastened to the west, and induced a number of the controllers of Seribas to repair to the scene of violence, and to insist upon judgment being passed at Khartoom. But to accomplish this purpose he had to travel hundreds of miles in a few weeks, during the rains, and before his task was completed the proper time for shipment had elapsed, the high waters had abated, and all his goods had to remain at the Meshera to await another season, exposed all along to the too probable attacks of the hostile Dinka. Aboo Sammat, so far from taking the law into his own hands, had proceeded in the most legitimate way to demand compensation; but Shereefee, not satisfied with the wrong he had already perpetrated, spurred on his negroes to make repeated incursions upon his rival's territory. Sometimes he endeavoured to

entice Aboo Sammat's Bongo people to desert, and sometimes sent his own to commit all manner of outrage and depredation. Many of the poor natives, the shuttlecocks of the fray, lost their lives in the contention; and I enriched my collection of skulls by some splendid specimens which I picked up on my way. "This was the spot," said Aboo to me, "where the thieves made their attack. You have seen for yourself, and should speak up for me."

Approaching the neighbourhood of the hostile Seriba we made a halt in the open country, about half a league away. To put a good face on the matter, and to make an impression upon Shereefee's people, everybody put on their best clothes, and Aboo Sammat's soldiers came out in all the gay colours of the fresh chintz which had just been acquired from the stores of the Meshera. The Turkish cut of these garments contributed in no small degree to the self-confidence of the men, and the Kenoosian could fairly pride himself upon having a troop who, not merely in externals, but in general discipline, were far superior to the disorderly bands which, in dirty rags, were quartered at the other Seribas. Every precaution was taken to guard against a sudden attack, and patrols were sent out to protect the flanks of our extended line. Ambushed in the thickets some armed Bongo were actually seen, but these outlying sentinels as soon as they observed there was a white man in the caravan, having heard of my presence in the country, abstained from any exhibition of hostility. Thus unmolested we drew close up to the Seriba, and Mohammed's party bivouacked out in the open country. Meanwhile I was received in the most friendly manner by Shereefee's brother, who was here in charge, and there was no disposition to act towards a Frank in any way that might involve difficulty at Khartoom. But I could not help thinking how narrowly all my baggage might be escaping attack, and what a hopeless attempt it might be to recover it.



The whole district, as I have mentioned, had been gradually rising in terraces all the way from the Tondy; and only just before we reached the Seriba, which was named Duggoo, after the superintendent of the place, had we marched continuously up-hill for half a league; no flowing water had hitherto been observed. On the south-west and south-east were visible the highlands in the distance, whilst in front of them were elevations of from 100 to 200 feet above the level of the adjacent vale. One of these elevations was very close to Duggoo in the north-east, whence from a bamboo jungle there streamed in the rainy season a brook which fell into the Dyau. The recesses and caverns in the red iron-stone reminded me of the great grotto at Koolongo, with its swarms of fluttering bats (*Phyllorhinus caffra*) and vast accumulation of guano.

The wide stretch of country between the Tondy and the Dyoor, extending some seventy miles, had but three years since been a populous district with many huts; now, however, it had only a few scattered habitations of the Bongo, which were grouped in the vicinity of either Aboo Sammat's or Shereefee's Seribas. Since the Bongo have been expelled by the Dinka, nothing but elephants and antelopes have found their pasture in those wild plains, which have once been cultivated. Occasionally the ruins of the burnt villages were still extant, rising above the rank grass. Nothing survived as direct evidence of the habitation of men; what scanty remnants of dwelling-places the first conflagration of the steppes had spared, either the ants or natural decay had soon destroyed. The only remaining vestiges of the occupation of the land are due to the richness of vegetation, and this has left its characteristic traces. I could specify some fifty or sixty plants which correspond so accurately with the weeds of other cultivated countries that they are significant tokens of a former presence of men. The preponderating Indian origin of all these plants is very observable, and a

better acquaintance with the geographical facts connected with them would probably be as trustworthy an indication of the various migrations of an uncivilized people who have no history as either their dialect or their physical development.

Five leagues away from Duggoo we arrived at Dogguddoo, the second Seriba of Shereefee, where he was then resident. Many a slough and many a marsh had we to traverse on our progress, the result of the rain which had been falling for months. Midway we paused for a rest beside the relics of a great Bongo village, where stood the ruins of a large fence of the same description as is seen around the present Seribas. In the very centre of the village had stood, as is commonly found, an exceedingly fine fig-tree (*F. lutea*), and there were besides, a large number of tombs constructed of blocks of stone and ornamented with strangely-carved posts; at some little distance was a number of handmills that had been left behind, destined for some years to come to be a memorial of the past. The spot, named after the previous governor, was called Pogao. Shortly afterwards we arrived at a charming little brook, known as the Mattyoo, which, under the shadow of a pleasant copse-wood, went babbling over its red rocky bed, making little cascades and rapids as it streamed along.

In consequence of the repeated burnings of the steppes, well-nigh all vegetation was now blighted and impoverished: in particular the higher districts presented an appearance of wretched desolation. Repeatedly, in the winter landscape of the tropics, there are seen trees standing in full foliage in the very midst of their dismantled neighbours; and the loss of leaf would seem to be hardly so much an unconditional consequence of the time of year as a collateral effect of locality or condition of the soil.

After having for months together explored every thicket, and day after day penetrated into the high grass on the river-banks, I could not suppress my astonishment at the absence of every description of snakes. The Khartoomers

suggest an explanation of this circumstance which I am not disinclined to accept; they conjecture that in this stony region there is a deficiency of that rich black soil which splits like a glacier in the dry season, and makes riding in the North-Eastern Soudan a very dangerous proceeding; and, consequently, that there is neither a way for snakes to escape from the fires of the blazing steppes, nor any of those lurking-places which are indispensable for their resort.

Incalculable in its effect upon the vegetation of Central Africa must be the influence of the annual steppe-burning, which is favoured by the dryness of the seasons. The ordinary soil becomes replaced by charcoal and ashes, which the rain, when it returns, as well as the wind, sweeps right away into the valleys. The rock is, for the most part, a very friable and weather-worn ironstone, and upon this alone has everything that grows to make good its footing. The distinction, therefore, as might be imagined, is very marked between vegetation under such conditions, and vegetation as it displays itself by the banks of rivers, where the abundant grass resists the progress of the fire, and where, moreover, a rich mould is formed by the decay of withered leaves. But even more than the impregnation of the soil with alkalis, does the violence of flames act upon the configuration of plants in general. Trees with immense stems, taking fire at the parts where they are lifeless through age, will die entirely; and, where the grass is exceptionally heavy, the fresh after-growth will perish at the roots, or in other places will be either crippled or stunted. Hence arises the want of those richly-foliaged and erect-stemmed specimens which are the pride of our own forests; hence the scarcity of trees, which are either old or well developed; and hence, too, the abnormal irregularity of form which is witnessed at the base of so many a stem and at the projection of so many a shoot.

Flowing without intermission all through the year, close

by Dugguddoo, there is a brook which the Bongo have named the Tomburoo. Its water hurries on at the rate of 170 feet per minute, its depth hardly ever exceeds three feet, while its breadth varies from 20 feet to 50. Its banks, about four feet high, were bounded by land subject to inundations corresponding to the measurement of the stream. At a league's distance to the east, the general elevation of the soil began afresh. The environs of the Seriba of Shereefee were only scantily cultivated, as the Nubians and the Bongo lived by preference on the produce of the plundering forages which they were accustomed to make amongst the adjacent Dinka tribes, the Ayell and the Faryahl, towards the north.

Exposing itself far and wide, there was the naked rock, the barrenness of which was only interrupted at intervals by a scanty covering of human bones! Carried off in groups, the captured slaves here succumbed to the overwrought exertions of their march. At times they died literally of starvation, as often there was no corn to be had in the barren land. The overland dealers in slaves make their purchases here at the most advantageous prices. In these eastern Seribas, as the result of the perpetual raids upon the Dinka, there is always a superabundance of the living black merchandise on hand, but very rarely is there an adequate supply of food for their maintenance. The traders proceed from Seriba to Seriba with their gangs, which they maintain on whatever provisions they can get on the way. Where destitution is an ordinary phase of things, it is self-evident that the traffickers, having no resources to support a lengthened journey, must, day after day, suffer considerable loss, and it is no unwonted thing for their gangs to melt away by a dozen at a time. Burnt bones of men and charred palisades of huts are too true an evidence of the halting-places of Mohammedanism, and, day by day, more and more was my imagination shocked by these horrid spectacles. In

the very Seriba there was even awaiting me afresh the miserable sight, to which no force of habit could accustom me, of a number of helpless children, perfect little pictures of distress and wretchedness, either orphans or deserted by their mothers, and who dragged on a pitiable existence, half-starved, burnt by falling into the fire in their sleep, or covered with loathsome sores.

Turning short off, almost at a right angle to our previous direction, our way beyond Duggoroo, after seven leagues, over a country well-wooded and rich in game, led us to the borders of Aboo Sammat's territory. Once again the land began to rise, and appeared to be all but barren in water-courses of any kind. As we went along I picked up, in a state of perfect preservation, several of the bleached skulls of some of Aboo Sammat's bearers, who, wounded in the murderous attack by Shereefee's people, had never been able to regain their homes. In a bag, which one of my attendants constantly carried, I had a collection made of a number of the great land-snails which, after the termination of the rains, abounded in this region. The two kinds which appeared most common were *Limnicolaria nilotica* and *L. flammea*; of these, the former is rather more than four inches in length, the latter rather more than three. They invade the bushes and shrubs, and have a great partiality for the tender leaves of the numerous varieties of wild vine. They serve as food for a number of birds, the *Centropus monachus*, the cuckoo of the climate, in particular having a keen relish for them. Their shells are as thin as paper, a circumstance which, like the brittleness in the egg-shells of hens, testifies to the deficiency of chalk in the soil. I was in need of soap, and the chief object which I had in taking the trouble to collect these shells was to obtain what cretaceous matter I could, to enable me to make a supply, no other method of getting it occurring to my mind. At night we rested at a poor Seriba called Matwoly, where we were



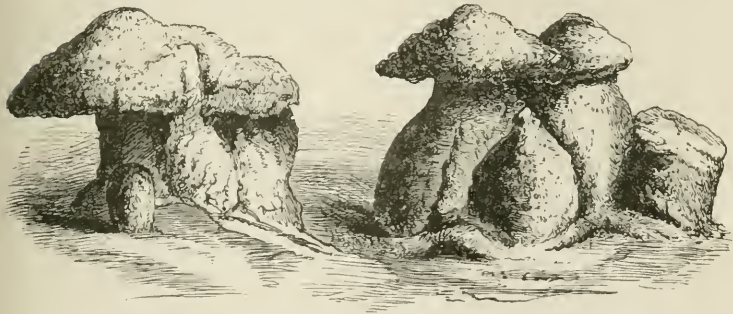
received in some dilapidated huts, as the place, together with all its Bongo adjuncts, for greater security against the attacks of Shereefee, was about to be abandoned.

The wearisome monotony of the woods, now generally stripped of their foliage, was enlivened by the fresh green of the *Combretum*, which here long anticipates every other tree in putting forth its tender buds. Gaily it stands apart from the uniform grey and brown of the surrounding forest, thrown into yet higher relief by the yellow of the mass of withered grass below, and showing itself brightly from the half-shaded gloom of the wood beyond.

Although I had now advanced an entire degree nearer to the Equator, being now in a latitude of  $6^{\circ} 20'$  N., I still found that the landscape around had charms to offer which were not inferior to the winter beauties of the distant north. In the early morning I delighted to see the rimy dew that had fallen on the sprouting grass, and which frequently remained as late as nine o'clock; over the feathery *Pennisetum* and the *Agrostideæ* it fell like a white veil, and the bright drops sparkled like diamonds in the sunshine. The slender gossamer, moreover, which stretched itself over the deeps and shallows of the soil, and even over the footprints in the ground, appeared to operate as a conductor of the dew, which congealed till it was like a film of ice which crackles beneath the tread of a traveller in the autumn.

Distant four and a half leagues to the south lay Aboo Sammat's head Seriba, known as Sabby, the name of its Bongo chief. Half-way upon our march we crossed a considerable stream, which was called the Koddy. As we forded its breadth of twenty feet, we found the water rising above our hips. Here again the candelabra-euphorbia seemed to be abundant, after having never been seen since I left the eastern bank of the river Dyoor. An essential feature of the district between the Dyoor and the Rohl is contributed by the small mushroom-shaped ant-hills which, found as they

are in many a part of Tropical Africa, here cover the stony surface with their peculiar shapes. Formed exactly like the common mushroom, the separate erections of the *Termes mordax* are grouped in little colonies. The main difference between the tenements of these ants and those which construct conical domes as tall as a man, consists in this, that they have a definite altitude, which rarely exceeds thirty inches and immediately that there is no further space they raise new turrets and form fresh colonies. The materials, too, of which this species of *Termes* constructs its edifice is neither grey nor of a ferruginous red, but is simply the alluvial clay of the place: it is so closely cemented together,



Mushroom-shaped white-ant hills.

that it defies the most violent kicking to displace it, and is hardly less solid than brickwork. The natives are very glad to employ it for the construction of their huts; they break it into fragments with their clubs, and moisten it till its substance yields. By the Bongo it is called Kiddillikoo.

The red ferruginous clay is the only material out of which the great ants (*Termes bellicosus*) construct their buildings. These are seldom found elsewhere than in a wood, where the pointed shapes are never seen. The neighbourhood of Sabby especially abounded in these monuments of animal labour, and not a few of them were fifteen feet in height. In altitude greater than in breadth, they reared themselves like a

large cupola surrounded by countless pillars and projecting towers. At the first commencement of the building it embraces only some isolated domes, which gradually are combined into one single cluster, whilst the ramifications of the interior have entirely to be reconstructed. When we reflect that the dimensions of the bodies of these toiling ants (the female neuters) are not one thousandth part so great as the structure that they upheave, we cannot refrain from comparing their edifices with the most extensive cities which human hands have reared. During my previous journey, I had found several opportunities of investigating the secret habits of these wondrous creatures. The life of the traveller in Africa is one continual conflict against their aggressions. Once at the missionary station in Gallabat, for seven days did the people work away with crowbars to remove one of these erections, which had been accumulated in the middle of the courtyard, and which was not only an impediment in the way, but was a nuisance to the adjacent huts. At length they penetrated to the royal chamber, and dragged forth the queen to the daylight, from which she had carefully excluded her subjects.

All the ant-hills of which I was able to make a survey were constructed upon the double-chamber system, the maze of cells being divided apparently into two separate storeys. Adequately to describe the marvellous interior of one of these haunts of the community would require a volume of itself. No labyrinth of coral could be more intricate; its walls are curiously cemented together, its chambers are most carefully arranged and most amply stored with vegetable produce, and there are magazines which teem with cakes and loaves. A regular series of bridges conducts from place to place, and many a crossway traverses the pile. To detail the wonders of these erections would tax the patience of the reader, and the study of a life-time would not exhaust the marvellous perfection of the organization which they present.

As might be conjectured, there is no want amongst these woods of ant-hills such as these, which have ceased to be occupied, and which consequently have been adopted as lurking-places by various kinds of animals that shun the light and lead a troglodite existence. Here skulks the aardvark or earth-pig (*Orycteropus*); here gropes the African armadillo (*Manis*); hither resort wild boars of many a breed; here may be tracked the porcupines, the honey-weasel, or ratel; here go the zebra-ichneumons and the rank civet-cats; whilst here, perchance, may be found what in this land is rare, an occasional hyæna.

Thus, after seven days' journeying over a country all but uninhabited, on the 23rd of November I found myself at the head Seriba of my friend and protector, who received me with true Oriental hospitality. First of all, he had newly-erected for my use three pleasant huts, enclosed in their own fence; his thoughtfulness had gone so far that he had provided me with several chairs and tables; he had sent to a Seriba, eight days' journey distant, to obtain some cows, that I might enjoy new milk every day; and, in short, he had taken the utmost pains to insure me the best and amplest provisions that the locality could supply. My attendants, too, who, together with their slaves, made up a party of thirteen, were entertained as freely as myself: everything contributed to keep them in good mood, and they were delighted jointly and severally to throw in their lot with mine.

The natives, when they saw not only their own superior, but the governors of other Seribas, treat me with such consideration, providing me with a palanquin for every brook, came to the conclusion that I was a magnate, and said to each other, "This white man is a lord over all the Turks"—Turks being the name by which the Nubians here wish to be known, although before a genuine Osmanli they would not have ventured to take such a title. As Aboo Sammat used jocosely to remark, they were accustomed at home to

carry mud, but here they carried a gun instead. It was a matter of congratulation to myself that the people already had arrived at some apprehension of the superiority of an European. It set me at my ease to observe that I had nothing to fear as to being mistaken by the natives for one of the same stock as the Nubian menials. Equally advantageous to me was it that the same impression prevailed amongst the Niam-niam and the distant Monbutto, to whose territories I was approaching, and accordingly I entered upon my wanderings under what must be considered favourable auspices.

Situated in a depression between undulating hills which stretch from south-west to north-east, the settlement of Aboo Sammat was surrounded by numerous Bongo villages and fields. Here he centred an authority over his Bongo and Mittoo territories which stretched away for no less than sixty miles. The residence of Aboo himself was about a league away, where he kept his harem in retirement, his elder brother having the charge of the principal Seriba. After I had settled myself as conveniently as I could, I began afresh my accustomed rambles, so that, in the same way as I had done in Ghattas's Seriba, I might familiarise myself with all the environs.

At this period, when vegetation was at a stand-still, the flora presented little novelty, and whatever I found corresponded very much with what I had already seen in the district between the Tondy and the Dyoor. The woody places around Sabby were generally somewhat thicker; there was neither the same expanse of low steppe-country, nor the same frequent interruption of woods by grassy plains. Corresponding to this density of growth of the forests there was a greater variety in the fauna.

Meanwhile, amidst my investigations, I did not lose sight of my projected journey to the Niam-niam, and continually made what preparation I could. I criticised very diligently the



muscles and measurements of the people, and very materially enlarged my vocabulary. Although I was only half-way towards the country of the Niam-niam, I found myself brought into connection with a considerably large number of them, and subsequently I was enabled in a degree to master their dialect. The report of the feud between Mohammed Aboo Sammat and Shereefee had extended to Mohammed's outlying Seriba in the Niam-niam country, and had grown into a rumour that all his people had been exterminated by Shereefee's agents. For the purpose of obtaining more reliable information the manager of the Seriba, ninety miles away, had sent ten young men to Sabby, and their strange appearance very much surprised me. Everything which I had hitherto seen of the people served to strengthen my conviction that they were marked off from the other population of Africa by a distinct nationality of their own. Even the Bongo seemed here to arouse my interest more than at Ghattas's Seriba, where, on account of their longer period of subjection, they had gradually lost very many habits and peculiarities of their race. I spent accordingly a good deal of my leisure in making sketches of their dwellings and their furniture, and in my numerous excursions round the villages, I persisted in investigating everything, however immaterial it might seem, as though I were examining the vestiges of the prehistoric life of a palisaded colony.

The three slaves who accompanied me were now indispensable as interpreters. Apart from them I could have prevailed very little in overcoming the shyness and mistrust towards strangers which the natives continually exhibited: an exterior survey did not satisfy me, and I persevered till I gained admittance to the inside of several of the huts, so that I could institute a regular domestic investigation. Every corner was explored, and by this means many a strange implement was brought to light, and many an unexpected discovery revealed.

The granaries of the Bongo were now quite full, as the harvest was just over: all was consequently mirth and riot in the district, and many a night's rest did I find disturbed by the noisy orgies which re-echoed from the shadowy woods. At full blast for hours together were the long wooden trumpets, the loud signal-horns, the huge trombones, and those immense drums for the construction of which the strongest timber has been selected from the forests. The powers of shrieking were put forth to the uttermost. Like the rolling of the breakers of an angry sea, the noise rose and fell: alternate screechings and howlings reached my ears, and hundreds of men and women seemed to be trying which could scream the loudest. Incapable of closing an eye for sleep while such infernal outcry was around, I went several times to inspect the frantic scene of merriment. Nights when the moon was bright were those most frequently selected for the boisterous revelry; the excuse alleged being that the mosquitoes would not let them rest, and therefore it was necessary to dance; but in truth, there was no nuisance of flies here worth consideration: I was not annoyed to anything like the same extent as upon my backward journey on the White Nile.

The following may be submitted as something like an ordinary programme of these *soirées musicales*. Slowly and mournfully some decrepit old man, or toothless old woman, begins with broken voice to babble out a doleful recitative; ere long first one and then another will put in an appearance from the surrounding huts, and point with the forefinger at the original performer, as if to say that this is all his fault, when suddenly, all together, they burst forth in universal chorus, taking up the measure, which they work into a wondrous fugue. At a given signal the voices rise in a piercing shriek, and then ensues a series of incredible contortions; they jump, they dance, and roll themselves about as though they had bodies of indian-rubber; they swing them-

selves as if they were propelled with the regularity of machines; it would almost seem as if their energy were inexhaustible, and as if they would blow their trumpets till their lungs gave way, and hammer at their drums till their fists were paralyzed. All at once everything is hushed; simultaneously they make a pause; but it is only to fetch their breath and recover their strength, and once more the tumult breaks out intense as ever. The license of their revelry is of so gross a character that the representation of one of my interpreters must needs be suppressed. It made a common market-woman droop her eyes and called up a blush even to a poor sapper's cheek. Many of the people had iron rings about their ankles with balls attached, and these they rattled with such violence that their feet were bathed with blood.

Go where I might, I found nothing but lamentation over the impoverishment and desolation of the land, yet those who complained were themselves responsible for its comfortless aspect. Whilst, through the migration of the people, the country towards the north during the last three years had been changed into a wilderness, the Bongo, who clung to their homes and remained on their settlements, had not only lost their former wealth in sheep, goats, and poultry, but had even been too much driven to extremities to continue their cultivation of corn, and were sufferers from what was little short of famine. The Bongo asserted that in the first year that the Khartoomers committed their depredations amongst them, they were so terrified lest all their sheep, and goats, and poultry should be carried off, that, without delay, they had them all killed, cooked, and eaten. Eye-witnesses were not wanting who told me what had been the astonishing quantities of poultry that once had teemed in every village; but when there ceased to be any security for any one to retain what he had, of course there ceased to be any interest in making a store. If the harvest were prolific so that the

granaries were full, the settlers would revel in indulgence as long as their resources held out; but for the greater portion of the year they had to depend upon the produce of the woods and upon the proceeds of the chase, which had often no better game to yield than cats, lizards, and field-rats. Not that there was any actual fear of starvation, because the supply of edible tubers and of wild fruits from the extensive woods was inexhaustible and not ill-adapted to a negro's digestion, and because there was an abundance of the seed of wild grasses to be collected, which replaced the scarcity of corn.

In productiveness the land around Sabby was not inferior to the environs of Ghattas's Seriba. The ears of sorghum here, as frequently as there, reached to a weight of six pounds; but at the same time the level tracts under cultivation were far less extensive, and in all the rocky places could only produce a smaller yield. The natives, however, never ventured to bring any of their grain to market, as I had been accustomed to see them: whatever anyone possessed, he cautiously kept out of the sight of the stranger. From all regular and systematic agriculture, the natives were as a rule debarred, because in the course of the year nearly every able-bodied man was compelled to go and do duty as a bearer, and consequently for months together was a stranger to his homestead, whilst he either plodded backwards and forwards to the Meshera, or was engaged upon the Niam-niam expeditions. Of copper, beads, and knick-knacks of every sort they managed to increase their store, but in agriculture they decidedly were retrograding. It was with them precisely as with their oppressors from afar: just as in Nubia, there was a destiny of evil being fulfilled upon the land, so here was the spectacle of a region degenerating from prosperity into neglect and woe.

Repeatedly in the evening hours I watched the ghost-like fluttering of a long feathered goat-sucker of the species

*Cosmetornis Spekii* *Slater*, observed by Speke\* in Uganda, and which was to be recognized by the astonishing elongation of the seventh and eighth wing-quills, the latter of which reaches over twenty inches in length. There was a second species of this genus, of which the male had the same kind of prolonged shaft-feathers expanded at the end and fluttering in the air like a peacock's tail. This was the *Macropypteria longipennis*, a remarkable bird which the Arabs call the "father of four wings," because, as it chases the mice, it looks as though it had a couple of satellites in attendance. Both these make their earliest appearance about a quarter of an hour after sunset and as the twilight passes rapidly into thorough night; I had, therefore, only scanty opportunities of sending what were at best only stray shots to bring them down. For the purpose of catching insects they generally wheeled in circles at no great distance from the ground, but as the range of their flight was very circumscribed and its rapidity extremely great, it was somewhat difficult to get a good aim. However, as the practice was repeated daily, I succeeded in securing a considerable number of Speke's interesting *Cosmetornis*. I should mention that while I had been in Ghattas's Seriba, sport of this kind had very frequently been an evening recreation. The antipathy of this aeronaut of the dusky evening to the clear light of day, seemed very remarkable: it kept itself to the seclusion of the low bushwoods, and when roused up would disappear again at the first ray of light; often it would settle itself on the ground in a pile of leaves to which its own hue corresponded, and it might then almost be trodden upon before it could be stirred into flight.

During the incessant excursions which I kept making round Sabby I was able to discriminate not less than twelve distinct species of antelopes, of which I was successful

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\* Vide Speke's Journal, p. 462.



in shooting several. Frequently met with here is the antelope (*A. oreas*) which is known as the Elend. During the rainy months it gathers in little groups of about half-a-dozen in the drier districts on the heights, but through the winter it is, like all its kindred, confined to the levels by the river-sides. Upon the steppes through which flow the brooklets in the proximity of Sabby the leucotis antelope is the most common of all game, and many is the herd I saw which might be reckoned at a hundred heads. Perhaps nowhere in the whole of North-east Africa would any one have the chance of seeing such numerous herds of antelopes collected together as travellers in the south are accustomed to depict. Assisted by a whole clan of Kaffirs, the Boers on the 24th of August, 1860, had a *battue* in honour of the Duke of Edinburgh, of which the result was that between 20,000 and 30,000 antelopes are said to have been enclosed. Of the more circumscribed district of the Nile the parts that are most prolific in game are on the north-west declivity of the Abyssinian highlands, on the Tacazze or Setcet, in the province of Taka: there it is not an unknown circumstance for herds to be found which exceed a total of 400 head, but they do not correspond in the remotest degree with those which are depicted in the published engravings of the South African hunt. Still poorer in numbers of individuals are the antelopes in Central Africa proper, where the uniform diffusion of men encloses smaller wastes than those which can alone provide large lairs for game.

Amongst the numerous smaller beasts of prey to which the regions that I visited gave harbourage, the zebra-ichneumon was to me one of the most interesting. I was very successful in securing living specimens of this widely-scattered species, and could not suppress my astonishment at the facility with which they were domesticated in my dwelling; if ever they get established in a house there is no getting rid of them. It is a saucy creature, and has neither fear to show nor submission to yield to the authority of man. It resembles

the wild cat of the steppes in the ease with which it can be accustomed to a home life. I found it exceedingly troublesome on account of the pertinacious curiosity with which it peeped into all my cases and boxes, upset my pots, broke my bottles, with no apparent object but to investigate the contents. To accomplish its aim it made incessant use of its long, taper, snuffling snout as a lever. But the most vexatious art of which the animal was master was the skill it had in scenting out the spots where my hens were accustomed to lay their eggs, and of which it learnt the flavour before I had an opportunity of removing them to a place of safety. It is moreover a tricky little animal ; by whisking and wagging its tail it assumes the appearance of fawning and wheedling, but as soon as anyone touches it, he gets a good bite on his finger. When hunted out and followed by dogs, it throws itself down on its back, kicks its legs about, and grins and gnashes with its teeth. To keep clear of being bitten the best way is to pounce upon it by its tail and to let it hang dangling in the air.

One morning there arrived at the Seriba from the far distant boundaries of the Bongo several wild-looking men, armed with bows and arrows. In order to satisfy myself of the effectiveness of their weapons, I set up a mark at a short distance, consisting of an earthen vessel, in front of which I placed a good thick pad of straw, and over all I threw a stout serge coat. Defying all the coverings, the arrow penetrated the coat, made its way through the straw and knocked a hole in the earthenware, which was nearly half-an-inch thick.

A plant there is here which is not very likely to be forgotten by anyone who has made many excursions into the woods : I mean the *Mucuna urens*. It is a sort of bean, of which the pods are enclosed in a thick rind and the leaves are covered with pungent bristles. These bristles are as brittle as fibres of glass and, broken off by the wind, are dispersed in

all directions over the foliage in the forests. No one who explores the thickets can escape being punished by these tiny prickles. The natives, who are naked, go amongst them with the extremest caution. The stinging sensation they cause lasts about ten minutes, but it may be alleviated by washing.

There is a kind of Christ's Thorn (*Zizyphus Baclei*) which every December yields an abundance of fruit, consisting of dry mealy berries, which have a very bitter taste. The colour of these is not unlike a chestnut; they are quite unfit for eating, but the Bongo prepare a powder from them which they throw upon the surface of their waters, and it has the effect of stupefying the fish.

In the parched steppe I repeatedly found a huge chafer belonging to the family of the Elateridæ, but unfortunately the specimens which I secured, together with my other collection of insect curiosities, were all destroyed by fire; and I have now no other reminiscences of them beyond the notes I took that they were of a bright brown colour and were but little short of two inches and a half in length.

Of the few larger shrubs which blow in the winter, an Echinops, with splendid purple blossoms as large as one's hand, left a deep impression on my recollection. They start out of the grass in situations where the woods are not over-dense, and rise to the height of a man. For the sake of the security of what has been styled a "protective resemblance," the mantis takes up its quarters amidst its boughs. Just as the leaf-frog secretes itself on the young and light green foliage, or the white ptarmigan resorts to the snowy downs of the frozen north, so does the mantis here take up its abode on the tree as purple as itself, and there endeavour to find a world in which it may conceal its singular shape. This part of Africa seemed to produce many species of this remarkable genus. Whenever I saw them I derived fresh confirmation for my belief that they try to adapt their places of resort to the specific colours of their bodies: the result of this is, that

they often startle the plant-collector as if they were ghosts, and their strange shape is indeed somewhat suggestive of a harpy. At first sight the heads of the Echinops, on which they settle, look like malformations of the shrub itself, for the insect uncoils its arms, and like a suppliant lifts them to the sky. Every variety in colour seems to belong to the mantis; I have seen them red, yellow, green, and brown; the most remarkable of all was one of the colour of grass, which I found upon the peak of my hut in the Meshera, and which was of the surprising length of ten inches.

Around Sabby the general security was so complete that, quite at my ease and entirely unarmed, I might have ranged the woods if there had been a certain immunity from being attacked by lions; and against this I was compelled to be on my guard as I penetrated the depths of the wilderness to secure the novelties of vegetation, which could not fail to excite my curiosity. Although my vocation constrained me day after day to explore the recesses of the woods more thoroughly, and to make my way through places hitherto inaccessible, yet I never met with any untoward accident. At home I am quite aware that there are some who entertain the idea that every traveller in Central Africa is engaged in perpetual lion-fights, whilst, on the other hand, there are some who make the insinuating inquiry as to whether lions are ever really seen. In a degree both are right—both are in the avenue of truth. Lions are, in fact, universal, and *may* be met with anywhere; but their numbers are not absolutely large, but only proportioned to the princely rank they hold in the scale of animal creation. Their appearance is always a proof of the proximity of the larger kinds of game. Corresponding to the line in history, which tells that forty generations of Mamelooks tyrannized over the people of Egypt, might be registered the line in the records of the animal kingdom, which might run that forty lions found subsistence in the land.

It is not to be presumed that every hunting excursion in Africa is associated with adventure. Such is far from the fact, and it would be utterly wearisome for me to recount every frivolous incident of my ordinary hunt in quest of game for the table. Even in Africa a chase may be as insipid as coursing a hare in the environs of Paris. Shooting and hitting are two different things, as are also hitting and killing on the spot. So great is found to be the nervous resistance of the larger and stronger kinds of game in Africa that the sportsman must be prepared to lose at least 70 per cent. of all that he is able to wound; this will arise not merely from his being destitute of dogs to follow the scent, but from his continually finding himself baffled in pursuit by the world of grass and of marshes, through which he is obliged to make his way. When on the march, another obstacle to securing what is shot often arises from the fear of being left behind by the caravan, and the possibility of losing one's way necessitates a despatch which is unfavourable to success.

One afternoon the chase after a considerable troop of hartebeests led me deep into the wood. The cunning animals watched my movements very anxiously; by stopping repeatedly they enticed me continually further on into the gloom, and still eluded the chance of giving me a shot. Already had I penetrated so far into the forest that the rays of the sun were totally lost, and everything was wrapped in the obscurity of twilight; I was about to make my way over a depression in the ground, to get nearer to an elevation from which the antelopes were calmly surveying me, when I suddenly stumbled over some huge shapeless object, which seemed to me to be moving. Owing to the obscurity of the place I could not distinguish anything, but I found there was an ant-hill close by, of which I endeavoured to make some use; under the protection of this I made an attempt to get a few steps nearer to the enigmatical creature that lay before me; from behind the mound I cautiously made



an investigation, and just at that instant the animal made a lurch, and revealed to me the snout of a huge wild boar, which seemed to cover the whole face like a mask, while a great pair of tusks projected from the bushy bristles of the enormous jaws; the stolid gaze of the brute made it clear that it was not conscious of my being near, but it seemed ready to take a spring upon the first intruder that should disturb it; I approached within the shortest possible distance, and then took aim, and lodged my bullet in the body of the beast. The spectacle that ensued was very singular. The unwieldy creature, contracte'd like an impaled fly, turned over on to its side, and then, with another contortion, on to its back, where it writhed about and jerked its legs in every direction. Whilst I was patiently abiding my time till the beast should expire, I was taken by surprise as I observed that the hartebeests were within pistol-shot of where I stood, as if they had been spell-bound by the incident which had interposed to rescue them from their pursuer. I was ready anew to take my aim at them. I had, however, only a single-barrelled gun, and no one in attendance to hand me a second. I was just on the point of loading, when, by one of those unlucky chances that will occur, I discovered that in my precipitation I had used all my bullets, and should only waste my labour in following up the pursuit. The wild boar, however, was mine, and I had it brought to my quarters the same evening. I went to bed without partaking of a supper from it, for whenever there is anything to do with the detestable flesh of a wart-hog, I am a regular Mohammedan. Accordingly, I had the greatest satisfaction in handing it over to the hungry negroes.

An incident still more peculiar had occurred to me on a previous occasion when I had gone out to hunt, attended by one of my Nubians, who rode a donkey, of which the supposed office was to carry home whatever might be the produce of my sport. I left my servant and the donkey carefully out

of sight in a spot where two rifts in the soil represented what, during the rains, was the course of two connected brooks. Proceeding to the tall grass, I was not long in sighting a small bush-antelope. I took a shot, and could entertain no doubt but that the animal was struck. I saw it scamper across the grass, and was every moment expecting to see it fall, when I heard a sudden bleat of anguish, and it was gone. Forcing my way through the rank grass, I made the closest scrutiny all around the place where, but a few minutes since, I had seen the wounded antelope, but my search was all in vain. I was encumbered in my movements by having to carry a couple of guns; but, knowing that the area of the ground was bounded by the two rifts that enclosed it, I felt certain that my search would not be without success. At length I discovered the antelope almost at my feet, but it was fixed immovably; it was fastened to the ground by what seemed to me at first the filthy skirt of one of the negroes. Looking more closely, however, I soon saw that the creature had been seized by an immense serpent, that had wound itself three times round its body, leaving its head projecting and drawn down so as well nigh to touch the tail. I retreated far enough to take an effectual aim, and fired. The huge python immediately reared itself bolt upright, and made a dash in my direction, but it was able only to erect its head; the hinder parts lay trailing on the ground, because the vertebral connection was destroyed. Seeing the state of things, I loaded and fired repeatedly, taking my aim almost at random, for the evolutions of a snake are as difficult to follow as the flight of the goat-sucker. I had on other occasions proved that a snake may be killed by one ordinary load of shot, if this at once breaks the vertebral column. I now completed my capture; the return to my quarters was made in triumph; the double booty formed a double burden, the snake on one side of the donkey and the antelope on the other, balancing each other admirably.

## CHAPTER IX.

Tour through the Mittoo country. Early morning in the wilderness. Soldier carried away by a lion. Dokkuttoo. Fishing in the Roah. Feeding a slave caravan. Ngahma. Dimindoh, the hunter's Seriba. Wounds from the grass. Dangadduloo. Entertainment in the Seribas. The river Rohl. Reception at Awoory. Footsore. Trial of patience. People of the district. Poncet's Seriba Mvolo. Mercantile prospects for the Egyptian Government. Fantastic character of landscape. Structure of pile-work. Rock-rabbits. Rock-rabbits' feet. Nile cataract in miniature. The *Tinnea aethiopica*. Seriba Karo on the Wohko. Reggo and its breed of dogs. Kurragera. Aboo Sammat's festivities. A speech of the Kenoosian. Aboo Sammat and the subjugated chiefs. Deragoh and its mountains. Kuddoo on the Roah. Fear of lions in the forest of Geegyee. Return to Sabby. The Mittoo people. Inferiority of race. Disfiguration of the lips by Mittoo women. Fetters of fashion. Love of music.

I SPENT December and January in a tour of considerable extent through the adjacent Mittoo country, being desirous of visiting some Seribas recently established by Aboo Sammat, and by means of which he had extended his frontiers far onwards towards the east. I obtained ten bearers for the transport of my baggage, and a Nubian captain of Aboo Sammat's company was expressly appointed to act as guide and to provide for my accommodation all along the route. I was accompanied likewise by three of my own Khartoom servants.

A short journey to the north-east brought us to Boiko, where, enclosed by a dense forest, was situated Aboo Sammat's harem. A lady here, the first wife, a daughter of the Niam-niam chief Wando, although she did not permit herself to be seen, was near at hand to do the honours: she was so

far civilized that she entertained me with coffee and several Khartoom dishes.

Proceeding eastwards we reached the little river Tudyee, which, flowing past Sabby at a distance of about two leagues to the east, ultimately joins the Roah (the Nam Dyow of the Dinka); at this time of year it is about twenty feet deep, and murmurs along a channel from twenty to thirty feet wide; now and then it forms deep basins, which never fail to be full of fish. We made our first night-camp near a fine tamarind, which will probably for years to come be a landmark as conspicuous as it was at the time of my visit; it was the usual halting-place of all caravans from east to west, and the traces of previous encampments, dilapidated straw-hats, vestiges of fires and fragments of bones bore ample testimony to the fact.

At this season a slight dew was perceptible towards five o'clock in the morning. The nights were calm and, in comparison with the day, were considerably cooler than in summer, when in the interior of the huts there is hardly any difference in temperature to be distinguished. Throughout the day, however, a strong north wind blew incessantly, which towards the afternoon increased almost to a hurricane. There is a peculiar charm in these early morning hours, and no one can wake from his repose in a night-camp in the wilderness without a sense of calm enjoyment of the delights of nature. As soon as the horizon reddens with the dawn the solitude is enlivened by a chorus of ring-doves, here the most frequent of their kind, and by the cackling of guinea-fowl. The traveller is aroused daily by their serenades, and, without much strain upon his imagination, he could almost persuade himself that he has been long resident in the same spot, so familiar does the cooing of the doves become.

As we were preparing to continue our march, some people came to meet us with some dismal intelligence from the

neighbouring village of Geegyee. They said that on the previous night a Nubian soldier, who had laid himself down at the door of his hut, about five paces from the thorn hedge, had been seized by a lion, and, before he could raise an alarm had been dragged off no one knew whither. I now learnt, that this district had for some years been infested with lions, and that lately the casualties had been so frequent that the greater part of the inhabitants of Geegyee had migrated in consequence. The entire village would have been transplanted long ago, but the lions had been always found to follow every change of position. At seven o'clock in the morning we reached the ill-omened spot, the poorest of neglected villages, surrounded by woods. A thorn hedge formed its enclosure but nowhere could we discover an entrance. Although the sun was now high, the inhabitants, terrified lest the lions should be near, were still sitting either on the tops of their roofs or on the piles that supported their granaries. Speechless and depressed with fear, my people proceeded on their journey: every one kept his gun in hand, and the bearers, listening anxiously at every rustle that broke the stillness, peered carefully after any traces of the dreaded foe.

After a good day's march we arrived at Aboo Sammat's Seriba Dokkuttoo, lying on the extreme east of the frontier of the Bongo; it was about twenty miles from the chief Seriba Sabby, being somewhat further to the south. Half a league before we reached Dokkuttoo we had crossed a considerable, though only periodical stream, called the Mokloio. It was now five feet deep, meandering over a low flat fifty feet wide to join the Roah.

The Roah is a river of about the same size as the Tondy, with which it finally unites itself; it here makes a remarkable bend from south-east to north-east, but its general direction for some distance in this district is due north; the stream flowed between banks twenty or thirty feet in



height; its average width was full forty feet, whilst it was only three feet deep; the velocity of the current was one hundred and twenty feet a minute. The grass flat covered by the Roah at the time of its inundation is not so wide as that covered by the Tondy at Koolongo; it measured barely half a league across, and I therefore conclude that this river carries northward a volume of water smaller than the Tondy.

The Bongo were most assiduous in securing the large supplies of fish offered by the Roah. Across the stream in many places was thrown a kind of weir like a *chevaux de frise*; this they stopped up with bunches of grass and so formed a small dam; over the open places were set creels, and altogether a rich produce rarely failed to be obtained. Some miles up the river, where the banks are shut in by impenetrable reeds, is a favourite resort of hippopotamuses, and it was said that, two years previously, the natives had killed no less than thirty in a single day. The brutes had been driven by the low condition of the water to seek the deeper basins of the river-bed, whence all escape was impossible.

We remained in Dokkuttoo for two days, of which I made the most by excursions in the neighbourhood. A small slave caravan, containing one hundred and fifty girls and children, happened to be passing through the Seriba; it was conducted by traders coming from Ghattas's and Agahd's territory in the east. The whole party huddled together for the night in a couple of huts, several old female slaves being entrusted with the supervision of the children. I was a witness of the arrangements for the evening meal, and, contrary to my expectation, found that everything was conducted with much system and regularity. The old Bongo people of the neighbouring villages had brought fifty bowls of dokhn-groats, and as many more containing sauces prepared from sesame-oil, Hyptis-pap, and dried and

powdered meat or fish, and other comestibles of gourds and wild Melochia.

My own entertainment was well provided for, and the agent had an extra bullock slaughtered in order that my little company should not proceed without the supply of meat necessary for the journey. Every mouthful of food that I swallowed in this unhappy country was a reproach to the conscience, but the voice of hunger drowned every higher emotion; even the bread that we ate had been forced from the very poorest in the season of their harvest when their joy, such as it was, was at its height; they probably had neither cow nor goat, and their little children were in peril of dying of starvation and only dragged out a miserable existence by scraping up roots. The meat, in the abundance of which we were revelling, had been stolen from poor savages, who pay almost a divine homage to their beasts, and who answer with their blood for the stubbornness with which they defend their cows, which they hold dearer than wife or child.

Leaving Dokkuttoo, we proceeded for three leagues to the south, passing through the light bushwood that skirted the left bank of the Roah. The woods lay close down to the river as it flowed between its rocky banks. We crossed the stream near some huts, already inhabited by Mittoo, of which the name of the local chief was Degbe. Further south our path again and again crossed wide meadow-flats containing water-basins almost as large as lakes, which, as they had no perceptible current, had every appearance of being ancient beds of the Roah. Several larger kinds of antelopes, water-bucks, and hartebeests appeared, and a herd of thirty leucotis challenged me to a chase. At night, at our bivouac in the forest, we enjoyed in consequence a fine feast of the savoury game. Between the Roah and the Rohl the previous uniformity of the rocks began to be broken by projections of gneiss and by scattered hills. About ten

leagues from Ngahma we passed a remarkable spot of this kind, where huge blocks of stone rose in mounds from which colossal obelisks might be hewn. These elevated places alternated with extensive flats level as a table top.

Ngahma was Aboo Sammat's most important settlement amongst the Mittoo. It lies in a S.S.E. direction from Dokkuttoo and derives its name from the elder of the people, who, with his twenty wives, resides at no great distance; by the natives it is called Mittoo-mor. From Ngahma I turned north-east towards Dimindoh, a small settlement of elephant-hunters belonging to Ghattas's "Gebel company," as the people style his establishments on the Bahr-el-Gebel. The district was the highest elevation between the Roah and the Rohl, the country being more diversified by defiles, clefts, and periodic streams than that which I had previously traversed. Dimindoh lay on the further bank of a little river called the Wohko, which, during our march, we had repeatedly to cross. The stream flows over a course of some seventy miles without any perceptible increase in its dimensions, a peculiarity that I have again and again observed in many other small rivers, which seem to flow across wide tracts of country unchanged in their condition by the affluence of any spring or running brook.

An excellent reception awaited me in Dimindoh. The hunting-village had been lately built of straw and bamboo at a large outlay, and there were regular straw palaces, of which the new domes and roofs gleamed with all the golden glory of Ceres. To say the very least, our rest was quite undisturbed by rats, and the idyllic abodes still retained the pleasant aroma of the meadows. I had no cause to complain of the entertainment in any of the smaller Scribas. I was always supplied with milk and with all kinds of meal. The traditional spirit-distillery of Ghattas's people was here also in full swing, and they brought to me, in gourd-shells, a concoction which was not so utterly bad as that at Gurfala.

I was, however, much bewildered by the constant solicitations for my medical advice. Amongst other cases they brought me a Nubian, who, on his excursions, had received such cuts from the grass that his feet had completely rotted away, leaving the tendons still hanging. These people have no rational way of treating their wounds, but when there is any inflammation they endeavour to allay it by corn-poultices and hot water, a proceeding which always aggravates the evil. I saw some who had lost several toes, and others who had the most revolting sores on the shins and insteps, and in nearly every case these had arisen from insignificant cuts which, simply from mismanagement, had terminated in disease.

“It is a strange thing,” I said to them, “that the grass is only bad *here*; it must be something more than that; it is a punishment from God.”

“But God,” they answered, “does not give us such grass in Dongola; this is a bad country.”

“Do you mean to say then,” I replied, “that God is kind in Dongola, and unkind here? No; I tell you, God is Himself punishing you for all your thievery, because there is here no other ruler to look after your misdeeds.”

I felt that I was quite justified in talking in this fashion to a people who, under the cloak of religion, are as unscrupulous rascals as any in the world, and who, misinterpreting the mottoes on their banners which incite them to war against the infidel, consider all plunder perpetrated on defenceless savages as heroic actions bearing them onwards to the palms of Paradise.

The chief Seriba of this eastern section of Ghattas's establishments lies only a league and a half to the north-east of Dimindoh, and was called Dangadduloo, after a certain Danga, who had been appointed the head of the Mittoo of the district. In 1863 the brothers Poncet of Khartoom had ceded to Ghattas their settlements amongst the Agar, on the

Rohl, in order to found fresh establishments in the following year near the cataracts of that river, among the Lehssy. The Agar, as I have already mentioned, had managed to obtain possession of a considerable quantity of firearms and ammunition, and had made themselves so formidable that the Khartoomers had not ventured to rebuild the Seriba that had been destroyed: for that reason, the settlements of Ghattas had receded southwards to the region in which I now found myself. Our road lay often across wide gneiss flats, which not unfrequently exhibited the same uniformity for several hundred yards together. From the surface the stone broke off in smooth laminae, often as thin as the cover of a book, and afforded me a convenient material for pressing my packets of plants. We had crossed the Wohko for the second time at Dimindoh, where its bed was about fifteen feet deep: its course is generally due north, but here it bends at a right angle to the east, as if seeking the shortest route to join the Rohl. The little river abounds in shells, especially in Anodontæ, which are turned to many domestic uses by the natives, while the massive *Etheria Cailliaudii*, not unlike the oyster, forms continuous banks in all these minor streams.

In Dangadduloo I found two applicants both eager to obtain the appointment as superintendent of the Seriba. One of these had accompanied the last caravan of supplies from Khartoom, and now was not acknowledged in the Seriba by the soldiers, who reproached him for having acted fraudulently. He was a Copt, and, as far as I know, the first and last Khartoom Christian who ever ventured amongst this set of fanatics. The other agent, named Selim, was a negro over six feet high, and by birth a Dinka; he had the majority of the inhabitants of the Seriba on his side, and lived in continual contention with his rival about the surrender of the stores brought from Khartoom. Both of these men received me with a great show of friendship, and each strove to outdo the other in politeness; they con-



sidered that a great deal might depend upon the answer that I should give their master on my return to Khartoom, when he would probably ask my opinion of their respective merits. Each maligned the other, and almost in the same terms; they were both, moreover, throughout the two days which I spent with them more or less in a state of intoxication.

Wherever I entered a Seriba there was almost invariably brought to my hut, according to the Soudan fashion of receiving strangers, a cooling draught, consisting of a kind of *cold cup* called Abrey. It was made in the simplest manner from highly-leavened bread, dried and crumbled into water; its flavour is agreeable, and travellers can hardly say too much in its favour: it is a preparation, however, that can only be made of sorghum bread. In addition to this the people are accustomed, according to patriarchal usage, to bring water to wash the stranger's feet. When these preliminaries had been gone through, I had then to take my seat upon the "angareb" or couch, which was generally covered with an elegant Persian carpet, and to await the visits that would be made me.

A succession of unknown personages ordinarily came, who made a reverent salaam and then silently and with mysterious air placed before me flasks, calabashes, and gourd-shells containing butter, milk, honey, spirits, merissa—in short, every delicacy that the country could offer. My people revelled in this abundance, and ever rejoiced at the happy thought which had impelled me to this tour, and that I had brought them from a land threatened with famine into this region of corn and cattle. The fact of a large number of the herds having been stolen, and that the territory was adjacent to the territory that had been plundered, gave rise to the risk of a nocturnal attack by way of reprisal: on this account numerous watches were set every night and the environs were patrolled, but no

sooner had the sun gone down than the entire community abandoned themselves to a general intoxication, so that I should never have been astonished if the Dinka had ventured on a surprise, which would have had every likelihood of being crowned with success.

The Mittoo of this district are called Gheree. Southwards and far to the east of the Rohl the general name of Moro is applied to the country, and as tribes of distinct people have settled there, it may no doubt be considered as a true geographical designation of the land itself; it is, however, the only example which came under my notice throughout the entire region of the appellation of the people and the land not being identical.

Favoured by the partial destruction of the high grass by fire, the natives were diligently setting about their great hunt. Battues, with nets, pits, and snares, were set on foot in every direction; the strong bows with curved handles, by means of which a lasso can by skill be thrown round a buffalo's legs, being in general use. In the villages I observed many trophies of the chase in the shape of some splendid horns of buffaloes and eland-antelopes.

As I went on due east towards the Rohl, I was obliged to be carried, on account of having a sore foot. This I found a matter of some difficulty, on account of the want of any suitable litter, and because the paths are all so narrow that there is no space for two persons to move abreast, while the difficulty was still further increased by the negroes refusing to carry the heavy angarebs in any way except upon their heads. Wherever Islamism has its sway in Africa, it appears never to be the fashion for any one to allow himself to be carried: this arises from a religious scruple which might with advantage be applied by Europeans to nations under their protection. A strict Mohammedan reckons it an actual sin to employ a man as a vehicle, and such a sentiment is very remarkable in a people who set no

limits to their spirit of oppression. It is a known fact that a Mohammedan, though he cannot refuse to recognise a negro, denying the faith, as being *a man*, has not the faintest idea of his being entitled to any rights of humanity.

The country on the left bank of the Wohko appeared well cultivated, and we frequently passed through fields from which crops of *Penicillaria* had been gathered. Three leagues from Dangadduloo there was some low meadow land, and, for the first time since leaving the Dyoor, I saw an extensive range of *Borassus* palms, their lofty stems, 80 feet in height, crowned with waving plumes of fan-shaped leaves. Beneath their shade nestled the huts of the Mittoo chief Bai, with whom we took our noonday rest. In the afternoon we retraced our steps for a couple of leagues, in order to put up for the night in the village of another chief, named Gahdy. Towards the north-east some important heights now showed themselves on the horizon beyond the Rohl, and after awhile I was able to settle certain angles so as to determine their relative bearings. By this means, for the first time, I ascertained that my route must be near the points which had been reached by former travellers, and I could with certainty identify Girkeny, relatively about 200 feet high, with the locality marked on Petherick's map.

It afforded me much amusement to watch the natives at their ordinary occupations in their pent-up dwellings, and my portfolio was enriched by the drawings of many of the household utensils, as well as of the personal ornaments which the Mittoo women possess in great abundance. These women are the most frightful that ever yet I had seen, and the horrible manner in which they mutilate their lips contributes a great deal to increase their repulsiveness. Elsewhere this practice is generally confined to the women, but here the men were similarly disfigured, and in Gahdy's village I was visited by a man from whose upper lip there

hung a pendant of polished quartz more than two inches long.

Just behind the village we came once more upon the Wohko, which had here more perfectly assumed the aspect of a river, being forty feet in width. It had now entered upon the wide low-lying steppe which extends to the western shores of the Rohl. We were nearly two hours in crossing this tract, which was densely covered with grass so high that, although in my litter I was six feet above the ground, I had to raise myself to catch sight of the adjacent mountains.

It is worthy of notice how all the rivers that I visited in this region, such as the Dyoor, the Paongo, the Tondy, the Roah, and the Rohl, of which the course was almost directly from south to north, in spite of the slight diminution of the velocity of the earth's rotation in these low latitudes of  $6^{\circ}$  or  $8^{\circ}$ , follow that law, exemplified in all rivers flowing northwards, and which is dependent on the rate of rotation of the earth. The course of all alike was nearly coincident with the eastern edge of the uniform steppes that covered the districts subject to their inundations. Along the western shore of the Dyoor and Paongo the steppes in many places could not be crossed in much less than an hour, whilst those on the east could be traversed in little more than ten minutes. In the same way it takes forty minutes to cross the western flats on the Tondy near Koolongo, but those on the opposite bank are easily passed in a sixth of the time. Here, too, upon the Rohl there are no flats at all upon the right-hand shore, but the river for some distance washes past a steepish bank on which lies Ghattas's Seriba Awoory. This bank is formed by the slope of the Girkeny, only about two leagues away.

The Rohl contains a much larger volume of water than the Tondy, and near Awoory its bed divides into several branches, which in the winter are separated by sandbanks

of considerable height. In the higher parts some stagnant pools remain, which, as they evaporate, fill the lowland with swampy humour. On the 17th of December I found the width of the river to be seventy feet; its depth was only about two feet and a half, but it was overhung by sandy banks twenty feet high, which were covered with reeds; its current moved at the moderate rate of about a hundred feet a minute. The river must offer an imposing sight in the height of the rainy season, when the plains are entirely under water; it must, then, apparently rival the Doory, although it does not contain more than a third of the quantity of water. Marked on existing maps under the name of Rohl, it is called by the Dinka the Nam-Rohl, *i. e.*, the river of the "Rohl," which is a tribe of the Dinka people. The Mittoo, the Madi, and other tribes along its course give it the name of Yahlo, whilst among the Bongo it is known as the Dyollebe. This is a fresh instance of what may be found throughout Africa, where the names of rivers, towns, and chiefs continually recur, and where Ronga and Mundo are almost as common as Columbus, Franklin, and Jackson in North America. The term Kaddo or Kodda, which appears on some maps, seems superfluous, since in both the Mittoo and Behl dialects the word means only "a river," or generally "water."

At Awoory a reception grander than usual was prepared for me. From my elevated position I could distinguish that the ant-hills were covered with black heads and that hundreds of inquisitive natives had collected to gratify their curiosity about me. As I entered the Seriba, fifty men were drawn up before the gate, under orders to honour me by firing a salute. Something of a feeling of misgiving quivered through me, and it was a relief to recollect that I was up in the air, and so comparatively safe from the shots that were to be fired on the ground.

The natives around Awoory are called Sohfy, and are the



same as the Rohl, who dwell further east. Their language in some respects resembles those of the Mittoo and the Bongo, although there are points in which it differs materially from both. In appearance and habits, the Sohfy bear a close affinity to the Mittoo. The three mountains to the north of Awoory are also inhabited by the Sohfy; Girkeny, the loftiest of these, is about three leagues distant, and consists of a bright mass of gneiss, which descends abruptly towards the south in precipices 200 feet apart. Petherick's route in 1863, between Aweel and Yirri, lay across this mountain. Nearer the Seriba is a little hill, with its villages of Nyeddy, Yei, and Madoory, all of which are tributary to Ghattas.

About a day's journey to the north-east there rises a lofty table-land, upon which the name of Khartoom has been conferred by the natives, in order to denote its importance and impregnability as a stronghold. Its inhabitants are respected by the people of the Seriba for their bravery in war, and are particularly renowned for their skill in archery: although they have been repeatedly attacked, the aggressors, ever unsuccessful, have been obliged to retreat with a large number of killed and wounded. A few weeks previously the population of this Mount Khartoom had attempted to surprise the Seriba, which most probably would not have escaped entire destruction, if the garrison of the neighbouring Seriba of the Poncets had not opportunely come to its relief.

The Nubians apply the general term of Dyoor to all the tribes on the Rohl to the south of the Dinka territory, although the tribes themselves, having nothing in common either in language, origin, or customs with the Dyoor of the west (a Shillook tribe), repudiate the definition. The designation was adopted from the Dinka, who thus distinguish all tribes that do not devote themselves to cattle-breeding. Petherick was in error when he imagined that the Dyoor

country known to him in his earlier travels extended so far as to include the Rohl: he would have escaped his misapprehension if he had only noted down a few of the characteristic idioms of their language.

Whilst I was in Awoory my foot became so much worse that for two days I was almost entirely incapacitated. Externally there was only a slight spot on the sole of the foot, but the entire limb had swollen with inflammation. I had every reason to fear an outbreak of guinea-worm, and therefore resigned myself to the cheerless prospect of being invalided for several weeks. Unable to carry out my intended trip to the attractive mountains of the neighbourhood, I had no alternative but to submit to my disappointment, and, without accomplishing my hopes, I was compelled to bid farewell to Awoory. For six days I had been confined to my litter, and meanwhile all search for plants, all the enticements of the chase, and all investigation of the implements peculiar to the villages had to be given up. Enthroned again on the heads of four sturdy negroes, I proceeded on my way. Through my position, my range of vision was somewhat enlarged, so that I had a little compensation for my helplessness in a more extensive prospect over the pleasant country. Pain, too, was subsiding, and no longer engrossed my care. The bright sky above, the still solitude of the steppes around, the mild air of the tropical winter, and the unwonted ease of my mode of progress, all combined to lull me into gentle reverie. The slight rustle made by the footsteps of the bearers among the yielding stalks was the only sound that broke my silent contemplations, and I could almost imagine that I was in a light boat, being driven by an invisible power across the waves of a sea of grass.

Until we passed the Rohl the road lay in a S.S.E. direction, close along its right-hand bank. Inland, the country appeared to ascend in gently-rising terraces, but the character

of the vegetation continued entirely unaltered, the bush-forest being composed of trees and shrubs of the same kind that I had observed ever since we had set foot upon the red soil. At the place of our transit the stream was undivided; but, although it was 200 feet in breadth, the water was little more than knee-deep. The numbers of fish were quite surprising, and our negroes amused themselves by darting with their arrows at the swarms of little perch, never failing to make good their aim.

On the opposite bank we entered the territory of another small but distinct tribe called the Lehssy, whose dialect differs from both Mittoo and Sohfy. Its narrow limits extend for a few leagues to the east of the river as far as Kirmo, which was one of the places visited by Petherick. Beyond again are the settlements of the Bohfy, in whose territory, a day's journey to the east of Mvolo, Agahd maintains a Seriba, which is situated on the Ayi, a river which, according to Petherick, contains less water than the Rohl and joins the Dyamid before it enters the Bahr-el-Gebel. To the north of the Bohfy dwell the Behl, who, together with the Agar and Sohfy, possess such wealth of cattle as to provoke continual raids on the part of the owners of the Seribas. Behind the Behl again, towards the Bahr-el-Gebel, are the Atwol, a people much feared for their warlike qualities, rendering the approaches to the Meshera of that river so unsafe that caravans are often in considerable danger of attack.

After crossing the Rohl we proceeded a mile or two to the S.E., and arrived at Poncet's Seriba in Mvolo. The character of the scenery had now entirely changed, and large blocks of granite, at one time in solid cubes, at another in pointed obelisks, started from the ground. On the north of the Seriba, and a little above the place where we forded the river in coming from Awoory, these rocky projections caused the stream to fall into rapids, which, on a reduced scale, bore a resemblance to a cataract of the Nile. This chain of

scattered rocks, which runs across the country from west to east, has been mentioned by Petherick ('Travels in Africa,' vol. ii.) as extending to the south of the village of Dugwara.

The agent in Mvolo, who had been for many years in the service of the brothers Poncet, received me most courteously. As I entered within the palisade of the Seriba, a hundred men saluted me after the fashion of the country, and even some shots were fired from a small piece of naval artillery that stood in the gateway. However honoured I might feel by this polite reception, I could be conscious of nothing but vexation at the sight of the blood-red banner with its crescent and extracts from the Koran. I had flattered myself in vain with the hope that here at least the cheerful waving of the tricolour—often but a mockery—would proudly assert the authority and independence of the Frank. My people had repeatedly declared that they would on no account follow under my flag, and I had no means open to me of convincing them of their error. The unfurling of the Mohammedan banner over the possessions of a Frenchman is a practical demonstration of the limited measure of authority which is really exercised by the Khartoom merchants over their dependents in the interior. There is not a single Christian in the settlement, so that the condition of things is not worse than might reasonably be anticipated. Such, at any rate, is my opinion, and I do not doubt but that any fellow-countryman of Poncet's would either hold his peace or pass a judgment even sterner than mine.

In all these countries the slave-traffic is a fact tacitly acknowledged quite as much as the transactions of the minor speculators on our own exchanges, and the brothers Poncet had much odium to endure from being held responsible for the delinquencies of their subordinates in this respect. These accusations, combined with the difficulty of maintaining a proper control over the conduct of their people, made them hesitate to increase the number of their settlements; their

insignificant profits, moreover, did not allow them to stand against the competition of the neighbouring companies, who shrunk from no means, however unlawful, for enriching themselves. At length the brothers Poncet had become weary of the illegitimate proceedings that went on covertly in defiance of their authority, so that a year previously they had disposed of their establishments to the Egyptian Government, stipulating for a period of three years for a payment of a percentage on the entire produce of ivory at the current rate of interest. Such were the circumstances under which the last European firm withdrew from the ivory trade, which had really been originated and established in the countries of the Upper Nile by Europeans alone. The Egyptian Government had looked forward to the monopoly of the ivory traffic as so likely to be lucrative that they paid a large sum for its purchase.

Mvolo was practically the nearest point to the region which was most productive of ivory, and there was a direct route from the Rohl to the Monbuttoo which avoided the hostile territory of the Niam-niam. Latterly, the Poncets had sent out two expeditions in the year instead of one, and had thus doubled their previous annual profits through having resources which were not available to any other establishment. But, in spite of everything, the authorities at Khartoom must have advised the Government very badly, for almost immediately after the discharge of the grant allowed to the Poncets the settlement passed into other hands, and Ghattas junior obtained for himself and for his heirs the whole of the productive territory.

Many may think that a resolution of the Government to monopolise the ivory trade in this district would augur well for the future, and that the results would inevitably tend towards a reform of the existing club-law, but it is really very doubtful whether such a change would benefit the poor oppressed natives. It is true that by a larger outlay of



capital than the Khartoom merchants can afford the profits might be considerably increased, and many sources of produce yet undiscovered might be brought to light; but, as I have said before, there can never be ensured a proper representative effectually to secure the interests of the Viceroy. All these enterprises are more or less involved in the slave trade, and a military occupation could not be thought of, because only Nubians can endure the climate, and Nubians would never submit to a regular discipline. Of the ineradicable propensity to slave-dealing which has always shown itself in every Government official, be he Turk or Egyptian, I will say nothing; but I may venture to observe that neither a regular system of taxation nor the suppression of the slave trade in the Upper Nile countries is possible until Egypt shall have made good its footing in Darfoor, that great nucleus of the Central African slave traffic, which has hitherto been a place of refuge for all the criminals in the Egyptian Soudan, and which affords a continual loophole of retreat for every outlaw of Khartoom. The threat so often heard in the quarrels of the people, "I will murder you, and escape to Darfoor," is a striking illustration of the estimate in which the district is held.

The inhabitants of Mvolo call themselves Lehssy, and in many particulars of their habits they resemble the Mittoo and Bongo. In the huts I frequently observed some singular wooden figures, the Penates of the establishment, which had been erected to the memory of a departed wife. Petherick describes the graves near Kirmo as adorned with forked boughs, and bits of wood carved into the shape of horns, exactly as I noticed them on the graves of the Bongo.

The district produces plenty of corn, and with its ample opportunities for hunting and fishing supports a tolerably large population, which has every appearance of being well fed. The Lehssy generally are of a medium height, but I came across individuals of a strength of build such as I saw

nowhere else except among the Niam-niam. I was also struck by the frequent occurrence of feet and hands disproportionately large. Dongolo, the native overseer of Mvolo, was, on account of his stoutness, called "bermeel," a barrel; and another of the inhabitants was nicknamed "elephant-foot."

Distinct, in some respects, from what I had already seen was this district of Mvolo. Far as the eye could reach, there extended a wide grassy plain, broken by huge stones of fantastic outline and by thickets or single trees. Graceful fan-palms waved above the groves, and the autumn tints gave a rich colouring to the scenery, every rock, with its covering of creepers, being a picture in itself. In the north could be seen the three mountains near Awoory, like purple peaks in the pale azure of the horizon. In the far distance the country had the deep blue of an Italian sky, mellowed as it came nearer into peculiar tints of grey and golden brown; whilst close to the foreground all was bright with the varied hues of foliage, red, yellow, and olive-green alternating with the freshness of the sprouting shrubs, the Indian red of the ant-hills, and the silvery grey of the jutting rocks.

The Seriba, like its environs, was unique of its kind. The formidable appearance of the confused pile-work would have spoilt the night's rest of any one who had a very sensitive imagination. Something like a picture I remember of the Antiquary's dream, only without the sea, did the complication of huts stand out against the tall blocks of granite from which the fan-palms started like proud columns. The huts themselves, on their platform of clay, were like paper cones on a flat table. In front was the great farmyard, with its hundreds of cattle under the charge of Dinka servants. These neatherds erect for themselves crooked awnings on equally crooked piles, and sit huddled up on a soft bed of ashes round the ever-glowing dungheaps, inhaling with delight their favourite fumes. These pile-works undergo









I.

VIEW IN THE DISTRICT OF MVOLO.





many modifications in design, and have been imitated from the strongholds made by the natives when they were still masters of the land. The principal use of these structures is to afford places of refuge from hostile attack.

Quite in keeping with the fantastic scenery and eccentric architecture is the peculiarity of the rock-rabbits that dwell among the crevices of the gneiss. Immediately after sunset, or before sunrise, they can be seen everywhere, squatting like marmots at the entrance to their holes, into which, at the approach of danger, they dart with wonderful snorts and grunts. The noise they make has caused the Nubians to bestow upon them the general name of "kako." There is, however, a great variety of species, hardly distinguishable from each other, scattered throughout the Nile countries, every district seeming to present its own special representative of the race. Not only are they found in the mountains of Abyssinia and of Upper Sennaar, but they inhabit those isolated mounds and hills which give its peculiar character to the landscape in Southern Kordofan and the province of Taka. Again, they appear in the mountains of the Bayooda steppes, and play a prominent part in Southern Africa; whilst other species are found in Arabia, in the Sinai peninsula, and in the Syrian mountains. Those that I saw in Mvolo nearly correspond with the Abyssinian species depicted by Bruce. They appear to feed chiefly on the bark of trees, although they occasionally devour young shoots and grass.

Abdoo, the controller of Mvolo, was half a naturalist: as a huntsman he had done service under many Europeans, and had acquired a reputation for being a skilful stuffer of birds. He drew my particular attention to the good sport afforded by the rock-rabbits, as they crept about in tempting proximity to the gate of the Seriba. At the same time, he asked if I could account for the wonderful way in which the animals managed to clamber up and down smooth rocks that were almost perpendicular.

“ I can't tell,” he said, “ how it is, but when you have shot one of the creatures, and catch hold of it, it sticks to the rock with its feet, in its death struggles, as though it had grown there.”

The under part of the foot is dark and elastic as india-rubber, and has several deeply-indented cushions.\* This arrangement, which no other mammalia or warm-blooded animals seem to possess, enables the creature, by opening and closing the centre cleft, to throw off part of its weight and to gain a firm hold upon the smooth surface of the stone. The toes are nothing but pads of horny skin, without regular nails, the hind foot alone being furnished, on the inner toe, with one claw, which is sharply compressed. For some time I could not at all comprehend how, with such a plump foot, the rock-rabbit could climb so safely over precipitous walls of granite, or even along the polished branches of the little trees in the ravines ; but the mystery was solved when I tried to pick up an animal which I myself had wounded. The granite was as smooth as pavement, and yet, when I seized the creature by the neck, it clung like birdlime to the ground, and required some force before it could be removed.

Although many other species of rock-rabbits or rock-badgers have been observed by scientific travellers, and although the animals take a conspicuous place in the fauna of Southern Africa, yet I have never come across any mention of this interesting circumstance. My observations may be discredited, but I have endeavoured to render them as accurately as possible, in the hope that future travellers will give further attention to the subject.

The largest specimens that I killed were females with young, and they measured about ten inches in length. They were remarkably like wild rabbits, of a grey tint ; the males being much lighter, and having a sharply-defined white stripe

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\* Bruce (vol. v., description of plate 24) expressly mentions the circumstance of the soft flesh standing up high on both sides of the indentation.

running about two inches along the middle of the back. The females of this species produce two perfectly-developed offspring at one birth. The flesh is like that of a common rabbit, and quite as much requires an artificial dressing to make it palatable.

Other interesting animals find their habitats among the rocks of Mvolo. The pretty little tan-coloured squirrels (*Sciurus leucumbrinus*), with two white stripes on either side, of a kind which is often seen on the steppes of Nubia, are here very abundant. There are also swarms of agamas, nodding their orange-coloured heads; the movements of these creatures are anxiously watched by the rock-rabbits, which first utter a note of alarm, and then retreat as nimbly as marmots to their holes, from which they never venture far away. Not unfrequently have I waited half-an-hour before their heads have appeared again.

The inevitable Guinea-fowl, of course, was to be found running through the grass, also a kind of francolin, the cocks with tails erect, like little bantams. As my good entertainment in the Seriba made me independent of the chase for my sustenance, I only killed a few specimens of this pretty bird. Francolins, which abound in other parts of Africa, are very rare throughout the district of the Gazelle. On the third day after my arrival in Mvolo, I was once more on my feet and able to take an excursion to some rapids about half a league to the north-east. The river divides into three branches, and rushes impetuously over a bed chequered with blocks of granite. Two of the larger islands were covered with dense bush-woods, and a charming hedge of borassus-palm lined the banks. The main stream passes in equal parts through the northern and southern arms. The first of these forms a precipitous fall of fifty feet, and, wildly foaming, dashes into the hollow among the rocks—the entire descent of the river at these rapids being at least a hundred feet. The river makes a bend

round the Seriba, and a quarter of a league to the east, above the falls, it is once more flowing in its ordinary bed, which is a hundred feet wide. The smooth blocks of stone were as clean as marble, and the water between was as clear as crystal; the fan-palms and luxuriant bushes spread a cooling shade over the pools, and everything conspired to form a spot that might be consecrated to the wood-nymphs and to the deities of the streams. It was a place most tempting for a bath—a pleasure from which I had been long debarred. The noxious properties of the waters which I had hitherto visited, as well as the dread of fever, had obliged me to forego all such pastimes; but now I thought I might indulge without fear of evil consequences. Fish are here so abundant, that whoever bathes is liable to find himself molested by their bites.

I rambled about the woods on the slopes of the opposite valley, and made many an interesting discovery. In great luxuriance grew a remarkable cucumber (*Cucumis Tinneanus*), which is covered by curious and long appendages. Throughout the district of Mvolo a shrub, which has already been naturalised in our conservatories under the name of *Tinnea aethiopica*, is particularly plentiful; its wood is used by the Nubians for pipe-stems. Its boughs, like those of the weeping-willow, trail to the ground. I gazed with silent emotion on a plant which seemed to mourn the fate of the brave traveller by whom, with her tender appreciation of the beauties of nature, it had formerly been delineated.

At a short distance to the north was pointed out to me the village of Dugwara, where the natives, as we could hear, were performing on their nogara.

I had now reached a point at which my route, for the first time since I left the Meshera of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, came in contact with localities whose position is pretty well determined. Mvolo itself had never been actually visited by its former owners, but in 1859 Jules Poncet, during the course of his extensive elephant hunts, had crossed the Rohl somewhere below



this spot.\* The route of the British Consul, J. Petherick, in 1863, lay along the opposite bank of the Rohl, and through Dugwara. My own surveys, corresponding as they did with other routes which had preceded my own, offered very satisfactory results; they agreed very accurately in establishing the position which had been assigned to the Meshera on Arrowsmith's map† of Petherick's travels between 1858 and 1863, so that I had occasion hardly at all to shift the geographical position of Dugwara. On all earlier maps the Meshera was invariably marked too far to the west, and the Gazelle was carried half a degree beyond its actual length. The time I occupied, both on my outward and homeward journey, in the navigation of the river, allowed me ample opportunity to verify the correctness of these calculations of my own. I do not know what materials Arrowsmith had at command to authorize him in making the fortunate amendment; Petherick certainly did not agree with the alterations, and, according to his computation, the longitude of this section of his route on the Rohl would have been twenty miles further eastwards than on Arrowsmith's map—a position which, for various reasons, must be improbable.

I had to undergo many little discomforts before leaving this interesting region. The black soldiers and slaves belonging to the Seriba thought that, because I was a white man, I must be the actual brother of the owner, and accordingly they came to me with all kinds of grievances. Contrary to the Controller's orders, a number of Niam-niam soldiers insisted on following me everywhere, and I was obliged to remonstrate with them rather sharply, to make them understand that I could not permit them to join my people, and that my retinue was large enough already. The female slaves betook

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\* 'Le Fleuve Blau : Notes géographiques de Jules Poncet,' is the best publication on the White Nile that I know. It gives reliable details of J Poncet's interesting journey, and specifies many characteristics, founded on some years' experience, of the different people of the district.

† Journal R. G. S., vol. xxxv.

themselves for refuge to my hut, bringing their complaints of the rough usage they received from their angry owners, but which it was only too probable they deserved for their faithlessness. The Nubians, on their part, were loud in demanding judgment from me as to their claims on some or other of these runaway women. I can only say that I was very glad to make my escape, and to find myself afresh upon my journey to the west. I was accompanied by a small herd of cows, calves, and sheep—a present from the Controller, who, moreover, forced an excellent donkey upon my acceptance.

After a stiff march of seven leagues and a-half, through a district with few watering-places, and little interest beyond occasional clumps of the lofty kobbo-tree,\* we were once more in the territory of the Mittoo, and had reached one of Poncet's smaller Seribas, called Legby. There was a second Seriba, named Nyoli, about three leagues to the south-east, which I did not visit, as its inhabitants were all busied with a grand *battue* for elands. These Seribas in the Mittoo country had only been founded in the previous year—they were on the direct road to the Monbuttoo, and had been intentionally pushed forward towards the territory of the Madi, in order to ensure advantageous quarters for elephant-hunting. The greater part of this region, which previously had been a sort of No-man's-land, had been recently appropriated to himself by a successful *coup* of the enterprising Aboo Sammat. From Legby to Ngahma was another five and one-third leagues. The road descended, in a W.N.W. direction, straight down to the Wohko, which we now crossed for the fourth time. We had also to ford two other of the rivulets that traverse the country, which is a good deal broken by hills and eminences. The ground had been quite cleared by the burning of the steppe, and although there had been no rain, a number of

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\* A new species of *Humboldtia* which unites the characteristics of the *Berlinia* with those of the *Crudya*.

perennial plants were sprouting up and covering the bare surface of the soil with their variegated bloom. Many of the trees, such as the *Combreta* and *Butyrosperma*, of which the flowers appear before the foliage, were in full blossom. Two especially attracted my attention, because they entirely fail in more northern regions—these were the *Xeropetalum*, with its beautiful bright-red flowers, not unlike mallows, and the *Stereospermum*, which bore grotesque bunches of bloom, resembling red thimbles. They were both in their full beauty, and to some extent reminded me of the floral luxuriance of the Abyssinian highlands.

While in Ngahma, I heard that Aboo Sammat, with his entire fighting force, had withdrawn from Sabby, for the purpose of inspecting his numerous Seribas in the south. It was his first year of possession, and he had gone to feel his way, preparatory to the taxation of the country. Meanwhile, all provisions had been exhausted in Sabby, and if I had ventured to return thither, it would have been at the risk of being starved. I therefore myself resolved to pursue my course in a southerly direction, in order to cast in my lot with Aboo Sammat, until the time drew near for our expedition to the Niam-niam country. The first halting-place at which we arrived, after a march of seven leagues, was the little Seriba Karo, in the Madi district. The road passed to the S.S.E. by a small mound of granite, of which the sterile flats were inhabited by rock-rabbits; we then advanced over granite flats until we reached a spot where an extensive table-land lay open to the south. Once again we crossed the Wohko, and proceeded along its right bank. The river here has all the characteristics of a periodical stream, and was now standing in lagoon-like basins. The width of the stony bed, and the deep holes washed in the huge blocks of granite, which are covered to a considerable height with the mossy *Podostemmaea*, are proofs of the abundance and violence of the water in the height of the rainy season. Looking

W.S.W., I was greatly surprised by the unexpected sight of some elevated rocky peaks. Amongst them, and about four leagues distant, was the point called Wohba, near Deraggo, which I afterwards visited. This isolated range extends as far as the Wohko, and there terminates in a ridge 80 to 100 feet in height. Near Karo the stream forms a defile 40 to 50 feet deep, enclosed by regular hills. The banks, which were very steep, were concealed by the impenetrable shade of magnificent trees (*Hexalobus*), reminding me very much of the true chestnut.

The Mittoo display a remarkable talent for music, and construct a great variety of instruments. The most important of these is a lyre with a sounding-board, not unlike the robaba used by the people of Nubia. The soldiers in all the Seribas manifest their African origin by the zeal with which in their leisure they practise the musical art. I noticed one of the Madi with a bamboo flute of quite an European pattern, and at my request he played what was really a very pretty air, which must have cost him considerable time and trouble to learn, so perfect were the separate modulations: when the Nubians heard him they paid him the compliment of saying that he played as well as any Frank musician in Alexandria.

From Karo I went on still southwards for three leagues to Reggo, another small Seriba belonging to Poncet's company, and where the elephant-hunters were quartered. The road thither led chiefly through cultivated fields that had been planted with *Penicillaria*. I also for the first time observed the culture of the sweet potato (*Batatas*), a favourite food of the Niam-niam. This had a singularly sweet taste, and a purplish rind, which occasionally deviated into white; the largest tubers of this in the Madi country never exceed the thickness of a finger.

The Poncets had founded settlements in this part of the country in order to hold their own against the wide incur-

sions which Aboo Sammat was making from his territory in the same direction. The company laid claim to the sole right of ranging the district, a demand which was only consistent with their original interest in the ivory produce. The hunters are called "Sayadeen," because they are armed with huge rifles, which have been gradually introduced into the country from Khartoom. Only a few days previously they had killed two elephants, which represented a whole year's success. In former years the Poncets had commanded the expeditions in person, and then a corps of these hunters would in a single year secure as much ivory as would equal the largest quantity now gathered from the aggregate of the Niam-niam lands. Although the period of which I speak was not more than fourteen years ago, these large collections have become completely things of the past. In the present Seriba district, it is now expected to make a journey of some days before there is any likelihood of catching sight of an elephant at all; the wary beasts, too, appear instinctively to know the regions in which they can be safe. They live to a great age, and I do not doubt but that all the oldest representatives of the elephant community have been at some time or other attacked by man, and that many have been actually under fire. In the Dinka country there are places such as I have already mentioned, in the woods of the Alwady tribe, where elephants may be seen during the rainy season. When I asked the Khartoomers why they did not go and get the ivory themselves, they always replied that such hunting would be a sorry failure, and that while they were shooting the elephants the natives would be shooting *them*.

In Reggo the soldiers were fond of breeding dogs, and the Seriba literally swarmed with the fat pups of the Niam-niam breed. I found, moreover, that the people managed to do a little quiet business for themselves by bartering dogs for slaves to the Mittoo. Dog's flesh, too, they enjoyed as much as the Niam-niam, and the price given for an animal affords



a proof of the relish they have for the dainty; the teeth form a favourite ornament for necklaces and stomachers.

The first of January, 1870, appeared, beginning a new link in the unbroken chain of time. It was the second New Year that I had commenced in Central Africa, and although for me the day passed quietly and with no rejoicing, yet I

was filled with thoughts of gratitude that I had been spared so long. Although one cloud and another might appear to loom in the uncertain future, yet the confidence I felt in my acclimatisation enabled me with good courage to proceed upon my wanderings.

The next place that we reached was Kurragera, the most southern point of Aboo Sammat's newly-acquired territory. The march had occupied about five hours, and on our way we had for the sixth time crossed the Wohko. Previously we had halted in the village of one of the Madi elders, who bore the melodious name of Kaf-fulukkoo; I had also the honour of an introduction to another chief, called Goggo, of whom I was able to



Goggo, a Mittoo-Madi Chief.

secure a portrait. His imposing peruke was not of his own hair, nor indeed was it hair at all, but consisted of an artificial tissue of woven threads, which were soaked with yellow ochre and reeking with grease.

Kurragera's Seriba, like Aboo Sammat's other settlements, had been entirely cleared of its soldiers, and only the local overseer of the Madi remained to look after the corn-stores. Inside the palisade were piled thousands of the bearers' loads each neatly packed into a circular bundle, and protected by the simple and effectual coverings made by the natives from leaves and straw. These packages contained a preliminary portion of the corn-stores. Almost every product of the soil that I have described in Chapter VI. was here to be seen, and in addition were the sweet potatoes cultivated by the Madi.

Aboo Sammat at this time, with his whole available fighting force, was encamped on the Wohko about three leagues to the south. With the help of 250 soldiers, and more than 300 Bongo and Mittoo bearers, he had put the entire country in the south and south-east, from beyond the Rohl nearly as far as the frontiers of the so-called Makkarakkah, under contribution. The tribes in the more immediate neighbourhood were the Madi-Kaya, the Abbakah, and Loobah, which manifestly occupied the same district to which, in 1863, Petherick's agent Awat made an expedition. Many chiefs submitted voluntarily to the taxation; others remained hostile for a period, but afterwards surrendered all their stores to the enemy *à discrétion*. The region was so productive that the number of bearers did not nearly suffice to carry away the goods that had been seized. The enterprise was accomplished without any loss of blood.

I was compelled to stay for some days in Kurragera to await Aboo Sammat's return, and began to get somewhat weary, as amongst the flora I could find little that was suitable for my collection; I had besides used up all the pencils I had brought with me, and was obliged to write with hen's blood. Meanwhile, as in Awoory and Ngahma, I continued my study of the Mittoo language, and took a great deal of pains to unravel the intricacies of the Madi method of

counting, to which I shall have another occasion to refer hereafter.

The butter-trees were now in full bloom. The milky juice that exudes from the stems of these trees reminds one of gutta-percha, which is a secretion of a species of the same order of plants (*Sapotaceæ*). I often saw the children making balls with the lumps of caoutchouc, which served as universal playthings. In 1861, Franz Binder, the Transylvanian, formerly a merchant in Khartoom, brought a hundredweight of this india-rubber to Vienna, but although the material turned out very well in a technical point of view, the cost of its transport was too great for it ever to become an important article in the commerce of these lands.

On the 7th of January, Aboo Sammat, with the greater number of his soldiers and bearers, returned to the Seriba. He wished to display his authority in a way that should make an impression upon me, and therefore set apart an entire day for festivities on a large scale. His people were divided according to their tribes into groups of 500, and each of these had to execute war-dances worthy of their commander. Aboo Sammat himself seemed ubiquitous; in a way that no other Nubian would have done without fancying himself degraded, he arrayed himself like a savage, and at one time with lance and shield, at another with bow and arrow, danced indefatigably at intervals from morning till night at the head of the several groups; he was a veritable Nyare-Goio, *i.e.*, master of the ceremonies; here he was dancing as a Bongo, there as a Mittoo; then he appeared in the coloured skin apron of the Niam-niam, and next in the costume of a Monbuttoo: he was at home everywhere, and had no difficulty in obtaining all the necessary changes of apparel. Several of the Bongo of Sabby exhibited a talent for theatrical representations, and to the great delight of the Nubians they enacted the scene of how Aboo Sammat surprised and thrashed the Mukhtar Sherefee; they improvised

a recitative accompanied by corresponding action, the purport of which was to tell how Mukhtar was hit with a stick, and tumbled into the straw hedge crying like a Deloo-buck, "ba mi oah!" (alas! alas!). Then followed the refrain, "Madrilalla, illalla, illalla." Between the parts there was an incessant firing; the guns were loaded with whole handfuls of powder, so that it was several minutes before the clouds of smoke rolled away from the groups of dancers. The continual noise and dust tired me far more than the longest day's march I had ever undertaken.

On the following day the Kenoosian convoked an assembly of the newly-subjugated chiefs of the Madi, and in a long speech impressed upon them their obligations. I was a witness of the characteristic scene, and as the interpreter freely translated sentence by sentence to the negroes, I did not lose a word of Mohammed's oration. With terrible threats and imprecations he began by depicting in the blackest colours the frightful punishments that awaited them if they should disobey his orders, while at the same time he plumed himself upon his magnanimity.

"Look you!" he said; "I don't want your wives and children, nor do I intend to take your corn, but you must attend to the transport of my provisions; and I insist that there shall be no delay, or else the people in the Seriba will starve. You, Kurragera, must go to your villages, and gather together old and young, men and women: get all the boys who can carry anything, and all the girls who bring water from the brook, and you must order them one and all to be here early to-morrow; every one of them will have to convey the corn to Deraggo; the bales are of all sizes, and each may carry in proportion to his strength. But mark you this: if one of the bearers runs away, or if he throws down his load, I will tear out your eyes; or if a package is stolen, I will have your head." And here Mohammed lifted a huge weapon like the sword of an ancient German knight,

and brandished it rapidly over the head of the Madi chieftain. Then turning to another, he proceeded: "And I have something to say to you, Kaffulukoo; I know that Poncet's people have been here lately, and have carried off two elephants; now how did they contrive to find them? Bribed you were, bribed so that you sent messengers to inform them where the elephants might be found. And you, Goggo, why do you permit such proceedings in your district? Now listen: if Poncet's people come back, you must shoot them; this must not happen again, or you shall pay for it with your life; and if any one of you takes ivory to a strange Seriba, I will have him burnt alive. Now, I think you understand pretty well what you ought to do. But I have something else to say, just to caution you in case you may have any intention of injuring my people. Perhaps, as a Turk may be walking alone, the negroes may creep into the grass, and shoot him with their arrows: what of that? Rats may bury themselves in the ground, and frogs and crabs may hide in their holes, but there is a way, you know, to find them out; snakes may creep about in the straw, but to that we can set fire. Or, perhaps, you will try to burn the steppes over our heads: never mind, I can light a fire too, and you shall pay dearly for your treachery. Do as you did before, and run away to the caves at Deraggo, and I will shoot you there with shitata (cayenne pepper) from my elephant rifle, and you will soon be glad enough, half choked and stupefied, to come out again and beg for mercy. Or, supposing the negroes try and poison the shallow khor, and any Turks drink that water and die—don't be expecting to fly away like birds, or to escape my vengeance!" And much more there was in the same strain.

I had sent my cattle from Ngahma direct to Sabby, and, after laying in a sufficient stock of provisions, I prepared to return as soon as I could to my head-quarters, in order to have time to complete the necessary arrangements for the



campaign in the Niam-niam countries. Before leaving Kurragera, I witnessed another amusing scene in Aboo Sammat's endeavours to make the chiefs understand the number of bearers he required. Like most other people of Africa, the Madi can only count up to ten, everything above that number having to be denominated by gestures. At last some bundles of reeds were tied together in tens, and then the negro, although he could not express the number, comprehended perfectly what was required of him. Kurragera was obliged to furnish 1530 bearers, and being asked whether he understood, made an affirmative gesture, took the immense bundle of reeds under his arm, and walked off gravely to his village. We moved on through the day in company with an enormous train of 2000 bearers of both sexes and of every age. Keeping on continually in a northerly direction, after a march of eight leagues we reached the Seriba Deraggo. The Deraggo mountains were visible several leagues distant to the north, and afforded some desirable stations for verifying my route. By the side of one of the Roah tributaries, called Gooloo, which, however, we did not cross, we halted for a while, and I employed the interval in shooting guinea-fowl, ordinary poultry in this district being somewhat scarce.

For the first time since I had quitted Egypt, I spent the night in Deraggo without my bedding: the servant who had the charge of it had left it behind in Kurragera. On all my tours, I never failed in being extremely careful not to omit anything that without material expense could contribute to my health and comfort. I had learnt enough to know that the more the traveller contrives to spare himself exhaustion from fatigue, the more he will be able ultimately to perform, and the greater will be his security against the baneful influences of the climate. A perfect, or even reliable, acclimatisation is not to be thought of until after some years' experience, and any attempt to hasten it by rash exposure, or by unnecessary hardship, is quite unavailing.

I spent one day in a visit to the neighbouring mountains, which, lying about a league to the east of the Seriba, extended for about three leagues to the north-east. The loftiest and most southerly peak is called Wohba, and is about 500 feet high: it contains some remarkable caves, which I had not time to visit; they were the same referred to by Aboo Sammat when he threatened to drive out the Madi with pepper-dust, a hint which might be taken by any future general who may desire to smoke out the unhappy Bedouins from the caves of Algeria. I contented myself with mounting an eminence about 300 feet high, called Yongah. The western horizon and the mountains of Awoory were unfortunately obscured by a dense smoke from the burning of the steppe; but the little hills between Ngahma and Karo were distinctly visible. I also noticed in the W.S.W. a mountain known as Gere, which I afterwards saw again when returning from the Niam-niam countries, as I was passing along the basin of the Lelissy. The chain of Deraggo is formed of a bright-coloured gneiss. A valley broke in near the spot which I explored, and along the entrance the Madi had dug a row of pits forty feet deep for the purpose of catching elephants. Hither, from a wide circuit, they hunt the animals, which, hastily rushing into the valley, fall headlong into the trenches which have been artfully concealed.

The Seriba Deraggo was situated in the eastern part of a valley gently sloping towards the mountains. From the depth of this depression there issued an important brook, whose bed at this season contained a series of huge pools. We now again turned westwards towards the Roah, in order that I might visit Kuddoo, the last of Aboo Sammat's Seribas, which lies exactly south of Dokkuttoo, and thirty miles higher up the river. We were obliged to make a wide *détour* to avoid the mountains, and, after a stiff march for five leagues in a W.N.W. direction, we at length reached our destination.

The Roah flows close by Kuddoo in a deep basin enclosed with forest, and describes a semicircle about the Seriba. The river was now from thirty to fifty feet wide; in the rainy season it is as much as fifteen feet deep, whilst in the winter its depth rarely exceeds four or five feet. The channel of the river was here entirely overarched with verdure; in some places the lofty trees starting from the dense woods met across the water, and formed bowers of foliage, whilst the fallen stems below made natural bridges. Very feeble were the rays of light that penetrated to the surface of the water, and the long creepers trailed from the overhanging branches. The force of the current caught the pendants, and made the tree-tops bend and the leaves all rustle as though moved by the hands of spirits. Large monkeys found congenial habitation in the branches, the river vegetation offering many of the fruits on which they can subsist. At times the beauty and abundance of the blossoms surpassed anything that I had seen. Pre-eminent in splendour were the brilliant *Combretæ*: the masses of bloom gleamed like torches amid the dark green of the thickets, whilst the golden sheen of the fruit intensified the marked contrast of the tints. Any attempt to give a detailed account of the beauties of Africa is entirely unavailing, and once again I refrain from wearying the reader with any further repetition of my admiration.

Leaving Kuddoo, we marched for eight leagues near the left bank of the Roah, and across the numerous little water-courses that intersect the region, and flow down to the river on the right. At Degbe we re-entered the road along which we had travelled on our outward trip, and, passing through Dokkuttoo, we did not again quit our previous route all the way to Sabby. As we approached Geegyee, the spot notorious for the rapacity of the lion, my people betrayed an anxiety still greater than upon their journey thither, for in Dokkuttoo the intelligence had reached us that some lions had been again seen on the previous day, and that several

travellers who had come across them in their march had only escaped by climbing up into the trees. This was a circumstance that painted itself upon my fancy in such entertaining details, that I could not resist the desire to see it acted out for my own amusement. Accordingly, when we had reached the densest part of the formidable forest, at a spot where the pathways were most crooked and intricate, I bellowed out in the most despairing accents I could command, the cry of "A lion! a lion!" In an instant the bearers had flung down their burdens, and my brave Nubians scampered off to the nearest tree. Nimbly as sailors up the rigging of a foundering ship, did they clamber high into the boughs. I enjoyed my laugh as I made them see what brave fellows they were.

We here saw in all directions the recent traces of numbers of elephants, which must have crossed our path in many places during the previous night. Our last bivouac was made on the banks of the Tudyee, where we feasted on the flesh of two hartebeests, brought down from among a number that had been feeding on the tender foliage of the underwood. On the last day but one of the march, I had more exertion than on any other of the twenty-four through which the excursion had lasted; without once sitting down, I passed the entire day in hunting and walking.

On the 15th of January I once more re-entered the hospitable huts of Sabby, and was welcomed by the servants I had left behind, and almost overpowered by the joyful caresses of my dogs. This tour to the east had altogether extended over 210 miles, and I had thoroughly explored the territory of a people who had hitherto been almost unknown, even by name. I will now take a retrospect of the country I had just left, and give a brief summary of my observations on its political condition.

In default of a national designation for a group of tribes speaking almost the same dialect, and whose distinctive

qualities appear mainly in their slight differences of apparel, I should prefer to follow the example of the Khartoomers, and call these people simply Mittoo; this name, however, only really belongs to the most northerly of the group, who call themselves Mittoo, or Mattoo, and there are four other tribes who consider themselves equally distinct and independent, viz., the Madi,\* the Madi-Kaya, the Abbakah, and the Loobah. Their collective country lies between the rivers Roah and Rohl, and for the most part is situated between lat.  $5^{\circ}$  and  $6^{\circ}$  N. Towards the north it stretches far as the territories of the Dinka tribes of the Rohl and Agar; on the south it is bounded by the eastern extremity of the Niam-niam, where the name of Makkarakkah has already been adopted in our maps. But Makkarakkah and Kakkarakkah is a designation which the Mittoo use for the Niam-niam taken in the gross, and not the name of any single tribe. Out of their own mouth, whenever I referred to the soil upon which I was standing, I had every proof that the Mittoo call their land "Moro," a name which Petheriek on his map has attributed to the entire district between lat.  $4^{\circ} 30'$  and  $6^{\circ}$  N., which extends eastwards from the Rohl to the Ayi.

All the Mittoo tribes are able to converse with each other, as their languages present only such minor differences of dialect as might be supposed would arise from their independent political position; the Niam-niam, on the other hand, with just the same plurality of tribes, preserve a uniformity of language which admits of scarcely any variety. The Mittoo dialects in some of their sounds resemble that of the Bongo, but taken as a whole, like all the distinctive languages of the larger nations of the Gazelle, the Mittoo and the Bongo have very little in common. As far as regards

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\* These Madi, whose name is of frequent occurrence in Africa, have no connexion with the Madi of the upper part of the Bahr-el-Gebel.



customs, dress, and household appliances, it must be admitted that the Mittoo tribes most nearly resemble the Bongo, and it almost might seem as if, in the history of their development, they formed a transition between them and the Niam-niam.

The subjection of the Mittoo to the Khartoomers must not be dated earlier than the year preceding my visit. Although the country in a limited sense had to a certain extent been partitioned amongst the arbitrary and advancing companies of the Upper Nile, and notwithstanding that its inhabitants had been in places reduced to a condition of vassalage similar to that under which the Dyoor and Bongo had been smarting for the last ten years, yet the entire subjugation of the southern tribes, the Loobah and Abbakah in particular, might still be described as incomplete. The Abbakah hitherto have been only occasionally subject to the incursions of slave-catchers and corn-stealers, and therefore they have neither the advantages nor the disadvantages, whatever they may be, of actual vassals.

In the scale of humanity all the Mittoo tribes are decidedly inferior to the Bongo: they are distinguished from them by a darker complexion, and by a bodily frame less adapted to sustain exertion or fatigue. During my visit to the Niam-niam countries, I had many opportunities of seeing large bodies of bearers of both races, side by side, and was then able to institute comparisons between the two. The Bongo vied with each other in their powers of endurance, and would subsist for a length of time upon mere roots without any perceptible change in their appearance, whilst the Mittoo under the same ordeal would waste almost to skeletons, and in a very short time would abandon all attempt at work. Even in their own homes I hardly ever saw them with the strongly-built frames of the sturdy Bongo. Nearly all the Mittoo who were employed as bearers were afflicted with the guinea-worm. An undesirable prerogative is this

that the race have gained, that they should nurture such a thorn in the flesh; for the guinea-worm is far from universal, and makes selections as to what diversities of human nature it shall choose to patronise.

I failed to obtain any satisfactory explanation of this debility of the Mittoo; their land is very productive, they are diligent agriculturists, and they cultivate many a variety of cereals and tuberous plants, as well as of oily and leguminous fruits. On account of its fertility the land requires but little labour in its culture, and throughout its extent displays a productiveness which is only found for any continuance at rare intervals in the other countries that I visited. It is especially noticeeable between lat.  $5^{\circ}$  and  $5^{\circ} 30'$  N., in the districts on the upper Roah and Wohko, which are liberal stores for the sterile Nubian settlements on either hand. The district of the Mbomo, which is adjacent to that of the Nganye of the Niam-niam, between the rivers Lehssy and Roah, is also pre-eminent among its neighbours for its extensive growth of maize.



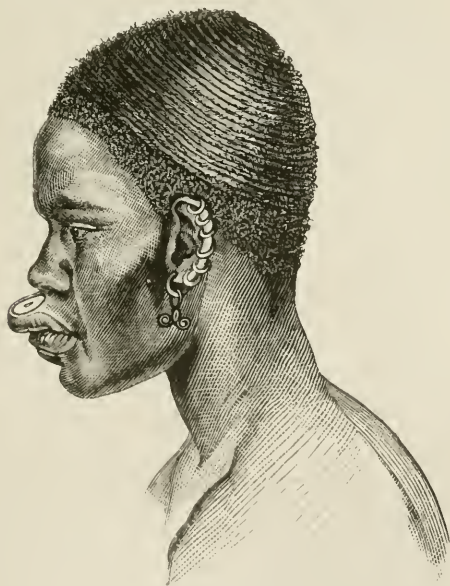
Goat of the Bongo, Mittoo, Mouvoo, and Babuckur.

The Mittoo breed the same domestic animals as the Bongo, viz., goats, dogs, and poultry; they possess no cattle, and are on that account ranked by the Dinka under the contemptuous designation of "Dyoor," which is intended to be synonymous with savages. They estimate the dog, however, in a very different way from the Bongo, and by their fondness for its flesh show that they are not many grades above the cannibal. Bernardin de S. Pierre, in his 'Études de la Nature,' gives it as his opinion that to eat dog's flesh is the first step towards cannibalism; and certainly, when I enumerate to myself the peoples whom I visited who actually, more or less, devoured human flesh, and find that among them dogs were invariably considered a delicacy, I cannot but believe that there is some truth in the hypothesis.

The whole group of the Mittoo exhibits peculiarities by which it may be distinguished from its neighbours. The external adornment of the body, the costume, the ornaments, the mutilations which individuals undergo—in short, the general fashions—have all a distinctive character of their own. The most remarkable of their habits is the revolting, because unnatural, manner in which the women pierce and distort their lips; they seem to vie with each other in their mutilations, and their vanity in this respect I believe surpasses anything that may be found throughout Africa. Not satisfied with piercing the lower lip, they drag out the upper lip as well for the sake of symmetry.\* To the observations I have made before about all African tribes that in their attire they endeavour to imitate some part of the animal creation, I may add that they seem to show a special preference for copying any individual species for which they have a particular reverence. In this way it frequently happens that their superstition indirectly influences the habits of their daily life, and that their animal-worship finds expression in their

\* The mutilation of both lips was also observed by Rohlf's among the women of Kadje, in Segseg, between Lake Tsad and the Benwe.

dress. It is, however, difficult to find anything in nature collateral with the adornment of the Mittoo women; and it surpasses all effort to understand what ideal they can have in their imagination when they extend their lips into broad bills. If our supposition be correct, the Mittoo fashion perhaps only indicates a partiality for the spoonbills and the shovellers with which these ladies may have some spiritual affinity. The projections of the iron-clad lips are of service to give effect to an outbreak of anger, for by means of them the women can snap like an owl or a stork, or almost as well as the *Balæniceps Rex*.



Lory, a Mittoo Woman.

Circular plates nearly as large as a crown piece, made variously of quartz, of ivory, or of horn, are inserted into the lips that have been stretched by the growth of years, and these often rest in a position that is all but horizontal; and when the women want to drink they have to elevate the upper



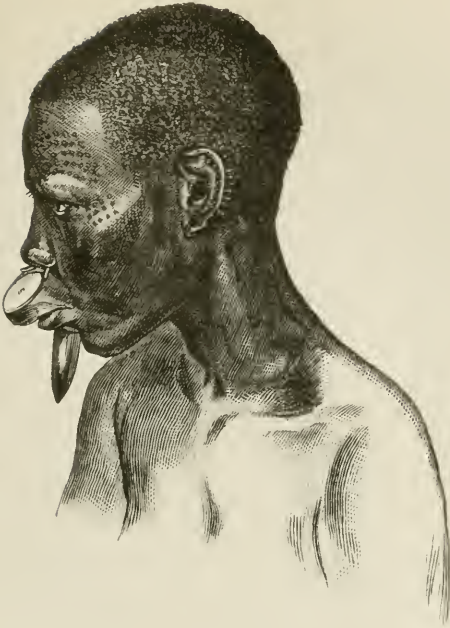
Wengo, a Mittoo Woman.

lip with their fingers, and to pour the draught into their mouths.

Similar in shape is the decoration which is worn by the women of Maganya; but though it is round, it is a ring and not a flat plate; it is called a "pelele," and has no other object than to expand the upper lip. Some of the Mittoo women, especially the Loobah, not content with the circle or the ring, force a cone of polished quartz through the lips as though they had borrowed an idea from the rhinoceros. This fashion of using quartz belemnites of more than two inches long is in some instances adopted by the men.

The women of the Madi correspond in their outward garb with the Mittoo in general; they make use of a short garment of mixed leaves and grass like the Bongo. The men adopt the same kind of skin covering for their loins as the Bongo, but they have one decoration which seems peculiar





Loobah Woman.

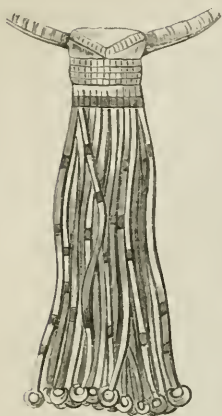
to themselves; they wear in front something after the style of the "rahad" of the Soudan or the "isimene" of the Kaffirs—a short appendage made of straps of leather, ornamented by rings and scraps of iron; but it is so narrow that it has almost the look of a cat-o'-nine-tails. There are others who buckle on to their loins a triangular skin which has every variety of rings and iron knick-knacks fastened round its edge.

Occasionally there were to be seen some broad girdles covered with a profusion of cowries, such as the Niam-niam were said to wear; but hitherto the Madi were the only people I had met with who retained any value for cowries, which for some time had ceased to be held in



Cone of quartz worn in the lip (actual size).

much repute in the Gazelle district. The mode of wearing these conchylia was to split off their convex backs and to fasten them on so as to display only the white orifices.



Apron worn by the Madi.

Like the northern Bongo the Mittoo disdain devoting their attention to the decoration of their hair: men and women alike wear it quite short. The portrait of Goggo has already furnished a representation of one of their elaborate perukes.

The plucking out of the eyelashes and the eyebrows is quite an ordinary proceeding among the women. The men have coverings for their head the same as the Niam-niam. The accompanying portrait of Ngahma shows such an article of headgear, suggesting the comparison either of a Russian coachman's hat, or of the cap of a mandarin. They are very fond likewise of fixing a number of iron spikes to a plate which they fasten behind the head, and to these they attach strings of beads and tufts of hair. The Madi make also a sort of cap rather prettily ornamented with coloured beads and which fits the head tight like a skull-cap.

It is only among the men that tattooing is practised on a large scale, the lines usually radiating from the belly in the direction of the shoulders like the buttons on certain uniforms; the women merely have a couple of parallel rows of dotted lines upon the forehead. The variety is very great of the ornaments which they construct out of iron and copper, consisting of bells, drops, small axes and anchors, diminutive rings, and platters, and trinkets of every sort. All the women wear a host of rings in their ears.

These tribes have the same liking for iron chains as the Niam-niam and the Monbuttoo. Whatever they attach to their bodies they attach by chains; and they are very inven-

tive in their designs for armlets and rings for the ankles. The armlets very often have a projecting rim, which is pro-



Ngahma, a Mittoo Chief.

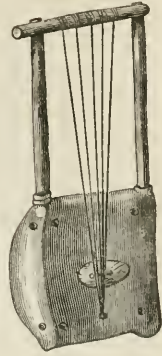
vided with a number of spikes or teeth, which apparently have no other object than to make a single combat as effective as possible.

Even amongst these uncultured children of nature, human pride crops up amongst the fetters of fashion, which indeed are fetters in the worst sense of the word; for fashion in the distant wilds of Africa tortures and harasses poor humanity as much as in the great prison of civilisation. As a mark of their wealth, and for the purpose of asserting their station in life, both sexes of the Mittoo wear chains of iron as thick as their fingers, and of these very often four at a time are to be

noticed on the neck of the same individual. Necklaces of leather are not unfrequently worn strong enough to bind a lion ; these impart to the head that rigidity of attitude given by the high cravats at which we wonder so much when we look at the portraits of a past generation. When the magnates of the people, arrayed in this massive style, and reeking with oily fat, swagger about with sovereign contempt amongst their fellow mortals, they are only as grand as the slimy diplomatists, solemn and stiff, who strut along without vouchsafing to unlock one secret from their wary lips. These necklaces are fixtures ; they are fastened so permanently in their place that only death, decay, or decapitation can remove them. I was never fortunate enough to see the mysterious operation by which these circles were welded on, but I know that when the rings are soldered to the arms and ankles, fillets of wood are inserted below the metal to protect the flesh from injury.

Amongst the many particulars in which the Mittoo are inferior to the Bongo, it may be noticed that their huts are not only smaller, but that they are very indifferently built. Many of them could be covered by a crinoline of lavish proportions. In their musical instruments, however, and in their capabilities for instrumental performances, they are far superior to any of their neighbours. Instead of the great "manyinyee," or wooden trumpet of the Bongo, they make use of long gourd flasks with holes in the side. They have also a stringed instrument which may be described as something between a lyre and a mandolin ; five strings are stretched across a bridge which is formed from the large shell of the Anodont mussel ; the sounding board is quadrangular, covered with skin, with a circular sound-hole at each corner. The instrument altogether is extremely like the "robaba" of the Nubians, and constitutes one of many evidences which might be adduced that the present inhabitants of the Nile Valley have some real affinity with the tribes of

the most central parts of Africa. The flute is made quite on the European principle, and is most expertly handled by the Madi, who bestow much attention on mastering particular pieces. Small signal-horns made with three apertures are in general use amongst the tribes of the district; but the slim trumpet called "dongorah" is peculiar to the Mittoo; it is about eighteen inches long, and resembles the "mburah" of the Bongo. Music is in high estimation amongst the tribes which compose this group, and it may be said of them that they alone have any genuine appreciation of melody, negro music in general being mere recitative and alliteration. I once heard a chorus of a hundred Mittoo singing together; there were men and women, old and young, and they kept admirable time, succeeding in gradual cadence to procure some very effective variations of a well-sustained air.



Mittoo air.

The implements in general differed very little from the industrial contrivances of the Bongo. Their iron-work is rougher and clumsier; but they take a great deal of pains in forming their arrow-tips, having scores of devices for shaping the barbs. One of their ordinary utensils is a crescent-cut ladle with a long handle for stirring their soup.

Graves, for the most part are seen like those of the Bongo; they consist of a heap of stones supported by stakes, on which is placed the flask from which the deceased was accustomed to drink; both Mittoo and Bongo too, as might be



conjectured, have the same method of disposing of their dead, and erect the carved wood penates which have been already mentioned.

The use of the bow and arrow gives the Mittoo a certain warlike superiority over the Dinka, and among their neighbours they are considered to surpass the Bongo in their dexterity in archery. Their bows are four feet long, and of an ordinary form. Like the Moubuttoo, who have shorter bows, they use wooden arrows which are about three feet in length. The heads of these arrows reach to the middle of the length. The Mittoo despise the cumbrous protection of a shield, but they are careful to keep a liberal supply of spears.

## CHAPTER X.

Preparations for Niam-niam campaign. Generosity of Aboo Sammat. Organisation of the caravan. Ceremonies at starting. Banner of Islam. Travelling costume. Terminalia forest. Hartebeest chase. Ahmed the Liar. Prospect from Mbala Ngeea. Bivouac on the Lehssy. Camp noises at night. Story of cannibalism. Ahmed's fate. The Ibba. First meeting with Niam-niam. Growth of the popnkky-grass. Elephant-hunting among the Niam-niam. Surprise at the white man. Visit to Nganye. A chieftain's household. Entertainment by Nganye. Gumba. Colocasia. A Niam-niam minstrel. Beauty of the Zawa-trees. Encephalartus on the hill of Gumango. Cultivated districts on the Rye. Condition of hamlets and farms. Devastation of Bendo's district. Contest with the soldiers. Escape from a bullet. Identity of the Sway and the Dyoor. The law of drainage. Passage of the Manzilly. First primeval forest. Frontier wildernesses. Organisation in the geography of plants. Importance of guinea-fowl to the traveller. Feeding the bearers. National diet.

THREE months had thus elapsed in almost uninterrupted wanderings, but I found on my return to Sabby that I could spare only a short reprieve for recruiting. Previous to starting on the laborious expedition to the Niam-niam, to which under the guidance of my protector I had pledged myself, there remained only a fortnight. A score of packages had to be fastened up, many a trunk had to be arranged, clothes had to be provided, implements of many sorts to be secured, ammunition and arms to be put in readiness for the projected excursion into a hostile territory, where we proposed to pursue our way for six months to come. In addition to this provision for the future, I had to make good the arrears in my diary, to get through all my correspondence for the current year, and to provide for the remittance of my valuables to distant Europe. All this had to be accomplished in the space of fourteen days.

Nor could domestic demands afford to be overlooked. My household required a vigilant supervision. The mere labour of washing our clothes was considerable, although the accumulation of two months' wear was by no means extensive. In order to perform the laundry work, it was necessary to send to the river, a league and a half distant, where the things could be rinsed out, dried, and bleached. On the evening before our departure for what we called "the world's end," my four-legged body-guard was suddenly enlarged by eight charming little pups of the splendid Shillook breed. Of my Nubian servants, Hussein was the oldest and the most experienced, and to him I entrusted the responsibility of conveying in safety the newly-born animals, together with my correspondence and all my collections, back to Ghattas's Seriba in Dyoor-land, which I still deemed my head-quarters. The worthy fellow thus had the advantage of exchanging the prospect of a roving life among the Niam-niam for the friendly life of the Seriba, where, in the society of his countrymen, he might pass his time in playing upon the robaba, in mastering the intricacies of the game of mungala, or, while the gourd-shells of merissa went merrily round, in joining in the chorus, rendered with a fine nasal twang, of "Derderoah, derderoah el yum, derderoah, derdereh, ginyatohm."

By the 29th of January, 1870, every preparation had been so far advanced that the bulk of the caravan was set in motion. Mohammed Abou Sammat himself proposed to join the party in about a fortnight, as he was compelled to go into the Mittoo district to secure some additional bearers. My own retinue consisted of four Nubian servants, and three negroes who were engaged as interpreters, one of them being a Bongo, the other two genuine Niam-niam; besides these, there was a number of Bongo bearers, which at first was about thirty, but in the course of our progress was increased to forty. The whole of these were supplied to me at the sole expense of Mohammed, whose hospitality I had now

been receiving for three months, and continued to enjoy to the end of our excursion; not only throughout the period of eight months did he entertain me and all my party whilst we were in his settlements, but he entered most readily into all my wishes, and whenever I desired to explore any outlying parts he would always lend me the protection of a portion of his armed force.

Never before had any European traveller in Central Africa such advantageous conditions for pursuing his investigations; never hitherto in the heart of an unknown land had there been anything like the same number of bearers at his disposal, and that, too, in a region where the sole means of transport is on the heads of the natives. All the museums—particularly those which are appropriated to botany—which have been enriched in any way by my journeyings are indebted to Aboo Sammat for not a few of their novelties. Solely because I was supported by him did I succeed in pushing my way to the Upper Shary, more than 800 miles from Khartoom, thus opening fresh districts to geographical knowledge and establishing the existence of some enigmatical people.

Everything, moreover, that Mohammed did was suggested by his own free-will. No compulsion of government was put upon him, no inducements on my part were held out, and, what is more, no thought of compensation for his outlay on myself or my party ever entered his mind. The purest benevolence manifestly prompted him—the high virtue of hospitality in its noblest sense. Whoever is actuated by the spirit of adventure to penetrate into the heart of Africa, so as to make good his footing amongst four different peoples, is undoubtedly a man of energy; although he may not be spurred on by any scientific purpose, and may simply be gratifying a desire to visit lands that are strange and to enjoy sights that are rare, yet he must have succeeded in vanquishing the thoughts which suggest that there is no

place like home, and which represent it as the merest folly to sacrifice domestic ease for the fatigues, troubles, and privations which are inseparable from the life of a wanderer.

Our caravan was joined on its way by a company of Ghattas's from Dangadduloo, conducted by a stout Diuka, whose acquaintance I had already made at the Seriba where he resided. His party consisted of 500 bearers and 120 soldiers, and they contemplated, in conjunction with a part of Aboo Sammat's people, undertaking an expedition into the ivory district of Keefa. That district was shut out from Ghattas's by the fact of the road towards it being the property of Aboo Sammat: according to a convention entered into by the Nubians, a caravan of one company was not to traverse a region appropriated by another, unless an alliance for that purpose was made between the two. As the result of this compact, it had come to pass that no less than fifteen different roads, corresponding to the same number of different merchant houses in Khartoom, branched out towards the south and west from the localities of the Seribas into the remotest lands of the Niam-niam.

Wherever two of these roadways intersect, a serious collision between the parties concerned is almost certain to ensue. Any conductor of an expedition is sure to endeavour to get the monopoly of all the ivory into his own hands. The various native chieftains are prohibited from disposing of their produce to any other agent than himself—a demand which is enforced by violence—and rival companies are intimidated by threats of action for trespass; in fact, no pains are spared to assert a right as vigorously as possible.

An agreement had now been made according to which the leader of Ghattas's caravan was to accompany Aboo Sammat's expedition as far as his establishments in the Niam-niam lands, and afterwards was to be allowed the protection of a military detachment to proceed towards the west, Aboo Sammat himself having resolved to carry on his own main



body in the direction of the south. The bearers of the Ghattas party from the east were all Mittoo, a tribe that is of much weaker frame and less capable of sustaining fatigue than the Bongo, so that by the time that they had reached Sabby, although it was only about four days' march, they had already a considerable number of invalids. Aboo Sammat's intention this year was to make his first experiment with the Mittoo from the territories he had recently gained, and to try to employ them as bearers in this enterprise among the Niam-niam. To be a bearer is a service which demands a kind of apprenticeship, and no one without practice is fitted for the continual strain and endurance which it requires. The representations, moreover, which had been made to these inexperienced Mittoo, both about the nature of the country they would have to traverse and the cannibal propensities of the people with whom they would be brought in contact, acted so powerfully upon them that it was only under compulsion that they could be made to enter upon the service at all. While, therefore, the Bongo bearers were to be relied upon, and looked forward blithely to any fatigues that might be before them, the Mittoo had to be scrupulously watched, and by night to be carefully secured within the bounds of the palisade to prevent their effecting an escape. On the very evening before we started from Sabby a number of them ventured upon a combination to revolt, and, in fact, got free into the open country. By the assistance of the Bongo they were captured after an hour's hard chase, brought back into the Seriba, placed under closer guardianship, and for a punishment were made to wear all night the yoke of the "sheyba," which is ordinarily placed on the necks of slaves.

Swelling the numbers of our caravans there was a whole troop of women and female slaves, and a crowd of negro lads who followed the soldiers to carry their equipments. There was in addition a large herd of cattle which the Ghattas

party had plundered from the Dinka, and which they drove with them to maintain themselves when they came to enter upon the desolation of the desert. Aboo Sammat, never rich in cattle, because he did not, in the same way as his neighbours, indulge in plundering the Dinka, had certainly made no superfluous provision for the needs of his people; but for myself there was an abundant supply of calves, sheep, and goats still remaining from the liberal presents that had been made me in Mvolo during my excursion to the Rohl. Whenever an animal was killed, I invariably shared the meat with the Nubians, and they were always ready to return the favour as often as they slaughtered any of their own. My people's necessities were thus supplied, whilst personally I was continually provided by Aboo Sammat with the choicest morsels as long as there was any choice to be made. But where property fails, even Cæsar must forego his rights; and days of scarcity did arrive, when for my servants there was nothing, and for myself there was next to nothing, to be had.

It will readily be imagined that for a colony of nearly 800 people a start in single file was not effected in a moment: it was quite midday before I commenced any movement at all. Several days had to elapse, and no little patience had to be tried, before things fell into anything like regularity. Of all men in the world, perhaps the Nubians are the most disorderly. Method is altogether alien to their nature; they loathe it after the unshackled freedom they are accustomed to indulge; they have no idea of any advantages arising from mutual co-operation, and accordingly they look upon any approach to order only as a token of individual bondage.

Amongst a body of men actuated by such sentiments, any thought of discipline, according to our ideas, is entirely out of the question. Only that master can at all hope to succeed in exercising any authority who understands how to get

upon the weak side of their character. By this means he may perchance attain what he wants in a way which a Turk, even by the extremest severity, could never accomplish. He may prevail, for instance, by slipping in at the right time an allusion to brotherhood, or by an appeal to honour and to the value of one's word; or he may invoke the religious sentiment by reminding the Nubian of his being a Mohammedan, "Thou art a Moslem;" or again, by holding out a bribe, such as a fresh slave or a good payment, he may reduce a cantankerous spirit to subjection; but whatever is done has to be effected craftily and with a good deal of insinuation and gentle coaxing. No one understood all these artifices better than Aboo Sammat, who was utterly regardless of all consequences and could behave like a perfect tyrant as soon as ever he had established a control. On account of my own position amongst the Nubians I had to renounce most of these little artifices, but, nevertheless, I had my own special resources. A piece of wit, brought to bear at the right place and at the right time, very seldom failed to be of essential service. Although a capacity for appreciating wit must in a way be considered local and limited in its compass, yet it hardly admits of dispute that there is no nation of the world entirely without its sense of humour. The botanist Fortune, who made his laborious investigations in China, has left it upon record that he only succeeded by mother-wit in gaining access to a people which had previously resisted every effort towards the least familiar intercourse with them. A faculty of bantering a little may be of considerable service to assist the progress of a traveller; and I may, perhaps, be allowed to relate what follows as an instance of the mode in which I attempted to proceed, and the example, perchance, may give a trifling hint to those who may be disposed to follow in my wake.

I will assume that there was going to be some contention or other between me and my people, as, for instance, that I

had determined to go to some particular mountain, and they held it as utterly useless to go and camp in a desert while they had the chance of staying and enjoying their merissa among their friends. Very rarely in Egypt do people exchange a few words with one another without introducing the term "ya Sheikh" as a mode of allocution. Even a father talking to his son of a few years old will address him as "ya Sheikh." In Nubia the habit is not quite so general, but is common enough to be familiar and to be entirely understood. Now, one of my people had once taken umbrage at the word being addressed to him, and in ill-tempered *pique* he had repudiated the term, saying "Don't sheikh me; I am no sheikh." I thought to myself that he should hear of this again; and hear of it again he did.

Some weeks elapsed, and by chance an occasion arose when we were discussing about a certain mountain, whether it were too far off or too high for us to ascend. One of my party was arguing and trying to satisfy the other, who was our cantankerous friend of old, and happened to begin one of his appeals to him by saying "ya Sheikh." This was my chance; so I cried out, "O don't sheikh him. Twice he has himself told me that he is no sheikh; he is a lout. If he were a sheikh, he would go with us to the mountain; but, because he is a lout, he likes to stay behind and sip his beer." A general laugh of applause followed my little sally, and the joke was hailed with a round of derision against the captious booby. This trifling circumstance, perhaps, may illustrate the mode of dealing which appeared to answer best, and I hope needs no excuse for the length at which it is related.

Delay upon delay prevented our making a start, and Nubian-like we consumed the day in getting ready. When the caravan did issue from the Seriba, it proceeded, according to the usage of the country, under the conduct of a banner carried ahead. The armed force was portioned out

in three divisions, each of which had its own flag. Aboo Sammat's banner was like the Turks'; it had the crescent and the star upon a red ground: Ghattas, although he was a Christian, displayed the same symbol of Islam, only red upon a white ground. At the start, two captains, Ahmed and Badry, were put in charge. Of these I had already made the acquaintance of the latter, during my excursion to the Rohl. Aboo Sammat himself, as I have mentioned, had arranged, with the third corps, to join the caravan somewhat later.

At the outset of any expedition, whether it be a movement to the river, a raid upon the cattle of the Dinka, or an excursion to the Niam-niam, it is deemed an indispensable preliminary that a sheep should be offered in sacrifice at the entrance of the Seriba. When this has been accomplished, the procession is prepared to start, and the standard-bearer lowers his flag over the victim, so that the border of it may just touch the blood, and afterwards there is the usual muttering of prayers. In truth, the banner of Islam is a banner of blood. Bloodthirsty are the verses which are inscribed upon its white texture; a very garland of cruel fanaticism and stern intolerance is woven in the sentences from the Koran which, in the name of the merciful God, declare war against all who deny the faith that there is one God and that Mohammed is his prophet, and which assert that his enemies shall perish from the face of the earth.

The sun was already in the zenith when we found our way to the arid steppes; the heat was scorching, but I enjoyed having my dogs about me, barking for joy at their liberation from the confinement of the Seriba. Very memorable to me is still that day on which I took this first decisive step towards the attainment of my cherished hopes. I thought of that moonlight night as I left Khartoom, when upon the glassy mirror of the White Nile I had kept my vigil of excited interest, and now here I was making a still more



decisive movement and entering upon a still more important section of my enterprise. Now, there was nothing to obstruct me from penetrating to the heart of Africa far as my feet could carry me ; now, as Mohammed said, I could advance to the "world's end," and he would convey me on till even I should acknowledge that we had gone far enough. But unfortunately my vision of hope was doomed to be dispelled. Just at the moment when curiosity was strained to its highest expectation, at the very time when scientific ardour was kindled to go on into the very depths of the mysterious interior, we were compelled to return. Had we only been enabled to prosecute our journey as far again towards the south, I do not entertain a doubt but that I should have been in a condition to solve the problem of the sources of those three great rivers of the west, the Benwe, the Ogowai, and the Congo.

Upon the first day's march we only proceeded a few miles and camped out beside the little stream Tudyee, of which the deeply-hollowed bed was divided into two separate arms. In one of these arms a languid current was passing on, but in the other, which was perfectly dry, I took my repose for the remainder of the day, under the shade of a grateful shrubbery which overhung its recesses. The revelry of a camp life was not wanting ; meat in abundance was boiled, roasted, and broiled, and the festivity extended far into the night. As is ever the case on the first encampment, the proximity to the settlements with their ample provisions enables it to assume the aspect of a picnic.

The most valuable portion of my luggage was conveyed in twelve small portmanteaus, carefully covered with hides : the remnant was carried in chests and baskets. The rolls of paper were wrapped in sheets of calico, which I had well soaked in fresh caoutchouc. I continued to experience the great comfort of having my baggage conveyed by hand, so that I had access at any stage of our progress to whatever I

required. It was hardly necessary to keep anything under lock and key, for nothing could be stolen that would not at once betray the thief. Everything was therefore open, and consequently very little time comparatively was lost in preparing for the daily start. There was only one thing to be guarded against, and that was the propensity of the bearers to turn the packages upside down. It was necessary in this particular to be always jogging the memory of the Bongo, who would reply "mawah," (I hear) and so everything would go safely along, over sloughs and brooks and marshes, and across the steppes reeking with dew, wherever the leader might desire.

Anxious to reach the village of the Bongo sheikh Ngoly, we made a prolonged march on the next day. Proceeding through the most southerly of the districts occupied by the Bongo, we kept still in the region that belonged to Aboo Sammat. An hour or more before sunrise, as is usual with these caravans, a general *réveil* was sounded by drums and trumpets, and a meal was made on the remains of the previous night's feast, as no halt was to be allowed for breakfast. A collection of plants, however, has to be carefully handled, and while my people were strapping up the packages, and the bearers and soldiers were forming their line, I found a quiet half-hour to prepare myself a cup of tea, and to arrange all my little matters for travelling. For the European traveller no article of apparel is better adapted than an old-fashioned waistcoat, with as many pockets as possible, into which a watch, a compass, a note-book, a tinder-box with some matches, and other articles of continual use may be stowed. A coat of any sort, however light, becomes a burden upon a walking expedition; about the arms it always uncomfortably obstructs the perspiration. A strong felt hat with a broad brim is the best protection for the head; it is preferable to the Turkish cap, but on account of the intense power of the rays of the sun it cannot be worn

immediately next the head. It cannot have anything below it better than the red fez, which never requires to be taken off; when rest is taken under the shade of some spreading tree, it is quite sufficient to remove merely the felt hat.

The march was through a pleasant park-like country, and after crossing a considerable number of fordable rivulets, we arrived about midday at the huts of Ngoly. At Ngoly, over a surface of about eight square miles, we found various groves of the *Terminalia macroptera*, having very much the look of a wood of European oaks. In these regions any continuance of a single species of tree or plant is very rare, and the bushforests are generally remarkable for the great diversity of species which is found on a limited area. The *Terminalia* is to be classed amongst that small number of trees of which regular groves, in what we call forests, rise to the view. It grows, as may readily be observed, upon the gentle depressions of a soil sufficiently rich, but which is yet too dry for the formation of the tall grass of the steppes, being watered only by currents which are formed during the rains, and of which we crossed the remnants during the dry months of winter. Between lat.  $5^{\circ}$  and  $3^{\circ}$  N., in the longitude under which we were travelling, the equatorial zone of the continual rainfall decidedly suffers an interruption, and the zenith altitudes of the sun cannot be said to bear a due proportion to the largest annual fall of rain.

The forests of the *Terminalia* are remarkable for the general deficiency of undergrowth or bushwood which they exhibit, a circumstance that arises from the general inability of woody plants to endure so moist a soil. The large proportion of the trees and shrubs of the country thrive much better in the rocky regions of the ironstone, and if ever a grove establishes itself where the ground is wet, it soon gets as clear of undergrowth as though all had been taken away by the hand of man, and ere long it assumes quite a northern aspect.

The landscape in Africa presents to a large extent examples of trees which only cast off their foliage fitfully. In contrast to these, the *Terminalia* annually throws off all its leaves as soon as the rains are over, and throughout our winter months it is perfectly bare. It grows to a height of about thirty or forty feet, and by its deeply-scored black bark and the general character of its ramifications, it may be said to be not unlike the glutinous alder of the north.

I passed the afternoon in a charming wood chasing the hartebeests (*Antilope caama*) which were abundant everywhere over this attractive hunting-ground. Their leather-coloured coats stood out in glaring contrast to the dark tree-stems; but the lack of underwood left our extensive encampment so thoroughly exposed, that the animals took alarm betimes, and were difficult to reach. Accordingly after an hour's fatigue, I had to content myself (as would happen again and again) with a number of guinea-fowl, which were a never-failing and never-palling contribution to our *cuisine*. On all my hunting excursions I invariably found myself accompanied by a regular troop of people who made the chase a matter of great difficulty, but who nevertheless considered their services indispensable. My own three negroes carried the portfolios for the plants, and my rifles; but from the bearers there was always a swarm of volunteers who came to act as pointers, prompted to their extra exertions, partly from a desire to get the lion's share of what might fall, and partly from that irrepressible love of hunting which seemed indigenous to their very nature.

As a matter of botanical interest I observed the frequency with which the wild *Phoenix* occurs in the low district all around Ngoly. Most probably this is the parent-stock of the date-palm; the time in which its fruit is here ripe is the month of July.

Up betimes on the morning of our third day's march, I took my place at the front of our caravan, close behind the

standard-bearer, in the hope of getting near enough to secure a shot at some hartebeest that might be taken by surprise. In the woods the animals could be seen in numbers as great as on the previous evening; they skulked behind the black stems of the trees, keeping a vigilant look-out, but as soon as anyone attempted to leave the procession and approach them, off they were with a bound, and scampering away in a zigzag career, regained the wilderness.

For a full hour the way proceeded through the wood, and then we entered a low-lying steppe which brought us to the running water of the little river Teh or Tee. As we approached we saw a herd of buffaloes betake themselves to flight, and, snorting and brandishing their tails, dash into the stream; these brutes, however, are here as elsewhere quite easily surprised by an adept. Flowing rather rapidly, the Teh is between twenty and thirty feet in breadth, and passes along wooded banks which gave me my first introduction to the flora of the Niam-niam. The botanical treasures of this district, I may venture perhaps to call the "bank or gallery flora," in contradistinction to that extensive class of vegetation which predominates over the wide steppes around. Large *Scitamineæ* contribute an essential feature, and there is an *Oncoba* which bears upon its leafless wood blossoms that are conspicuous for their numerous stamens. This *Oncoba* is here found in its most northerly abode, but its growth is wide-spread as far as Benguela.

Unfortunately there was little leisure for me to enjoy this attractive *entrée* to the flora of the land. We had to hurry on, and passed quickly into a region where the tall unburnt grass made the route indistinguishable to all but an expert, and where it was impossible to see more than a few paces in advance.

By perseverance we reached a bare and extensive rocky plain developing itself into the depression of a valley along which the stream of the Mongolongboh cuts its winding



path. The rock is all composed of red ironstone, very frequently of that coarse and large-grained quality which is technically known as roe-stone. These flats of red rock are common all through the districts south of the great alluvial territory of the Dinka which is watered by the Gazelle and its various tributaries. They are often, for leagues together, level as the surface of a table, scarcely ever revealing a rift, and very rarely worn away into hollows. When, however, any of these depressions are found, they are always sure to be full of most interesting specimens of a periodic vegetation.

Our next halting-place was close by the water-side under the shade of some noble trees, in which a merry troop of monkeys were frisking. As we arrived before midday, I had an opportunity of taking a ramble in the neighbourhood. For some miles round, the region was entirely uninhabited, and the utmost desolation prevailed. None of the traces of any previous occupation could be seen—none, I mean, of the peculiar weeds which will survive where there has been any cultivation; everywhere there was only bushwood and steppe, except just in the spots where the stone flats were on the surface or where the ground rose into hills, enclosing the valley along which the Mongolongboh wound its course. There was a fine panorama of the vale from the top of the hills, and many a group of antelopes enlivened the general stillness of the scene. My attention was arrested by a plant which was new to me and characteristic of the region; this was the little *Protea*, which occasionally formed complete hedges, bearing a resemblance to the class of vegetation which is found in the south of Africa, but which is very rarely met with in any northern portion of the continent.

Ahmed, the temporary leader of our caravan, had made arrangements to start again immediately after noon, at the same time announcing that we could not expect to be able to reach any place supplied with water at which we could

pass the next night. This statement was quite contrary to the declaration of those who knew the way, and on the following day was refuted. Ahmed, however, persisted in his opinion, and, in his own Nubian fashion, said that he was ready to be pronounced a liar by any one who could disprove the truth of what he said. Wranglings of this sort went on day after day, and occasioned me some disquietude and misgiving.

A gathering storm compelled us to put forth all our energies, by way of precaution, to protect the baggage. The dark clouds rolled towards us, and the encampment was all bustle and alarm. By good chance, however, the storm passed on over our heads, and we had only a few heavy drops of rain. Since the end of last November this was the first day on which any rain at all had fallen. As often as we were threatened with wet, and time did not permit us to erect our tent, I made my baggage as secure as I could, by piling wood and layers of stone upon it, and covering the whole with great sheets of waterproof twill.

Long before sunrise on the 1st of February we had quitted our encampment, hastening our movements through a fear, which was altogether groundless, of there being a deficiency of water. Encompassed by hills, we marched along rising ground, and by the time that the morning light had dawned, we found ourselves at an elevation of about 500 feet above the valley of the Mongolongboh, and with a prospect open before us towards the south, much more extensive than we had hitherto enjoyed. The ridges of hills ran from east to west, and the peaks right and left of the path by which we were proceeding were called by our leaders Mbala Ngeea. Looking to the south we could see a thickly-wooded vale several miles across, and beyond this were two terraces diverging towards the west, which were made conspicuous by the contrast in their colour. The dark blue ridges which were more remote in the S.S.W. were

pointed out as the district of Nganye, and the residence of the first Niam-niam chief whom we should have to visit. Before us in the valley there was visible the low ground of the Lehssy, which, in the lower part of its course, is called Doggoroo by the Bongo; whilst only separated from the Lehssy by a range of little hills, there was still beyond the broad and fertile valley watered by the Upper Tondy, which here receives the name of the Ibba. Among the Bongo its name is simply Bah, i.e. the river, just as the local population of Baghirmi call the Shary, a further evidence of the relationship which exists between the people.

We now descended from the heights and arrived at the Mah, of which the flat bed caused a number of broad pools of water to obstruct our way. This was the water that gave the lie to Ahmed's statement. Along undulating terraces we next reached a wood, which consisted for the most part of wide stretches of kobbo-trees (*Humboldtia*), which gave a light but welcome shadiness to our path. The height attained by these *Cesalpinææ* is generally about forty feet. They are to be admired for their fine feathery foliage, and for the size of the seed-vessels which hang from the boughs. During the drought of the winter season, when the herbage was short, or had altogether perished through the burning of the steppes, they sent out young sprouts graceful as the main stem itself, which were a charming ornament to the woods. The colour of the tender leaves sported from a bright moss-green to the richest purple, each leaflet being not less than two feet long. The magnitude of the leaves gives a peculiar feature to the woods, which flourish freely on the upper terraces of the district, the steppes in the depressed vale around being marshy and quite destitute of trees.

Making a fresh ascent, we passed upon our left one of those insulated elevations of gneiss which are so frequent in these regions, and which, as they lie scattered and weather-beaten over the plain, have all the indication of

being the remains of some upheaving of the hills above the general level of the ferruginous swamp-ore around. The shape which these islands of gneiss most generally assume is that of a spherically-arched mound, here about 200 feet in height; and of this I saw some thirty examples in different parts during the course of my wanderings. A group of stately hartebeests was parading upon the summit, and surveyed from the distance of half a league the progress of our caravan as it wound its way along the bushy paths. By midday we had reached the Lehssy, and camped upon a flat of gneiss which the waters at their height had washed. At the present season of the year the stream pursued its course beneath the soil, but it had left a considerable number of water-pools, some of them a hundred paces long, and from forty to fifty feet wide, which, overhung as they were by shading bushwood, abounded in fish, especially barbel. By means of small shot I was able to secure a good many of these; and in a country like this where an agricultural life necessitates a residence remote from the river-plains, and where fresh fish is with difficulty preserved on account of the heat, such a catch is invaluable; it is welcomed as a dainty, and makes a most desirable change in the wearisome routine of the daily diet.

The splendid Afzelia-trees which overshadowed the Lehssy gave an additional charm to this halting-place, which was abundantly supplied with water that was as bright as it was refreshing. The level surface of the gneiss answered the double purpose of couches on which to sleep and tables on which to eat. Upon the shadowy banks one of the *Anonaceæ*, the *Hexalobus*, grows extensively, exhibiting its long tufted flowers, and breathing forth its pungent vanilla-like aroma; the petals, in colour and appearance, resemble little fragments of tape-worm, and are quite unlike any other known plant.

Continually was the repose of night again broken by the

incessant chattering or singing of the Nubians, who ever chose the night-time for their hilarity, and in consequence were all day long as sleepy and lazy as they could be. All at once, when everyone was asleep, they would start up, and as a freak fire a *feu de joie*, startling the nocturnal silence by the whistling of their balls. Even the negroes did not sleep around their fires undisturbed. Under cover of the night every one took care to look after his own individual needs, and to enjoy the morsels that he had contrived to gather in the day-time; and many a tit-bit carefully concealed from the eyes of others all the day, was secretly consumed by the hungry fellows in the dead of night.

On the following morning I was one of the hindmost of the caravan, and proceeded in the company of Ahmed, our guide, and a few stragglers. We had passed two or three watercourses, overhung with copsewood and now quite dry, when we came upon a Mittoo bearer, exhausted by his journey, lying by the wayside. He was a poor withered, consumptive creature, and seemed as if he were pretty near his last gasp. The other bearers had taken his burden from him, and, conscious that he could not carry it farther, had spoken a few cheering words and left him to his fate. By a fair day's walking it was just possible he might regain his home, provided he could keep clear of the prowling lions on his way; but lions, it is known, have a remarkable scent for a poor lone and helpless man. Let a poor fellow be sick or wounded, and he incurs a double danger. Meanwhile, the people who were with me were all discussing the matter in their own way; they could not agree whether the poor wretch were really ill, or whether he was making pretence, and not a few of them declared that no sooner would he have the chance than he would be off homewards as nimbly as a hare. Ahmed at this point put in his word, and observed that a day's journey farther in advance, the man would never have ventured upon being left behind by his



company, for fear of finding his way to the caldrons of the Niam-niam. This observation of his immediately turned the conversation to the subject of the cannibalism of that people, of which I was far from being convinced.

I mentioned that Piaggia had resided a whole year among the Niam-niam without witnessing a single instance of the practice. Ahmed replied that Piaggia had only visited the district of Tombo, where the people were nothing like so bad as they were here in the east, and he asserted that I should only have to wait for a few days before proof strong enough would be opened to my eyes. He went so far as to declare, nay, he swore hard and fast, that he knew a case in which some bearers, who had died from fatigue on the way, had been buried, and that in the interval of his going and returning, their graves had been reopened. Naturally I objected to this statement, that only the day before he had branded himself as a liar, and that consequently his word deserved no confidence; he persisted, however, in his affirmation, and went on to argue that it was not possible that it was any beast that had disturbed the graves; stones had been removed to get at the corpses that they wanted. "Yes," he added, "and I have myself seen them eat foul flesh,—vile, stinking, putrid flesh;" and as he spoke he made grimaces so horrid, that they had every sign of being the expression of a sincere abhorrence. Poor Ahmed! I can think I see him still upon those rocks, expressing his emotion by the gestures of his hands. I can even now hear the vehemence of his oaths. Poor Ahmed! as though he were to be the very first of victims to his own belief, within a few weeks he fell in a *mêlée*, his body could not be found on the scene of conflict, and where should it by any possibility have gone, except into the stomachs of the Niam-niam?

Farther onwards our progress was very much impeded by the high masses of dry grass which had escaped destruction

when the steppes were burned. In the path, which is a mere narrow rift in the steppes, made by those in front forcing themselves through, grass-stems abound so hard and firm, that they are as unyielding as the stubble of a sorghum-field, and make a most disagreeable obstruction in the way. The chain of hills over which we had crossed the day before constitutes the present boundary between the hunting-grounds of the Bongo and the Niam-niam. Indications, however, are not wanting that until a few years ago, the country quite up to the base of the hills had been occupied by the Niam-niam; at present the first district of this people is reached at the farther bank of the Ibba. As we continued our march, we observed a number of half-burnt posts belonging to their huts, and every here and there amidst the grass, there were the remnants of the great wooden drums, which never fail in any village of this people.

At noon we arrived at the Ibba, as I have said the Upper Tondy here is named. About a hundred feet in breadth, but only three feet deep, it offers no difficulty in the way of being forded. The water was running from east to west at the rate of sixty feet a minute, and many blocks of gneiss were lying in the river-bed, which was bounded by gradually ascending banks. I found some deep water beneath a line of overhanging trees, and thoroughly enjoyed a refreshing bath; it was my mishap, however, to experience an inconvenience which occurred to me again more than once in the course of my travels. Half-an-hour I had to wait for my clothes, which had been carried off by the mistake of one of my servants, and taken to the caravan. In my position it was impossible to avoid the heat of the sun, and the skin of an European is too sensitive to endure without mischief a temperature which at the very least was 80° Fahr. in the shade, the ordinary heat of the district in a locality well shaded, but quite open to the influence of the wind.

Upon the southern side of the river were the first culti-

vated lands of the Niam-niam that we had yet seen, and which at that time were lying fallow. Shortly afterwards the ground suddenly rose for some hundred feet. The universal Sorghum is here the prevailing crop, but farther on it is in a very large degree replaced by Eleusine.

We next found ourselves upon the territory of a tolerably rich chieftain, named Nganye, who was on very friendly terms with Aboo Sammat. Meanwhile, for the first mile or two after we left the river, we observed that all the inhabitants vacated their abodes. The name of the superintendent of the district was Peneeo. In all regions like this, where the greater fear happened to be on the side of the natives, the same behaviour was repeated, and very often was accommodating to both parties. In these cases the people with their wives and children, their dogs and poultry, their guitars, their baskets, their pots and pans, and all their household articles, make off to the thickest parts of the steppes, which have been spared from the fire and reserved for elephant hunting; there they hide themselves in an obscurity which only the eye of a bird could penetrate. It will not rarely happen that they are betrayed simply by the cackling of their fowls.

Some of Mohammed's soldiers, who had been sent on in front, returned and brought us tidings of welcome from Nganye, whose residence we hoped to reach on the following day. We found ourselves, however, already very comfortable, as Peneeo, the chief of the district, or Behnky,\* had likewise, as Nganye's representative, paid us his compliments; he had brought a supply of corn for the bearers, and a lot of poultry as a present to myself. In his retinue were a number of men, who, although they were not unlike the score of Niam-niam that I had seen at Sabby, yet here in their own home had an appearance singularly wild and warlike.

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\* Behnky has the French pronunciation of "bainqui."

With their black poodle crops of hair, and the eccentric tufts and pigtailed on their heads, they afforded a spectacle which to me was infinitely novel and surprising. Amongst the hundreds of Bongo and Mittoo, with whom the Dinka were associated as drovers, these creatures stood out like beings of another world; here were genuine, unmistakeable Niam-niam, neither circumcised nor crop-headed, such as other travellers have seen either in Khartoom or in the Seribas; here they were, presenting all the features of wildness which the most vivid Oriental imagination could conceive; a people of a marked and most distinct nationality, and *that* in Africa and amongst Africans is saying much.

Pursuing our route on the following day, we passed along a country that was very undulated, and led through many deeply cut defiles which ran down to the river. For three leagues we kept making a stiff ascent over fallow land, until we arrived at the settlement of Nganye. In consequence of the early rains and that which had fallen in the previous night, the ground had become quite soft, and a multitude of those plants which put forth their blossoms before their leaves had sprouted up. Grass so strong and so thick I have never elsewhere seen, as what I saw in this region. Subsequently I penetrated much farther on, and saw the high grass of the southern districts in the height of the rainy season, but on returning in the month of June, I could not suppress my astonishment at the enormous growth which here the grass attained. The dry stalks, in their height and thickness like reeds on a river-bank, are intentionally protected by the natives from destruction when the steppes are burned: and whenever there seems a chance of driving up a herd of elephants, the steppe-burning is only partial, and done in patches. The strongest of these permanent grasses is a species of panicum which the Niam-niam call "popukky." The haulm of this attains a height of fifteen

feet, and becomes almost as hard as wood, and as thick as a man's finger. Cut crosswise its section is not circular, but a compressed oval, its colour being a bright golden yellow. At its lower end it is not hollow like a reed, but quite compact in substance, and if I wanted to make pipe-stems of it, I was obliged first of all to bore right through its length. Of this popukky the Niam-niam construct some very serviceable doors for their huts, and some mats, which they lay upon the ground and use for beds.

Whenever masses of grass of this nature are set on fire, the elephants have no possible escape from certain death. The destruction is carried on by wholesale. Thousands of huntsmen and drivers are gathered together from far and wide by means of signals sounded on the huge wooden drums. Everyone who is capable of bearing arms at all is converted into a huntsman, just as everyone becomes a soldier when the national need demands. No resource for escape is left to the poor brutes. Driven by the flames into masses, they huddle together young and old, they cover their bodies with grass, on which they pump water from their trunks as long as they can, but all in vain. They are ultimately either suffocated by the clouds of smoke, or overpowered by the heat, or are so miserably burnt that at last and ere long they succumb to the cruel fate that has been designed for them by ungrateful man. The *coup de grâce* may now and then be given them by the blow of some ready lance, but too often, as may be seen from the tusks that are bought, the miserable beasts must have perished in the agonies of a death by fire. A war of annihilation is this, in which neither young nor old, neither the female nor the male, is spared, and in its indiscriminate slaughter it compels us sorrowfully to ask and answer the question "Cui bono?" No other reply seems possible but what is given by the handles of our walking sticks, our billiard balls, our pianoforte keys, our combs and our fans, and other unimportant articles of this



kind. No wonder, therefore, if this noble creature, whose services might be so invaluable to man, should even, perhaps some time during our own generation, be permitted to rank in the category of the things that *have been*, and to be as extinct as the ure-ox, the sea-cow, or the dodo.

Fatiguing enough we found our progress through the towering grass. The path was narrow, and it was very neces-



Niam-niam in full dress.

sary to plant one's foot firmly upon the stalks to avoid stumbling on the way. At length towards noon we arrived at the head-quarters of the chieftain, a residence which, in the language of the country, is called his "mbanga."

I found myself at once encircled by the natives, who came streaming in to see for themselves the white man of whom

already they had heard so much. It was my own first opportunity of seeing the Niam-niam in the reality of their natural life. As became a people with whom hunting is a prominent feature in their pursuits, they were girded with skins. High upon their extensively-dressed hair they wore straw-hats covered with feathers and cowries, and fastened on by means of long bodkins of iron or copper. Their chocolate-coloured skin was painted in stripes, like those of the tiger, with the juice of the Blippo (*Gardenia malleifera*).

Whilst I was reposing beneath an awning that had been put up as a shelter from the sun, the natives bestowed upon



Coiffure of the Niam-niam.

me such a prolonged and decided stare that I had ample opportunity for transferring a few of their portraits to my sketch-book.\* In the early evening I paid my respects to

\* The portraits here presented are those of two dandies, named Wennepai and Schngba.

Nganye, the resident prince. His abode consisted of a collection of huts, some larger than others, which he had assigned to his body-guard, and to the wives and children of his closest associates. The mbanga of a prince may be known at once by the numerous shields that are hung upon the trees and posts in its vicinity, and by the troop of picked men, fully equipped, who act as sentinels, and are at hand night and day to perform any requisite service. Military expeditions, surprises, conspiracies for murder, are here the order of the day, but frequently other and better employments will arise to engage them—as, for instance, when the discovery is announced that a herd of elephants is in the neighbourhood. Then the signals must be sounded, and everyone without delay must be summoned, the occurrence being recognised as of national importance, for there is the chance of securing many hundredweights of ivory, and perchance ten times the weight of meat.

The shields are woven in pretty patterns of intermingled black and white, and are lined with royal leopard-skins. They are fastened by means of an iron knob on the inner side to the “trumbash” (an iron missile with three large projections), and altogether form really a striking sight.

Very modest in its pretensions was the court of this negro prince, and it had little to distinguish it from the huts of the ordinary mortals who had their homes around. The huts were circular, and had conical roofs which were unusually high and pointed, and were probably constructed to throw off the rain outside, as well as to allow for the dispersion of the smoke which was caused by the fire below. Surrounded by a dozen women, who with some household slaves superintended the tillage of the royal domain, Nganye had every appearance of enjoying a peaceful—nay, it may be said, an idyllic—existence.

I found him perfectly naked except for a little apron that he wore. He was sitting on a Monbuttoo stool, quite un-

armed, and with no insignia whatever of his rank. There were, indeed, some twenty or thirty natives who were armed and kept guard in the outer court, but apart from this any pretension to state was entirely wanting. By means of my two interpreters I contrived to keep up a long conversation which I found interesting enough. I was made acquainted without reserve with all the details of Nganye's family, and with all the particulars of his home administration. It was much that I came to him as a friend of Aboo Sammat's. Aboo Sammat was to him a friendly neighbour, who brought to him as his chief an annual contribution of copper, beads, and stuffs; and the prince in return stored up for Aboo Sammat's purchase all the ivory which the year's exertions had secured. As regarded my own native land he did not exhibit the remotest curiosity; concerning the design and object of my journey no particle of interest betrayed itself in anything that he said nor in any question that he asked; and a similar remark may be made with respect to all the chieftains with whom I happened to be brought in contact. As everywhere else in Africa, a welcome is here given by reaching out the right hand; the middle fingers are joined and jerked together until they snap and crack again.

Whilst the cannibal magnate and myself were thus in solemn conference, and were ever regarding one another with that reverence which befits the representatives of noble communities, my retinue was being entertained with roast buffalo meat served up in pretty carved dishes. There was nothing palatable that could have been placed before me, and although Nganye, as subsequently Wando and Munza, accepted food from me, I never did from them. It is extremely unusual for Nubians and natives to take any meals in common, not so much from any religious scruple, but simply because it has never been the custom. In front of me, however, was placed a great clay vessel with four necks

full of Niam-niam beer brewed from eleusine, which my Nubians enjoyed thoroughly as being stronger than anything they can get in their own country.

I presented Nganye with a great many necklaces of garnet-beads of the kind which had been prepared for the East Indian market. My own collection included no sorts except those which were quite novel in this country, having been provided not at all for the purpose of merchandise, but with the express object of making presents. Out of compliment to me, Nganye always wore my gifts as long as we remained in his locality, but, in the same way as other chieftains, he at other times systematically abstained from adorning himself with any foreign trinkets.

On the night of the 3rd of February some rain again fell, but it was not heavy enough to penetrate the grass coverings that we had improvised for our baggage. This was the third occasion on which we had now had rain, and although the fall had been very insignificant, in fact scarcely a quarter of an inch, yet the effect was so great as to be almost magical. Its influence alike upon the thirsty earth and withered steppes was very wondrous, and the sprouting stalks of grass bore ample witness to the invigoration that it brought.

A broad valley, alternately steppe and cultivated land, spread itself out around the residence of Nganye, and through its midst there wound a watercourse which now was dry. Over this we made our way; and mounting the opposite acclivity, proceeded one league onwards to the west, thus for the time reversing our previous progress. Black and barren were the burnt steppes at this season, when the elephant-hunting was all over, and they were unrelieved as yet by any vegetation. Literally our feet trod upon the embers of the burnt grass, very much to the detriment of my own white costume, and involving a large consumption of my soap that had been so laboriously procured from oil of sesame, burnt wood, and oyster-shells. Around the base of the charred



bushes there were little lines of green where the young sprouting herbage broke through the earth, and now and then some opening blossom would give an unexpected beauty to the scene. It almost seemed as if these early-blooming children of Flora had been waiting for a few drops of the rain that they might escape from the womb with the remnant of the sap which it had yet to give. Upon the general gloomy aspect of the landscape these rare scattered blooms of course could make no impression; it was needful to seek for them, and bend low to find them; they were modest as the violet which seems to hide itself by the wayside, and yet has charm enough to detain the passer-by.

A charming walk of two leagues and a half brought us to a subsidiary holding of Nganye's, named after its superintendent Gumba. The villages of the district were abundant in corn, and afforded too welcome a chance for the hungry bearers to resist making there their halting-place; the prospect, moreover, of brimming beer-flasks had its wonted attraction with the Nubians. The goal was full in view; a little ridge of hills beckoned hospitably from afar, and immediately beyond were the broad acres of cultivated land which belonged to Gumba.

A region was this which rarely failed to supply charming halting-places, and we could take our noontide rest in shady yet breezy positions beneath the spreading trees. The tamarind, however, which hitherto had thrown over us its pleasant canopy during our way along the lonely desert, now failed entirely, and I saw it again no further to the south; so also Mungo Park's butter-tree, which had been so prominent a feature upon the red soil of the Bongo and the Dyoor, now disappeared completely from the scene; but on the other hand there were here displayed as much as in the northern latitudes the *Parkia*, the *Azelia*, the *Vitex*, the fig, and the *Khaya*, whilst with these there were intermingled many new and striking forms of incomparable beauty.





The country hereabout was tolerably secure, the Niam-niam being desirous to secure Aboo Sammat's friendship in order to ward off any mischief that might arise from the dangerous neighbourhood of Sabby. I considered it sufficiently safe to venture upon a little tour, attended only by my two Niam-niam servants. Directing my steps to the hill, I found that it was only like a hundred others, a pile of brown roe-stone, and apart from the open panorama it afforded, it possessed no interest at all. All along I gathered weeds and plants in ever-fresh variety.

Making at length our halt at a hamlet, my two companions drew my attention to a valuable production of their land. Underneath one of the granaries, which was supported in the usual way upon posts, was a great pile of firmly-pressed clay. On this an old woman was hammering with the pestle belonging to her mortar, and having knocked a hole, she drew out some tubers of a kind that I did not recognise. I afterwards found that it was the Colocasia, which is cultivated very freely throughout the Niam-niam country, and which when boiled makes a very excellent vegetable. The thick covering of clay is put over them not only to keep them moist in the dry season, but also to defend them from the ravages of rats, worms, and white ants. Whenever any of the tubers are required it is only needful to knock a hole through the clay, which can be plastered up again with a few handfuls of fresh mud. The same plan is also adopted in the rainy season to protect the crops from damp and rot; thus clay, everywhere abundant, is an universal antidote to the violence of nature.

As the darkness came on, our camp was enlivened by the appearance of the grotesque figure of a singer, who came with a huge bunch of feathers in his hat, and these, as he wagged his head to the time of his music, became all entangled with the braids of his hair. Altogether the head was like the head of Medusa. These "minne-singers" among the Niam-niam are known as "uzangah." They are as sparing

of their voices as a worn-out *prima donna* ; except for those close by, it is impossible to hear what they are singing. Their instrument is the local guitar, the thin jingling of which accords perfectly well with the nasal humming of the minstrel's recitative. The occupation of these nzangah, however, notwithstanding the general love of the people for music, would not appear to be held in very high esteem, as the same designation is applied to those unfortunate women, friendless and fallen, who are never absent from any community. Quite contrary to the practice of the neighbouring tribes, they have nothing to do with boisterous music, and only use their drums and horns for the purpose of signals. The minstrelsy of the Niam-niam may be said to have the character of a lover's whisper.

Starting again and proceeding to the south, after an agreeable walk of about three hours, we arrived at the quarters of Bendo, a brother of Nganye, who had set him in charge of one of his best and most populous districts. The homesteads were all scattered over a wide and well-cultivated area, which extended with a northerly aspect along the declivity of an elevation of gneiss that rose to an altitude of about 200 feet. This hill was named Gumango ; before we reached it we had to cross a considerable stream called the Rye, which throughout the year is always flowing. Uninfluenced hitherto by the rain, its breadth was now about forty feet, and its depth was sufficient to allow us to enjoy a pleasant bath at a spot where it ran beneath the shelter of some thick *Psychotriæ*. Tall popukky grass covered the banks, amidst which the splendid Nathalia, with its blossoms fine as those of a horse-chestnut, rose in all its beauty. The whole region, on either side the stream, was well cultivated, and look whichever way we would, we saw groups of farmsteads, although villages, in our sense of the term, did not exist.

Each family resides close to, if not actually upon, the



land it cultivates. The insecurity of property is everywhere so great, that rather than relinquish their incessant watch over their crops, the people submit to many inconveniences and live far away from watercourses, put up with short supply of firewood, and brave the ravages of the white ants. Hostility, in this land, does not simply mean plunder and escape; the enemy is vengeful, and if he can carry nothing off, will damage all he finds, and destroy the rising crops.

The Rye empties itself into the river Sway, as the Dyoor is termed by the Niam-niam, although by the Bongo and Dyoor it is called the Geddy. Close to the rising eminence of Gumango, the Rye upon its left shore receives a considerable stream flowing from the marshy plains, along the banks of which are scattered numerous farmsteads surrounded by plantains. This was the first time I had seen the *Musa sapientium* in any quantities; just beyond the Nile district in the Monbuttoo country it becomes the very staple of the people's food. The cultivation of the plantain seems to be a speciality of all the equatorial regions of Africa, from Uganda on Lake Ukerewe right away to the western lands on the Gaboon and Ogowai.

Our encampment had been made to the north-east of Gumango in a great grove of Zawa-trees (*Lophira alata*). Of this tree very few detached specimens are met with. It belongs to a class which flourishes beyond the range of the woods of the river banks, and will grow on a tolerably dry soil. Very noble is it in its growth, and so fine, that Colonel Grant has pronounced it to be the fairest memorial of his famous tour. Its bark is jet black, and it has a cylindrical crown of narrow quivering leaves, which vary in length from a foot to a foot and a half, whilst their breadth is rarely a couple of inches. Whilst it is young the colour of the foliage is purple, which subsequently changes to a deep sap-green. Every leaf is of a leathery texture, deeply wrinkled, and its surface smooth as if it were varnished. The blossoms repose

in thick masses upon the extremities of the boughs; in colour they resemble those of the tea-tree, and emit a fragrant odour sweet as roses. It is one of the most serviceable productions of the country, as its fruit, which is about as large as a hazelnut, yields a prolific supply of oil, of which the quality is singularly pure, while it is neither rank in smell nor coarse in taste. For my own part I much prefer the oil that is thus obtained to either that of the oil-palm, or of the butter-tree.

All the morning I pursued my botanising on the river Rye, and all the afternoon upon the sides and summits of Gumango. The arched surface of the rising mound of gneiss, stretching out without a rift, was the habitat of several very interesting ferns. Here I found the first specimen of *Encephalartus* which had ever been discovered in the northern latitudes of Africa. The joy of this surprise was no transient thing; but as often as the eye of the collector glances over the treasures he has brought from afar, it surveys a permanent memorial of his successful tour. The Ensete or wild Musa of Africa, which the Niam-niam call the "Boggumboly" (or little plantain) grows likewise in great abundance upon this interesting hill.

As surveyed from the summit of Gumango, the country, with the variegated colours of its cultivated enclosures, exhibited a thoroughly European aspect. Ploughed fields are nowhere to be seen, but the labour is limited to clearing out the weeds, and loosening the surface of the mould to receive the fine-grained eleusine, which no doubt requires more care than sorghum, which latter is sown broadcast.

All the farmsteads at this time had been deserted by their occupants, who had gone away and abandoned their well-stored granaries. Compared to the number of residences the store of provisions was very great, especially when the advanced season of the year is taken into account, for April was the month in which the new seeds should be planted

out. One with another the huts had three granaries each, two of which were full of eleusine in its original condition, the remaining one being devoted to the same grain after it had been malted.

Everything testified to the fruitfulness of the soil. Sweet-potatoes, yams, and colocasie were piled up in heaps, and our hungry Bongo and Mittoo fell upon them as though they had entered a hostile country. The receptacles for corn, being circular erections of clay, supported on posts, and furnished with a covering which lifted up and down like a lid, were soon emptied, and the immediate neighbourhood of our quarters was like a scene of rapine and plunder.

The arrangements of the Niam-niam huts are much the same throughout the land. Two, or at most three, families reside close together. Generally from eight to twelve huts are clustered round one common open space, which is kept perfectly clean, and in the centre of which is reared a post upon which the trophies of the chase are hung. Skulls of the rarest kind, splendid horns of antelopes and buffaloes, are attached to this standard, and, it must be added, skulls of men and withered hands and feet! Close in the rear of the huts, upon the level ground, were the magazines for corn; behind these would be seen a circle of Rokko fig-trees, which are only found in cultivated spots, and the bark of which is prized, far more than the handsomest of skins, as a material to make into clothing. Further in the background might be noticed a perfect enclosure of paradise figs; then in wider circumference the plantations of manioc and maize; and, lastly, the outlying fields of eleusine extending to the compound next beyond. I sketched several of the huts, which are embellished externally with black and white decorations. Several of the dwellings had roofs which rose upwards in two points; long poles projected from the peaks alike of huts and of granaries, and on these were strung rows of great land-snails (*Achatina*).

After some time we found Bendo himself arrayed in an apron of red flannel which had been given him by Mohammed. He looked very much disconcerted at seeing his property laid under such heavy contribution, but he was utterly helpless to arrest the havoc. The promise was given that Mohammed, when he arrived, would compensate him for all his loss by ample presents of copper rings and other gifts; and, as matter of fact, we found Bendo, at the time of our return, perfectly satisfied in his old quarters, and ready to show many proofs of the friendly interest with which he regarded me.

Besides Bendo and Gumba, Nganye had four brothers,—Imma, Mango, Nyongalia, and Mbeli,—who acted as his deputies, and had the charge of various districts. Intimidated by his alliance with Aboo Sammat, they were subservient to him with the obedience of vassals. There was, however, a seventh brother, Mbagahli, known by his Arabic name of Surroor, who was the direct subordinate of Aboo Sammat, and had been established in command of the wide country vanquished by him, which was bounded by the territories of Nganye, Wando, and Mbeeoh. Nganye had only two sons recognised as legitimate, Imbolutiddoo and Mattindoo, the former of which was destined to be the heir of his dignity. Nganye's father was Moonuba, one of the six sons of Yapahti, who must not be confused with another prince of the same name whose territories lay to the south of Dar Fertect.

On the 6th of February our march was maintained for a distance of six leagues until we arrived at the Sway. Whilst marching in single file it was very difficult to hold any communication with those who were before me or behind. Thus for a great part of the way I kept up no conversation at all, and had to obtain all my information about the country at the places where we halted, and where from the examination of several people I could learn the truth; going always upon

the principle that in Africa what *two* witnesses state has some degree of probability, but when *three* agree, there is a moral certainty. As we proceeded, my attention was sufficiently occupied by observing the plants on both sides of our road, and every now and then I counted our steps in order to ascertain our rate of marching, the people, meanwhile, giving me the credit for muttering my prayers.

For the first and last time during our whole journey, I had a sharp contention with Aboo Sammat's soldiers. Their conduct to the natives excited my indignation more and more every day, and an incident now occurred that thoroughly passed my powers of endurance. I could not without remonstrance allow one of the Nubians to maltreat the bearer that had been consigned to him by Bendo, and to strike him till his face was covered with blood, merely because he had broken a common calabash. But however much my sympathy with the negroes might make me a favourite with them, it could only be exhibited at the cost of a sacrifice of friendship with the Nubians, who were so indispensable for my comfort and necessities. I got the reputation of being a partisan and defender of the blacks, and more than once I was bitterly reproached because, as it was said, I reckoned the word of one negro of more account than that of ten Mussulmans. Under all similar circumstances, I learnt as far as I could to keep myself neutral, and thus happily I avoided much friction with either party. But it should be mentioned that I was never a witness of that abandoned cruelty and systematic inhumanity which the accounts of previous travellers in the lands of the Upper Nile might lead us to expect. A traveller to be just will take into consideration all the circumstances of the case and all the ameliorating particulars which may be alleged; but in the majority of these narratives, which make the hair almost stand on end, the judgment that is passed is not unfrequently warped and exaggerated. There is no justification for the



pride with which we civilised people boast of our humanity. We have only to reflect upon the horrors that follow in the train of our wars, and if we could enfranchise ourselves from prejudice we should be compelled to allow that we are worse barbarians than all the Nubians—nay, that we are murderers by deliberate intention, and destroyers of the happiness of the homes of thousands.

As ill-luck would have it, on this same day a bullet came whistling by close to my ear. Once before, during my stay at Fashoda, on the White Nile, as the reader may recollect, I had been in peril of my life through the excessive carelessness of the Nubian soldiers in handling their arms; and not only was the danger renewed now, but a few days later it was repeated for the third time. On this occasion a group had camped out on the side of the road as I was defiling past in the caravan. One of the men had his comrade's gun in his hand, and was apparently examining it, when, as I was within a few paces of him, it went off. All that I heard was the cry of alarm on the part of the man that he wished he had known the gun was loaded; my own people flocked around me in consternation, but I passed on without turning my head, as though I had heard nothing. After the events of the day my mode of proceeding was designed to make an impression on the people, and succeeded in winning the hearts of all, especially as I never passed a single remark upon the whole transaction. The result was that everyone looked upon me as protected by a good star, and that every attempt upon my life would be utterly unavailing.

Our further progress led us, for two leagues from the residence of Bendo, along cultivated lands which were covered with farmsteads. On either hand, and apparently united with Gumango, stretched out ranges of granite hills to the south and south-east. One hill in particular lay to the left of our way, which was very long, but not higher than Gumango. The three succeeding leagues were all down-hill across a

desert, and we had to pass some marshy courses, and several of what for want of a better name may be called "meadow-waters," which at this season of the year were quite dry. These localities in Kanori, the dialect of Bornoo, are called "nyalyam." Barth mentions them as one of the most characteristic features of Central Africa, between the Shary and the Benwe.\* The prevailing character of the landscape was that of a steppe lowland, broken now and then by park-like woods.

The southern limit of Nganye's territory is reached at the river Sway, which flows through the desert land which bounds alike his territories and Aboo Sammat's. Just one league before we arrived at the river we passed the hamlets of Marra, who was a "behnky" of Nganye's. The Sway is the upper Dyoor, and according to the uniform representations of the Niam-niam, it is considered as the main stream. I came across its source at the mountain of Baginze, where, although it is but a little brook, it is called by the same name. The proofs that I can adduce for the identity of the Dyoor and Sway are conclusive enough to establish it for a certainty, and they appear worthy of some special notice here, since they may serve to throw some light upon the question of the independence of the Welle, as a system distinct from that of the Nile basin.

1. There is no doubt that the length of the river's course between the two points where I crossed it, the one in Marra's district and the other in Bongo-land, near Manganya, amounts to 145 miles; but the positions, which I accurately determined, of the south Bongo Seribas, belonging to Ghattas and Kurshook Ali, and the assertion of these two men that the Dyoor flows due north from a distance of at least 70 miles

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\* They correspond to what in the Mark of Brandenburg are called "Luche" (from the Slavonian, "Luga," a pond), being meadow-like depressions from which the water passes by subterranean channels.

above the fording-place near Manganya, virtually reduce the portion of the course that I did not explore to one-half.

2. At Marra, the Sway was already a stream with a volume of water sufficient to have an important share in the formation of the Dyoor.

3. All the Niam-niam that were questioned by me in Kurkur and Dangah, and who came from parts of their native land adjacent to these places, plainly and uniformly called the Dyoor by the name of the Sway; and without ever having been to Marra they were quite aware that the river came from the parts intermediate between the lands of Nganye and Wando.

4. Upon the road which the roving ivory companies of Mundo take over what was formerly Tombo's territory, the Sway is crossed near Fomboia, at a place that corresponds to the curve which the river describes in my map.

5. The most important river flowing towards the north and east that must be crossed by expeditions proceeding southwards from Dem Bekeer in Dar Ferteet, is the Nomatilla or Nomatina, which according to all accounts is identical with the upper course of the Wow or Nyenahm, and is at all events the largest tributary of the Dyoor. From Solongoh's residence, past which it flows, the Nubians have followed the course of the Nomatilla right down into the lands of the Bongo and Dyoor. There are no other important tributaries that the Dyoor can possibly receive upon the left; the Sway must, therefore, necessarily be the whole and entire upper course of the Dyoor.

To myself it was a great satisfaction thus to have placed beyond a doubt the origin of at least one of the principal source streams of the region of the upper Nile; and thus definitely to have assigned its geographical position to Mount Baginze.

The Sway flows past Marra along a level steppe, which on account of the rapid flow and deep channel of the river can

only rarely, and that at the time of the rainfall, be under water. At this time the banks were perpendicular, rising to a height of some 18 or 20 feet, and being cut through layers of alluvial soil very much reminded one of the Nile "guefs." The distance between bank and bank was 40 feet, but the actual river was now about 25 feet wide. Its depth was about 4 feet, and it was flowing at the rate of 120 feet a minute. The volume of water which passed was thus 200 cubic feet in a second, whilst the Dyoor, before its union with the Wow, at the dry season in the end of December, did not roll onward a volume of more than 1176 cubic feet. In the middle of June again the Sway had a volume of 1650 cubic feet to the second; whilst the Dyoor in the rainy season, at the point I have just mentioned, exhibited a volume of 8800 to 14,800 cubic feet.

This apparent discrepancy between the proportions of water of the two rivers at the opposite seasons of the year, is nevertheless quite in accordance with physical laws, and is consequently adapted to the purposes of demonstration. The drainage of the land outwards from its springs takes place in definite channels. These channels are represented by the great rivers which take their rise in the highest districts. The rain, uniformly spread throughout the country, makes its escape to its destination by the courses which are periodically opened in the smaller streams which become tributary to the larger. Compared, therefore, to what they are in the winter, the great rivers are not during the rainy season proportionately increased to the same extent as the smaller.

All the tributaries of the Dyoor (even to the great Wow, to which the Dyoor owes at least one-third of its volume), as far as they are known to me, have in winter the most trifling significance. Upon the right are the Rye, the Lako, and the Lengbe; on the left the Hoo, the Yubbo, and the Bikky. Any small addition which the little affluents might be able to yield in the winter is all lost by infiltration and by

evaporation, so that their entire and united efficiency is so unimportant as to be of no account whatever.

The sun had not risen on the 7th of February when we started on our passage over the river. A bath, no doubt, after the heat and fatigue of the previous day was very refreshing, but on this occasion it was involuntary; and as we waded up to our necks in water I was conscious of sacrificing the cosy warmth which a preparatory cup of tea had given my stomach to the cause of science.

Through a charming bush forest, which, though destitute of large trees, was most imposing in the luxuriance and size of its foliage, our long column continued its march. These bush woods, remarkable for the large dimensions of their leaves, predominate everywhere throughout the countries of the Bongo and of the Niam-niam; they contain little of the nature of the steppes, except in parts where there is space left for the grass to spring up in abundance. Districts destitute of trees could not anywhere be found except upon the rocky flats or amidst the damp and marshy lowlands. The outspread of green was so universal, that, camp where we would, we were like the eggs in a bowl of salad. Let arable land lie but a couple of years in fallow, and it will break out into a young but dense plantation; the roots of the shrubs that have been cut down send up new shoots, and the whole is soon again a mass of verdure. It should nevertheless be mentioned that every tree that is either fine in itself or useful in its product is always spared and allowed to stand. The charm of the landscape at this early season of the year is very fascinating, and beyond a question April and May are months full of delight in Africa.

Before noon we had reached the little river Hoo, which after flowing as far as the eye could reach through continued steppes, at a spot a few leagues further down unites itself to the Sway. At this period it was a mere brook rather than a river, with a level sandy bed varying from 35 to 20 feet in



breadth; it had but a languid flow and seldom was above 2 feet in depth. The banks are very low, and the rainfall consequently soon makes it overflow its limits and swamp the adjacent steppes as far as the very limits of the woods. The plants which flourish on its borders, trees and shrubs alike, clearly reveal that for months together they have been under water.

We took an hour's rest, which was spent in making a cup of tea and in disposing of a kala-bok (*Antelope leucotis*) which I had shot upon our way as a herd had crossed our path. A fine landscape was open before us to the east, and upon the outspread plain were herds of buffaloes of which the movements afforded us some entertainment. They went to and fro in groups of several hundreds along the ground that was furrowed by their tracks, and over land which in the dry season alone was rugged and uneven. Whenever we crossed any extensive river-plains we always fell in with herds of buffaloes; but we observed that vestiges of elephants were comparatively very rare, although the indications were not wanting that even quite recently some had been upon the scene. But to these sagacious creatures a trodden path is a thing to be eschewed, and they prefer to pursue their long marches under the obscurity of night. If any one would prosecute elephant-hunting to advantage, he must, as a matter of course, renounce every other aim whatever.

From the flats where the Hoo lay low, we proceeded through an undulating rocky bush-wood to an adjacent brook called the Atoborroo. Sunk in a deep chasm 80 feet deep it was hardly perceptible from above, and streamed on overmassed by the densest marsh foliage. The vegetation of the woods offered me a fresh feast of plants that I had never before seen, and I enjoyed an especial pleasure in the discovery of thickets of a species of ginger-plant, which filled the valley all around with the most delicious aromatic perfume, and grew quite down to the edge of the water.

Damp and foggy was the following morning as our caravan moved on its way. We had proceeded but a short distance when our advanced party came to a standstill. This was a symptom that a brook or river of some sort had obstructed further progress. These continual delays and interruptions contributed somewhat to the difficulty of keeping a systematic record of my wayfaring experiences. Through the tall grass and high bushes I endeavoured to push my way to the head of the line, but I could only succeed in arriving in time to see the first company follow their banner over the Manzilly. Along a ravine deeply overhung by the broad branching foliage of the fig-trees, the stream rushed on to the north-east, a direction precisely the reverse of what was followed by the Hoo, which ultimately received the waters of all the minor streams which came from the western heights. At every time of the year these water-courses are all very rapid, and generally speaking they run over gravel beds in distinction from the marshy mould of the more sluggish streams. In these cases the tedious process of undressing is limited to merely taking off one's socks and boots, and this is a considerable saving of time.

Shortly after this we came to a small, albeit a very small piece of primeval forest, containing giant fig-trees, commonly called gum-trees, and indeed of a species not unlike the *Ficus elastica*. As a forerunner of greater surprises still to come, there rose before my view the first thicket of the calamus (the rotang or Spanish reed), which deserves a foremost place in every description of the woods that line the river-banks in the Niam-niam lands. It was a "gallery" or avenue in miniature, such as I should find on a larger scale along the side of nearly all the smaller streams to the south. This conception, so necessary to an adequate topographical representation of the land, will be discussed in a somewhat later page.

After a while we reached a second brook beside the farm-

steads of Kulenjo, which are the first settlements of the Niam-niam subject to the immediate control of Aboo Sammat. The possessions of each separate Niam-niam are parted from each other, just in the same way as the territories of the different tribes, by desolate intervals void of any residents whatever, nominally for the purpose of security, so that the inhabitants may by placing out a watch easily guard against any sudden attack. When there is mutual distrust, or in times of open war, watches are of little service in signalling danger, for then every Niam-niam, as a true hunter, passes his whole time in watching and lying in wait.

During the entire day I occupied myself among the magnificent thickets on the stream near Kulenjo, the vegetation, so different from what I had seen in other parts of the Nile district, and of which I had had only a foretaste on the Atazilly, being here revealed in its full splendour. The flora embraces the majority of the plants of the western coasts of tropical Africa that are known on the Gaboon, the Niger, and the Gambia, and overstepping the watershed dividing the Nile districts from the basin of the Tsad, opens to the traveller from the north the unexpected glory of the wildernesses of Central Africa. Though all was but a faint reflection of the rich luxuriance of the primeval forests of Brazil, yet, in contrast to what had gone before, it could not fail to be very charming. Throughout the twenty-six degrees of latitude over which I travelled, the progress of vegetation, according to the geographical zone and the meteorological condition of the successive lands, was organised with wonderful simplicity. For the first 800 miles stretched the dreary desert, giving place to wide steppes, void of trees, but ever covered with grass; next came the delightful region of the bush forests, where the vegetation, divested of the obnoxious thorns of the desert, recalled the soft foliage of his native land to the mind of the traveller, who lastly entered upon what he might correctly call the true primeval forest

which carried him back to the memories of his youth when he yielded his fancy to the fascinations of 'Robinson Crusoe' or of 'Paul and Virginia.' An identical change gradually supervening in the character of vegetation is perceptible in a contrary direction in the southern half of the continent; and travellers proceeding from the Cape northwards to the Equator have rarely failed to draw attention to the fact.

Nature everywhere proceeds upon the principle of levelling what is opposite and balancing what is extreme: she would seem to abhor the sharply-defined boundaries in which man delights so much, and in accordance with this law she here presents to the eye of the inquirer a transition that is very gradual, so that the limits of her districts overlap one another like the fingers of folded hands. Even in lat.  $7^{\circ}$  N. small isolated tracts of bank-forest, bearing, however, the characteristic types of the "gallery" flora, are scattered like enclaves among the bush-forests of the distant north. The forests at Okale, at Yagla, and the locality called "Genana," are examples which I have already mentioned.

Nowhere did the guinea-fowl afford better sport than along the stream at Kulenjo; about noon their grey plumage could be seen in the shade of the foliage as they perched aloft in the trees at the edge of the wood, where they could be brought down one after another with the greatest ease. The keen vision of the Niam-niam did me good service in spying out the birds from a distance, for the waving green around me made me almost blind. The early morning likewise is not an unfavourable time for getting at guinea-fowl; they begin their flight very shortly after sunrise, but even then they are too much occupied in securing their food to heed the approach of any tolerably cautious sportsman.

The reader may perchance wonder at my frequent mention of these guinea-fowl, and I would therefore be allowed to explain that the traveller in Africa would be quite at a loss without them, as, with rare exceptions, they form the main

commodity of his daily *cuisine*. In the course of five years I daresay I brought down as many as a thousand of these birds, generally two at a time. By using the lightest shot that can be obtained, and aiming high, failure is quite exceptional, as the smallest grain that hits the long neck is sure to bring down the game. With dogs, even when untrained, securing the birds is a still more easy matter. The guinea-fowl cannot fly far at a time, and therefore when they perceive the dogs in the long grass, they seem to realise their inability to escape, and take refuge on the nearest bough. Often while my dogs have surrounded a tree, I have brought down from a distance of thirty or forty feet one guinea-fowl after another, without a single bird having ventured to leave its hiding-place.

In marching for three days across an open wilderness, the caravan had to be provided by Kulenjo with their ordinary meals, and it was no easy matter in a region so scantily populated to find the necessary food for a thousand hungry mouths. The feeding took place in the evening, and before sunrise in the morning. The whole party of bearers were divided into groups, to which the food was distributed by the different "nyare," or local Bongo overseers, who generally accompany the leaders of these longer expeditions. Handfuls of corn, measured out just as though they were portions for camels or asses, and lumps of bread composed of coarsely-ground impure Teleboon-corn (eleusine), boiled to a pulp, formed the wretched allotment and composed the substance of a meal such as we should hesitate at giving even to our cattle. Frequently in the wilderness they are reduced to the necessity of cooking and eating their corn unground. In comparison with this vile and wretched provision, linseed-cake and bran would be accepted by the Bongo and Mittoo bearers as choice delicacies. The natives bring them their pulpy bread in baskets, and by counting the great lumps of dough, which were packed in green leaves, it was possible,



with some approximation to truth, to estimate the number of families appointed to take their share in providing the supplies.

Dainties more tempting and *recherché* were brought in gourd-shells. The natives who brought these alone formed a goodly company, consisting chiefly of boys and children; the women, being shy, and also jealously guarded by their husbands, remained behind at home.

I must not omit to mention the vegetables, which, when circumstances permitted, were also brought for the bearers. These vegetables, served with sauces, were arranged in hundreds of gourd-shells, pots, and bowls, round the immense pile of the so-called bread. The sauces, which were greatly relished by the Bongo, consisted of a compound of animal and vegetable grease, water, soda, and aromatic herbs. The chief ingredients in the finer sorts were grains of sesame and hyptis, pounded to a pulp, whilst the inferior kinds were mainly composed of the Zawa-oil of the *Lophira alata* and oil of termites. Those with the most piquant flavour are made of dried fish, which is pounded and rolled into balls like cheese; in consequence of the heat of the climate these very soon acquire a *haut goût*. Neither Bongo nor Niam-niam will touch pimento, as they consider its very pungency to be an evidence of its poisonous properties; consequently they seek a substitute in stinking fermented matter.

Common salt is absolutely unknown in this part of Africa; the only salt to be procured being extracted from the ashes of the wood of the *Grewia*; consequently the greasy soups when boiled coagulate almost into a kind of soap, and their flavour may be more easily imagined than described. To make specially attractive sauces there is added the flesh of elephants and buffaloes, which has been previously dried and pounded. Any fat from meat is all but unknown: Nature appears to have quite denied any supply to animals that are wild, and the Niam-niam have no domestic animals like their neighbours; whilst the fat of dogs and men, even if it were

not loathsome to the Bongo, would be far too rare and costly to be used for such a purpose. Such is the usual food supplied to the native bearers, and according to their notion it is probable that no more grateful diet could be prescribed.

At some seasons other products of the soil, such as the larger kinds of gourds, are added to the catalogue of supplies. Gourd-leaves, too, which can be gathered throughout the year, together with various herbs, which are found neither to be unwholesome nor to have the flavour of pimento, are pounded and mixed with the soups. Vegetables proper are rarely grown, but whatever weeds may spring up on all cultivated soils are employed as a substitute, and play as important a part in the economy of the food as many articles that are used on our own tables; they serve partly as material to thicken the soups, and partly as nourishment to satisfy hunger. As I proceeded further on my journey, I found that manioc, sweet-potatoes, and green plantains took the place of the corn-pap and Bongo sauces, whilst it should be observed that in the more northerly regions cereals formed the basis of the food.

On the twelfth morning of our march I rose with the welcome prospect of that day reaching Aboo Sammat's Seriba. Attending to my toilet, and taking my time over my breakfast, I did not quit the camp at Kulenjo until long after the last of the bearers had left. The day brought me along a charming walk, and yielded a fine harvest of botanical treasures; we crossed four streams, passed several isolated hamlets, and finally entered a dense forest of lofty trees. This was no park with its alternations of meadows and thickets, trees and groves: it was a veritable forest in our northern sense, but infinitely more lovely and varied, and not marked by the solemn monotony of our native woods. In contrast to the surrounding country, the forest land extended over an area of many miles to the north and south of the

Seriba, and nowhere did it show an exclusive predominance of any single species. Trees there were most striking and stately, but the most remarkable circumstance about them was the diversity they displayed; a fact that may be comprehended, when it is stated that amongst thirty adjacent trees were found representatives of no less than twenty different classes.

## CHAPTER XI.

Aboo Sammat's territory. Jungle on the brooks. Discovery of wild pepper. Giant trees. Modesty of the Niam-niam women. Fresh danger from a bullet. A Bongo poisoned by manioc. Liberal treatment of bearers. Nduppo's disagreement with Wando. Savage admiration of Europeans. The skin-trade. Wando's braggings and threatenings. Formation of columns for war. Natives as soldiers. Difficulties of river-fording. Difference of level of soil on the watersheds. Mohammed's prelude to drinking beer. Division of forces. Primeval forest on the Lindukoo. Rikkete's jealousy. Varieties of genets. Mohammed's *réveille*. Morning toilet of the Niam-niam. Water-fall on the Lindukoo. Magic roots. Watershed of the Nile district. Simple geological formation of Central Africa. The chimpanzee and pandanus found only beyond the watershed. Confusion in crossing the brook. Africa's revenge on the white man. Venturesome interview of Mohammed with Wando. Value of ivory and copper. Definition of a "gallery-wood." Duality of vegetation. Wando visits my tent. Wando's *nonchalance*. A specimen of native cookery. Six Nubians murdered by Niam-niam. The leaf-eater and grass-man.

ONE of the native chieftains, as I have already mentioned, had exhibited so much hostility, and had been so great an obstacle to Mohammed Aboo Sammat's ivory trade in Wando's district, that Mohammed had proceeded to violence and had wrested away his territory. This chieftain was now dead, and Mohammed in his place had appointed a native spearman of royal blood. Mohammed had a considerable number of these spearmen, natives of the Niam-niam country, who were brought into his Seribas, and having been initiated into the use of fire-arms, formed one of the main supports of his authority. Backed by the continual presence of some forty or fifty armed Nubians, Surroor (for such was the name of the new vicegerent) held sway over a populous area of 700 square miles. According to the joint

estimate made by Mohammed and Surroor, the number of men in the territory capable of bearing arms was not less than 40,000. I believe, however, that half this number would be nearer the mark; for when I test my impressions by comparing them with the results of my careful investigations in Bongo-land, I cannot but think that the entire population of the Niam-niam country, with its wide tracts of wilderness utterly uninhabited, hardly averages 65 to the square mile.

Since here amongst the bearers there is no institution of statute labour, and the number of villages and huts could only be arrived at by careful scrutiny of an entire district, the only means open to me for estimating the amount of population was by taking what reckoning I could of the people who assembled on either side of our route as we passed along. These may be divided into three classes: first, those who had come from mere curiosity; secondly, those who had been ordered to settle in a district to contribute towards the general means of subsistence; and, thirdly, the fighting-force that was displayed in various places during time of war, and which most probably represented the large majority of the men who were capable of bearing arms.

The strongholds in this district consist of one large Scriba and three smaller palisaded enclosures. In these subsidiary settlements discipline is maintained by native overseers with a small detachment of armed men.

The personal relation of the Niam-niam towards their rulers was far less servile than what I had observed among the Bongo and Mittoo. The duties imposed were mainly the same. They were bound to assemble promptly at any signal either for war or for hunting, to provide an adequate support for whatever soldiers and bearers might be brought into the country; to furnish wood and straw for building purposes, and to perform various incidental labours. The



Niam-niam, however, are not employed as bearers upon the expeditions, and upon the whole are less oppressed and are treated with more consideration than the Bongo. At present they can hardly comprehend their state of subjection, and this indefinite feeling is fostered at first by leniency on the part of the oppressors, that they may smooth the way for severer measures in the future.

The power of any native chiefs among such a people of unsettled habits and unpliant temper as the Niam-niam—a people delighting in the chase—is necessarily at present very limited; it cannot extend any further at all than to accomplish the disposal of whatever men may be capable of bearing arms either for the purpose of warfare or of hunting. The official emoluments of these chiefs are derived partly from an allowance made upon all the ivory that is secured, which is always paid without being contested, and partly from their having a right to half of all the elephant meat; but for their ordinary subsistence they have to turn their attention to the cultivation of the fields; and for this purpose they endeavour to increase their home establishments by the acquisition of as many wives and women-slaves as their resources will allow.

I remained at this place from the 10th to the 26th of February. The Seriba was in lat.  $4^{\circ} 50'$  N., and was 87 miles south—almost due south—of Sabby. It was situated in the angle formed by the confluence of two streams, the Nabambisso and the Boddo, which were overhung by lofty trees, and in some places were enclosed by dense thickets. Close at hand was the “mbanga” of Surroor.

I spent the daytime in an assiduous investigation of the neighbouring woods. My collection increased considerably, and the paper packets prepared for the reception of my treasures were rapidly filled up. The crowds of natives who came from far and near to gaze upon me afforded me an acceptable opportunity of filling up some pages in my album.

My two Niam-niam interpreters (called in Arabic Gyabir and Amber) felt at home upon their native soil, and accompanied me everywhere, making my intercourse with the natives perfectly easy. I was able to roam about at will in the adjacent jungles, as the environs were as safe as those of Ghattas's Seriba in the Dyoor; and, altogether, I was soon as comfortable as I could desire in this remote land.

The scenery was lovely; the two streams never failed throughout the year to be well supplied with water, and flowed through deep glades where the lofty trees were wreathed and festooned with creepers in clustered grace that would have been an ornament to any palm-house. In the part where the supply of water was diverted to the residences the woods had been considerably thinned. The wild date-palm (*Phœnix spinosa*), which may be considered as the original of the species cultivated throughout the desert region from Senegambia to the Indus, grows here as a low shrub, and together with the calamus forms an impenetrable hedge along the banks of the stream. The double barbs of the calamus cling tenaciously to the skin and clothes, reminding one of the prickly acacia to which the Boers, or Dutch colonists in South Africa, have given the name of "wag-a-bitjen," *i. e.* wait-a-bit.

A new characteristic of the flora appears here in the Amomum, which I found in tall masses on the damp soil near the bed of the stream, and even in the water itself. I saw five different species, with white, yellow, and crimson flowers. The fruit of all the kinds is bright red, and contains a soft pulp which has a flavour like citron, and which envelops the aromatic seeds known as grains of paradise. The water of the streams runs clear as crystal, and the traveller may at any time allay his thirst by a cooling draught. Here and there the sun's rays force their way through the interlacing creepers which hang in festoons between stem and stem, and in the twilight the foliage gleams almost like

burnished metal. The Ashantee pepper (*Cubeba Clusii*) clothes the trunks with a close network which is thickly covered with bright red berries that grow in clusters as long as one's finger. After the fruit has been dried it makes a very good substitute for black pepper, which it very much resembles in flavour. I was the first to draw the attention of the Nubians to the plant, for, although they had travelled much in the Niam-niam lands, they had no idea that these berries had the properties of pepper, and seemed highly gratified at the discovery. The Niam-niam take the pepper only as a medicine; for seasoning their dishes they are accustomed to use the Malaghetta pepper (*Habzelia*), of which we shall have to speak on a later page. The Ashantee-pepper is one of the most common and yet at the same time one of the most striking of the characteristics of the primeval forests of the district; it forms the finest adornment of the giant trees, and covers the venerable stems of these princes of the vegetable kingdom with a vesture of royal purple.

One amongst the most imposing forms of vegetation is found in a *Sterculia* of the Cola tribe, called "kokkorokoo." This tree grows to a height of 80 or 90 feet; the stem gradually tapers upwards to a point, whilst at the base it is suddenly expanded to so great a bulk that it would require eight or ten men to encircle it; thence it rises in a mass of narrow arms, corresponding to the direction of the roots, shooting upwards for many feet, like a series of planks joined together edge to edge. The leaves are heart-shaped and form a light and airy foliage, but this commences at such a height above the ground that I was for some time in doubt about the true form of the tree. At length I discovered a shoot bursting from a root that enabled me to realise a proper idea of the plant. It is no uncommon thing in these primeval forests for the botanist thus to see the object of his desire at a height so far above his head that he is unable to attain so much as a single leaf.

It was upon the Boddo that I found the first specimens of *Anthocleista*. The flora of the Niam-niam countries contains several species of this genus of the Loganiaceæ, which is remarkable for the immense size and small number of its leaves that grow all together at the crown of a single stem running up without a branch. Let any one imagine a tobacco plant magnified to ten times its natural size and placed upon the top of a stem some twenty feet high, and he will then have some idea of this plant with its circling labyrinth of leaves. In any drawing of a landscape the *Anthocleista* defies every rule of perspective. The equatorial zone alone can boast of plants so unique in character as these, which may be considered as samples of the unexplored splendour of the primeval forests of Brazil.

After every ramble I turned my steps to Surroor's mbanga, and my visits there were always enjoyable, because I ever found something fresh that sensibly enlarged my knowledge of the country. There was invariably a large assemblage of natives about the vicegerent's court, and among them a considerable number of women; for Surroor, besides his thronging harem, kept a great many female slaves in attendance upon himself and his wives. As a guest of Mohammed's I was always treated here with the utmost respect. The most elaborate benches and stools were brought out for me to sit on, and Surroor's store of these exemplars of native art was inexhaustible. The choicest delicacies of the country were outspread before me, but these were to me as prohibited as shewbread. I always made a rule of eating alone, and consequently felt constrained to leave the dainties to my interpreters and Nubian servants.

Yes; I took my meals alone. A solitary European, as he proceeds farther and farther from his home, may see his old associations shrink to a minimum; but so much the more, with pertinacious conservatism, will he cling to the surviving remnants of his own superiority. Nothing can ever divest

him of the thought as to how he may maintain the prerogative, which he takes for granted, that he is a being of some higher order. Many a misanthrope, in his disgust at the shady side of our modern culture, may imagine that to a traveller, in his intercourse with the children of Nature, the thousand necessities of daily life must seem but trifles vain and empty, to be dispensed with without a sigh. Such an one may fancy that the bonds which fasten him to the world of civilisation are weak and all waiting to be rent asunder as soon as Nature is left to assert her unfettered rights ; but from experience I can assure him that the truth is very different. With the fear of degenerating ever before his eyes, the wanderer from the realms of civilisation will surely fix his gaze almost with devotion on the few objects of our Western culture that remain to him, which (however trivial they are in themselves) become to him symbols little less than sacred. Tables and chairs, knives and forks, bedding, and even pocket-handkerchiefs, will assume an importance that could never have been anticipated, and it is hardly too much to aver that they will rise to a share in his affections.

The social position of the Niam-niam women differs materially from what is found amongst other heathen negroes in Africa. The Bongo and Mittoo women are on the same familiar terms with the foreigner as the men, and the Monbuttoo ladies are as forward, inquisitive and prying as can be imagined ; but the women of the Niam-niam treat every stranger with marked reserve. Whenever I met any women coming along a narrow pathway in the woods or on the steppes, I noticed that they always made a wide circuit to avoid me, and returned into the path further on ; and many a time I saw them waiting at a distance with averted face, until I had passed by. This reserve may have originated from one of two opposite reasons. It may on the one hand have sprung from the more servile position of the Niam-niam



women themselves; or, on the other, it may have been necessitated by the jealous temperament of their husbands. It is one of the fine traits in the Niam-niam that they display an affection for their wives which is unparalleled among natives of so low a grade, and of whom it might be expected that they would have been brutalised by their hunting and



A Niam-niam Girl.

warlike pursuits. A husband will spare no sacrifice to redeem an imprisoned wife, and the Nubians, being acquainted with this, turn it to profitable account in the ivory trade. They are quite aware that whoever possesses a female hostage can obtain almost any compensation from a Niam-niam.

My exceptional position made it easy for me to procure an order from Surroor that some of his wives should sit for their portraits. This was an unusually favourable opportunity,

and the ladies with their plaited tresses, allowed me to make many additions to my portfolio and to my list of measurements. In this place I measured about fifty different people, taking no less than forty measurements of each. This of course was the work of time, but my trouble was all in vain, for all my notes, with many others, were destroyed in the fire, of which the record will have to be made, on the 2nd of December. Altogether I had carefully registered the measurements of more than 200 individuals belonging to various nations.

During the time that Surroor had acted in the capacity of Mohammed's spearman, he had learnt to speak Arabic fluently, and was therefore able to give me considerable information on many points. I asked many local questions, since the unravelling of the confused hydrographical network in this part of the country was an object which I could never permit to be absent from my thoughts. I was not long, however, in discovering that these Zandey (Niam-niam), although possessing such uniformity in speech and customs, had no more knowledge of the remote parts of their country than the majority of the other natives of Central Africa. I may mention, as an instance of this, that no one in this district knew so much as the name of Mofio, whose territory indeed was 300 miles distant, but whose reputation, as one of the chief Niam-niam princes, might have been presumed to be wide-spread.

Another occasion very shortly afterwards had the effect of impressing the people about me with a very lofty notion of the good genius which presided over my fortune, and protected me from injury. A traveller who has learnt experience will understand the desirableness of turning the progress of events to the advantage of his personal reputation. As I was about to take my seat of honour at Surroor's side on a Monbuttoo bench, my life for the third time was imperilled by a bullet fired from the neighbouring Seriba. The

descending ball passed close to my left, and within a few inches of my forehead; glancing off the palm-sticks which were attached to my seat, it dashed through the roof of an adjacent hut. However much I may have been alarmed, I succeeded entirely in disguising my terror. The Nubians do not possess any wad-hooks for extracting either cartridges or bullets; their guns consequently have to be discharged in order to keep them clean and in proper condition. It may therefore be imagined that in the vicinity of a Nubian camp there is a perpetual whirring and whizzing in the air from the incidental firing of these stray shots.

Hunting in this place, as far as we were concerned, was not to be thought of, as the region was far too thickly populated, and the Niam-niam themselves are such devoted huntsmen that they leave nothing for the stranger beyond the few francolins and guinea-fowl which may escape their snares.

During our sojourn, Mohammed Aboo Sammat, with his faithful black body-guard of true Zandey, had arrived from the Mittoo country. The entire united forces then prepared to advance to the south, Ghattas's agent and plenipotentiary not considering that a division could be ventured upon until we had gained sufficient assurance of the peaceful intentions of Wando, whose territory we should have to cross upon our route. Any apprehensions of hostility, however, were soon allayed, and for a time all went well.

By the 25th of February all the preparations for marching were complete, and, reckoning all Aboo Sammat's and Ghattas's people, we were a body of little short of 1000 strong. Our marching column was not much less than four miles in length, so that it happened more than once, after a short day's march, that those in front were erecting their huts with leaves and grass before those in the rear had lost sight of the smoke of the encampment of the previous night.

Just before starting Mohammed had sent some of his

dependents back to Sabby, and I took the opportunity of remitting by them the botanical collection which I had made. Amongst other plants were two specimens of the remarkable Cycadea, which after all the vicissitudes of travel arrived in Europe in a state of vitality.

Only a small portion of my reserve of cattle was now remaining, and the maintenance of the men in the Seriba had quite exhausted the stores; to Mohammed's great annoyance, even the sorghum-seed, which was to have been conveyed to Munza, king of the Monbuttoo, as a curiosity, had been consumed as material of diet, and thus the heart of Africa had been deprived of one advance in culture.

We proceeded, first of all, two leagues in a westerly direction, and after crossing the Nabambisso and two smaller streams, we made our necessary halt. It was on the western boundary of the cultivated district subject to Aboo Sammat, and before we could venture to quit it, an adequate relay of provisions had to be procured from the neighbourhood.

The feeding of the bearers was an animated scene, enlivened as it was by the concourse of some hundreds of the Niam-niam people. The provision for the most part consisted of great lumps of pappy dough piled upon broad leaves, and served with strong-smelling sauces which were brought in pots, bowls, calabashes, and vessels of every variety. Drawn up on one side, in groups arranged according to the order of their arrival, stood the bearers, whilst the Niam-niam in throngs took their position on the other, and many an eager glance was thrown upon the preparations for the general repast. I took my sketch-book in my hand, and wandering through the ranks preserved my observations of the diversified tattooing which everywhere arrested the eye.

To judge from the representations which have been given us by Du Chaillu, Griffon, and other travellers, I should say that in external appearance the Niam-niam very much resemble the people of the Fan on the Gaboon. The two races

adopt a similar fashion of dressing their hair; both alike have the reputation of being cannibals; and from all accounts their domestic arrangements are not very different.

Almost immediately after starting on the following morning we crossed the Nabambisso, and our course subsequently lay across a group of low mounds of gneiss covered with an interesting vegetation. Here grew in great abundance the *Selaginella rupestris*, clothing the bare rock with a graceful carpet of verdure; and here, too, for the first time since leaving the Red Sea, I was greeted with the sight of the Abyssinian aloe with its fiery barb. This plant belongs to the flora of the loftiest mountains; but although the elevation of the country was scarcely more than 2500 feet, yet it was sufficiently high to permit the plant to thrive; in Nubia, too, it flourishes at an altitude hardly higher than that in which it is conspicuous here. After surmounting the gneiss rocks we crossed the Nabambisso for the second time, and marching onwards in a southerly direction we reached a wide depression, called Yabongo, enclosed by dense bushes like the "Luche" in the Mark of Brandenburg, or perhaps still more like a meadow-pool in the sense of the "nyalnyam" of Bornoo. On the edge of the water many wild *Phoenix* of both sexes were flourishing with greater magnificence than any I had yet seen, their stems running to the height of some twenty feet. For a distance now there were no watercourses above ground to be seen, and shortly afterwards we entered upon another valley which was distinguished by the name of Yabo. The interval between the two hollows was filled by woodlands, graceful as parks, and adorned by many a large-leaved fig-tree bearing a multitude of figs much larger than those we ever grow.

While we were here, one of the Bongo bearers died from the effects of eating manioc before it had been prepared and divested of its poisonous parts. For twenty-four hours before his death he had lain in a state of coma, and a strong emetic



had been entirely without effect. In the Niam-niam countries the manioc roots are of the same uncertain quality as those of South America, and the Bongo being unfamiliar with the differences, often do themselves serious injury on their expeditions by partaking of them indiscriminately.

Not long afterwards another of the Bongo people was carried off by a lion from the side of a bivouac fire; and these two were the only deaths that occurred in the course of the two months that Mohammed's caravan was on its outward way. Probably much was due to the salubrity of the air, which contributed to make the men superior to the drawback of unwholesome food, and to all the exertions, fatigues, and deprivations to which they had to submit; but beyond a doubt the fact spoke volumes for the considerate treatment that the bearers received from Mohammed. He spared his people most studiously, and often rated the soldiers very severely whenever they were impatient or harsh with the bearers; he personally superintended the distribution of all the corn, and in his anger I have heard him revile the troops, telling them that they were good-for-nothing rascals who only knew how to go to sleep, and how to bully the bearers.

Towards noon on the 27th of March we reached the Uzze, a small river running almost parallel with the Sway, and of about the same dimensions as the Hoo, only having a much slower current. The river-bed was twenty-five feet wide, but at this period there was not more than a two-foot depth of water. The stream flowed along an open plain, unrelieved by trees, but animated by many herds of buffaloes, which we did not now stay to chase, but which afforded us excellent sport upon our way back. About two miles to the south of the Uzze we crossed the Yubbo, the two rivers here being quite close together, although they diverge again to a distance of several leagues towards the west before they ultimately unite and join the Sway.

The Yubbo at this time was fifty feet wide, and like the

Uzze was only two feet deep; it meandered along a low steppe which was obviously subjected to inundation, a fact that testified to the importance of the river in the rainy season. Estimated merely with reference to the length of its course, the Yubbo might compete with the Sway for the honour of being chief among the original stream-sources which make up the Dyoor, but the comparison of the volume of water which the separate rivers contain demonstrates that it really performs a very subsidiary part. Another argument that very pointedly tends to prove that the Sway is really the main source rests upon the fact that the natives distinguish it, at its earliest risings, in the defiles of the Baginze, by the same name that the Dyoor itself bears among the Niam-niam in what were formerly the states of Tombo. The development of the Sway, from the aggregated confluence of a number of smaller streams, is as characteristic an example of "river-sources" as the records of geographical science can furnish.

After crossing the deep hollow of the bed of the Yubbo, we met some messengers who had been despatched by Nduppo, Wando's brother, to bid us welcome. Nduppo was chief of a district subject to his brother, with whom, however, he was by no means on good terms. From Nduppo himself, of course, we had no hostilities to fear, as nothing could be of more importance to him than to preserve his friendly relations with Mohammed. As we arrived at his mbanga some hours before night, I had time to make a short visit to a deep ravine at no great distance, that was watered by a streamlet called the Nakofoh, which was almost hidden by the dense groves upon its bank.

Our camp had meanwhile been improvised, a number of grass huts having been speedily erected because of the threatening aspect of the sky; towards evening for some days past there had been the appearance as if a storm were rising, but rain had only fallen twice since the beginning of

the month, and even now the clouds were broken. On reaching the encampment I found Nduppo himself in company with Mohammed. I joined them at once, being as anxious as anyone to get what intelligence I could about Wando and his intentions. It transpired that the feud between Nduppo and his brother had become so violent in rancour that Nduppo avowed that he lived in constant terror of being attacked and murdered by Wando's soldiers, and this cruel destiny which he foreboded did actually befall him a very few days after our departure. For ourselves, the following day would decide whether we were to have peace or war.

Our next move was to the quarters of Rikkete, another brother of Wando's, and who, holding the office of behnky, had remained faithful in his allegiance, and was consequently in avowed hostility to Nduppo. The three brothers were part of the numerous family of Bazimbey, whose extensive dominions, a few years previously, had been divided into six small principalities, a heritage which was a perpetual apple of discord amongst his sons. Bazimbey was one of the six sons of Yapahti, who still retain their rule over nearly all the eastern countries of the Niam-niam.

My personal appearance aroused the most vivid interest on the part of Nduppo and his suite. Their curiosity seemed insatiable, and they never wearied in their inquiries as to my origin. Theirs were the first exclamations of a kind which more or less frequently continued to be made throughout the rest of my journey. To their mind the mystery was as to where I could have come from; my hair was the greatest of enigmas to them; it gave me a supernatural look, and accordingly they asked whether I had been dropped from the clouds or was a visitor from the moon, and could not believe that anything like me had been seen before.

And with regard to this appearance of mine, I may mention that amongst these people of the far interior it hardly seemed to be the colour of my skin that principally

excited their astonishment, for even in the remotest regions of Central Africa, tribes that have no conception of an ocean are aware of the existence of white men; but it was invariably my long straight hair that caused their chief surprise, my own purpose in letting my hair grow to an unusual length being that I might be identified at once amid all the countless shades of complexion that were found amongst the Nubians. I enquired whether they had not seen the traveller Piaggia, that white man who but a few years ago had been staying in their parts with king Tombo; but they replied that although they had heard about him, they had never seen him. In my way, therefore, I was quite unique, and truly a *desideratum* in their ethnographical experience.

Nduppo communicated to us many particulars about his brothers, and about the warfare that was carried on between them, and informed us likewise of the death of Bazimbey's brother Tombo, who had entertained Piaggia with so much hospitality. Tombo's kingdom, it appeared, had likewise been cut up into a number of smaller states which still retained all their national hostility to the intruders from Khartoom. The residence at which Bazimbey had lived, during his sovereignty, was pointed out to me, at a distance which, I should presume, was about 25 miles. It was explained to me that a messenger, if he were strong and could walk well, could accomplish the journey in a day, but, it was added that he must not halt on the way, and that he would have to get on apace like a Niam-niam, and not to dawdle like a Bongo bearer carrying his load.

Throughout the whole of the territory that was subject to Wando, the clothing of all the people consisted of skins, as the fig-tree, of which the bark is so generally used in the south, does not thrive here at all well. For all those who require it, the bark has to be imported from the country of the Monbuttoo, and is consequently an article of luxury. Skins

can ordinarily be obtained at a price which seemed to me ridiculously small. For the purpose of getting a few trifling additions which were necessary for my *cuisine* I was in the habit of breaking up some of my larger copper rings into little bits, and I was very pleased to find how far these copper fragments would go in making purchases of skins of various kinds. In this way I bought a fine otter skin (probably *Lutra inunguis*, Cuv.) for about threepence, genet skins for about a penny apiece, and those of the *Colobus quereza* for a very little more. Very plentiful and consequently equally cheap were the skins of civets, *Herpestes fasciatus*, *Felis maniculata*, *F. caracal* and *F. serval*. The skins of the smaller kinds of antelopes, too, were very frequently offered for sale, especially those of the beautiful *Antilope scripta* (the harness bush-buck of South Africa) and of *A. grimmia*, *A. madoqua*, and the long-haired water-buck (*A. difassa*). It is very strange how, notwithstanding this extraordinary abundance and cheapness of skins, traffic in them, as an article of commerce, is entirely unknown in Khartoom, where the dealers seem to have no suspicion of the large demand there undoubtedly would be. Leopard skins, it may be added, were comparatively rare, and were only used by royal personages to line their shields, or according to their own special prerogative, to encircle their heads. Nduppo wore a serval-skin, of which the ends drooped in graceful folds over his neck and shoulders, whilst great pins, headed with pieces cut from the tail of the *Sciurus leucumbrinus*, held it firmly fastened to his luxuriant hair.

Aboo Sammat was known amongst the Niam-niam by the name of "Mbahly" or "the little one," a designation given him long ago by the people, on account of the youthful age at which he had entered their country. Nduppo informed us that Wando had declared, with what was tantamount to an oath, that Mbahly should not this time escape, but that he and all his crew should be annihilated: he, moreover,



told us that the threats had extended to myself. Wando, he said, avowed that he did not want any presents, and that all the beads in the world were nothing to him; if any offerings were sent he would trample them in the grass; if any stuffs were given him he would rip them into shreds; plenty of copper he had already, and for that matter, plenty of ivory too, but he did not intend to part with any of it.

For a long time it perplexed me to discover the reason of Wando's animosity. Only two years previously he and Mohammed had been on the most friendly terms. Mohammed had visited him at his home, and the two had entered into the closest alliance, which had been sealed by Mohammed marrying his daughter, who as I have already mentioned, was now one of the first ladies in the harem of Boiko. But, meanwhile, Mohammed had been in Khartoom, and during his absence he had entrusted the charge of his expeditions to his brother, who had fallen out with Wando. Mutual recriminations led to mutual plunder, and Wando was now in a rage that could not easily be suppressed.

Nduppo led us to understand that in the course of our next march we should receive definite tidings of Wando's intentions. If an attack were resolved upon, his whole force would be assembled and we should be prevented from going on to Rikkete; but if, on the other hand, we were permitted to reach Rikkete unmolested we might then be sure that there would be a temporary peace. And this in reality we found to be the case. As we were approaching Rikkete we were met by Wando's envoys bringing the accustomed conciliatory flasks of beer. Various circumstances might have weighed with the chieftain to induce him to postpone his outbreak. It is possible that he considered that while Aboo Sammat's and Ghattas's companies were united and could muster 300 guns, the time was not arrived for an attack; he also reckoned, with true African craftiness, that it would be more advantageous to himself to fall upon us on our way

back from the Monbuttoo. He imagined, moreover, that all our valuables which he now so contemptuously rejected would fall into his hands without the necessity of any ivory traffic at all, and that our stores (as being an unnecessary burden to be carried to the Monbuttoo and back) would be deposited in his charge until our return; and in addition to all this, it is not unlikely that he counted with some certainty upon receiving plenty of presents from the liberal Kenoosian.

In order to be ready in a moment for any emergency, our caravan for the first time, on the 28th of February, set out on its journey with its disposition arranged according to the rules of Nubian warfare. The entire body being drawn out in columns, the whole of the armed force was divided into three companies, each headed by its own banner. In front of all marched the first division of the troops, followed by the bearers with the linen goods, the bars of copper, and the store of beads; in the middle of the train was the second division, which had charge of the bulk of the ammunition, chests of cartridges and boxes of powder and caps; then followed the women and female slaves, whilst the third division brought up the rear. For the general security it was ordered that no straggler should be permitted to lag behind or to go farther back than the standard-bearer at the head of the third division. From the nature of the path all were obliged to march in single file, and thus our train, although as compact as possible, swelled out to an enormous length. Independently of the main body, a troop of native soldiers, composed of Bongo and Niam-niam slaves, that had been armed and well trained by Aboo Sammat, was now detached to reconnoitre the thickets in front and on either hand, and to make sure that the advance was safe. As a general rule, these blacks made much more effective soldiers than the Nubians, and upon them fell the heaviest of all the work of war. Their employment of hunting, which

is a pursuit much too laborious for their oppressors, makes them far more expert and practised shots, and besides this, they are heartier in their work and fear neither wind nor weather.

Whilst all the Nubians who carry guns are dignified by the high-sounding title of "Assaker" (soldiers), the natives who may be enlisted are called in the common jargon of the Soudan Arabic, either "Narakeek," "Farookh" or "Bazingir." The precise etymology of these various designations I could never ascertain. There are, however, some words which occur so frequently in the conversation of the Khartoomers that they become indispensable for fully describing the details of service in the countries of the Upper Nile. The "Narakeek," for instance, would appear to be the only men who are trusted with the heavier guns, of which a considerable number, originally intended, no doubt, for elephant-hunting, are now found in the companies of the Khartoomers, and form what might be called their artillery. Mohammed Aboo Sammat had twenty of these guns, of which I ascertained that the majority were manufactured by Roos of Stuttgart. They are not loaded either with conical shot or with explosive bullets, but merely with a handful of heavy deer-shot; their action is very effective, and their first discharge amongst a party of savages rarely fails to send them scampering off at full speed.

It was in crossing the beds of the brooks and in getting through the thickets that bounded them that the greatest precautions were requisite. All our long experience had made us quite aware how easily a caravan may be thrown out of marching order and put into the greatest confusion by the mere irregularity of the soil, and under such circumstances every attempt at defence must be unavailing: bullets might do some service when deliberately aimed at an open foe, but would be utterly useless when fired at random from amidst a labyrinth of trees or in the obscurity of a thicket.

Between three and four hours were occupied in reaching Rikkete's mbanga. Half-way on our road, after crossing three smaller streams, we came to a larger one, which, like the others flowing to the south and to the east, passed near the hamlets which lay contiguous to Nduppo's frontier. Here we halted for our morning meal. The bearers ransacked acre after acre for the sweet-potatoes which were in cultivation in this district, where also, for the first time in our descent from the north, we found manioc plantations of any magnitude. Only in deference to an express order that the poultry which was running about the forsaken huts should be respected as the property of others, did the people abstain from catching the hens and chickens that were within their reach, but it was an act of self-denial, and they were compelled to content themselves with plantains cooked in ashes. Altogether it was a motley picture of African camp-life: the ravaged lands, the chattels of the fugitives scattered all around, the variety of platters, the corn-bins, the wooden mortars, the stools, the mats, and the baskets, all tumbled about at the pleasure of the intruders, conspired to make a spectacle of confusion so utter and so hopeless that the only relief was in resignation.

Beyond the stream our path turned directly to the south; hitherto its direction, though winding, had been mainly west. The continual fluctuations in the level of the land made me suspect that we were really approaching that watershed of the Nile for which I had been looking with such eager and impatient expectation. The ground, that had been sloping down towards the west all the way to Nduppo's mbanga, we now found sloping down towards the east, so that the streams that proceeded from this district to meet the Yubbo for a while flowed in a direction exactly opposite to that of the stream they were about to join. A comparatively important stream, the Lindukoo, at a little distance received all these other streams into its channel and was the last

water connected with the system of the Nile that we had to cross. Over steepish hills, along defiles of slippery clay and through clefts and ravines which the rain-torrents had capriciously hollowed out, our road led us onward to Rikkete. Contrary to our expectations we were received amidst the mingled noise of drum and trumpet, whilst a deputy from the chieftain stood in front of his huts to bid us welcome.

We encamped upon some ground that was still fallow, for the few showers that had fallen were only the forerunners of the settled rain which lasts from May till October, and had had little effect upon the soil, so that the sowing of the crops had not yet commenced. Our camp was close to some groups of huts that were inhabited by Rikkete's wives and retinue; and behind it, under the shadow of imposing banks, flowed a brook called the Atazilly.

Mohammed entered into very amicable relations with Rikkete, and not only obtained some valuable tusks from him by way of traffic, but secured an ample supply of provisions for the immediate use of the caravan. Towards evening some messengers arrived from Wando, confirming his friendly intentions and bringing, as peaceful pledges, an offering of flasks of eleusine-beer. At night we were in company with Rikkete, and Riharn my cook, who had but few opportunities of displaying that skill in the culinary art which he prided himself upon learning in the large hotel at Cairo, prepared some farinaceous dish in the European style with which I entertained the Niam-niam magnate. The article that seemed to puzzle the people most was our sugar; they could not comprehend how it should have all the appearance of stone and yet melted in the mouth, tasting like the juice of their native sugar-cane, which was cultivated among them, although not to any great extent.

Before tasting the proffered beer, Mohammed insisted upon Wando's emissaries emptying one gourd-shell after another



for their own enjoyment, a proceeding which had the effect of considerably elevating the spirits of the party. The Nubian soldiers, pleased at the pacific turn that matters had taken, passed the night in chanting their carols, accompanied by the strains of the tarabuka ; and the Bongo and Mittoo revelled and danced for many hours in their own fashion to the sound of their kettle-drums and horns.

There seemed now to remain no further obstacle in the way of the separation of the two companies ; and, in order to complete the preliminary arrangements for the division, it was decided that we must remain for a whole day with Rikkete, a determination which was hailed by myself with much satisfaction. Ghattas's corps was to be accompanied by a detachment of one hundred of Aboo Sammat's soldiers, and to take its departure for what formerly had been Keefa's territories in the west and south-west, where they hoped to transact a remunerative business, because, in consequence of the absconding of the natives, the main company of Ghattas had been left destitute of any bearers. After the reduction, an armed force of 175 was left for our protection as we proceeded on the remainder of our way to the Monbuttoo.

Early on the following morning I paid Rikkete a visit at his residence in the village, and made him what I considered a handsome present of beads of a pattern superior to what had ever before been seen in this part of Africa. I, however, received no present in return, but on the contrary had to pay for the simplest things with which I was supplied, whether they were sweet-potatoes, colocasiae, or poultry. The Niam-niam are an acquisitive people, and never lose an opportunity to increase their store of copper, attaching comparatively little importance to any other wealth. Once when I was complaining that in spite of my liberality I could not obtain the most trifling articles for cooking without giving a full price for them, I was met by the true

African answer that if they took the trouble to bring me their commodities I must expect to pay for them.

My visit to Rikkete over, I could not resist spending the day of our halt in an excursion. Accordingly, having enlisted the services of some natives as guides, I started off with all my people, who had to carry my heterogeneous appliances, which consisted of guns, portfolios, boxes large and small, cases, ropes, trowels, stock-shears and hoes. Crossing the Atazilly, and wading by the side of the stream through the swamps which were crowded with jungles of amomum as high as myself, and adorned with the rosy blossoms of the *Melastomaceæ*, I proceeded for three-quarters of a league across the steppe until I reached the stream to which I have referred already, called the Lindukoo or the Undukoo.

Here there opened to my view one of the most magnificent prospects that forest scenery could afford; the gigantic measure of some of the trees was altogether surprising, but yet, on account of their various heights, their foliage lay as it were in strata, and the denseness of the ramification wove the branches into a chaos as picturesque as it was inextricable. A merry world of apes was gambolling on the topmost boughs; two of the larger species of monkeys (*Cercopithecus*) were also represented, as well as members of the *Galago* family, which are half-blinded by the glare of daylight. The *Colobi*, too, with their long silvery hair, were conspicuous as they flitted across the dark gaps that were left in the lower branches, or as they scampered along the more horizontal arms of the trees above. Numerous, however, as they were, I had no chance of securing a single specimen, as my shot, when aimed to an altitude of seventy or eighty feet, was spent in vain. The guinea-fowl, as ever, afforded prolific sport, their large grey bodies standing out distinctly against the fresh verdure; but we lost a great many that were hit, in consequence of their falling into the midst of impenetrable masses of shrubs.

Accompanied as I was by only a small number of armed men, I could not be otherwise than sensible how completely, if they chose, I was in the power of the natives. I was encouraged, however, to believe that the engagement made was perfectly reliable, as, except under that conviction, consent would never have been given for the armed forces to divide.

My Niam-niam guides rendered me the greatest service; not only did they enter very heartily into my pursuits, climbing up the lofty trees without hesitation to reach the produce of the topmost boughs, but they made me acquainted with the native names of all the plants, and brought me specimens for my close inspection of what otherwise I could merely see at a distance, and in the confusion of promiscuous foliage.

Though the hollow gorge of the river sank for some eighty feet, there were trees at the bottom whose crests were level with the land above. The protruding roots amid the landslips, just as in our own mountain hollows, served as steps; and all along, abundant as in Alpine clefts, there sprung up many a variety of graceful ferns.

I proceeded north-west for a considerable distance up the stream, and having laboriously crossed and recrossed the swampy bed of the valley, I returned in the evening to my quarters with my portfolios enriched beyond my most sanguine expectations. Before night, I repeated my visit to Rikkete's residence, and found his wives sitting on the open area before the huts, and employed in their several domestic ways. My intrusion appeared to give the ladies great uneasiness, and the interpreters themselves put on a grave look of concern and were ominously silent. I was just about to transfer the scene to my sketch-book when Rikkete suddenly appeared. He reproached me vigorously, insisted upon knowing what business I had amongst his wives, and demanded how I presumed to go to his huts without his

knowledge or permission. These Niam-niam wives for their part were very passive, and as quiet and reserved as though they had been brought up amidst the refinements of a Turkish harem. Rikkete, too, was soon appeased. He was a true son of the desert; but his general demeanour, the reserve of his bearing, and the moderation of his tone, were worthy of him as a man of royal blood who, conscious of his superiority, could, when he pleased, converse with the most perfect self-possession.

In my subsequent transactions with the natives, I was again offered a great number of skins; this time skins of genets, which were represented in several varieties. I discriminated them into three sorts, according to the number of the stripes made by the spots that ran along the body. The general colour appeared to change with the creatures' age. The ground colour varied from a light ash-grey to a deep yellowish brown, while the spots ranged from the colour of coffee to a perfect black. In consequence of these diversities zoologists have very probably been misled, and have been all in error when they have described the *Viverra genetta* as being of several species.

In the glimmer of dawn we were aroused by the accustomed signals. Two of the Bongo in Mohammed's service had learnt at Khartoom how to blow their trumpets and beat their drums for this important function, and they sounded the Turkish *réveil* admirably, giving it the full roll and proper compass. In particular, Inglerly the trumpeter was superb in his execution, and the astonished woods could not too often re-echo back his clanging notes. The Niam-niam were quite delighted with the strain, and frequently could be detected humming the melody to themselves. Wando and Munza alike were never weary of urging the request that Aboo Sammat would either make them a present of his trumpeter, or allow them to purchase him at any price he might elect to name; but Inglerly was the joy and pride of

Mohammed, and in his way was quite unique throughout the district of the Upper Nile as far as the banner of Islam had been borne.

Our caravan was accompanied by a large number of guides and natives who were eager to show the way, as a stiff day's march was before us, and a passage over several difficult water-courses had to be accomplished. The morning toilette of the Niam-niam guides was singular enough. In order to protect themselves against the chilly damp of the early dew as they marched along the narrow pathways of the steppes, they covered the entire front of their body with some large skins, which made them look as if they wore coopers' aprons. For this purpose there is no skin that looks more picturesque than that of the bush-bock, with its rows of white spots and stripes upon a yellow ochre ground. The bearing of the Niam-niam is always chivalrous as becomes a people devoted to war and to the chase, exhibiting a very strong contrast to the unpolished nonchalance of the Bongo, the Mittoo, and even of the finicking Arabians. The Niam-niam might be introduced straight upon the stage, and would be faultless in the symmetry with which they would go through their poses.

Our way took a turn beyond the Atazilly across the same steppe over which we had passed yesterday. After an hour we arrived again at the Lindukoo, which here forms a considerable cataract of some thirty feet deep, falling over the worn and polished gneiss. A thick bank-wood shaded the rocks, which were charmingly adorned with the rarest ferns, and a regular jungle of tangled foliage canopied the depth beneath which the rosy blooming ginger-bushes grew as tall as a man and scented the air with their fine aroma. Just for half-an-hour we halted upon the high and dry levels that we found, and regaled ourselves with refreshment from our store of provisions.

An early rest like this was quite common with us, for in the confusion of our starting at the dawn of day there was



seldom any leisure at all to think of breakfast. Our leader, neither proud nor upstart, but like all Nubians, whose finest quality is their sense of equity and brotherhood, munched away amidst a circle of his more intimate associates, to which my Khartoom attendants were admitted, at some cold fowl seasoned with pimento, which was the choicest morsel that the country could supply. With the flowery yams, the sweet-potatoes, and the colocasiæ, which appeared such an invaluable boon to the country, the Nubians could do nothing, so unaccustomed were they in their native place to vegetables of any sort: what they missed most was plenty of their flat cake of kissere; quite voluntarily they renounced all meat. They carried with them a supply of the capsules of the *Hibiscus esculentus*, dried before they were ripe, and by the aid of the indispensable red pepper and some fat or oily substance, they manufactured a slimy sauce in which they soured their kissere. They were epicures enough to carry with them in a horn their own "duggoo," which is a kind of pot-pourri composed of every condiment they can procure, being a combination of salt, pimento, fœnum græcum, basilicum, coriander, mustard, dill, and a variety of other ingredients of the kind.

But now for a time the days of kissere and sorghum-pap were over. Now for awhile they had to put up with eleusine, that tiny, scaly, black and bitter grain of which Speke declares that it is sown, because the spades, which do such an amount of mischief to other seeds, leave this uninjured—the same *Eleusine coracana* (called teleboon in Arabic and raggi in the West Indies) which on account of its extreme bitterness was condemned by Baker as being putrid and unfit to eat. Leaving it for the people who seemed to enjoy it well enough, he made the remark that "the lion dies of hunger where the ass grows fat."

There was a general belief in magic. One day, my servant, Mohammed Ameen, would get it into his head that I had found a plant from which I could extract gold; on the

next day it would be some wonderful skull that I had found, and from which I knew how to extract the subtlest poison; the day after and I had the luck to kill an antelope because I was in possession of some marvellous root. With plain matter-of-fact these good people cannot get on at all: that every herb must have some medicinal properties and use would appear never to have entered the minds of any but Europeans. "Knowest thou the herb that gives perpetual youth?" is the question that the Oriental asks; and mysterious secrets are yet to be unfolded to the African.

No one clings more than a Niam-niam to the superstition that the possession of certain charmed roots contributes to the success of the chase, so that the best shots, when they have killed an unusual number either of antelopes or buffaloes are usually credited with having such roots in their keeping. The fatalism, which is exhibited just as decidedly by Mohammedans as by heathens, is such that it does not attach the least importance to the skill with which an arrow or bullet is aimed. This is a reason why the Khartoomers are never practised in the art of shooting; they do not doubt but that whatever is designed for the unbeliever is sure to hit its mark.

The direction which the river Lindukoo was taking appeared to me to be exactly the reverse of that in which flowed the current of the Yubbo; and, in spite of the positiveness on the part of the guides, all their statements left my mind unconvinced, and in a state of considerable perplexity. But two months later when I had again to cross the river some distance further to the East, my presentiment was thoroughly confirmed. The formation of the land just here is very uneven and irregular; quite in contrast to what it was observed to be both previously and subsequently upon our progress. With the Lindukoo, then, I was bidding farewell to the district of the Nile. Many as there had been before who had undertaken to explore the mighty river to its

fountain-head, here was I, the first European coming from the north who yet had ever traversed

#### THE WATERSHED OF THE NILE.

Upon this memorable day in my life, I confess I had no real knowledge of the significance of the soil upon which my steps were tarrying, for as yet I could know nothing of the configuration of the country before us. The revelation of the truth about this watershed only became apparent to me after I had gathered and weighed the testimony of the Niam-niam, which sufficiently demonstrated that the next river, the Mbrwole, belongs to the system of the Welle. This river *now* was an enigma to me, and to unravel the hydrographical perplexities which surrounded it, continued throughout my journey to puzzle my brain; certainly I was satisfied it could never be brought into unison with any of the tributaries of the Sway. A little patience, and the problem was solved.

With the exception of the high ridge on the north of the River Lehssy which the Niam-niam call Mbala Ngeea, there was nowhere, along the entire line from the Gazelle to the Welle, any wide difference observable in the conformation of the land. But southwards from the Lindukoo, it was all uphill and downhill, and through defiles, hill-caps rising and falling on either side, high enough to be prominent over the undulations that were around them. These undulations were everywhere of that red hue which rendered it all but certain that they were only elevations of that crust of recent swamptore which is so widely diffused in Central Africa. The higher eminences that rose above were of a far earlier formation, being projections of gneiss, the weather-worn remnants of some primeval mountain ranges, gnawed by the tooth of time, and crumbled down from jagged peaks to smooth and rounded caps. Subsequently, on my return at the end of April, I pushed my way beyond these elevations

of the gneiss, and penetrated farther east, into the narrower limits of the watershed.

This uniformity in geological formation of a district so immense, as far as it is known, is certainly very remarkable. The source of the Dyoor is the only exception, and presents some variety in stratification. Everything points to the fact that since the era of the formation of the swamp-ore (spreading as it does from the banks of the Dyoor to the Coanza, and from Mozambique to the Niger) there has been no alteration in the surface condition of the land except what has occurred by reason of the water-courses finding new directions for themselves along the loose and yielding deposit. And even when the elevations are taken into account which have caused whole chains of hills to arise, such for instance as those which encircle the basin of the Tondy, still I am inclined to believe that there too the existence of the valleys and depressions is to be explained by no other hypothesis than the perpetual mutability of the channels by which the streams have forced their way.

Followed in our course from the Lindukoo by a side stream which discharged itself by a waterfall, we arrived at the regular watershed, which, judging by my aneroid, which had not varied for four years, I should estimate at 3000 feet high. Passing onwards we came to a brook called the Naporruporroo which rippled through a gorge some seventy feet deep. The stem of a great tree had been thrown across the chasm, and by means of this we were enabled to pass over without being under the necessity of making a descent. As we proceeded, the peaks of the trees which grew beneath were some way below the level of our feet. After a while, we had first to cross another, and then another of these streams which at no great distance united themselves in one common channel.

The stream I have just mentioned was at the bottom of a valley some eighty feet deep, and as its banks were almost

perpendicular the bearers had to make the most strenuous exertions to ascend. They had to help each other up, and the baggage therefore had to be passed on from one to another of the men, and then to be laid down awhile that they might have their hands at liberty to help them as they climbed. To accomplish this difficult passage at all with four-footed beasts of burden it would have been requisite to make a very long and arduous *détour*. The detention, however, to which the difficulty subjected the caravan was not in any way a loss to me; it gave me time to stay and gather up what I would of the botanical treasures of the place, which in luxuriance seemed to me to surpass all that as yet I had seen. The valley was so deep that no ray of sunshine by any possibility could enter it. The pathway was barely a foot wide and wound itself through a mass of waving foliage. There was a kind of *Brillantaisia* with large violet blossoms that I found close by the way; and I stayed to arrange in my portfolio, for future investigation, some of its leaves, waiting while our lengthy procession passed along. Squeezed up in a labyrinth of boughs and creepers, and wreathed about with leaves, I sat as though I were in a nest. These opportunities were several times repeated, in which I found I could get half an hour at my disposal, and could botanize without disturbance; then as soon as the caravan had defiled past I took advantage of the first open ground to regain my position near the front.

So numerous were the hindrances and so great the obstacles which arose from the ground conformation of the watershed that our progress was necessarily slow.

About four miles from Lindukoo we reached the Mbrwole, which the Nubians without further description simply call "Wando's River." It was here bordered by wood, and had a breadth of about eighty feet, though its depth did not exceed two feet, the flow of the stream being what might be described as torpid.



Aboo Sammat's people gave us all the particulars of the year's luck in hunting, and dwelt much upon the circumstance of a chimpanzee having been killed, an event which was evidently very unusual. The woods that composed the "galleries" were dense and manifestly adapted to be a resort of these creatures. The fact was of considerable interest as relating to the watershed, because in none of the more northerly woods had I ever been able to acquire any evidence at all that the chimpanzee had been known to exist. It was remarkable that the first trace I found of this race of animals was upon my reaching the first river that was unattached to the system of the Nile. It may be said of the district of Wando, where bank vegetation is most luxuriant and where the drainage is like a complication of veins squeezed from an overcharged sponge, that it is the region which, more than any other, is conspicuous for the abundance of the chimpanzee, which here represents the breed of the West African *Troglodytes niger*.

Countless in diversity as were the trees and shrubs, the *Anonaceæ*, by mere reason of their numbers, must take a very prominent place in the catalogue. A family of plants is this of which, so long as the flora of tropical Africa was unexplored, it was presumed that America was the chief, if not the exclusive habitat. But since our knowledge has been enlarged, and especially since my own investigations in the Niam-niam lands, it has become clear almost beyond a question that Africa is at least as prodigal in the *Anonaceæ* that it yields as all the tropical districts of America.

Again for two hours we made a pause. The Nubians enjoyed a bright cool bath, the long column of bearers still toiling onwards with their loads. The opportunity to myself was as acceptable as ever, and I continued to secure a new abundance of botanical treasure. By way of variety, intelligence was brought us that a gun had gone off through negligence, and that the ball had rent a hole in the apron

of one of the soldiers. Of course there was a great outcry and no end of gesticulating. The culprit took with the most passive resignation the lashing that was assigned him, and then all was forgotten, and something fresh had to be awaited to stir up a new excitement. The people are fatalists of the purest water, and no amount of experience can make them prudent.

Farther on, a march through a flat and open steppe led us after a few miles to a deep glen so thick with wood that it occupied us at least half an hour in crossing. Its bottom was a wide marshy streak over which there was no movement of the water, that seemed to be entirely stagnant. A new type of vegetation revealed itself, one never observed in the Nile lands by any previous traveller. This consisted of the thickets of *Pandanus*, which were to my mind an evidence of our having entered upon a new river-district altogether, the plant being an undoubted representative of the flora of the western coast.

And now we had to make our first experience of the various artifices by which the transit over these marshes has to be accomplished; not only would it be impossible for a carriage of any description or for any one on horseback to go over, but even when the baggage was conveyed by hand there was the serious risk of anyone seeing all that he most cared for, his clothes and his journals, tumbling from the bearers' heads and sinking in the filthy slime. Mouldering trunks of trees there might be, but to place the foot upon these was to find them roll like a wave in the waters; others would be too smooth and slippery to allow a step to be trusted to their treacherous support; and then the deep continual holes would either be filled by water or covered with a floating vegetation which betrayed the unwary footsteps into trouble, so that there was no alternative for the bearers but to jump from mound to mound and keep their balance as best they might: to no purpose would they try

to grasp at some support; the prickly leaves of the Pandanus, notched and jagged on the edges as a saw, made them glad to withdraw their tortured hand.

For miles far away the deserts re-echoed back the shouts of the bearers as they splashed through the waters; and the air around reverberated with the outcry, with the mingled laughing and swearing of the Nubians, and with the fluster of the women slaves as they jostled each other in carrying their dishes, gourd-flasks, and calabashes, through the prickly hedges. Every now and then would arise a general shriek, half in merriment, half in fright, from a hundred lungs, betokening that some unlucky slave had plumped down into a muddy hole, and that all her cooking utensils had come tumbling after. I could not help being on continual tenter-hooks as to the fate which would befall my own baggage, particularly my herbarium, which although it was packed up most cautiously in india-rubber, yet required to be handled very gently. My Bongo bearers, however, were picked men, and did their work well. They waded on and never once had any misadventure, so that it resulted that everything, without exception, that I had gathered in these remote districts of Central Africa, was spared alike from loss or damage.

Dressing and undressing on these occasions was tiresome enough, but it was not the whole of the inconvenience. When the task of getting across had been accomplished, there still remained the business of purification; and no easy matter was it to get free from the black mud and slime that adhered tenaciously to the skin. It almost seemed as if Africa herself had been roused to spitefulness, and was exhibiting her wrath against the intruder who presumed to meddle with her secrets. With a malicious glee she appeared to be exulting that she was able to render the white man, at least for the time, as black as any of her own children; nor was she content till she had sent a plague of

mud-leeches to add to his discomfort. Naked and shivering she let him stand even in the mist and rain of a chilly dawn; and no help for him till some friendly hand should guide him to a pool where the water still was undefiled, and he could get a wash. And then what a scraping! How ruefully too would his eye fall upon the ugly blood-suckers which clung about his legs! To make these relax their hold, recourse must be had to the powder-flask; and, after all, the clothes would be saturated with the blood that had been shed in vain. As for the things that had been splashed and wetted in the turmoil of the passage, they were laid out either upon a cluster of trampled fern-leaves or upon any little spot that seemed to give them a chance of drying.

The sun was already declining, and we had still three of these bogs to pass over, each with its running stream that would delay us for half an hour or more. Of these three, the second was the largest, and was known by the name of Mbangoh. Notwithstanding the vexation and harassment, to which I was unaccustomed, I found many an opportunity of gathering shrubs and plants of interest from the promiscuous vegetation amidst which we made our way.

The shades of night had gathered, when, after passing the last of the rivulets, we arrived at some farms in a cultivated spot. There was indication of rain, and a great deal of commotion ensued in taking precaution against it; luckily, however, we escaped with only a few heavy drops, and having been relieved from anxiety by a general clearing of the weather, we enjoyed the good night's rest which our hard day's toil had earned.

In order that we might arrive at Wando's residence in good time on the following day, we made our start punctually at sunrise. After we had marched for half a league over open steppe, and had effected our passage over the Dyagbe, the signal was sounded for the morning halt.

Mohammed here expressed his intention of having a

preliminary conference with Wando before we definitively pitched our camp, and borrowing my revolver, as he had done before, he set out with the utmost composure, attended solely by his black body-guard, the Farookh. At the head of these he hurried away at a pace so fast that the lads who carried his arms could scarcely keep up with him. It is characteristic of the Nubians that whenever they have important transactions on hand they always move with extreme rapidity.

Within an hour Mohammed returned, perfectly content with his interview, and proceeded at once to conduct the caravan to the station allotted to it, close to the banks of the Dyagbe, and just about the distance of an arrowshot from the wall of foliage which formed the confine of the primeval forest. Taking their hatchets, the bearers entered the thickets and hewed down long stakes, with which they set to work to construct some huts, my own people meanwhile busying themselves by providing some posts and props which I required equally for the protection of my baggage from the dampness of the ground and for placing it out of the reach of white ants. I had brought some deal boards with me from Khartoom, and by putting these upon the props a convenient arrangement was made for storing in the narrowest compass a good deal of baggage. Space in my tent was necessarily very limited.

Every hand was set to work, and in a very short time a number of pretty little huts were erected with no other material than the fresh grass; and when the baggage had all been properly secured there commenced a brisk and very amicable commerce with the natives. Fine elephant-tusks were brought for sale, and found no lack of ready purchasers. Presents of cloth and beads were freely distributed, for the double purpose of putting the people into a good mood and of inducing them to disclose new resources for procuring ivory. Wando himself appeared arrayed in a large shirt of figured



calico, made with long sleeves, which he wore (in the same way as all the other native chieftains) solely out of compliment to the donor. As soon as the visitors withdrew he deemed it an attire below his dignity, and could not condescend to trick himself out in a dress which ordinarily was reserved as a kind of curiosity for his wardrobe.

The cannibal prince, of whom for some days we had been in such dread, looked a harmless mortal enough as he strolled through the camp arm-in-arm with Mohammed's officers; no doubt they had enjoyed a mutual drink to each other's health.

The kind of beads which the Niam-niam prefer wearing, when they can procure them, is that which is known in Khartoom commerce as "mandyoor," consisting of a long polyhedral prism, about as large as a bean and blue as lapis lazuli. Hardly any other kind retains any value at all. Cowries are still used as a decoration on the national costume, but the demand for them is not great, and for ten years past they have not formed at all an important item in the Khartoom traffic. Fashion extends its sway even as far as these remote wildernesses, which have their own special demand for "novelties."

As medium of exchange, nothing here was of any value except copper and iron, which never failed to be accepted in payment. English copper, which the Khartoomers take with them in long bars about three-quarters of an inch thick, is most in repute; but not unfrequently they make use of the lumps of copper which they obtain from the mines to the south of Darfoor. With any other resources for obtaining copper the inhabitants of the country through which I travelled appear to be hardly acquainted, though possibly the Congo region might, in former times, have found an outlet for its store in this direction. To provide suitable small change for their minor purchases, the expeditions to the Niam-niam always include among their bearers a certain number of smiths, who

from the larger bars and ingots fabricate rings of all sizes, from the eirelet to go round the arm down to the ring just large enough to fit the finger. These rings are made from quadrangular bars, the ends of which are subsequently reduced to taper points. It may be added, by way of example, that for a finger ring a Niam-niam would give a chicken, although the copper material itself was not worth three farthings.

Here, at its fountain-head, ivory, as might naturally be expected, may be obtained in barter at a very trifling cost. On the coast of Guinea it is necessary to part with a whole host of commodities, guns, cloth, knives, looking-glasses, and what not, for a single tusk of an elephant; but a Niam-niam is contented if he can get half a bar of copper, which would not be worth more than four or five dollars. Not only, however, would there be some additional presents of cloth or beads, but the weight and transport would have to be taken into account. The prime cost here would probably be scarcely five per cent. of the value of the ivory, which fluctuating of course, according to quality, generally, on an average, in Europe realises two or three dollars a pound; whilst on the other hand, the same purchase could not be made at the harbours upon the western coasts for much less than 80 per cent. of the gross value. Through the immense outlay which is entailed upon the Khartoom merchants by the support of so many soldiers, and, in fact, from the precarious results of the expeditions, the ultimate profit is really so moderate and it is gained at so much risk, that the ivory trade on the whole is not flourishing. But how matters could practically be mended, or how the expenses of proceeding in the lands of the Upper Nile could be diminished, I confess I have no scheme to propose. The lands are not only so remote from the coast, but they are so far away even from the navigable rivers, that they can never play an important part in the traffic of the world; nor can the railway which it is in

contemplation to construct between Khartoom and Egypt introduce any material change into the existing condition of things.

So full of bustle was our camp life that it was not till nightfall that I had an opportunity of inquiring from Mohammed what had transpired during his interview with Wando. I now learnt that the revolver he had borrowed had done him a good turn. He had hurried on in front of his escort, and had gone boldly to the chieftain to reprimand him for his equivocal behaviour; but he had no sooner entered the hut than he was encircled by a troop of Wando's satellites, who levelled their lances at him in a most threatening attitude. He felt himself a prisoner, but, undismayed, he cried out that his life should cost them a thousand lives, and, snapping the revolver, he dared them to touch him at their peril. The intimidated Niam-niam at once assumed a milder tone, and, thanks, as Mohammed said, to his temerity, everything turned out well.

We remained in Wando's camp from the 2nd to the 6th of March. The wood at Dyagbe was most luxuriant, and every day it unlocked to me new and untold treasures, which were a permanent delight. Here, too, was unfolded before my gaze the full glory of what we shall in future understand as "a gallery."

My predecessor, the Italian Piaggia, whose meagre description of the Niam-niam lands betrays, in spite of all, an acute power of observation, has designated these tracts of bank vegetation as "galleries." The expression seems to me so appropriate and significant that I cannot help wishing it might be generally adopted. I will endeavour briefly to state in what the peculiarities of these "galleries" consist.

In a way that answers precisely to the description which Dr. Livingstone in his last accounts has given of the country to the west of Lake Tanganyika, and which is not adequately accounted for either by the geological aspect of the region

or by any presumed excess of rain, there is sometimes found a numerical aggregate of springs which is beyond precedent. These springs result in a perpetual waterflow, which in the north would all be swallowed up by the thirsty soil of low and open plains, but which here in the Niam-niam country is all restrained within deep-cut channels that form, as it were, walls to confine the rippling stream. The whole country, which is nowhere less than 2000 feet above the level of the sea, is like an over-full sponge. The consequence of this is, that many plants which in the north disappear as soon as the fall of the waters deprives them of their moisture, are here found flourishing all the year round; so that all the vales and chinks through which the water makes its way are permanently adorned with a tropical luxuriance. The variety of trees and the manifold developments of the undergrowth conspire to present a spectacle charming as any that could be seen upon the coast of Guinea or in the countries which are watered by the lower Niger. But, notwithstanding all this, the vegetation altogether retains its own specific character up in the higher tracts between stream and stream, and corresponds to what we have been familiar with ever since we put our foot upon the red soil of Bongo-land, being a park-like wood, of which the most conspicuous feature is the magnitude of the leaves.

I have previously had occasion to mention how a dualism of the same kind marked the vegetation of the whole country south of the Hoo, where the formation of the land first changed from the monotonous alternations between low grass flats and undulated wood-terraces. It would almost seem as if the reason for the altered law which presides over the watercourses is to be sought in the increasing elevation of the soil, and in the opening of the lower plain of the swamp-ore, which, being furrowed up with a multitude of channels, allows the unfailing supply of all the numerous springs to flow away.

Trees with immense stems, and of a height surpassing all

that we had elsewhere seen (not even excepting the palms of Egypt), here stood in masses which seemed unbounded except where at intervals some less towering forms rose gradually higher and higher beneath their shade. In the innermost recesses of these woods one would come upon an avenue like the colonnade of an Egyptian temple, veiled in the leafy shade of a triple roof above. Seen from without, they had all the appearance of impenetrable forests, but, traversed within, they opened into aisles and corridors which were musical with many a murmuring fount.

Hardly anywhere was the height of these woods less than 70 feet, and on an average it was much nearer 100; yet, viewed from without, they very often failed to present anything of that imposing sight which was always so captivating when taken from the brinks of the brooks within. In some places the sinking of the ground along which the gallery-tunnels ran would be so great that not half the wood revealed itself at all to the contiguous steppes, while in that wood (out of sight as it was) many a "gallery" might still exist.

Most of those gigantic trees, the size of the stems of which exceed any of our own venerable monarchs of the woods, belong to the class either of the *Sterculiæ* or the *Boswelliæ*, to which perhaps may be added that of the *Cesalpinix*; the numerous Fig-trees, the *Artocarpeæ*, the *Euphorbiaceæ*, and the endless varieties of the *Rubiaceæ*, must be entirely excluded from that category, and few representatives of this grade belong to the region of the underwood. Amongst the plants of second and third rank there were many of the large-leaved varieties, and the figs again, as well as the *Papilionaceæ* and especially the *Rubiaceæ* had an important place to fill. There was no lack of thorny shrubberies; and the *Oncoba*, the *Phyllanthus*, the *Celastrus*, and the *Acacia ataxacantha*, cluster after cluster, were met with in abundance. Thick creepers climbed from bough to bough, the *Modecca* being the most pro-



minent of all; but the *Cissus* with its purple leaf, the *Coccinea*, the prickly *Smilax*, the *Helmiæ*, and the *Dioscoreæ* all had their part to play. Made up of these, the whole underwood spread out its ample ramifications, its green twilight made more complete by the thickness of the substance of the leaves themselves.

Down upon the very ground, again, there were masses, all but impenetrable, of plants of many and many a variety which contributed to fill up every gap that was left in this mazy labyrinth of foliage. First of all there were the extensive jungles of the *Amoma* and the *Costus* rising full fifteen feet high, and of which the rigid stems (like the haulms of the towering grass) either bar out the progress of a traveller altogether or admit him, if he venture to force his way among them, only to fall into the sloughs of muddy slime from which they grow. And then there was the marvellous world of ferns destitute indeed of stems, but running in their foliage to some twelve feet high. Boundless in the variety of the feathery articulations of their fronds, some of them seemed to perform the graceful part of throwing a veil over the treasures of the wood; and others lent a charming contrast to the general uniformity of the leafy scene. High above these there worked themselves the large slim-stemmed *Rubiaceæ* (*Coffeæ*), which by regularity of growth and symmetry of leaf appeared to imitate, and in a measure to supply the absence of, the arboraceous ferns. Of all other ferns the most singular that I observed was that which I call the elephant's ear. This I found up in trees at a height of more than 50 feet, in association with the *Angræca* and the long grey barb of the hanging *Usneæ*.

Whenever the stems of the trees failed to be thickly overgrown by some of these different ferns, they were rarely wanting in garlands of the crimson-berried pepper which twined themselves around. Far as the eye could reach it rested solely upon green which did not admit a gap. The

narrow paths that wound themselves partly through and partly around the growing thickets were formed by steps consisting of bare and protruding roots which retained the light loose soil together. Mouldering stems, thickly clad with moss, obstructed the passage at well-nigh every turn. The air was no longer that of the sunny steppe, nor that of the shady grove; it was stifling as the atmosphere of a palm-house; its temperature might vary from 70° to 80° Fahr., but it was so overloaded with an oppressive moisture exhaled by the rank foliage that the traveller could not feel otherwise than relieved to escape.

To the European lover of his garden everything at first might seem to be as artistic in its grouping as it was abundant in its luxuriance; but the screaming outcry of the birds in the branches above, the annoying activity of the insect world, and beyond all, the amazing swarms of minute ants which come showering down from every twig upon anyone who intrudes upon their haunts, detract very considerably from the enjoyment of this prodigality of nature. Yet for those who could persevere there was much to compensate in the general solemnity of the scene, for the sound of the rustling of the foliage above could scarcely penetrate the weird shades below. Butterflies gay and busy in countless swarms, with their gleaming yellow wings, gave animation to the repose of the eternal green, and made up for any deficiency of radiant bloom.

Our encampment was but comparatively a few steps away from this unbounded storehouse of creative wealth, so that with the greatest convenience I could prepare within my tent for all my explorations. That dual character of the vegetation to which I have referred offers a great advantage to the botanist in this teeming district. In the damp atmosphere of the western coasts the drying of plants is hardly ever capable of being accomplished without exposing them for a time before a fire, an operation which has generally the effect

of inducing a blackness over the specimens which necessarily very materially increases the difficulty of their being scientifically examined when they reach their destination in Europe; but here, except upon a thoroughly wet day, the plants will all dry just as readily as they would in a country where water is the reverse of abundant. When plants have been gathered and dried in the hot steamy atmosphere of Guinea, and corresponding plants have been gathered and dried as they are found in Nubia, the comparison of the two may assist in establishing what relations exist between the bank wood and the steppes of the different countries.

I had already made the acquaintance of Wando's sons, but hardly expected the honour that Wando himself paid me by visiting me in my tent. A troop of armed men composed his retinue and arranged themselves in a circle round the tent, whilst, with all deference, I made my illustrious guest the offer of my own seat which I had brought with me from the Gazelle. Wando was somewhat below a medium height, but he could show a large development of muscle, and no insignificant amount of fat. His features were of so marked and well-defined a character, that in their way they might be pronounced good, the head itself being almost perfectly round. Nothing took me more by surprise at Wando's entrance than the perfect self-possession, which might almost be called *nonchalance*, with which he took the proffered seat. Savage as he was, his composure and native dignity were those of which no European when receiving homage would need to be ashamed. Crossing his arms upon his breast, he reclined one leg upon the other, and began to throw the centre of gravity of his bulky frame so far behind the perpendicular that I was in momentary fear lest the back of my chair, which creaked audibly at every movement of the Niam-niam potentate, should be faithless to its trust. It seemed to sigh beneath its burden. Wando reminded me in more than one

respect of the portly king of Ovampo, on whom Galton with some trouble forced the crown that had been brought from the theatre. With the merest apology of a piece of skin to cover him, he sat in all but absolute nakedness, revealing the exuberance of fat which clothed his every limb.

It was commonly said of Wando that he was the avowed enemy of all cannibalism. I was informed in various quarters that people from the neighbouring districts had come to him when they found themselves growing too fat, and had declared that they did not consider their lives were safe on account of the men-eaters by whom they were surrounded. But the sentiments of the chieftain did not appear to exercise much influence upon the majority of his subjects, as we only too soon became aware as we advanced farther to the south.

This visit of Wando's gave me an opportunity of which I did not omit to avail myself of entering my indignant protest against the want of hospitality with which on his part we had been received. I recounted to him by way of contrast the many acts of liberality which had been shown us by the Nubians in general, assuring him that my dogs had received more care from them than I, their master, had received from him, king though he was; to supply my dogs with meat, goats had been killed, and for myself bullocks had never been spared. Wando remonstrated, saying that he had neither one nor the other; but I made him understand that he had plenty of poultry, certainly enough, and more than enough, for me and my people. Finally, I proceeded to let him know what I thought of his hostile demonstration before our arrival; and while I spoke I dashed my fist upon the camp-table which stood before us, till the plates and drinking vessels clattered and jingled again. My personal attendants, however, Mohammed Ameen and Petherick's old servant, the travelled and experienced Riham, knew better, after all, than

I did, how to take Wando to task. Pointing to me, they made him comprehend that he was threatened with a most certain and speedy judgment if he suffered a Frank to come to the most trifling harm. They charged him not to forget that it was a Frank he was dealing with, and that it was quite within the power of a Frank to make the earth to yawn and from every rent to give out flames that should consume his land. And as they spoke, the interpreters explained all, word for word, to his excited understanding. Intimidated to that degree of which none but a negro is capable, and only eager to avert a miserable fate, he hurried back to fulfil his promise of sending provisions without stint or delay.

Almost immediately afterwards a number of his people came teeming in, bringing not only some lean and half-fed poultry, but a lot of great black earthen pots which they laid down as offerings from their master at the opening of my tent. A revolting smell of burning oil, black soap, and putrid fish rose and stunk in the nostrils of all who were curious enough to investigate, even from a distance, the contents of the reeking jars; to those who were so venturesome as actually to peer into the vessels, there was revealed a dark-coloured stew of threads and fibres, like loosened tow floating between leather shavings and old whip-thongs. Truly it was the production of a savage, and I may say of an indigenous, cookery, such as our progenitors in their primeval forests might have prepared for themselves out of roast rhinoceros or mammoth-foot. There seemed a rebound in the lapse of time. As matter of fact, the caldrons were full of a burnt smoky *ragoût* made from the entrails of an elephant some two hundred years old, very tough and exceedingly rank. This wonderful example of nature's earliest promptings was handed first to me by the Bongo bearers, whom I at once begged to accept for themselves the dainty dish of the savages; but even the Nubians, not at all



too fastidious generally in anything which their religion permits them to eat, rejected the mess with the greatest disdain.

It had happened some years before, as one of Ghattas's companies was making their way across Wando's territories, that six Nubians were murdered in the woods by some natives who had accompanied them to the chase, professing to be their guides. As soon as the Nubians had fired away all their ammunition in shooting at their game they had no means of defence left in their power, and consequently were easily mastered. Mohammed at once sent to demand the six guns, which beyond a doubt were in the possession of Wando's people—so anxious was he to prevent the natives from becoming acquainted with the use of firearms. Wando commenced by denying his ability to meet the demand, and then resorted to procrastination; but subsequently, pressed by Mohammed, who declared that the continuance of his friendly relations must depend upon the restitution of the guns, he surrendered four of them, asserting that the others could not be found. Any further satisfaction was not to be expected, because on the one hand there was either no getting the perpetrators into custody, and on the other, even if they could be brought from their place of refuge, no one could be bribed to give any substantial evidence against them.

On the second day after our arrival at Wando's residence, attended by a considerable number of natives and a dozen soldiers, I made an excursion out for about two leagues northwards along the banks of the Dyagbe. Guereza-monkeys in merry groups were in the foliage above, but I was not fortunate enough to bring down more than a single specimen. According to the statements of my guides, who were hunters by profession, chimpanzees were numerous, but we certainly did not get a glimpse of one. Very weary with my exertions of tramping over the marshy ground I was rejoiced to bring

back into camp an ample booty in the way of botanical rarities.

During our travels I had obtained from the Niam-niam who accompanied our caravan an epithet which I never lost in all the subsequent stages of our journey. In their own dialect these people called me "Mbarik-pa," which would be equivalent to a name amongst us of "Leaf-eater." It was a designation that reminded me very vividly of my professional brother David Douglas, who fell a martyr to his devotion to Nature, and who was known amongst the North-American Indians as "the Grass-man."

My Niam-niam interpreter Gyabir, as I learnt some time afterwards, had given his friends some marvellous accounts of the way in which I was accustomed to eat whatever I found growing. He used to relate that I had a habit of dismissing my attendants and getting into a dense thicket where I imagined that I was unobserved, and that then I used with great haste to gather and devour enormous quantities of leaves, and he added that this was the way in which, one day after another, I groped after my ordinary food. Others contributed their observation that I invariably came forth from the woods with an exhilarated expression and quite a satiated look, whilst they were conscious of nothing else than the cravings of hunger. After all it was very natural; for the inspiration which is derived from contemplating Nature can elevate one far above his mortal and bodily wants.

The dominant idea which seemed to be impressed upon the natives by my botanical ardour concentrated itself upon their conviction as to the character of the country where the white man has his home. According to their belief the land wherein the white men spent their lives could show neither grass nor tree, and consisted of nothing better than sandy plain and stony flat. Those amongst them who had been carried away as slaves in the ivory expeditions and had

returned again from Khartoom had brought strange accounts of the grim desolation and utter drought of the Moslem lands over which they had passed ; and what, they asked, must be the condition of the still remoter countries of the Frank, of whom they only knew that he kept the Turk supplied with cotton-stuffs and guns ?

## CHAPTER XII.

Poultry-market. Votive pillars and hunting-trophies. Indirect evidence of cannibalism. The chimpanzee in Central Africa. Presents of chimpanzee skulls. New style of huts. The A-Banga. Cultivation of manioc in Central Africa. The Treculia. Cam-wood and muscat nuts. Conflict with natives. Shooting-match and sham fight. Magic lucifers. Mutual interchange of blood. Botanical excursion interrupted. Gyabir wounded. Modes of expressing pain. Female slaves captured. Giant lichens. Tree-termites. Monbutto frontier. Reception by Nembey. Northern limit of the oil-palm. Imaginary alarm. Unexpected arrival of Khartoomers. Visit of Bongwa and his wife. Cattle of the Maogoo. Cultivation of the sugar-cane. Interview with Izingerria. Arrival at the Welle. Condition of the Welle. Relations of the stream. Crossing the river. Monbutto canoes. New impressions of the heart of Africa. Arrival at Munza's residence.

AT sunrise, on the 6th of March, we took our departure from the abode of Wando. For our security on the way, the caravan was attended by a number of guides which the chief-tain had placed at our disposal. Just before starting, the intelligence arrived of the death of Nduppo, the alienated and hostile brother of Wando. A party of armed men had been despatched by Wando, and after a short conflict they had killed the enemy. Nduppo's wives and children had taken refuge in Mohammed's Seriba, where they met with a hospitable reception and were provided with the residence and provisions that were necessary for their support.

According to a custom which is generally recognised in Central Africa, whenever a caravan mistakes its way and is obliged to retrace its steps and return to a road from which it has deviated, a bough is thrown across the wrong path and a furrow is scratched in the ground by means of the feet, so

that no succeeding caravans may fall into the same error. This duty is entrusted to the people accompanying the standard-bearer in the rear.

The route of the first day led us along the right bank of the Dyagbe, past Wando's tall conical huts, and through a gallery of picturesque wood scenery. Having forded the stream which, plentifully supplied with water, resolved itself into several channels, we rested on the farther side amidst the outlying homesteads of the district. The startled inmates made a momentary escape; but soon recovered from their alarm, and returning to their dwellings commenced a brisk business in selling poultry all along our line. The men alone, however, brought their fowls, tied up in bundles, to the market; the women kept themselves quite aloof. After a brook of smaller dimensions had been crossed and some more groups of huts had been left behind, the caravan arrived at a stream of considerable magnitude known as the Billwey, but which so much resembled the Dyagbe in the shady character of its banks that it might very easily be mistaken for it. Then ensued two of the "gallery" paths, the first being quite small, the other somewhat larger and known by the name of Mono. The district still seemed to be fairly populous, and from all sides we were met by people who came to us partly to offer their services as guides, and partly to learn what particulars they could about the intentions of the caravan. There was a coming and going which a European might compare to the bustle of a general holiday at home.

Without stopping, however, we continued our progress, and by noon we reached a brook called Diamvonoo, one of the gallery streams, of which the banks were enclosed by dwellings. Here we halted close to the huts of the superintendent of the place.

The Niam-niam residences seem never to fail in having some posts which the natives erect for the purpose of displaying, in proof of their bravery, whatever trophies of







success they have gained either in hunting or in war. To this practice, as established on the Diamvonoo, my osteological collection is indebted for some considerable additions. Attached to the projections of these memorial posts were skulls of antelopes of many a species, skulls of little monkeys and of great baboons, skulls of wild boars and of chimpanzees, and I must not hesitate to add, skulls of men! These were in some cases quite entire, whilst in others they were mere fragments. They were fastened to the erections like the presents on a Christmas-tree, but instead of being gifts for children, they were treasures for the comparative anatomist. Too decisive to be misunderstood were the evidences of the propensity to cannibalism which met our astonished gaze. Close to the huts, amongst the piles of refuse, were human bones, which bore the unquestionable tokens of having been subjected to the hatchet or the knife; and all around upon the branches of the neighbouring trees were hanging human feet and hands more than half shrivelled into a skeleton condition, but being as yet only partially dry, and imperfectly sheltered by the leaves, they polluted the atmosphere with a revolting and intolerable stench. The prospect was not inviting, and the asylum offered to travellers was far from tempting; but we did not suffer ourselves to be discouraged, and made up our minds to be as comfortable as we could in our little huts.

Without loss of time I betook myself naturally to the chase for trophies, Mohammed entering with so much zeal into my pursuit after the skulls of some of the chimpanzees, that he clambered up one of the votive pillars. This drew upon us the eyes of the astonished natives, and their amazement seemed to be especially directed to the circumstance of our taking so much trouble into our own hands. "You have plenty of slaves," they said, "you are chieftains and have authority; how is it that you are not ashamed to work for yourselves in the way you do?" This, probably, was spoken

in derision, or probably in a measure as a reproach to us for appropriating what did not belong to us. However, I put on the air of munificence, and set matters all right by a prodigal distribution of copper rings.

Taking into account the large number of skulls of chimpanzees, more or less perfect, which I saw in the hamlets on the Diamvonoo, I am sure that I am quite justified in my impression that this spot must be one of the centres from which these creatures circulate their kind. Upon the Western African coasts the prevalence of the chimpanzee breed is very considerable, extending from the Gambia down to Benguela. But in the interior, on the other hand, the haunt of the chimpanzee hitherto has been supposed to be limited to the country of the Niam-niam. Previous to my arrival the Khartoom people had been the means of securing some defective skins, which were sent to various museums, and these were quite sufficient to confirm the fact of the existence of chimpanzees in that quarter. But so great was the variety in age and kind, so marked the difference in these beasts according as they came from one district or another, that a whole series, it appeared, of varying species had to be distinguished and arranged by means of material which was totally inadequate for scientific classification. Nearly all the specimens at hand were those of very young animals, and no mammal is known which as it grows older is subject to more decided changes in its external appearance than the anthropomorphic ape.

I am not speaking of Du Chaillu's gorilla. This largest of all apes is sufficiently known, and its specific stability is no longer a matter of doubt. Its range, however, is apparently very limited, as hitherto it has only been found in the delta of the Ogowai.

On the other hand the chimpanzee, as it exists far and wide in the west of Africa, has, in consequence of its individual and collective features, been divided into a long series

of supposed species, varieties, and races, about which the most skilled investigators in this branch of natural history are by no means agreed. In one point they seem to be unanimous, and all concur in recognising the *Troglodytes niger*, E. Geoffr., as the progenitor or the normal type of this series of anthropomorphic apes.

The chimpanzee of Central Africa, to judge from the specimens that have found their way to European museums, differs in many respects from the true *Troglodytes niger*, E. Geoffr., and may be accounted as a separate race which in the lapse of time has developed itself, and adapted its condition to subsistence in far out-lying regions. Professor Giglioli, of Florence has classified it as a subsidiary kind or sub-species, to which he has assigned my own name, because, in 1866, I was the first to bring any definite information about it. In a work\* elaborated with the utmost care he has collected every detail that science offered to his hand. According to Giglioli the chimpanzee of the Niam-niam countries was distinguished from the *Troglodytes niger* of Western Africa by the large capacity of its brain chamber, which he thought could very probably not be matched by any other species. We are indebted to Professor R. Hartmann, of Berlin, for a monograph † which has collected into one view, and may be said to exhaust, all the material which has hitherto been brought to bear upon this topic. From a comparison of a very large number of specimens of very various origin, he has come to the conclusion that the Niam-niam chimpanzee has no such marked distinction as to isolate it in a systematic sense, and that notwithstanding some subordinate characteristics of race, it must still be reckoned as one amongst the many forms of the *Troglodytes niger*.

In modern times there are no animals in creation which

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\* 'Troglodytes Schweinfurthii Gigl. in Studii Craniologiei sui Cimpanze.' Genova, 1872.

† Reichert's and Du Bois Raymond's 'Archiv.' Berlin, 1872.



have attracted a larger amount of attention from the scientific student of nature, than these great quadrupeds, which are stamped with such singular resemblance to the human form as to have justified the epithet of anthropomorphic. The most distinguished zoologists and anatomists have devoted to them their best and undivided attention, and their industry has resulted in the publication of splendid works in illustration of their studies. The labours of Giglioli and Hartmann indicate a still further advance in these strivings after truth. These inquiries cannot fail to be as supremely interesting to man, as the crown of creation, as the prospect of the ultimate solution of the problems of ethnography still hidden in the heart of the continent of Africa, must be to the civilised nations of Europe. But all investigation at present only leads human intelligence to a confession of its insufficiency; and nowhere is caution more to be advocated, nowhere is premature judgment more to be deprecated, than in the attempt to bridge over the mysterious chasm which separates man and beast.

Justly enough has Hartmann expressed his indignation against those ephemeral writers and those *dilettanti*, who, incapable of scientific research and unfurnished with scientific material, have ventured to handle the topic of the "anthropomorphic apes." These empty theorists, when they circulate their baseless, or at least their unripe, hypotheses, may perchance persuade themselves that they have mastered the doctrine either of the elevation of the ape or the deterioration of man; but in reality they have done nothing but aggravate the bewilderment which already had turned the heads of a half-wise generation.

It was getting well onwards towards night, and by the red glare of the pitch-torch which is the invariable resource for lighting the Niam-niam huts, I was getting my supper, in the simplicity of the primitive times of creation, off sweetened plantains and tapioca, when I was interrupted by

a visit from some of the natives who lived close at hand. They had come to dispose of a collection of fine skulls of the chimpanzee, and I effected the purchase by means of some large copper rings. The people told me of the abundance of these creatures in the adjacent woods, and related a number of the adventures which had befallen them in their arduous attempts to capture them: they promised, moreover, to bring me some further contributions for my collection, but unfortunately I could not wait to receive them; we could not prolong our stay because of the scarcity of provisions, and we had to start betimes on the following morning. Altogether I made an addition of about a dozen skulls to what I had previously secured, but many interesting fragments I much regretted being obliged to leave behind, having no alternative on account of my limited means of transport.

It was not my good fortune to witness a chimpanzee hunt. This is always an arduous undertaking, involving many difficulties. According to the statements of the Niamniam themselves the chase requires a party of twenty or thirty resolute hunters, who have to ascend the trees, which are some eighty feet high, and to clamber after the agile and crafty brutes until they can drive them into the snares prepared beforehand. Once entangled in a net, the beasts are without much further difficulty killed by means of spears. However, in some cases they will defend themselves savagely and with all the fury of despair. Driven by the hunters into a corner, they were said to wrest the lances from the men's hands and to make good use of them against the adversary. Nothing was more to be dreaded than being bitten by their tremendous fangs, or getting into the grasp of their powerful arms. Just as in the woods of the west, all manner of stories were rife as to how they had carried off young girls, and how they defended their plunder, and how they constructed wonderful nests upon the topmost boughs of the trees—all these tales, of course, being but the purest fabrications.

Amongst the Niam-niam, the chimpanzee is called "Ranya," or "Manjarooma;" in the Arabic of the Soudan, where long ago its existence seems to have been known, it was included in the general name of "Ba-ahm." The life which the Ranya leads is very much like what is led by the ourang-outang in Borneo, and is spent almost entirely in the trees, the woods on the river-banks being the chief resort of the animals. But in the populous Monbuttoo country, where the woodlands have been thinned to permit the extensive cultivation of plantains, the chimpanzees exhibit a great fear of man, and pass their existence in comparative solitariness. Like the gorillas, they are not found in herds, but either in pairs or even quite alone, and it is only the young which occasionally may be seen in groups.

For three leagues we advanced on the next day towards the S.S.W.; and this was the general direction, with little variation, by which we continued our progress to the Monbuttoo. During this short interval we crossed no less than five water-brooks, each of them bounded by its "galleries," and halted at last upon the right bank of a sixth which was named the Assika. It was close to the quarters of a chief whose name was Kollo. With the exception of a slight elevation lying to the right, the whole surface of the land between the streams was level steppe. The borders of these streams were all well-populated; the soil was entirely under cultivation, and appeared to be very productive. We found ourselves here amidst a tribe, differing widely in habits and dialect from the Niam-niam, and which bore the semblance of being a transition population allied to the Monbuttoo who occupied the districts in our front.

This tribe is distinguished by the name of the A-Banga. They are said to have come across the wide desert, which bounds the territories of the two nations, and quite recently to have migrated into the lands of the Niam-niam, submitting themselves voluntarily to the sway of Wando. A very

similar migration, resulting in the partial blending of the two people, seems to have occurred in the west, where the A-Madi,\* driven out by over-population, their product of roots and plantains, which they obtained without toil, being inadequate for their support, resorted to the Gangarra hills of Indimma. Some chance few of the A-Madi were found intermixed with the A-Banga. Both of these could be thoroughly identified with the Monbuttoo by their habits and mode of life, but with regard to dialect they would seem to have been much influenced by their intermixture with the bordering population of the Niam-niam. The last home which they occupied as a clan was the populous province which the Monbuttoo king Munza now possesses to the north of the Welle. As the greater part of the A-Banga are quite capable of speaking the Zandey (or Niam-niam) dialect, I had no difficulty by the aid of my interpreters in holding conversation with them; beyond the Welle, however, there were very few with whom they were able to converse.

The first hamlets of the A-Banga which we entered, made it at once clear that they adopted quite a different style of building their huts to what we had already seen. The conical form of the roofs, employed as it is in nearly every other region of Central Africa, here began to give place to the roof with a gable end which is universal farther south. The square huts themselves were sometimes constructed with posts and left open like sheds, and were sometimes enclosed by four walls.

The dress and war equipment of the A-Banga are the same as those of the Monbuttoo. The ears of both sexes are pierced so that a good thick stick can easily be run through the aperture, and for this purpose the concave portion of the ear is cut out. As a consequence of this custom both the

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\* The A-Madi must not be confounded with the Madi of the Mittoo, nor with the Madi south of Gondekoro. In the native dialect "a" is only a plural form: *e. g.*, "ango" means a dog; "a-ango," dogs.

A-Banga and the Monbuttoo have acquired from the Nubians the name of the Gurrugurroo (derived from the word gurgur which signifies "bored") to distinguish them from the Niam-niam, which is their term to denote all cannibals. The A-Banga and Monbuttoo also practise circumcision, whilst the Niam-niam abstain entirely from any mutilation of the body.

Turned up into a high chignon, the hair is worn by the women of the A-Banga without any head-covering, the men commonly adopting the mode of the Niam-niam, who wear a



An A-Banga.

straw hat without a brim. Some of the men, however, as in the accompanying portrait, make a compromise between the Monbuttoo and Niam-niam fashion, wearing the hair in the Monbuttoo style about the forehead and temples, and discarding the chignon for the tufts worn by the Niam-niam. The small apron which they wore was not, as with the Niam-niam, made of skin, but from the bark of the Rokko fig-tree.



The shields did not consist of the oval wicker-work of rotang, but were four-cornered tables of wood of a length sufficient to protect the entire body. In place of the trumbash and Niam-niam lance, they carried the lances, scimitars, and bows and arrows of the Monbuttoo. The women go all but entirely naked, wearing nothing but a fragment of the bark of the fig-tree. Just under the arms, in the same way as the Monbuttoo women, they bind a stout and broad strip of some woven material, which when they sit upon their benches and low stools hangs across their lap, and serves as well for a girth in which to carry their little children.

In this intermediate district between the corn-lands and the lands in which roots or fruits were cultivated, the fertility was very wonderful, and the agricultural labour that was applied was very great. Besides eleusine and maize there were many patches of penicillaria: amongst earth-products I observed yams, helmia, colocasia, manioc, and the sweet-potato; amongst various other leguminous plants there grew the catyang or rawan-bean (*Vigna sinensis*), the horse-bean (*Canavalia*) the voandzeia, and the *Phaseolus lunatus*; the oily fruits included earth-nuts, sesame, and hyptis; whilst there still remained room for Virginian tobacco, for the sugar-cane, for the Rokko fig-tree, and for large numbers of plantations of plantains (*Musa sapientium*).

Manioc plays an important part amongst the plants cultivated in this region, both on account of the yield it gives and the small amount of labour required in its cultivation. Here, as in Guiana and Brazil, it seems to delight in a soil that is rather moist and somewhat shaded, and accordingly the position which is usually chosen for its culture is just on the border of the "galleries" on the open steppe. The end of April, at the real commencement of the rainy season, is the best time for planting it. The plant is of a leafy growth, it has hardly any wood, and attains a height varying from three to six feet; the mode of planting it consists simply of

breaking off some pieces about a span long, and burying them in the soil which has been superficially broken up. It is quite unnecessary to trench it, since the soil is naturally very light and loose, being composed principally of rotten leaves. As the manioc is a year and a half or two years before it produces strong tubers, it is customary to use the ground between the rows, by planting, as is done elsewhere, various other crops, either of maize, colocasia, or yams. One great advantage connected with the manioc is the length of time for which the tubers may be left in the earth after their full development: provided only the ants can be kept from them, they will remain in good condition for two or three years; consequently they do not require to be housed, and their culture admits of leaving the granaries free for other provisions, in a way quite different from most tubers, which would soon perish if suffered to remain in the wet soil.

The gathering is nearly as simple a process as the planting. Each single plant is pulled away from the loose earth, and the tubers are allowed to remain attached. In quality and size they differ very materially. As the death of our poor Bongo bearer had testified, some of the varieties when eaten in a crude form are most poisonous, and even when boiled they are very injurious unless the fibrous fringes have been removed from the hearts. Scientific analysis has shown that they contain a certain proportion of prussic acid, and there is no doubt that their leaves when bruised emit the decided odour of bitter almonds. The unwholesome kinds are generally of small growth, and as a rule are of very woody texture. The finer and nutritious sorts grow as large as a man's arm, and being very tender may be eaten with no more misgiving than the camanioc of Brazil, which is the form of the vegetable for which a great partiality is shown by the Monbuttoo south of the Welle.

No one can have travelled much in the tropics without being tolerably acquainted with the mode commonly prac-

tised of dressing the manioc. I will therefore only pause to mention that the method followed here of getting rid of the poisonous matter does not consist so much in expressing the juices as in cutting up the tubers into pieces, and allowing them to remain in water for more than four-and-twenty hours; the result is that they get a very tainted flavour, which, however, disappears again in the process of drying. A long boiling finally prepares the manioc for eating. The yield of starch, which is known as South American tapioca, is estimated as one third of the weight of the fresh tubers.

Very probably, I should think, manioc has found its way to this extreme limit of its culture from Angola, by means of the intercourse of the people with the states under the dominion of Miwata Yamvo, many of whose customs appear to have been transferred to the Monbuttoo. But in all the northern parts of the Nile region the cultivation of manioc is still unknown, and although it has made its way into nearly all countries on the coasts within the tropics, it has not advanced towards Egypt as far as Nubia, or towards Arabia as far as Abyssinia.

Thoroughly authenticated, meanwhile, stands the fact that it was originally planted by the Portuguese upon the western coasts, and first of all in Angola. An inference may very fairly be deduced that in this way various other plants, such as maize and tobacco, were introduced into Africa, and only became naturalised at some date subsequent to the discovery of America.

After scrutinising this district as fully as I could, I was surprised never to find a single instance of the existence of the *Carica papaya*, which has now for so long become indigenous to all the maritime tropical countries of the world. Barth speaks of its abundance in the states of Haussa, and other travellers in the tropics have made frequent mention of its growth, but I do not remember finding it in Egypt except as a garden curiosity, while in Nubia and Abyssinia I never met

with it at all. I was the first to introduce tomatoes into the district of the Gazelle, and I have no doubt that ere long they will be extensively grown even in the most central localities of Africa. Cultivated so easily as they are, they nevertheless seem to be utterly wanting throughout all the wild districts that have been hitherto explored in the southern portion of the continent.

On the 8th of March some ivory business on the part of Mohammed entailed the break of a day in our continued march. The respite afforded me an opportunity, which I readily embraced, of making a botanising trip to the rich galleries of the woods on the Assika. Bribed by a few copper rings, some natives willingly came with me and were of infinite service in getting me the produce of some gigantic trees which otherwise had been quite inaccessible. Amongst these trees I may specially mention a *Treculia*, eighty feet high, known as the "pushyoh," one of the family of the *Artocarpeæ*. The great globular fruit of this was larger than my head, and seemed to realise the wish of the peasant in the fable where he longed for a tree which would grow pumpkins. I stood and gazed with astonishment at the A-Banga, who seemed to have all the nimbleness of monkeys. By taking hold of the boughs of the smaller trees, and bending them down sideways, and tearing down the long rope-like creepers, they contrived to climb the tallest and the smoothest stems. Some of the trees were ten feet in diameter at the base, and had a bark without a wrinkle; not unfrequently they ran up to a height of some forty feet without throwing out a single branch, standing, as it were, like the columns of a thousand years in the piazzas of the Eternal City.

I had made some chain-shot, but neither by means of this nor by the use of my heaviest single bullets could I succeed in getting any specimens of the fruit which grew on the tops of the tallest trees; my ordinary shot, however, sufficed to bring down some detached leaves, from the examination of

which I was able to form an opinion as to the true scientific character of these giants of the wood. My proceedings appeared to confirm the impression which the natives began to form that I must be a leaf-eater.

Here on the Assika I found a kind of muscat-nut (*Myristica*), and here too I gathered the first examples I had seen of the West African cam-wood (*Pterolobium sandalinoides*), which after it has been pulverised is commonly used as a favourite rouge for the skin of the Niam-niam and Monbuttoo men. The women, in both districts alike, are accustomed to stain themselves by preference with a black dye that is extracted from the pulp of the Gardenia fruit, known as blippo. Here, likewise, I again saw another of the notorious towering trees of Africa, the mulberry-tree of Angola, which Welwitsch has asserted is known to grow to a height of 130 feet.

Reverting for a moment to what had transpired before, I may mention that, on the preceding day, we had had our first disagreement with the native population. Just before we reached the Assika we were about to halt for a few minutes' rest, when, although our caravan was accompanied by Kollo and Bakinda, the chiefs of the district through which we were pushing, the owner of the land came and began to inveigh against us with the most abusive language, and, brandishing his spear in defiance, opposed our intention to advance. He wanted to know what right the Turks had to come spying out his place, and declared that he would not submit to have them defile any of his quarters. An outbreak seemed imminent; a mischievous combination was only too likely, when, acting on Kollo's advice, Mohammed managed to quiet the uproar. He proceeded without further parley to set light to one of the straw huts which was being used as a granary; and it would be impossible to exaggerate the fright and amazement of the natives when they saw him take the flaming fire out of his hand. One single lucifer match



had worked a miracle. There was no need of further measures of reprisal for our protection ; when we reached the hamlets on the Assika we found the natives quite amenable to our wishes, and ready to permit us to instal ourselves amidst their dwellings.

In the evening Mohammed established a shooting match. The natives had never been made familiar with the effect of our firearms, regarding them only as clumsy lances, or, as they called them, great "iron sticks," and Mohammed felt it was desirable to inspire them with a proper respect for the weapons. Selecting one of the thickest of the wooden gates that, according to custom, swung in front of the huts, he set it up for a target, and the general astonishment was unbounded when it was discovered that out of fifty balls at a hundred paces, at least ten had gone clean through the wood. The Bongo bearers were then put through an exercise of feigning an attack. With wild outcry, and still wilder boundings and jumpings, they rushed upon their imaginary foe, representing, in their way, the light cavalry dashing in after the prelude of the roar of the artillery. Then, to complete the illusion of the spectacle, they seized huge clods of earth and great clumps of grass, and so returned, a picture of troops laden with spoil, to the position from which they had started. This was but a sham fight ; but a few weeks later, and the scene had to be re-enacted in earnest.

The next movement of the caravan was towards the west. Twice there were some brooks to cross, and after half a league we halted by the Yuroo. We were now in a country with a large population, the whole district being called Nabanda Yuroo, or the "villages of the Yuroo," as the names of the streams in this region always give their designation to the land. The stream was shadowed in the usual way by the thickly developed growth of the gallery foliage, and took a curve in the form of a horse-shoe. Within the

bend were scattered the farmsteads surrounded by large groves of plantains of which the ripe fruit had been already housed. The preparations that were set on foot towards forming a camp without making use of the existing huts either for the shelter of our baggage or for the reception of the superiors, demonstrated at once that a residence here for some days was certainly intended. The pretext alleged for the stay was to allow the Mohammedans to solemnise the anniversary of their new year. The issue, however, did not answer to the expectation.

I had here to exhibit myself to a larger number of curious eyes than usual; but I was able to obtain the measurements of the skulls of some of the A-Banga, whilst others were immortalised in my sketch-book. I had also to provide for the entertainment of the people who came to visit me, and in this respect was greatly assisted by my matches, as the marvel of my being able to produce fire at my pleasure was an inexhaustible source of interest. If ever I handed over a lucifer and allowed them to light it themselves, their rapture surpassed all bounds; they never failed to consider that the power of producing flames resided in me, but their astonishment was very greatly increased when they discovered that the faculty could be extended to themselves. Giving the white man credit for being able to procure fire or rain at his own free-will, they looked upon the performances as miracles unparalleled since the dawn of creation. For myself, I sat composedly apart, as though invested with some mysterious charm; but to say the truth, I was rather bored by this conjuring, which was a stale excitement to me, as it had now entered upon its second year of performance. Still the wonder of the Africans seemed never to cease, and they did not flag in their delight at the instantaneous flame.

The method of obtaining fire, practised alike by the natives of the Nile lands and of the adjacent country in the

Welle system, consists simply in rubbing together two hard sticks at right angles to one another till a spark is emitted. The hard twigs of the *Anona senegalensis* are usually selected for the purpose. Underneath them is placed either a stone or something upon which a little pile of embers has been laid; the friction of the upper piece of wood wears a hole in the lower, and soon a spark is caught by the ashes, and is fanned into a flame with some dry grass, which is swung to and fro to cause a draught, the whole proceeding being a marvel which might well-nigh eclipse the magic of my lucifer matches.

As we were now expecting a forced campaign of two days through the wilderness, on the confines my servants had to apply their attention to the provision of adequate supplies, as whatever we required would have to be carried with us. To accomplish our plan satisfactorily we were obliged to contract a treaty offensive and defensive with the natives, and nothing would suffice for this but a mutual interchange of blood. The circumstance led me for the first time to become a witness of this barbarous, but truly African custom. The words of the pledge are emphatic: "In peace we will hold together; in war we will be a mutual defence." Osman, one of my people who had come from Berber, being a novice in the ranks of the Niam-niam campaigners, became one of the most enthusiastic adherents to this pledge. In vain I represented to him the unlawfulness of his conduct from a Mohammedan point of view; I threatened that for the future he should be called a heretic and an unbeliever, as bad as a Kaffir; but all to no purpose: he became a blood-drinker by profession, and so obtained from me whatever copper rings and beads were necessary for cementing the bonds of the treaty.

The following day was devoted entirely to exploring the sylvan flora around; to my heart's desire could I now wander amidst the thickets on the Yuroo, which would have been deemed inaccessible to any one but a plant-hunter.

In the mould formed by the leaves which had decayed beside the stream that parted itself into many a vein, I came across a number of drums, stools, and other specimens of wood-work which the natives had buried in the mud, in order to give them a permanent blackness. This too is the way in which they prepare the reeds of which they weave their shields and matting. The process of rapid superficial humification which takes place here, is to be attributed doubtless to the temperature being so much higher than in the temperate zones, where a corresponding degree of decomposition would be the work of years.

Whilst botanising on the Assika we had more than once been taken by surprise at arrows from some unknown hand having fallen very near us. To bend down to pluck a remarkable plant, and to take up some whistling arrow instead, is not a common experience, even in Africa. The hostile and defiant attitude of the natives was too plainly revealed to us, when on the 11th of March the elder of my Niam-niam attendants, Gyabir, was shot in the muscle of his arm. Shrieking aloud in alarm and agony, he flung down my valuable rifle, and betook himself to flight. So dense was the thicket that I knew nothing of the disaster till my other attendants came running up, and terror-stricken began to shout, "They are coming! they are coming!" After this we hurried back to the camp. I was very deeply concerned at the supposed loss of my breech-loader, which I was accustomed to call my "cook," so serviceable had it been day after day, in bringing down guinea-fowl and francolins for my table. By good fortune, however, one of the Bongo folk had caught sight of the weapon, and soon brought it back to me safe and sound.

Several of the Bongo bearers had also returned wounded more or less by these insidious arrows; none of them were very severely injured, but they came back howling in alarm. Each race seemed to have its own way of giving vent to

expressions of woe. The Niam-niam outcry for pain that was sudden, was a sharp "Ow! ow!" but for a continued pain it consisted of a prolonged "Akonn! akonn!" The Bongo cry was "Aoh! aoh!"—that of the Dyoor was "Awai! awai!" For suffering of every degree the Mon-buttoo seem to have a word peculiar to themselves, and on every occasion, however trivial, for a mere push or fall, they will break out into a long-drawn wail of "Nangway! nangway!"

The arrows of the A-Banga and the Monbuttoo differ from those of other tribes by being provided at the extremity of the shaft with two wings, which are made either of hairs from the tail of the genet, or quite as often of bits of plantain-leaves. In their points they correspond with those of the Mittoo-Madi. The points are generally iron, but occasionally they are made of wood which is almost as hard as iron. The shafts consist of the firm reedy steppe-grass, and are of about the thickness of a common lead-pencil. By a cruel refinement of skill which might almost be styled diabolical, they contrive to place one of the joints of the reed just below the barbs, with the design that the arrow should break off short as soon as it has inflicted the wound, making it a very difficult matter to extract the barbs from the flesh. The usual method of extracting a lance-head is to take a knife and make a sufficiently large incision in the wounded muscle for the barbs to be withdrawn; but, in fact, the result generally is that very jagged and troublesome wounds are inflicted.

No little excitement was stirred up in our encampment when Gyabir came back wounded. I set to work and extracted the arrow by breaking off the shaft, and drawing the head out on the side of the arm opposite to that at which it had entered. All the evening, however, I was too much occupied in my own pursuits to have time to devote to the consultations of the Nubians. As night was drawing on there



was a fresh uproar, and the shrieks of women in alarm revealed that some Job's post of evil tidings had arrived. Three female slaves had gone to the banks of the Yuroo to fetch water for the camp, and had been discovered fatally wounded, whilst six others had disappeared and had evidently fallen into the hands of the A-Banga. A state of war then was manifestly declared ; at once a fresh supply of cartridges was distributed to the soldiers, the sentinel-watches were made doubly strong, and a detachment of Farookh was told off and ordered to keep vigilant guard all night. Water for the night was indispensable, and in order to fetch it a number of women went down to the water-side, carrying torches in their hands, and under the protection of a strong escort who fired frequent shots into the bushes.

Mohammed proceeded on the following morning to distribute his force into several companies, and as soon as it was daylight sent them roaming over the environs, commissioned, if possible, to obtain some hostages that might be exchanged for the missing slaves. They found, however, that all the farmsteads had been deserted by their inhabitants, and without accomplishing their purpose they returned to the camp. All the huts and the plantain-groves were spared, but only provisionally. In the event of a thorough rupture the natives in the immediate neighbourhood had more to fear than the remoter people from the indiscriminate revenge of the Nubians, and it was hoped that their influence would avail to secure that the stolen women should be restored. In fact, several of the local chiefs did come in the middle of the day for the purpose of offering some explanation to Mohammed. Mohammed made them clearly understand that unless by night-fall the captives were delivered up every farm and every crop in the district should stand in flames. The warning had its due effect ; the restitution was promptly made, and left us free and contented to prepare for our farther progress towards the south.

Ready enough we were next morning to turn our backs upon the inhospitable quarters, and to postpone a regular warfare until the date of our return, when a conflict seemed inevitable, and we should have but a hostile reception to expect. The Bongo bearers had meanwhile taken good care to replenish their stock of provisions by laying hands on every granary they could, so as to be prepared for the transit over the desert-country which lay between us and the friendly territory of the Monbuttoo. We first passed over the Yuroo, and shortly afterwards we crossed two other streams which flowed into it, each full of water and with well-wooded banks. After marching on for about two hours till we had passed the last cultivated fields of the A-Banga, we arrived at a rivulet which watered an open steppe, and finding some detached and spreading fig-trees, we made a halt and took our morning meal. A very obvious sinking of the land had ensued since our passage over the previous streams, the surface of the soil around being once more marked by undulations.

Onward for two leagues we went over a level steppe which was all but void of trees, occasionally passing over some sandy eminences which had all the appearance of being the remnants of gneiss rocks decomposed by the lapse of time. Comparatively a short period will suffice to obliterate these remnants of rock as the formation of the superficial iron-stone goes on. Altogether the region through which we were passing now presented an aspect very different from the land we were leaving behind, which had been very profusely intersected by a very network of intricate watercourses all bounded by abundant woods. Here the streams all irregular and undefined, twisted their ambiguous way through marshy meadows, their banks being totally destitute of woods; some occasional clumps of *Scitaminea* being the only plants to be seen. They had to be crossed as best we could at the spots where the herds of buffaloes had trodden down the slime into something of solidity; but the black water was

frequently as high as our necks, whilst the mud beneath our feet seemed to have no bottom. Numerous large frogs and a quantity of land crabs (*Telphusa Aubryi*) were wallowing in the half-dry pools on the banks.

Especial precaution had to be taken here to protect the baggage and to convey it across the swamps without injury. We had successfully accomplished the passage of two of these difficult fords, when the tokens of a gathering storm made us halt for the night upon the banks of a third before we could venture to proceed. As expeditiously as possible a tent was erected, into which as much baggage was stowed as it could contain, but it was far from being spacious enough to shelter the whole, so that for the greater part of the night the Nubians had to protect it by piling over it great ricks of grass. An entire deficiency of wood made it impossible to extemporise either huts or sheds. The tumultuous confusion, the shouting and the running, the rescuing here, the escaping there, and all amidst the crashing thunder of the tropics, and in a torrent of rain that fell as though the very sluices of the sky were open, conspired to form a study from which a painter might conceive a picture of the Deluge. The meadow-stream by which we were compelled to pass this luckless night had a direction that was easterly, and therefore contrary to that of the rivers we had previously passed; it flowed to join the Kahpily which may be described as a river of the second magnitude, and which unites its dashing flood with the more northerly of the two sources of the Welle, the Keebaly and the Gadda.

Frightfully hungry after the disturbed vigil of the night, but yet still fasting, we proceeded at dawn to take the mud-bath which crossing the stream involved. Some Bongo who were adepts in swimming had to go in front, and convey great masses of grass and *Phrynica*, which they let down in the deepest parts so as to cover the sinking bottom. Going on in the same southerly direction as on the day before, we passed

along the sunken ground, and after a while came to a brook which once again was shaded by luxuriant gallery-woods. The path that led through the thickets down to the main arm of the stream had been for so many feet encroached upon by the water, which rose high in consequence of its contracted channel, that the only means of progress was either along the unstable trunks of fallen trees, or through puddles in which it was hard to preserve one's equilibrium. The narrow rift was cut out from the entanglement of foliage, creepers, roots, and branches, as neatly and smoothly as though it had been trimmed by a knife.

Never before had I seen such wonderful masses of lichens, of which the long grey garlands hung down in striking contrast to the deep green of the foliage above. Just like the



*Platycerium Elephantotis*, Schweinf. One-eighth of natural size.

“barba espanola” of the forests of the Mississippi, a gigantic form of our *Usnea florida* here adorned every tree. But a

decoration stranger than all was afforded by the *Platycerium*, which projected in couples, like elephant's ears, from the branches of the trees; it is one of the most characteristic of all the gallery-flora of the region. Another species of the genus which I had observed in other parts, the *Platycerium stemmaria*, with its bifurcate leaves, here too finds a conspicuous place.

In these ancient woods, however, there is nothing that could more attract the attention of the naturalist than the wonders of the world of white ants. So assiduous are they in their industry and so inexplicable in their work, that their proceedings might well-nigh tempt a scientific student to take up his permanent abode near their haunts. They construct their nests in a shape not dissimilar to wine-casks, out of thousands and thousands of leaves, which they cement together with a slimy clay, using a strong bough for the axis of the whole, so that the entire fabric is suspended at a giddy height.

This species of white ant (*Termes arborum*) had been already observed by Smeathman in Western Africa. They partition their buildings by means of wood-shavings and bits of bark, and in the same way as the forest-ants they make several stories, and set apart nurseries and chambers for the young.

Just as the bottle-gourd of the primeval wilderness offered to a primitive people the first models for their earthenware, so have the structures which the ants contrive from leaves furnished the natives of Central Africa with the general design of all their basket-work. Already I have referred to the corn-baskets of the Bongo as one of the earliest illustrations of the fact that their weaving is but a faithful copy of the building of the ants.

Coming next to a tract of bushwood, and then crossing two more galleries, on which was displayed all the wild beauty of the virgin forest, we arrived about midday at the stream which marks the boundary of the kingdom to which we were directing our way. The passage across this river occupied us



more than half-an-hour, so intricate was the labyrinth of the uprooted trees over which it was necessary to clamber; and the way was made still more difficult by the thorny interlacings of the *Smilax* and the obstructive jungles of the Rotang.

Whether open by chance or cleared by human hands, it was hard to determine, but there were spaces in the gallery-woods which were comparatively void of trees; over these was spread an abundant growth of plantains, which had a look most perfectly in harmony with the primitive wilderness around. Only on the fallen trees was it possible to effect a passage amidst the confusion of the many channels; for the network of the drooping creepers baffled every attempt to swim. At length, however, all was accomplished, and we were greeted by a view of the hospitable home of the Monbuttoo.

After taking some brief repose on the frontier of the new country, followed by troops of men and women, we proceeded to the residence of Nembey, a local chieftain under King Degberra, who governs the eastern half of the Monbuttoo, whilst the western portion belongs to Munza, a sovereign who rules with a still more powerful sway. The abode of Nembey was situated on a rivulet called the Kussumbo, which rolls on its crystal waters in a deeply-hollowed channel to join the Kahpily. Crossing the stream, we encamped upon some slightly undulated ground, encompassed by low bushes, where we erected some grass-huts that should be perfectly rain-proof. Immediately upon our arrival, Nembey, accompanied by a number of his wives, paid me a visit in my tent, and brought me a present of poultry.

Mohammed Aboo Sammat was an old friend and ally of the western king Munza, who was never otherwise than upon a footing of war with his neighbour and rival Degberra. Little therefore could Mohammed have expected in the way of welcome or hospitable reception from the king of the

Eastern Monbuttoo, if it had not chanced that his subordinate officer had discovered the advantageous ivory trade which might be opened with the strangers. This is the explanation which may be offered of the courtesy of our reception, and which accounts for the neighbourhood all round being free from any peril as far as we were concerned.

The woods on the Kussumbo I found to be an inexhaustible source of botanical treasure. Conspicuous amongst many other examples of the characteristic vegetation were the *Raphia*, the *Elais*, the bread-fruit or *Artocarpus*, and a species of Trumpet-tree (*Cecropia*) which was the first representative of the American genus that I had found in the continent of Africa. The oil-palm (*Elais*) is here at the extreme northern limit to which cultivation has ever transferred it, as it is still utterly unknown in all the districts of the Nile. Not until we crossed the Welle did we find it planted out in groves, and to judge from appearances it had only been planted even there for purposes of experiment.

Upon the day following our arrival at the residence of Nembey, I ventured out without any apprehension of harm into the semi-cultivated plantain-grounds which ran for some miles along the river-banks, passing as I went a long series of farms and fields that were under tillage, everywhere observing the women and children sitting in front of their neatly-kept huts and attending to their household duties.

The sun was just sinking on the horizon, and we were still enveloped in the thickets shrouded in masses of manioc and plantains, when the report of firearms, volley after volley, coming from the camp, took us by surprise, and induced us without delay to hurry back; such repeated discharges, we could not help suspecting, must too surely betoken some aggression on the part of the natives. We loaded our pieces, and trying to follow the direction of the sound, we started off on our return, but for a time we wandered vaguely about, hardly knowing how to get free of the plantations; we at

length managed to reach the villages, from which the way was quite direct. Together with ourselves streamed on a crowd of the residents, who came hurrying out, equipped with their shields and lances, or with their bows and arrows. As we approached the farms we heard the beating of the signal drums, and everywhere at the doors of the huts we saw the women and children, all eagerly bringing from the interior the necessary arms for their husbands and fathers, who were waiting impatiently without. Not knowing whether we were friends or foes, we pushed on all together along the road. Helpless enough I felt myself, as burdened with my heavy boots I tottered over the smooth tree-trunks which had been thrown across the depth of the Kussumbo; behind and before were the excited people, equipped with arms, as frantic as wild Indians, and very naturally the thought rose to my mind, how completely, if they chose, I was within their power.

It did not take long to get through the woodlands, and then again we were out upon the open. One glance at the camps before us revealed the mystery: the Nubians with their swarthy troops of bearers had been doubled in number by the arrival of another company of merchant-people from Khartoom, and in honour of the meeting the usual salvoes had been fired. The new comers were the party belonging to Tuhamy, who was an upper secretary in the divan of the Governor-General, by whose authority I was empowered to claim the hospitality of all the Seribas. To Mohammed's soldiers the unlooked-for arrival of a number of their countrymen was a welcome occurrence which they celebrated as a holiday; but to Mohammed himself the chance meeting was a vexation, from which ultimately, as he foresaw, various unpleasantnesses arose. The territories of Tuhamy's people were situated on the lower Rohl, their head Seriba being at a spot named Ronga, where they had been established some years previously by the French adventurer,

Malzac. They had come direct by the way through the districts of the Mittoo and the Madi; and at the Diamvonoo, (where I had made so large a collection of the skulls of the chimpanzees) they had had such a vigorous conflict with the Niam-niam that for two days they were obliged to defend themselves behind an extemporised abattis against the hostilities of Wando, and had not escaped without some loss of life on their side. Suspecting no mischief, they had arrived at the place just at the moment that our caravan had hurried away to escape the general conflict that seemed imminent, and accordingly they had found the natives all up in arms and ready for immediate action.

At midnight a heavy rain set in, which lasted till the morning; and in the uncertainty as to what the weather would be, our departure was delayed long beyond the ordinary hour, and we were even at last obliged to start in a thick and drizzling mist. In spite of the wet, Tuhamy's party had gone on in the early morning. We were all anxious about keeping our powder dry; but, for my part, I must own I was more concerned for the safety of my collection, which had been gathered and preserved with so much trouble. A halt was made for an hour in one of the farmsteads on our way, and the large open sheds belonging to the local superintendent were of infinite service in providing immediate shelter for the baggage. Our route crossed four streams, all flowing to the south, after which we arrived at the Mazoroody, on the banks of which the line of farms belonging to Bongwa extended a considerable way. Bongwa was a chieftain subject to pay tribute equally to Munza and to Degberra, as his possessions were contiguous to those of both these rival kings. We crossed the river, which was approached by an extensive steppe, which terminated in a declivity that led us downwards for well-nigh 200 feet, and then halting, we proceeded to erect our camp by constructing

a number of huts in the best way we could out of the masses of sodden grass.

Accompanied by his wife, Bongwa paid us a visit in camp, and allowed me the unusual honour of taking a sketch both of himself and of his better half. The old lady took her seat upon a Monbuttoo bench, wearing nothing else than the singular band, like a saddle-girth, across her lap, in the general fashion of all the women of the country. Like nearly all her race, she had a skin several shades lighter than her husband's, being something of the colour of half-roasted



Bongwa's Wife.

coffee. She exhibited a singular tattooing, which appeared to consist of two distinct characters. One of these ran in lines over the shoulders and bosom, just where our own ladies wear their lace collars; it was apparently made of a number of points pricked in with a needle, and forming a pattern terminating on the shoulders and breast in large crosses. The other was a pattern traced over the whole stomach,



standing out in such relief that I presume it must have been done by a hot iron; it consisted of figures set in square frames, and looked somewhat like the tracery which is sculptured on cornices and old arches. Bodkins of ivory projected from her towering chignon, which was surmounted by a plate as large as a dollar, fastened on by a comb with five teeth manufactured of porcupine-quills.

Since Madame Bongwa only intended to pay me a short visit, she did not appear *en grande tenue*; the picture, therefore, necessarily failed in the black figures which, for full dress, were painted on her ample flanks, and which would have given a double interest to the likeness. As a token of my recognition of the steadiness with which she sat during my artistic labours, I permitted her (and this was the greatest privilege I could afford any of the natives) to put her fingers through my hair, which to her eye was so astonishingly long and sleek.

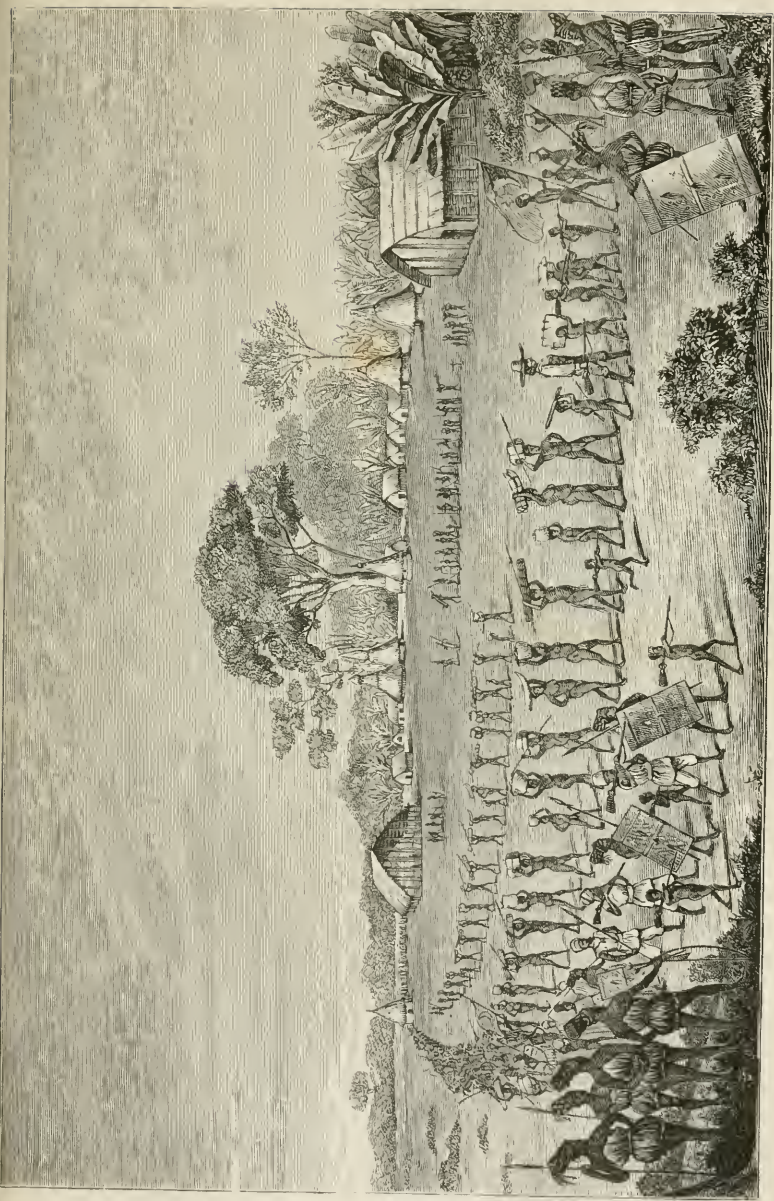
The first hours of the following morning were spent in making purchases from the natives of a supply of yams and sweet-potatoes; the day, consequently, was somewhat advanced before we could make a start. The strips of grass-land, void of trees, into which the numerous rivulets parcel out the district, were here peculiarly narrow; in the course of a single league we passed over no less than three different streams, and then came to another, the Bumba, which we had to go over twice. Whenever we came to thickets, the *Raphia* or wine-palm was sure to be prominent, and put every other plant into the shade. Its noble branches are used by the Monbuttoo for making their stools and the seats which they erect upon the roofs of their huts.

A very populous district was soon reached, known as the district of Eddeedy, who being within Munza's kingdom was tributary to Izingerria, Munza's viceroy and brother. At this spot we came again into contact with the party of Tuhamy, which had encamped upon the river Bumba. We had for so

long been unaccustomed to the sight that the prospect of grazing cattle came upon us almost as a surprise. At first we were under the impression that Tuhamy's people must have brought the oxen with them; but the manifest deviation of the beasts from the Dinka type set us to inquire whence they had really come. They were of a thicker and shorter build than those we had seen, having a different formation of the skull and very prominent humps. We were informed that they had been a present from King Munza to Eddeedy. Munza himself had some years previously received a large herd of them from the powerful ruler of some people in the south-east, with whom he had concluded an amicable alliance. The tribe who were thus referred to were called by my interpreter the Maogoo, and I imagined that through this word I could get some perception of what Sir Samuel Baker meant when he spoke of the land beyond Lake Mwootan as Ulegga, and its inhabitants as the Malegga.

Taking now a more southerly direction, the road led us over three different streams, which flowed to the west to join the Bumba. On the fourth stream from the Bumba was situated the mbanga of Izingerria. It was somewhat late in the afternoon before we made our imposing entrance, and then we found both sides of the roadway lined with crowds of astonished folks who had come to gaze at our troop. The officials appeared in full state, their hats adorned with waving plumes: they had come attended by their shield-bearers, and had ordered their indispensable benches to be brought with them, that they might receive us at their ease and observe the unusual spectacle we presented with as much convenience as possible.

We took up our encampment on the steppe just beyond the stream which divided us from the circle of huts, which was arranged around an open area, and allotted to the wives and soldiers of the prince. The plots that had been cleared near the little river were for the most part planted with



L.

ENTRY TO IZINGERLIA'S MBANGA.



sugar-canes. The canes grew to the size of a man's arm, but I think they were generally very woody and less soft in their texture than those which grew in Egypt. Except for chewing, the natives seem to have no object in growing them, and apparently have no notion of expressing or boiling the sap, for otherwise they would not have been so surprised as they were at the bits of loaf-sugar which we gave them by way of putting their experience to the test. The plants thrive very well in the plantations, which are amply irrigated by the numerous ducts of the various streams, and, indeed, they grow in a half-wild condition. Had the natives only a better disposition for industry and a freer scope for traffic, there is no estimating what might be the value of the production which is here so bountifully bestowed.

In company with Mohammed I visited Izingerria in his dwelling in the later hours of the evening, and found him sitting on his bench in the open space, surrounded by about a dozen of his satraps. Having been made acquainted with the custom of the country that all officials, all heads of families, and indeed all persons of any distinction, whenever they pay a visit, take with them their slaves to carry their benches, because it is considered unseemly to sit, like Turks or Arabs, upon the ground, I gave orders that some of my people should, on these occasions, invariably accompany me and carry my cane chair. We took our seats opposite Izingerria, and by the assistance of one of the natives, who could talk to my Niam-niam interpreter, I contrived to keep up, in spite of the labour of a double translation, some mutual interchange of thought till the night was far advanced. Of hospitable entertainment there was not a word; perhaps it was considered inconsistent with the dignity of a formal interview, but there was not even the offer of the usual eleusine beer. The consumption of tobacco, however, was quite unrestrained. I could not help observing, without being quite able to account for the circumstance, that my cigars did not



in the least appear to attract any notice on the part of the natives, although they were accustomed to smoke their tobacco exclusively through pipes, and were as entirely unacquainted either with the habits of chewing tobacco or of taking snuff as any other of the African negroes who have not been contaminated in these respects by intercourse with Mohammedans and Christians.

The Monbuttoo use pipes of a primitive, but really of a very serviceable description, which they make from the mid-rib of a plantain-leaf. The upper classes, however, not unfrequently have a metal tube, some five feet long, made by their smiths. The lower extremity of the pipe is plugged up, and an opening is made in the side near the end, into which is inserted a plantain-leaf, twisted up and filled with tobacco. This extemporised bowl is changed as often as requisite, sometimes every few minutes, by the slaves who are kept in attendance. The only tobacco which is known here is the Virginian (*N. tabacum*, L.). With much relish I smoked a pipe of this construction, which was altogether a novelty to me, and I found that it was a contrivance that modified the rankness of the tobacco almost as perfectly as if it had been inhaled through the water-reservoir of a narghileh.

At length the attainment of my cherished hopes seemed close at hand. The prospect was held out that on the 19th of March we might expect to arrive at the Welle. The way to the river led us due south, and we went onwards through almost uninterrupted groves of plantains, from which the huts, constructed of bark and rotang very skilfully sewn together, ever and again peeped out. A march of scarcely two leagues brought us to the bank of the noble river, which rolled its deep dark flood majestically to the west, in its general aspect suggesting a resemblance to the Blue Nile. For me it was a thrilling moment that can never fade from my memory. My sensations must have been like Mungo

Park's on the 20th of July, 1796, when for the first time he planted his foot upon the shore of the mysterious Niger, and answered once for all the great geographical question of his day—as to whether its waters rolled to the east or to the west.

Here, then, I was upon the very bank of the river, attesting the western flow of the water, about which the contradictions and inconsistencies of the Nubians had kept up my unflinching interest ever since we set out from Khartoom. Whoever has any acquaintance with the indistinctness that ever attaches to the statements of those who would attempt to describe in Arabic the up-current or the down-current of a river will readily comprehend the eagerness with which I yearned to catch the first glance of the waters of which the rippling sound, as they washed their stony banks, came through the bushes to my strained and listening ear. If the river should flow to the east, why then it solved the problem, hitherto inexplicable, of the fulness of the water in Lake Mwootan; but if, as was far more likely, it should go towards the west, then beyond a doubt it was independent altogether of the Nile system. A moment more, and the question was set at rest. Westerly was the direction of the stream, which consequently did not belong to the Nile at all; it was in all likelihood not less than 180 miles distant from the most western coast of Lake Mwootan, and at the numerous rapids which are formed in its upper course it rises almost to the level of the lake, even if it does not attain a still higher altitude.\*

Very similar as I have said it looked in some respects to the Blue Nile at Khartoom, the Welle had here a breadth of 800 feet, and at this period of the year, when its waters were at their lowest, it had a depth varying from twelve to fifteen feet. The banks, like the “gneys” of the Nile, rose about twenty feet above the level of the stream, and appeared to

\* The measurements are given in the sketch-map in Vol. II.

consist almost exclusively of alluvial clay and some layers of blended sand and mica; but as far as I could investigate the exposed face of the river-wall, I could see neither pebbles nor drift, and only occasionally were the scanty remains of shells to be detected.

Here, as well as on the upper part of the main stream, named the Keebaly, which we subsequently crossed, no inundation of the country seems ever to occur, although the land sank with rather a sudden fall for 100 feet down to the wood-encircled bank of the river.

There was nothing remarkable about the rate at which the water flowed: on the northern bank it passed at about fifty-five or sixty feet a minute; so that the volume of water that rolled by would be about 10,000 cubic feet a second; but supposing the rate of the stream to be invariable, this volume would be nearly doubled at the season when the river was at its fullest height. The Welle is formed about twelve miles above this spot by the union of the Gadda and the Keebaly. About three weeks later (on the 13th of April) the Gadda was about 155 feet wide and two to three feet deep, whilst the Keebaly, which is the main stream, was 325 wide and at least twelve feet deep. Of the two streams just above the junction, the rate of flow was fifty-seven feet and seventy-five feet respectively. Fourteen miles above its point of confluence with the Gadda, the Keebaly forms a series of rapids flowing over innumerable crags of gneiss, making a labyrinth of little islands which are known as Kissangah, and which part the stream into many minor channels that after they are re-united reach across in a distance of 1000 to 1200 feet from shore to shore.

I made all the inquiries I possibly could about the condition and fluctuations of the river from the interpreters who were attached to the expedition, and ascertained that the water was actually at this date at its lowest level. The first indication that I had of any rise or increase in the stream

was when I crossed it again a little higher up, towards the east, in the middle of April; and to judge from what was pointed out to me then on the river-banks, I should conjecture that the period of the highest water would be about two months later.

The Welle had all the tokens of being a mountain stream of which the source was at no remote distance, and to a certainty was not in a latitude much to the south of that of the spot where we were crossing. The colour of the flood at this time of the year corresponded very remarkably with the cloudy waters of the Bahr-el-Azrek, and it is probable that when it is at its height it has that look of coffee-and-milk which the river presents at Khartoom. Moreover, there is an additional proof indicating that the river has its origin in some mountain region at no great distance, which is furnished by the fact of so many considerable streams (such as the Keebaly, the Gadda, the Kahpily, the Nomayo, and the Nalobey) all having their channels uniting in what is comparatively a very limited area. The result of all my varied inquiries seemed to demonstrate most satisfactorily that to the south-west of Munza's residence the land takes a decided rise; and the existence of certain detached groups of hills, which according to the declarations of the natives are at no very great distance, serves to confirm my belief as to the orographical character of the country. The hills and isolated mountains to which I refer would be, I imagine, none other than the western fringe of the "Blue Mountains," which Baker observed from the farther side of Lake Mwootan (the Albert Nyanza), and of which (as he saw them on the north-western confines of the lake) he reckoned that the height must be 8000 feet.

From this spot also the position of the abodes of the tribe of the Maogoo was pointed out to me, and it lay between the S.E. and E.S.E. It was to me a very remarkable thing how accurately the natives of Africa, by the indication of the

finger, would point to any particular locality ; they were also equally skilful in telling the hour of the day by the height of the sun, and I rarely detected an error of much more than half an hour in their representations. In wide open plains like the deserts of Nubia, where the journeys are made for many miles consecutively without the least variation in direction, the precision of their estimate reaches such singular correctness, that if a lance is laid upon the ground the path to which it points will lead, with scarcely a hair's-breadth deviation, to the destination required, and the road thus indicated will accord perfectly with any direct route that may be marked upon the map. Many years ago Bruce of Kinnaird alluded to a circumstance of this kind in his travels through the Nubian desert ; and during my wanderings between the Nile and the Red Sea I had various opportunities of satisfying myself of the truth of what he states.

Taking into calculation the geographical configuration of this part of Africa, and relying not so much upon the representations of previous European travellers as upon the information obtained along the wide tract that extends from Lake Tsad to Kordofan and south of that line, it may be asserted that the Welle belongs to the system of the Shary. That the Welle has any connection with the Gazelle, and so ultimately with the Nile, is contradicted not merely by the general belief, but by the authenticated statements of the inhabitants who dwell upon its borders ; and more than this, it is totally inconsistent with the fact that the Welle is a stream vastly greater than the Gazelle in the volume of its waters ; for while both alike were at their lowest ebb on the 27th of April, 1863, Petherick has placed it upon record that the Gazelle had but 3042 cubic feet of water to roll on, in comparison to 10,000 feet, which was the volume, every second, of the Welle.

Perhaps I may seem to lay greater stress upon the information which I gained by my inquiries, than a rigorous



critic, who knows what an ambiguous country I was traversing, may be inclined to think is fair. But let me invite his attention to the following statement. Although the entire eastern portion of the Niam-niam country from Mofio to Kanna has been repeatedly visited by companies from Khar-toom, and I have been repeatedly brought into contact with those who have taken part in the expeditions, I have never come across but one single individual who has represented that there is connection anywhere between the Welle and the Gazelle; and in addition to this, the Monbuttoo and the Niam-niam, with an agreement that is undeviating, all represent that the Welle holds on its course to the N.E. as far as they could follow it for days and days together, till it widens so vastly that the trees on its banks are not visible, and that at last there is nothing but water and sky. This representation would imply that the river issues in some inland lake. They have, moreover, their tales to tell of the inhabitants of the country on the lower part of the river, as to how they dress in white, and like the Nubians kneel upon the ground and say their prayers. Clearly, therefore, these residents are Mohammedans, and the direction and the distance of their abode would seem to corroborate an impression that they must be the inhabitants of some southern parts of Baghirmy.

As I have spoken of the Welle in comparison with the Gazelle, I may now be permitted to bring it into contrast with the Shary, so far at least as the lower course of this river has been explored. According to the testimony of Major Denham, who made his observations on the 24th of June, 1824, the width of the Shary at its mouth was about half a mile, while its stream had a velocity of something under three miles an hour. This would indicate a stream three times as strong as that of the Welle, and if the average depth of the waters as they flow into Lake Tsad be reckoned at ten feet it would give a volume of 85,000 cubic feet a

second, whereas at the very highest reckoning the volume of the Welle is not above 20,000 cubic feet.

On the other hand the eastern main branch of the Shary at Mele, where it was measured by Barth on the 18th of March, 1852, had a breadth of 1800 feet, and in mid-channel it had a depth of fifteen feet, while it was specially recorded as rolling on with a velocity of some three miles an hour, which, however, in a way that we should not have expected, Barth says did not make him reckon the stream as particularly strong.

That the Shary, so early as the month of March, should show an increase in the mass of its waters, would appear to indicate that according to theory it must be augmented by some other rivers coming from more southern latitudes than the Welle. It is a positive fact that there are no other streams of the least account that could possibly flow into it from the arid steppes of Darfoor and Wadai on the north; the land there has no springs, and consumes for itself whatever it receives from the clouds above. If then the Welle flows neither into the Gazelle nor yet into the Shary, it might perhaps be asked whether it is not a tributary to the ample waters of the Benue, which Barth found at Yola, on the 18th of July, 1851, to be 1200 feet in width, having an average depth of 11 feet, and a periodic change of 50 feet between the highest and lowest level of its stream; but then there would still remain the further question as to what, in that case, must be the source of the Shary, and whence it comes; and this is a question that decides for itself the full value of the counter-evidence.

It is a matter of especial interest to recollect that Barth would appear already to have announced the existence of the Welle under the name of the river of Kubanda. The people that he had about him were natives of Darfoor, who had been accustomed to carry on their expeditions for plunder ever since the year 1834. In fact he assigns the position of the river of Kubanda to the latitude of  $3^{\circ}$  N., and affixes a note to his account of it stating that "a tree, called the Kumba, is

said to grow upon its banks." Now, Kumba is the Niamniam for the abundant Malaghetta pepper (*Xylopiæ æthiopicæ*), which has communicated its name to the Pepper Coast, and in the middle ages was a spice much valued and known as Habb-el-Selim (Selim's grains), and had probably been brought into the market by the people of Morocco, long before black pepper was known at all. I satisfied myself that at present this pepper is known to the Foorians as a product of the distant south.

The transport of the caravan across the great river was by no means an easy matter; by the aid, however, of the ferry-men whom Munza had provided, it was accomplished so vigorously that in the course of three hours our last man had been carried over. The passage was effected by large canoes which were hewn out of a single trunk of a tree, and which, alike in shape and solidity, were superior to what we had hitherto seen. Some of them were not less than thirty feet long and four feet broad, and sufficiently spacious to convey both horses and bullocks. So ample are their dimensions that there is no risk of their being upset, nor did they lurch in the least degree as we got into them. They were made with both ends running horizontally out into a beak, and the border lines were ornamented with carved figures. As the current was not very strong, it was found sufficient to have two boatmen, who squatted down at each extremity of the canoe; their paddles were about five feet long, and tapered down towards the end in the shape of a narrow shovel, and to say the truth, the boatmen used them very much in shovel-fashion.

I had seen the teak canoes on the Red Sea which are called "Hoory" in Arabic, and are of a build imported from India, and many of the canoes which are in use at Suakim and Djidda, but none of these were comparable, either with respect to size or elegance, with the canoes of the Monbuttoo. It is remarkable that on the lower course of the Shary there

are no ferry-boats in use except such as are made out of a number of planks fitted and fastened together ; the conclusion from this would appear to be obvious: either that there are no fine trees to be felled in that country, similar to those on the borders of the Welle, or that between the source and mouth of the Shary there are impediments to navigation which are insuperable. In the distance of about 1000 miles to Lake Tsad from the point of our passage, the stream would have fallen more than 1450 feet.

Our encampment was formed about half-a-league to the south of the river; it was encircled by the dwellings of the Monbuttoo, who had spread themselves over the declivity of a steep woody ravine. The groves in this locality yielded me every day fresh trophies in my raids upon the vegetable domains of Nature, whilst at nightfall the natives came trooping in and enlisted my curious interest. Ambassadors deputed by King Munza came to bring me his official recognition, and were charged at the same time to render to him what information they could about the doings and intentions of the wonderful stranger. As the messengers sent by the king were sufficiently versed in the Zandey dialect to hold conversation in it, I was enabled to make them understand the object of my visit to their country, and to all appearances they were thoroughly satisfied by my explanation.

We were still at a little distance from the point which we had determined must be the limit of our progress for this year; we had, however, but one day's rest to make, and then we should proceed to make our entry into Munza's quarters. A fresh world of novelty seemed to be awaiting us in this remote region, the very kernel of the continent, equally distant from the Indian Ocean and from the Atlantic. Everything was new. The bright and clear complexion of the natives, their singular garb, their artistic furniture, the convenience of their orderly houses, and finally, the savage etiquette of the pompous court, all struck me with fresh surprise and ever renewed the feeling

of astonishment. There was, moreover, an exuberance of strange and unexpected vegetation; whilst plantations, sugar-canes, and oil-palms were everywhere to be seen in plentiful luxuriance. Truly, I now found myself in the heart of Africa, realising to the letter the fascinating dreams of my early youth.

Nothing could be more charming than that last day's march which brought us to the limit of our wanderings. The twelve miles which led to Munza's palace were miles enriched by such beauty as might be worthy of Paradise. They left an impression upon my memory which can never fade. The plantain-groves harmonised so perfectly with the clustering oil-palms that nothing could surpass the perfection of the scene; whilst the ferns that adorned the countless stems in the background of the landscape enhanced the charms of the tropical groves. A fresh and invigorating atmosphere contributed to the enjoyment of it all, refreshing water and grateful shade being never far away. In front of the native dwellings towered the splendid figs, of which the spreading crowns defied the passage of the burning sun. Anon, we passed amidst jungles of *Raphia*, alongside brooks crammed full of reeds, or through galleries where the *Pandanus* thrive, the road taking us uphill and downhill in alternate undulation. No less than twelve of these brooklets did we pass upon our way, some lying in depressions of one hundred feet, and some sunk as much as two hundred feet below the summits of their bounding walls of verdant vegetation, and there were two upheaved and rounded hills of gneiss, rising to an altitude of some 300 feet, along the flanks of which we wound our path. On either hand there was an almost unbroken series of the idyllic homes of the people, who hurried to their gates, and offered us the choicest products of their happy clime.

Beside the streamlet which was last but one of all we passed, we made our final halt in the shadow of a large



assembly-ground that we might take our repast of plantains and baked manioc. The crowds of bearers made their camp around the stem of a colossal *Cordia abyssinica* which stood upon the open space in front of the abode of the local chief, and reminded me of the Abyssinian villages, where this tree is specially cultivated. Von Beuermann has mentioned that he observed this tree in Kanem rendering the same service as the lindens of the German villages, and forming a cool and shady resort to which the residents might betake themselves for recreation. These trees, with their goodly coronets of spreading foliage, are the survivors from generations that are gone, and form a comely ornament in well-nigh all the villages of the Monbuttoo.

And then, at last, conspicuous amidst the massy depths of green, we espied the palace of the king. We had reached a broad valley, circled by plantations, and shadowed by some gigantic trees which had survived the decay of the ancient wilderness; through the lowest part meandered a transparent brook. We did not descend into the hollow, but halting on the hither side we chose a station clear of trees, and proceeded without delay to fix our camp. We enjoyed a view in front of a sloping area, void of grass, enlivened with an endless multiplicity of huts, of which the roofs of some were like ordinary sheds, and those of others of a conical form. And there, surmounting all, with extensive courts broad and imposing, unlike anything we had seen since we left the edifices of Cairo, upreared itself the spacious pile of King Munza's dwelling.

The order for the halt was no sooner given than the bearers set about their wonted work, and labouring with their knives and hatchets soon procured from the jungles by the brook the supply of material sufficient for our architectural needs. Rapidly as ever our encampment was reared: hardly an hour elapsed before our place of sojourn was in order, with a gorgeous landscape opening in its front, and this time in

view of the royal abode of an African monarch. My own tent, which began to exhibit only too plainly the tokens of being somewhat weather-beaten by repeated exposure, was located in the very midst of the lines of our grass-huts: not now was it erected, as often it had been, upon the bare rock of a desolate wilderness, but in the centre of a scene of surpassing beauty: for the first time I had it decorated with my flag, which waved proudly above it in honour of our arrival at the court of so distinguished and powerful a prince.

The natives lost no time in crowding in and endeavouring to obtain an interview. But it suited my inclination to withdraw myself for a time. I remained in the retirement of my tent simply because I was weary of these interviews, which always necessitated my permitting either my head to be handled, in order to convince them that the long straight hair was really my own, or my bosom (like Wallenstein's when he fronted his murderers) to be bared that they might admire its whiteness. I was thus induced to remain under shelter, and meanwhile the Monbuttoo magnates waited patiently or impatiently without; they had brought their benches, which they placed close to my quarters, but I continued obstinate in my determination to be undisturbed, resolved to reserve all my strength and energy for the following day, when I should have to exhibit the marvel of my existence before King Munza himself.

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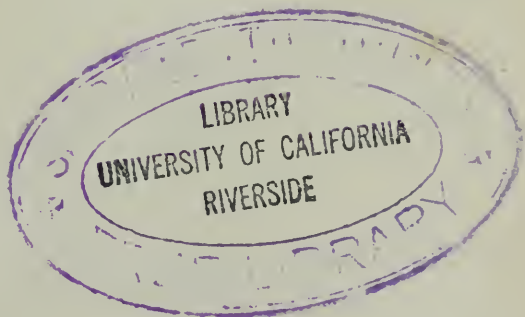












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August

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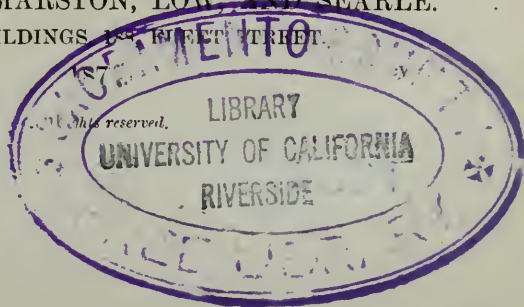
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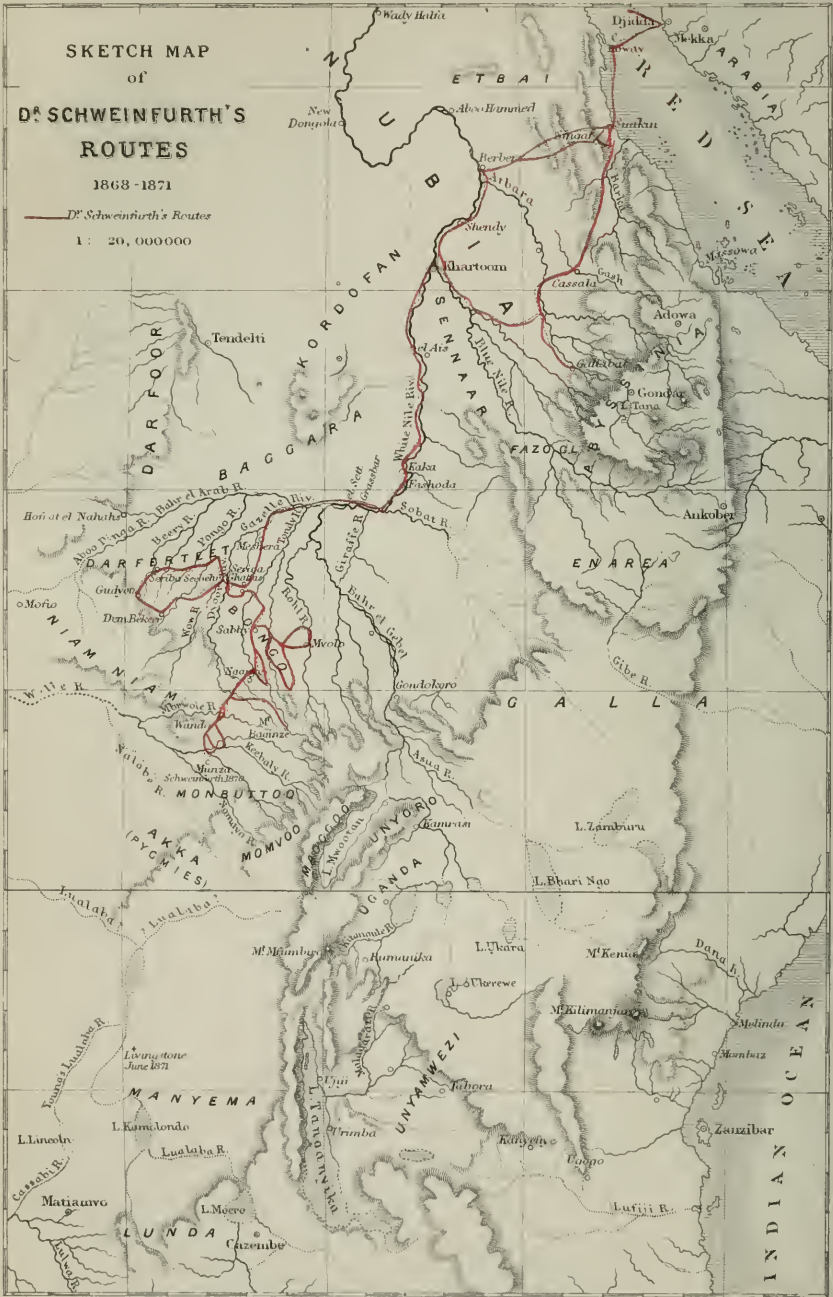
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SKETCH MAP  
of  
**D<sup>r</sup> SCHWEINFURTH'S**  
**ROUTES**

1868-1871

— D<sup>r</sup> Schweinfurth's Routes

1 : 20,000,000



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Longitude East of Greenwich

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# THE HEART OF AFRICA.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

THE NIAM-NIAM. Signification of the name. General characteristics. Distinct nationality. Complexion and tattooing. Time spent on hair-dressing. *Frisure à la gloire*. Favourite adornments. Weapons. Soldierly bearing. A nation of hunters. Women agriculturists. The best beer in Africa. Cultivated plants. Domestic animals. Dogs. Preparation of maize. Cannibalism. Analogy with the Fans of the West Coast. Architecture. Power of the princes. Their households. Events during war. Immunity of the white man. Wanton destruction of elephants. Bait for wild-fowl. Arts and manufactures. Forms of greeting. Position of the women. An African pastime. Musical taste. Professional jesters and minstrels. Praying machine. Auguries. Mourning for the dead. Disposal of the dead. Genealogical table of Niam-niam princes.

LONG before Mehemet Ali, by despatching his expeditions up the White Nile, had made any important advance into the interior of the unknown continent—before even a single sailing vessel had ever penetrated the grass-barriers of the Gazelle—at a time when European travellers had never ventured to pass the frontiers of that portion of Central Africa which is subject to Islamism—whilst the heathen negro countries of the Soudan were only beginning to dawn like remote nebulae on the undefined horizon of our geographical knowledge—tradition had already been circulated about the existence of a people with whose name the Mohammedans of the Soudan were accustomed to associate all the savagery which could be conjured up by a fertile imagination. The comparison might be suggested that just as



at the present day, in civilised Europe, questions concerning the descent of men from apes form a subject of ordinary conversation, so at that time in the Soudan did the Niam-niam (under the supposition that they were graced with tails) serve as common ground for all ideas that pertained to the origin of man. This people, whose existence was evoked from the mysterious hordes of witches and goblins, might have vanished amidst the dim obscurity of the primeval forests if it had not been that Alexandre Dumas, in his tale of 'l'Homme à Queue,' so rich in its charming simplicity, had, exactly at the right moment, raised a small memorial which contributed to its preservation.

To lift in a measure the veil which had enveloped the Niam-niam with this legendary and magic mystery fell to the lot of my predecessor Piaggia, that straightforward and intrepid Italian who, animated by the desire of opening up some reliable insight into their real habits, had resided alone for a whole year amongst them.\*

I reckon it my own good fortune that I was so soon to follow him into the very midst of this cannibal population. It was indeed a period of transition from the age of tradition to that of positive knowledge, but I have no hesitation in asserting that these Niam-niam, apart from some specialities which will always appertain to the human race so long as it hangs unconsciously upon the breast of its great mother Nature, are men of like passions with ourselves, equally subject to the same sentiments of grief and joy. I have interchanged with them many a jest, and I have participated in their child-like sports, enlivened by the animating beating of their war-drums or by the simple strains of their mandolins.

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\* In the 'Bolletino della Soc. Geogr. Italiana,' 1868, pp. 91-168, the Marquis O. Antinori has, from the verbal communications of the traveller himself, most conscientiously collected Piaggia's experiences and observations in the country of the Niam-niam during his residence.

The name Niam-niam \* is borrowed from the dialect of the Dinka, and means "eaters," or rather "great eaters," manifestly betokening a reference to the cannibal propensities of the people. This designation has been so universally incorporated into the Arabic of the Soudan, that it seems unadvisable to substitute for it the word "Zandey," the name by which the people are known amongst themselves. Since among the Mohammedans of the Soudan the term Niam-niam (plur. Niamah-niam) is principally associated with the idea of cannibalism, the same designation is sometimes applied by them to other nations who have nothing in common with the true Niam-niam, or "Zandey," except the one characteristic of a predilection for eating human flesh. The neighbouring nations have a variety of appellations to denote them. The Bongo on the north sometimes call them Mundo, and sometimes Manyanya; in the country behind these are the Dyoor, who uniformly speak of them as the O-Madyaka; the tribe of the Mittoo on the east give them the name of the Makkarakka, or Kakkarakka; the Golo style them Kunda; whilst among the Monbuttoo they are known as Babungera.

The greater part of the Niam-niam country lies between the fourth and sixth parallels of north latitude, and a line drawn across the centre from east to west would correspond with the watershed between the basins of the Nile and Tsad. My own travels were confined exclusively to the eastern portion of the country, which, as far as I could understand, is bounded in that direction by the upper course of the Tondy; but in that district alone I became acquainted with as many as thirty-five independent chieftains who rule over the portion of Niam-niam territory that is traversed by the trading companies from Khartoom.

Of the extent of the country towards the west I was unable

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\* It should again be mentioned that the word Niam-niam is a dissyllable and has the Italian pronunciation of Gnam-gnam.

to gain any definite information; but as far as the land is known to the Nubians it would appear to cover between five and six degrees of longitude, and must embrace an area of about 48,000 square miles. The population of the known regions is at least two millions, an estimate based upon the number of armed men at the disposal of the chieftains through whose territory I travelled, and upon the corresponding reports of the fighting force in the western districts.

No traveller could possibly find himself for the first time surrounded by a group of true Niam-niam without being almost forced to confess that all he had hitherto witnessed amongst the various races of Africa was comparatively tame and uninteresting, so remarkable is the aspect of this savage people. No one, after observing the promiscuous intermingling of races which (in singular contrast to the uniformity of the soil) prevails throughout the entire district of the Gazelle, could fail to be struck by the pronounced characteristics of the Niam-niam, which make them capable of being identified at the first glance amidst the whole series of African races. As a proof of this, I may introduce a case in point. I was engaged one day in taking the measurements of a troop of Bongo bearers, when at once I detected that the leader of the band had all the characteristics of the Niam-niam type. I asked him how it happened that he was a "nyare," *i.e.*, a local overseer, among the Bongo, when the mere shape of his head declared him, beyond a doubt, to be a Niam-niam. To the amazement of all who were present he replied that he was born of Niam-niam parents, but that it had been his fate when a child to be conveyed into the country of the Bongo. This is an example which serves to demonstrate how striking are the distinctions which enable an observer to carry out the diagnosis of a negro with such certainty, and to arrive at conclusions which ordinarily could only be conjectured by noticing his apparel or some external and accidental adornments.

I propose in the present chapter to give a brief summary of the characteristics of this Niam-niam people, and shall hope so to explain the general features of their physiological and osteological aspect, and so to describe the details of their costume and ornaments, that I may not fail in my desire to convey a tolerably correct impression of this most striking race.

The round broad heads of the Niam-niam, of which the proportions may be ranked among the lowest rank of brachycephaly, are covered with the thick frizzly hair of what are termed the true negroes; this is of an extraordinary length, and arranged in long plaits and tufts flowing over the shoulders and sometimes falling as low as the waist. The eyes, almond-shaped and somewhat sloping, are shaded with thick, sharply-defined brows, and are of remarkable size and fulness; the wide space between them testifies to the unusual width of the skull, and contributes a mingled expression of animal ferocity, warlike resolution, and ingenuous candour. A flat square nose, a mouth of about the same width as the nose, with very thick lips, a round chin, and full plump cheeks, complete the countenance, which may be described as circular in its general contour.

The body of the Niam-niam is ordinarily inclined to be fat, but it does not commonly exhibit much muscular strength. The average height does not exceed that of Europeans, a stature of 5 feet 10½ inches being the tallest that I measured. The upper part of the figure is long in proportion to the legs, and this peculiarity gives a strange character to their movements, although it does not impede their agility in their war dances.

The skin in colour is in no way remarkable. Like that of the Bongo, it may be compared to the dull hue of a cake of chocolate. Among the women, detached instances may be found of various shades of a copper-coloured complexion, but the ground-tint is always the same—an earthy red, in contrast to the bronze tint of the true Ethiopian (Kushitic)

racés of Nubia. As marks of nationality, all the "Zandey" score themselves with three or four tattooed squares filled up with dots; they place these indiscriminately upon the forehead, the temples, or the cheeks. They have, moreover, a figure like the letter X under the breasts; and in some exceptional cases they tattoo the bosom and upper parts of the arm with a variety of patterns, either stripes, or dotted lines, or zigzags. No mutilation of the body is practised by either sex, but this remark must be subject to the one exception that they fall in with the custom, common to the whole of Central Africa, of filing the incisor teeth to a point, for the purpose of effectually griping the arm of an adversary either in wrestling or in single combat.

On rare occasions, a piece of material made from the bark of the *Urostigma* is worn as clothing; but, as a general rule, the entire costume is composed of skins, which are fastened to a girdle and form a picturesque drapery about the loins. The finest and most variegated skins are chosen for this purpose, those of the genet and colobus being held in the highest estimation; the long black tail of the quereza monkey (*Colobus*) is also fastened to the dress. Only chieftains and members of royal blood have the privilege of covering the head with a skin, that of the serval being most generally designated for this honour. In crossing the dewy steppes in the early morning during the rainy season, the men are accustomed to wear a large antelope hide, which is fastened round the neck, and, falling to the knees, effectually protects the body from the cold moisture of the long grass. A covering, which always struck me as very graceful, was formed from the skin of the harness bush-buck (*A. scripta*), of which the dazzling white stripes on a yellowish ground never fail to be very effective. The sons of chieftains wear their dress looped up on one side, so that one leg is left entirely bare.

The men take an amount of trouble in arranging their hair which is almost incredible, whilst nothing could be more



simple and unpretending than the ordinary head-gear of the women. It would, indeed, be a matter of some difficulty to discover any kind of plaits, tufts, or top-knots which has not already been tried by the Niam-niam men. The hair is usually parted right down the middle; towards the forehead it branches off, so as to leave a kind of triangle; from the fork which is thus formed a tuft is raised, and carried back to be fastened behind; on either side of this tuft the hair is



Remarkable head-dress of the Niam-niam.

arranged in rolls, like the ridges and crevices of a melon. Over the temples separate rolls are gathered up into knots, from which hang more tufts, twisted like cord, that fall in bunches all round the neck, three or four of the longest tresses being allowed to go free over the breast and shoulders. The women dress their hair in a simpler but somewhat similar manner, omitting the long plaits and tufts. The most peculiar head-gear that I saw was upon some men who

came from the territory of Keefa, and of this a representation is given in the accompanying portrait. These people reminded me very much of the description given by Livingstone of the Balonda, that people of Londa, on the Zambesi, which he came across during his first journey. The head is encircled by a series of rays like the glory which adorns the likeness of a saint. This circle is composed entirely of the man's own hair, single tresses being taken from all parts of the head and stretched tightly over a hoop, which is ornamented with cowries. The hoop is fastened to the lower rim of a straw hat by means of four wires, which are drawn out before the men lie down to sleep, when the whole arrangement admits of being folded back. This elaborate coiffure demands great attention, and much time must be devoted to it every day. It is only the men who wear any covering at all upon their head: they use a cylindrical hat without any brim, square at the top and always ornamented with a waving plume of feathers; the hat is fastened on by large hair-pins, made either of iron, copper, or ivory, and tipped with crescents, tridents, knobs, and various other devices.

A very favourite decoration is formed out of the incisor teeth of a dog strung together under the hair, and hanging along the forehead like a fringe. The teeth of different rodentia likewise are arranged as ornaments that resemble strings of coral. Another ornament, far from uncommon, is cut out of ivory in imitation of lions' teeth, and arranged in a radial fashion all over the breast, the effect of the white substance in contrast with the dark skin being very striking. Altogether the decoration may be considered as imposing as the pointed collar of the days of chivalry, and is quite in character with the warlike nation who find their pastime in hunting. Glass beads are held in far less estimation by the Niam-niam than by the neighbouring races; and only that lazuli blue sort which I have men-

tioned as known in the Khartoom market by the name of "mandyoor" finds any favour at all amongst them. Cowries are often used to trim the girdles as well as the head-gear.

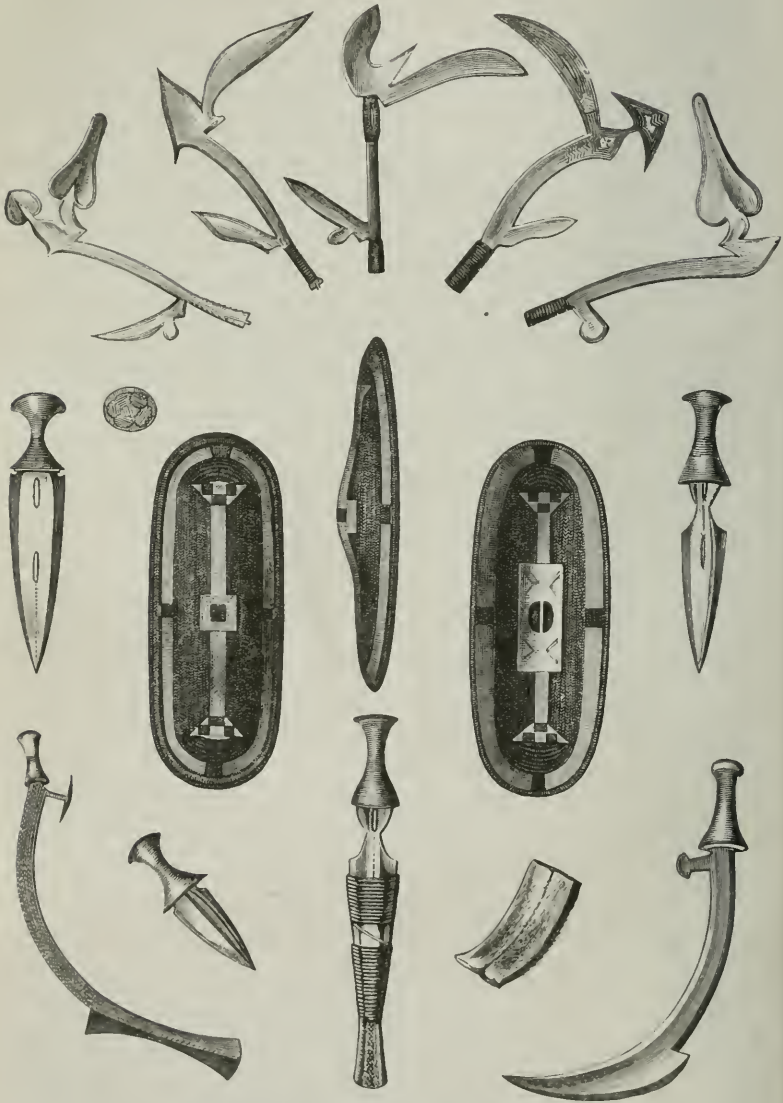
The principal weapons of the Niam-niam are their lances and their trumbashes. The word "trumbash," which has been incorporated into the Arabic of the Soudan, is the term employed in Sennaar to denote generally all the varieties of missiles that are used by the negro races; it should, however, properly be applied solely to that sharp flat projectile of wood, a kind of boomerang, which is used for killing birds or hares, or any small game: when the weapon is made of iron, it is called "kulbeda." The trumbash of the Niam-niam\* consists ordinarily of several limbs of iron, with pointed prongs and sharp edges. Iron missiles very similar in their shape are found among the tribes of the Tsad basin; and a weapon constructed on the same principle, the "changer manger," is in use among the Marghy and the Musgoo.

The trumbashes are always attached to the inside of the shields, which are woven from the Spanish reed, and are of a long oval form, covering two-thirds of the body; they are ornamented with black and white crosses or other devices, and are so light that they do not in the least impede the combatants in their wild leaps. An expert Niam-niam, by jumping up for a moment, can protect his feet from the flying missiles of his adversary. Bows and arrows, which, as handled by the Bongo, give them a certain advantage, are not in common use among the Niam-niam, who possess a peculiar weapon of attack in their singular knives, that have blades like sickles. The Monbuttoo, who are far more skilful smiths than the Niam-niam, supply them with most of these weapons, receiving

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\* The accompanying illustration (page 10) gives examples of five different forms of trumbash.

in return a heavy kind of lance, that is adapted for the elephant and buffalo chase.



Knives, scimitars, trumbashes, and shield of the Niam-niam.  
(The shield is represented in three different positions.)

Such are the details with which I present the reader with my portrait of the Niam-niam in his full accoutrement of war. With his lance in one hand, his woven shield and trumbash in the other—with his scimitar in his girdle, and his loins encircled by a skin, to which are attached the tails



of several animals—adorned on his breast and on his forehead by strings of teeth, the trophies of war or of the chase—his long hair floating freely over his neck and shoulders—his large keen eyes gleaming from beneath his



heavy brow—his white and pointed teeth shining from between his parted lips—he advances with a firm and defiant bearing, so that the stranger as he gazes upon him may well behold, in this true son of the African wilderness, every attribute of the wildest savagery that may be conjured up by the boldest flight of fancy. It is therefore by no means difficult to account for the deep impression made by the Niam-niam on the fantastic imagination of the Soudan Arabs. I have seen the wild Bishareen and other Bedouins of the Nubian deserts; I have gazed with admiration upon the stately war-dress of the Abyssinians; I have been riveted with surprise at the supple forms of the mounted Baggara: but nowhere, in any part of Africa, have I ever come across a people that in every attitude and every motion exhibited so thorough a mastery over all the circumstances of war or of the chase as these Niam-niam. Other nations in comparison seemed to me to fall short in the perfect ease—I might almost say, in the dramatic grace—that characterised their every movement.

In describing this people, it is hard to determine how far they ought to be designated as a nation of hunters, or one of agriculturists, the two occupations apparently being equally distributed between the two sexes. The men most studiously devote themselves to their hunting, and leave the culture of the soil to be carried on exclusively by the women. Occasionally, indeed, the men may bring home a supply of fruits, tubers and funguses from their excursions through the forests, but practically they do nothing for the support of their families beyond providing them with game. The agriculture of the Niam-niam, in contrast with that of the Bongo, involves but a small outlay of labour. The more limited area of the arable land, the larger number of inhabitants that are settled on every square mile, the greater productiveness of the soil, of which in some districts the exuberance is unsurpassed—all combine to make the





cultivation of the country supremely easy. The entire land is pre-eminently rich in many spontaneous products, animal and vegetable alike, that conduce to the direct maintenance of human life.

The *Eleusine coracana* (the "raggi" of the East Indies), a cereal which I had found only scantily propagated among the people that I have hitherto described, is here the staple of cultivation; sorghum in most districts is quite unknown, and maize is only grown in inconsiderable quantities.

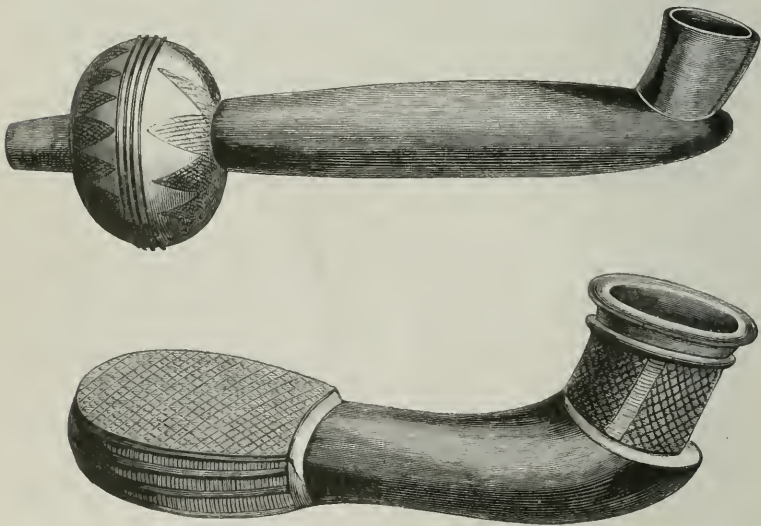
Here, as in Abyssinia (where its product is called tocusso), eleusine affords a material for a very palatable beer.\* In the Mohammedan Soudan the inhabitants, from cold fermented sorghum-dough, extract the well-known merissa; and by first warming the dough, and exercising more care and patience in the process, is made the bilbil of the Takareer; neither of these beverages, however, to our palate would be much superior to sour pap: even the booza of Egypt, made though it is from wheat, is hardly in any respect superior in quality. But the drink which by the Niam-niam is prepared from their eleusine is really capable, from the skill with which it is manipulated, of laying a fair claim to be known as *beer*. It is quite bright; it is of a reddish-pale brown colour, and it is regularly brewed from the malted grain, without the addition of any extraneous ingredient; it has a pleasant, bitter flavour, derived from the dark husks, which, if they were mixed in their natural condition with the dough, would impart a twang that would be exceedingly unpalatable. How large is the proportion of beer consumed by the Niam-niam may be estimated by simply observing the ordinary way in which they store their corn. As a regular rule, there are three granaries allotted to each dwelling, of which two are made

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\* The brewing of beer from malted eleusine is practised in many of the heathen negro countries; and in South Africa the Makalaka, a branch of the great Bantoo race, are said to devote a considerable attention to it.

to suffice for the supply which is to contribute the meal necessary for the household; the other is entirely devoted to the grain that has been malted.

Manioc, sweet potatoes, yams, and colocasiae are cultivated with little trouble, and rarely fail to yield excellent crops. Plantains are only occasionally seen in the east, and from the districts in which I travelled, I should judge that they are not a main support of life at any latitude higher than  $4^{\circ}$  N. Sugar-canes and oil-palms entirely failed in this part of the land, but I was informed that they were as plentiful in Keefa's territory as they are among the Monbutto.



Clay pipes of the Niam-niam.

All the Niam-niam are tobacco-smokers. Their name for the *Nicotiana tabacum* is "gundey," and they are the only people of the Bahr-el-Ghazal district that have a special designation for the plant. The other sort, *N. rustica*, which, on the contrary, has a local appellation in nearly every dialect of the neighbouring nations (apparently denoting



that the plant is indigenous to Central Africa) is utterly unknown throughout the country. The people smoke from clay pipes of peculiar form, consisting of elongated bowls without stems. Like other negro races that remain untainted by Islamism, they abstain from ever chewing the tobacco.



Niam-niam Dog.

In broad terms, it may be stated that no cattle at all exists in the land; the only domestic animals are poultry and dogs. The dogs belong to a small breed resembling the wolf-dog, but with short sleek hair; they have ears that are large and always erect, and a short curly tail like that of a young pig. They are usually of a bright yellowish tan colour, and very often have a white stripe upon the neck; their lanky

muzzle projects somewhat abruptly from an arched forehead; their legs are short and straight, thus demonstrating that the animals have nothing in common with the terrier breed depicted upon the walls of Egyptian temples, and of which the African origin has never been proved. Like dogs generally in the Nile district, they are deficient in the dew-claws of the hind-feet. They are made to wear little wooden bells round their necks, so that they should not be lost in the long steppe grass. After the pattern of their masters, they are inclined to be corpulent, and this propensity is encouraged as much as possible, dogs' flesh being esteemed one of the choicest delicacies of the Niam-niam.

Cows and goats are familiar only by report, although it may happen occasionally that some are brought in as the result of raids that have been perpetrated upon the adjacent territories of the Babuckur and the Mittoo. There would hardly seem to be any specific words in the language to denote either sheep, donkeys, horses, or camels, which, according to common conception, would all come very much under the category of fabulous animals.

Although the Niam-niam have a few carefully-prepared dishes of which they partake, in a general way they exhibit as little nicety or choice in their diet as is shown by all the tribes (with the remarkable exception of the Dinka) of the Bahr-el-Ghazal district. The most palatable mess that I found amongst them was composed of the pulp of fresh maize, ground while the grain is still soft and milky, cleansed from the bran, and prepared carefully so that it was not burnt to the bottom of the pot. The mode of preparation is rather ingenious. A little water having been put over the fire till it is just beginning to boil, the raw meal, which has previously been rolled into small lumps, is very gently shaken in, and, having been allowed to simmer for a time, the whole is finally stirred up together.

The acme, however, of all earthly enjoyments would seem

to be *meat*. "Meat! meat!" is the watchword that resounds in all their campaigns. In certain places and at particular seasons the abundance of game is very large, and it might readily be imagined that the one prevailing and permanent idea of this people would be how to chase and secure their booty; but, as I have remarked before, there is no greater evidence of the real difference between the disposition of nations than that which is afforded by their general expression for food. As, for example, the Bongo verb "to eat" is "mony," which is their ordinary designation of sorghum, their *corn*; so the Niam-niam word is identical with "pushyoh," which is their common name for *meat*.

Just as in his investigation of the animal and vegetable kingdoms the naturalist is attracted to the very lowest organizations because they contain the germs of the higher and more complicated, in the same degree does the interest of the traveller centre upon the simplest development of culture, because he knows that it is the embryo of the most advanced civilization.

The accuracy of the report of the cannibalism which has uniformly been attributed to the Niam-niam by every nation which has had any knowledge at all of their existence, would be questioned by no one who had a fair opportunity of investigating the origin of my collection of skulls. To a general rule, of course, there may be exceptions here as elsewhere; and I own that I have heard of other travellers to the Niam-niam lands who have visited the territories of Tombo and Bazimbey, lying to the west of my route, and who have returned without having witnessed any proof of the practice. Piaggia, moreover, resided for a considerable time in those very districts, and yet was only once a witness of anything of the kind; and that, as he records, was upon the occasion of a campaign, when a slaughtered foe was devoured from actual bloodthirstiness and hatred. From my own knowledge, too, I can mention chiefs, like Wando, who

vehemently repudiated the idea of eating human flesh, although their constant engagement in war furnished them with ample opportunity for gratifying their taste if they desired. But still, taking all things into account, as well what I heard as what I saw, I can have no hesitation in asserting that the Niam-niam are anthropophagi; that they make no secret of their savage craving, but ostentatiously string the teeth of their victims around their necks, adorning the stakes erected beside their dwellings for the exhibition of their trophies with the skulls of the men whom they have devoured. Human fat is universally sold. When eaten in considerable quantity, this fat is presumed to have an intoxicating effect; but although I heard this stated as a fact by a number of the people, I never could discover the foundation upon which they based this strange belief.

In times of war, people of all ages, it is reported, are eaten up, more especially the aged, as forming by their helplessness an easier prey to the rapacity of a conqueror; or at any time should any lone and solitary individual die, uncared for and unheeded by relatives, he would be sure to be devoured in the very district in which he lived. In short, all who with ourselves would be consigned to the knife of the anatomist would here be disposed of by this melancholy destiny.

I have already had occasion to mention how the Nubians asserted that they knew cases in which Bongo bearers who had died from fatigue had been dug out from the graves in which they had been buried, and, according to the statements of Niam-niam themselves—who did not disown their cannibalism—there were no bodies rejected as unfit for food except those which had died from some loathsome cutaneous disease. In opposition to all this, I feel bound to record that there are some Niam-niam who turn with such aversion from any consumption of human flesh that they would

peremptorily refuse to eat out of the same dish with any one who was a cannibal. The Niam-niam may be said to be generally particular at their meals, and when several are drinking together they may each be observed to wipe the rim of the drinking vessel before passing it on.

Of late years our knowledge of Central Africa has been in many ways enlarged, and various well-authenticated reports of the cannibalism of some of its inhabitants have been circulated; but no explanation which can be offered for this unsolved problem of psychology (whether it be considered as a vestige of heathen worship, or whether it be regarded as a resource for supplying a deficiency of animal food) can mitigate the horror that thrills through us at every repetition of the account of the hideous and revolting custom. Among all the nations of Africa upon whom the imputation of this odious custom notoriously rests, the Fan, who dwell upon the equatorial coasts of the west, have the repute of being the greatest rivals of the Niam-niam. Eye-witnesses agree in affirming that the Fan barter their dead among themselves, and that cases have been known where corpses already buried have been disinterred in order that they might be devoured. According to their own accounts, the Fan migrated from the north-east to the western coast. In various particulars they evidently have a strong affinity with the Niam-niam. Both nations have many points of resemblance in dress and customs: alike they file their teeth to sharp points; they dress themselves in a material made from bark, and stain their bodies with red wood; the chiefs wear leopard skins as an emblem of their rank; and all the people lavish the same elaborate care upon the arrangement of their tresses. The complexion of the Fan is of the same copper-brown as that of the Niam-niam, and they indulge in similar orgies and wild dances at the period of every full moon; they moreover pursue the same restless hunter life. They would appear to be the same of whom the old

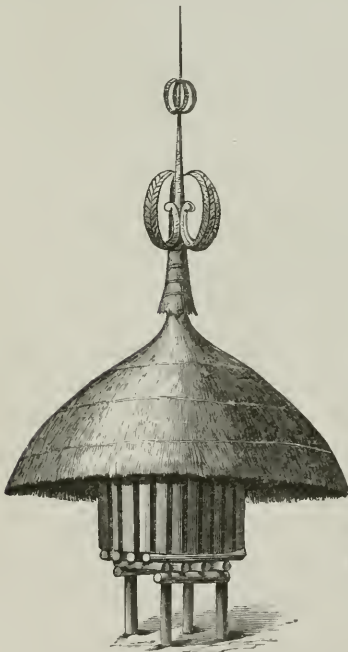


Portuguese writers have spoken under the name of "Yagas," and who are said, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, to have laid waste the kingdom of Loango.

No regular towns or villages exist throughout the Niam-niam country. The huts, grouped into little hamlets, are scattered about the cultivated districts, which are separated from one another by large tracts of wilderness many miles in extent. The residence of a prince differs in no respect from that of ordinary subjects, except in the larger number of

huts provided for himself and his wives. The hareem collectively is called a "bodi-moh."\*

The architecture of the eastern Niam-niam corresponds very nearly with what may be seen in many other parts of Central Africa. The conical roofs are higher and more pointed than those of the Bongo and Dinka, having a projection beyond the clay walls of the hut, which affords a good shelter from the rain. This projection is supported by posts, which give the whole building the semblance of being surrounded by a verandah. The huts that are used for cooking have roofs still



Niam-niam Granary.

more pointed than those which serve for sleeping. Other little huts, with bell-shaped roofs, erected in a goblet-shape upon a substructure of clay, and furnished with only one

\* "Bodimoh," in the Zandey dialect, has also the meaning of "papyrus."

small aperture, are called "bamogee," and are set apart, as being secure from the attacks of wild beasts, for sleeping-places of the boys, as soon as they are of an age to be separated from the adults.

Every sovereign prince bears the title of "Bya," which is pronounced very much like the French word *bien*. His power is limited to the calling together of the men who are capable of bearing arms, to the execution in person of those condemned to death, and to determining whether there shall be peace or war. Except the



Bamogee : or hut for the boys. "

ivory and the moiety of elephant's flesh, he enjoys no other revenue; for his means of subsistence he depends upon his farms, which are worked either by his slaves or more generally by his numerous wives. Towards the west, where a flourishing slave-trade is driven to the cost of the oppressed inhabitants who are not true Zandey, a portion of the tribute is raised by a conscription of young girls and boys, a part of the purchase-money paid by the Darfoor traders to the chief being handed over to the parents who are thus robbed of their children.

Although a Niam-niam chieftain disdains external pomp and repudiates any ostentatious display, his authority in one respect is quite supreme. Without his orders no one would for a moment entertain a thought either of opening war or concluding peace. The defiant imperious bearing of the chiefs alone constitutes their outward dignity, and there are

some who in majestic deportment and gesture might vie with any potentate of the earth. The dread with which they inspire their subjects is incredible: it is said that for the purpose of exhibiting their power over life and death they will occasionally feign fits of passion, and that, singling out a victim from the crowd, they will throw a rope about his neck, and with their own hands cut his throat with one stroke of their jagged scimitar. This species of African "Cæsarism" vividly recalls the last days of Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

The eldest son of a chief is considered to be the heir to his title and dignity, all the other sons being entrusted with the command of the fighting forces in separate districts, and generally being assigned a certain share of the hunting booty. At the death of a chief, however, the firstborn is frequently not acknowledged by all his brothers; some of them perchance will support him, whilst others will insist upon their right to become independent rulers in the districts where they have been acting as "behnky." Contentions of this character are continually giving rise to every kind of aggression and repeated deeds of violence.\*

Notwithstanding the general warlike spirit displayed by the Niam-niam, it is a very singular fact that the chieftains very rarely lead their own people into actual engagement, but are accustomed, in anxious suspense, to linger about the environs of the "mbanga," ready, in the event of tidings of defeat, to decamp with their wives and treasures into the most inaccessible swamps, or to betake themselves for concealment to the long grass of the steppes. In the heat of combat each discharge of lances is accompanied by the loudest and wildest of battle-cries, every man as he hurls his

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\* Of the thirty-five chieftains who rule over these 48,000 square miles of territory, comparatively few in any way merit the designation of king. The most powerful are Kanna and Mofio, whose dominions are in extent equal to about a dozen of the others.

weapon shouting aloud the name of his chief. In the intervals between successive attacks the combatants retire to a safe distance, and mounting any eminence that may present itself, or climbing to the summit of the hills of the white ants, which sometimes rise to a height of 12 or 15 feet, they proceed to assail their adversaries, for the hour together, in the most ludicrous manner, with every invective and every epithet of contempt and defiance they can command. During the few days that we were obliged to defend ourselves by an abattis against the attacks of the natives in Wando's southern territory, we had ample opportunity of hearing these accumulated opprobriums. We could hear them vow that the "Turks" should perish, and declare that not one of them should quit the country alive; and then we recognised the repeated shout, "To the caldron with the Turks!" rising to the eager climax, "Meat! meat!" It was emphatically announced that there was no intention to do any injury to the white man, because he was a stranger and a new-comer to the land; but I need hardly say that, under the circumstances, I felt little inclination to throw myself upon their mercy.

It is in a measure anticipating the order of events, but I may here allude to the remarkable symbolism by which war was declared against us on the frontiers of Wando's territory when we were upon our return journey. Close on the path, and in full view of every passenger, three objects were suspended from the branch of a tree, viz. an ear of maize, the feather of a fowl, and an arrow. The sight seemed to recall the defiant message sent to the great King of Persia, when he would penetrate to the heart of Scythia. Our guides readily comprehended, and as readily explained, the meaning of the emblems, which were designed to signify that whoever touched an ear of maize or laid his grasp upon a single fowl would assuredly be the victim of the arrow. Without waiting, however, for any depredations on our part,

the Niam-niam, with the basest treachery, attacked us on the following day.

In hunting, the Niam-niam employ very much the same contrivances of traps, pits, and snares as the Bongo; but their *battues* for securing the larger animals are conducted both more systematically and on a more extensive scale.

In close proximity to each separate group of hamlets, and more frequently than not at the threshold of the abodes of the local chieftains known as the "borrumbanga," or "chief court," there is always a huge wooden kettledrum, made of a hollow stem mounted upon four feet. The sides of this are of unequal thickness, so that when the drum is struck it is capable of giving two perfectly distinct sounds. According to the mode or time in which these sounds are rendered, *three* different signals are denoted, the first being the signal for war, another that for hunting, and the third a summons to a festival. Sounded originally in the *mbanga* of the chief, these signals are in a few minutes repeated on the kettledrums of the "borrumbangas" of the district, and in an incredibly short space of time some thousands of men, armed if need be, are gathered together.

Perhaps the most frequent occasions on which these assemblages are made arise from some elephants having been seen in the adjacent country. As soon as the force is collected, the elephants are driven towards some tracts of dense grass that have been purposely spared from the steppe burning. Provided with firebrands, the crowd surrounds the spot; the conflagration soon extends on all sides, until the poor brutes, choked and scorched, fall a helpless prey to their destroyers, who despatch them with their lances. Since not only the males, with their large and valuable tusks, but the females also with the young, are included in this wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter, it may easily be imagined how year by year the noble animal is fast being exterminated. The avarice of the chiefs, ever desirous of



copper, and the greediness of the people, ever anxious for flesh, make them all alike eager for the chase. I constantly saw the natives returning to their huts with a large bundle of what at first I imagined was firewood, but which in reality was their share of elephant-meat, which after being cut into strips and dried over a fire had all the appearance of a log of wood.

The thickets along the river-banks abound in many kinds of wild fowl, which the natives catch by means of snares. The most common are guinea-fowl and francolins, which are caught by a bait that is rather unusual in other places. Instead of scattering common corn in the neighbourhood of the traps, the people make use of fragments of a fleshy *Stapelia*. This little succulent grows on the dry parts of the steppe, and is frequently found about the white ant-hills; it is likewise naturalised in Arabia and Nubia, and in a raw condition is sometimes eaten as human food. Birds are very fond of it, and so approved is it as a bait that I not unfrequently found it growing beside the huts, where it was planted for this particular purpose.

The handicraft of the Niam-niam exhibits itself chiefly in ironwork, pottery, wood carving, domestic architecture, and basket-work; of leather-dressing they know no more than others in this part of Central Africa. Their earthenware vessels may be described as of blameless symmetry. They make water-flasks of an enormous size, and manufacture pretty little drinking-cups. They lavish extraordinary care on the embellishment of their tobacco-pipes, but they have no idea of the method of giving their clay a proper consistency by washing out the particles of mica and by adding a small quantity of sand. From the soft wood of several of the *Rubiaceæ* they carve stools and benches, and produce great dishes and bowls, of which the stems and pedestals are very diversified in pattern. I saw specimens of these which were admirable works of art, and the designs



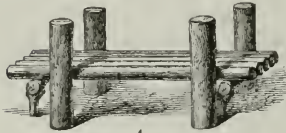
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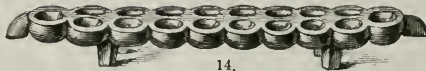
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14.



10.



12.



15.



13.

Niam-niam handicraft.

- 1. Wooden signal drum.
- 2 and 3. Mandolins.
- 4. Bedstead.
- 5. Iron bell.

- 6. Carved head for the neck of a mandolin.
- 7. Carved signal-pipe.
- 8. Wooden dog-bell.

- 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Wooden dishes.
- 14. Mungala-board.
- 15. Wooden stool.

of which were so complicated that they must have cost the inventor considerable thought.

As every Niam-niam soldier carries a lance, trumbash, and dagger, the manufacture of these weapons necessarily employs a large number of smiths, who vie with each other in producing the greatest variety of form. The dagger is worn in a sheath of skin attached to the girdle. The lance-tips differ from those of the Bongo in having a *hastate* shape, to use once more the botanical term which distinguishes the *folia hastata* from the *folia lanceolata*. Every weapon bears so decidedly the stamp of its nationality that its origin is discoverable at a glance. All the lances, knives, and dagger-blades are distinguished by blood-grooves, which are not to be observed upon the corresponding weapons of either the Bongo or Dyoor.

Mutual greetings among the Niam-niam may be said to be almost stereotyped in phrase. Any one meeting another on the way would be sure to say "muyette;" but if they were indoors, they would salute each other by saying "mooke-note" or "mookenow." Their expression for farewell is "minahpatiroh;" and when, under any suspicious circumstances, they wish to give assurance of a friendly intention, they make use of the expression "badya, badya, muie" (friend, good friend, come hither). They always extend their right hands on meeting, and join them in such a way that the two middle fingers crack again; and while they are shaking hands they nod at each other with a strange movement, which to our Western ideas looks like a gesture of repulse. The women, ever retiring in their habits, are not accustomed to be greeted on the road by any with whom they are not previously intimate.

No wooing in this country is dependent, as elsewhere in Africa, upon a payment exacted from the suitor by the father of the intended bride. When a man resolves upon matrimony, the ordinary rule would be for him to apply to

the reigning prince, or to the sub-chieftain, who would at once endeavour to procure him such a wife as might appear suitable. In spite of the prosaic and matter-of-fact proceeding, and notwithstanding the unlimited polygamy which prevails throughout the land, the marriage-bond loses nothing of the sacredness of its liabilities, and unfaithfulness is generally punished with immediate death. A family of children is reckoned as the best evidence and seal of conjugal affection, and to be the mother of many children is always recognised as a claim to distinction and honour. It is one of the fine traits of this people that they exhibit a deep and consistent affection for their wives, and I shall have occasion in a future chapter to refer to some touching instances of this feature in their character.

The festivities that are observed on the occasion of a marriage are on a very limited scale. There is a simple procession of the bride, who is conducted to the home of her future lord by the chieftain, accompanied by musicians, minstrels, and jesters.\* A feast ensues, at which all partake in common, although, as a general rule, the women are accustomed to eat alone in their own huts. The domestic duties of a housewife consist mainly in cultivating the homestead, preparing the daily meals, painting her husband's body, and dressing his hair. In this genial climate children require comparatively little care or attention, infants being carried about everywhere in a kind of band or scarf.

The Niam-niam have one recreation which is common to nearly the whole of Africa. A game, known by the Nubians as "mungala," is constantly played by all the people of the entire Gazelle districts, and although perhaps it is not known by the Monbuttoo, it is quite naturalised among all the negroes as far as the West Coast. It is singular that this

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\* Among the Kaffirs the ceremony of conducting a bride to her new home is observed with much formality.

pastime should be so familiar to the Mohammedan Nubians, who only within the last twenty years have had any intercourse at all with the negroes of the south ; but in all likelihood they received it in the same way as the guitar,\* as a legacy from their original home in Central Africa. The Peulhs devote many successive hours to the amusement, which requires a considerable facility in ready reckoning ; they call it "wuri." The game is played likewise by the Foolahs, the Yolofs, and the Mandingo, on the Senegal. It is found again among the Kadje, between the Tsad and the Benwe. The recurrence of an object even trivial as this is an evidence, in its degree, indirect and collateral, of the essential unity that underlies all African nations.

The "mungala" itself † is a long piece of wood, in which two parallel rows of holes are scooped out. Nubian boards have sixteen holes, the Niam-niam have eighteen. Each player has about two dozen stones, and the skill of the game consists in adroitly transferring the stones from one hole to another. In default of a board the game is frequently played upon the bare ground, in which little cavities are made for the purpose.

Having thus detailed their warlike demeanour, their domestic industry, and their common pastime, I would not omit to mention that the Niam-niam are no strangers to enjoyments of a more refined and ideal character than battles and elephant-hunts. They have an instinctive love of art. Music rejoices their very soul. The harmonies they elicit from their favourite instrument, the mandolin, seem almost to thrill through the chords of their inmost nature. The prolonged duration of some of their musical productions is very surprising. Piaggia, before me, has remarked that he believed a Niam-niam would go on playing all day and all night, without thinking to leave off either to eat or to drink ;

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\* *Vide* vol. i. chap. ix.

† A mungala board is represented in Fig. 14 of the plate illustrating Niam-niam handicraft.



and although I am quite aware of the voracious propensities of the people, I am half-inclined to believe that Piaggia was right.

One favourite instrument there is, which is something between a harp and a mandolin. It resembles the former in the vertical arrangement of its strings, whilst in common with the mandolin it has a sounding-board, a neck, and screws for tightening the strings. The sounding-board is constructed on strict acoustic principles. It has two apertures; it is carved out of wood, and on the upper side is covered by a piece of skin; the strings are tightly stretched by means of pegs, and are sometimes made of fine threads of bast, and sometimes of the wiry hairs from the tail of the giraffe. The music is very monotonous, and it is very difficult to distinguish any actual melody in it. It invariably is an accompaniment to a moaning kind of recitative, which is rendered with a decided nasal intonation. I have not unfrequently seen friends marching about arm-in-arm, wrapt in the mutual enjoyment of their performance, and beating time to every note by nodding their heads.

There is a singular class of professional musicians, who make their appearance decked out in the most fantastic way with feathers, and covered with a promiscuous array of bits of wood and roots and all the pretentious emblems of magical art, the feet of earth-pigs, the shells of tortoises, the beaks of eagles, the claws of birds, and teeth in every variety. Whenever one of this fraternity presents himself, he at once begins to recite all the details of his travels and experiences in an emphatic recitative, and never forgets to conclude by an appeal to the liberality of his audience, and to remind them that he looks for a reward either of rings of copper or of beads. Under minor differences of aspect, these men may be found nearly everywhere in Africa. Baker and some other travellers have dignified them with the romantic name of "minne-singers," but the designation of "hashash" (buf-

foons) bestowed upon them by the Arabs of the Soudan would more fairly describe their true character. The Niam-niam themselves exhibit the despicable light in which they regard them by calling them "nzangah,"\* which is the same term as that by which they designate those abandoned women who pollute Africa no less than every civilized country.

The language of the Niam-niam (or, to speak more properly, the Zandey dialect), as entirely as any of the dialects which prevail throughout the Bahr-el-Ghazal district, is an upshoot from the great root which is the original of every tongue in Africa north of the equator, and is especially allied to the Nubio-Lybian group. Although the pronunciation is upon the whole marked and distinct, there are still certain sounds which are subject to a considerable modification, even when uttered by the same individual. The nasal tone which is given to the open sounds of *a* and *e* as they rise from the throat fix a character upon the articulation that is quite distinct from that of the Bongo, and altogether the dialect is poorer in etymological construction, being deficient in any separate tenses for the verbs; it is, moreover, far less vocalised, and has a cumbrousness which arises from the preponderance of its consonants.

The language is undoubtedly very wanting in expressions for abstract ideas. For the Divinity I found that many interpreters would employ the word "gumbah," which signifies "lightning," whilst, in contrast with this, other interpreters would make use of the term "bongbottumu;" but I imagine that this latter expression is only a kind of a periphrasis of the Mohammedan "rasool" (a prophet, or messenger of God), because "mbottumu" is their ordinary term by which they would designate any common messenger or envoy.

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\* In Loango all exorcists and conjurers are called "ganga," an appellation which would appear to have the same derivation as this Zandey word "nzangah." The "Griots" in Senegambia are held in the same contempt as the Niam-niam minstrels.

Although none of the natives of the Gazelle district may be credited with the faintest conception of true religion, the Niam-niam have an expression of their own for "prayer" as an act of worship, such as they see it practised by the Mohammedans. This word is "borru." When, however, the expression is examined, it is found really to relate to the augury which it is the habit of the people to consult before they enter upon any important undertaking.

The augury to which I have thus been led to refer is consulted in the following way. From the wood of the *Sarcocephalus Russegeri*, which they call "damma," a little four-legged stool is made, like the benches used by the women. The upper surface of this is rendered perfectly smooth. A block of wood of the same kind is then cut, of which one end is also made quite smooth. After having wetted the top of the stool with a drop or two of water, they grasp the block and rub its smooth part backwards and forwards over the level surface with the same motion as if they were using a plane. If the wood should glide easily along, the conclusion is drawn that the undertaking in question will assuredly prosper; but if, on the other hand, the motion is obstructed and the surfaces adhere together—if, according to the Niam-niam expression, a score of men could not give free movement to the block—the warning is unmistakable that the adventure will prove a failure.

Now, since they also use this term "borru" to describe the prayers of the Mohammedans, there seems some reasonable evidence for supposing that they actually regard this rubbing as akin to a form of worship. As often as I asked any of the Niam-niam what they called prayers, they invariably replied by referring to this practice and by making the gesture which I compare to working with a plane. This praying-machine is concealed as carefully as may be from the eyes of the Mohammedans. It was, however, frequently resorted to during the subsequent brief period of warfare,

when my own Niam-niam attendants diligently consulted the oracle, and, as the result was uniformly satisfactory, it contributed not a little to confirm their confidence in my reputation for good luck.

There are other ordeals common to the Niam-niam with various negro nations, and which are considered as of equal or still greater importance. An oily fluid, concocted from a red wood called "bengye," is administered to a hen. If the bird dies, there will be misfortune in war; if the bird survives, there will be victory. Another mode of trying their fortune consists in seizing a cock, and ducking its head repeatedly under water until the creature is stiff and senseless. They then leave it to itself. If it should rally, they draw an omen that is favourable to their design; whilst if it should succumb, they look for an adverse issue.

A Niam-niam could hardly be induced to go to war without first consulting the auguries, and his reliance upon their revelations is very complete. For instance, Wando our inveterate antagonist, although he had succeeded in rousing two districts to open enmity against us, yet personally abstained from attacking our caravan, and that for no other reason than that his fowl had died after swallowing the "bengye" that had been administered. We awaited his threatened attack, and were full of surprise that he did not appear. Shortly afterwards, we were informed that he had withdrawn in fear and trembling to an inaccessible retreat in the wilderness. Our relief was considerable. It might have fared very badly with us, as all our magazines were established on his route; but, happily, he had gone, and the Niam-niam with whom we were brought in contact stoutly maintained that it was the death of his fowl alone which had deterred him from an assault and had rescued us from entire destruction.

These auguries are consulted likewise in order to ascertain

the guilt or innocence of any that are accused, and suspected witches are tried by the same ordeal.

The same belief in evil spirits and goblins which prevails among the Bongo and other people of Central Africa is found here. The forest is uniformly supposed to be the abode of the hostile agencies, and the rustling of the foliage is imagined to be their mysterious dialogue. Superstition, like natural religion, is a child of the soil, and germinating like the flowers of the field it unfolds its inmost secrets. Beneath the dull leaden skies of the distant North there are believed to be structures haunted by ghosts and spectres. Here the forest, with its tenantry of owls and bats, is held to be the abode of malignant spirits; whilst betwixt both are the Oriental nations, who, without forests, and exposed to the full strength of a blazing sun, fear nothing so much as "the evil eye." Truly it may be averred that the development of superstition is dependent upon geographical position.

In thus recapitulating the general characteristics of the Niam-niam, this chapter necessarily has exhibited some measure of repetition. I will proceed to conclude it, in the same manner as the record of the Bongo, by a few remarks upon the customs of this people with regard to their dead.

Whenever a Niam-niam has lost any very near relative the first token of his bereavement is shown by his shaving his head. His elaborate coiffure—that which had been his pride and his delight, the labour of devoted conjugal hands—is all ruthlessly destroyed, the tufts, the braids, the tresses being scattered far and wide about the roads in the recesses of the wilderness.

A corpse is ordinarily adorned, as if for a festival, with skins and feathers. It is usually dyed with red wood. Men of rank, after being attired with their common aprons, are interred either sitting on their benches, or are enclosed in a kind of coffin, which is made from a hollow tree.

According to the prescriptions of the law of Islam, the



earth is not thrown upon the corpse, which is placed in a cavity that has been partitioned off at the side of the grave. This is a practice mentioned before, and which is followed in many heathen parts of Africa.

Like the Bongo, the Niam-niam bury their dead with a scrupulous regard to the points of the compass; but it is remarkable that they reverse the rule, the men in their sepulture being deposited with their faces towards the east, the women towards the west.

A grave is covered in with clay, which is thoroughly stamped down. Over the spot a hut is erected, in no respect differing externally from the huts of the living, and being equally perishable in its construction, it very soon either rots away through neglect or is destroyed in the annual conflagration of the steppe-burning.



## CHAPTER XIV.

MOHAMMED'S friendship for Munza. Invitation to an audience. Solemn escort to the royal halls. Waiting for the King. Architecture of the halls. Grand display of ornamental weapons. Fantastic attire of the sovereign. Features and expression. Stolid composure. Offering gifts. *Toilette* of Munza's wives. The king's mode of smoking. Use of the cola-nut. Musical performances. Court fool. Court eunuch. Munza's oration. Monbuttoo hymn. Munza's gratitude. A present of a house. Curiosity of natives. Skull-market. Niam-niam envoys. Fair complexion of natives. Visit from Munza's wives. Triumphal procession. A bath under *surveillance*. Discovery of the sword-bean. Munza's castle and private apartments. Reserve on geographical subjects. Non-existence of Piaggia's lake. My dog exchanged for a pygmy. Goats of the Momvoo. Extract of meat. Khartoomers' stations in Monbuttoo country. Mohammed's plan for proceeding southwards. Temptation to penetrate farther towards interior. Money and good fortune. Great festival. Cæsar dances. Munza's visits. The Guinea-hog. My washing-tub.

MUNZA was impatiently awaiting the arrival of the Khartoomers. His storehouses were piled to the full with ivory, the hunting booty of an entire year, which he was eager to exchange for the produce of the north or to see replaced by new supplies of the red ringing metal which should flow into his treasury.

This was Mohammed's third visit to the country, and not only interested motives prompted the king to receive him warmly, but real attachment; for the two had mutually pledged their friendship in their blood, and called each other by the name of brother. During his absence in Khartoom, Mohammed had entrusted the command of the expedition of the previous year to his brother Abd-el-fetah, a Mussulman of the purest water and a hypocritical fanatic, who had greatly offended

the king by his arrogance and unsympathetic reserve. He considered himself defiled by contact with a "Kaffir," and would not allow a nigger to approach within ten steps of his person; he refused to acknowledge either African king or prince, and always designated the ladies of the court as slaves. But Mohammed was entirely different. By all the natives he was known by his unassuming title of "Mbahly," *i.e.*, the little one, and in all his dealings with them he was urbanity itself. He won every heart by adopting the national costume, and attired in his native rokko-coat and scarlet plume, he would sit for hours together over the brimming beer-flasks by the side of his royal *confère*, recounting to him all the wonders of the world and twitting him with his cannibal propensities. No wonder then that Munza's daily question to Mohammed's people had been: "When will Mbahly come?" and no wonder that, as we were preparing to cross the great river, his envoys had met us with a cordial greeting for his friend. Nor was the attachment all on Munza's side. Immediately on our arrival, Mohammed, leaving the organization of our encampment entirely to the discretion of his lieutenants, had gathered up his store of presents, and hastened to convey them to the king. The greater part of these offerings consisted of huge copper dishes, not destined, however, in this remote corner of the globe to be relegated to the kitchen, but to be employed for the far more dignified office of furnishing music for the royal halls. The interview was long, and our large encampment was complete and night was rapidly approaching before Mohammed returned to his quarters. He came accompanied by the triumphal strain of horns and kettle-drums, and attended by thousands of natives bearing the ample store of provisions which, at the king's commands, had been instantly forthcoming. He announced that I was invited to an audience of the king on the following morning, and that a state reception was to be prepared in honour of my visit. It need

hardly be said that it was with feelings of wonder and curiosity that I lay down that night to rest.

The 22nd of March, 1870, was the memorable date on which my introduction to the king occurred. Long before I was stirring, Mohammed had once more betaken himself to the royal quarters. On leaving my tent, my attention was immediately attracted to the opposite slopes, and a glance at the wide space between the king's palace and the houses of his retinue was sufficient to assure me that unusual animation prevailed. Crowds of swarthy negroes were surging to and fro; others were hurrying along in groups, and ever and anon the wild tones of the kettle-drum could be heard even where I was standing. Munza was assembling his courtiers and inspecting his elephant-hunters, whilst from far and near streamed in the heads of households to open the ivory-mart with Mohammed, and to negotiate with him for the supply of his provisions.

Somewhat impatiently I stood awaiting my summons to the king, but it was already noon before I was informed that all arrangements were complete, and that I was at liberty to start. Mohammed's black body-guard was sent to escort me, and his trumpeters had orders to usher me into the royal presence with a flourish of the Turkish *reveille*. For the occasion I had donned a solemn suit of black. I wore my unfamiliar cloth-coat, and laced up the heavy Alpine boots, that should give importance to the movements of my light figure; watch and chain were left behind, that no metal ornament might be worn about my person. With all the solemnity I could I marched along; three black squires bore my rifles and revolver, followed by a fourth with my inevitable cane-chair. Next in order, and in awestruck silence, came my Nubian servants, clad in festive garments of unspotted whiteness, and bearing in their hand the offerings that had been so long and carefully reserved for his Monbuttoo majesty.



It took us half an hour to reach the royal residence. The path descended in a gentle slope to the wooded depression of the brook, then twisted itself for a time amid the thickets of the valley, and finally once more ascended, through extensive plantain-groves, to the open court that was bounded by a wide semicircle of motley dwellings. On arrival at the low parts of the valley we found the swampy jungle-path bestrewn with the stems of fresh-hewn trees and a bridge of the same thrown across the water itself. The king could hardly have been expected to suggest such peculiar attention of his own accord, but this provisionary arrangement for keeping my feet dry was made in compliance with a kindly hint from Mohammed, who, knowing the nature of my boots, and the time expended in taking them off and on, had thus thoughtfully insured my ease and comfort; moreover, these boots were unique in the African world, and must be preserved from mud and moisture. Unfortunately all these arrangements tended to confirm the Monbuttoo in one or other of their infatuated convictions, either that my feet were like goats' hoofs, or, according to another version, that the firm leather covering was itself an integral part of my body. The idea of goats' feet had probably arisen from the comparison of my hair and that of a goat; and doubtless the stubbornness with which I always refused to uncover my feet for their inspection strengthened them in their suspicion.

As we approached the huts, the drums and trumpets were sounded to their fullest powers, and the crowds of people pressing forward on either hand left but a narrow passage for our procession. We bent our steps to one of the largest huts, which formed a kind of palatial hall open like a shed at both ends. Waiting my arrival here was one of the officers of state, who, I presume, was the master of the ceremonies, as I afterwards observed him presiding over the general festivities. This official took me by the right hand, and without a word conducted me to the interior of the hall.

Here, like the audience at a concert, were arranged according to their rank hundreds of nobles and courtiers, each occupying his own ornamental bench and decked out with all his war equipments. At the other end of the building a space was left for the royal throne, which differed in no respect from the other benches, except that it stood upon an outspread mat; behind this bench was placed a large support of singular construction, resting as it seemed upon three legs, and furnished with projections that served as props for the back and arms of the sitter: this support was thickly studded with copper rings and nails. I requested that my own chair might be placed at a few paces from the royal bench, and there I took up my position with my people standing or squatting behind me, and the Nubian soldiers forming a guard around. The greater number of the soldiers had their guns, but my black squires, who had never before been brought face to face with so mighty a potentate, subsequently confessed to me that their hearts beat fast, and that they could not help trembling to think how a sign from Munza could have brought all our limbs to the spit.

For a considerable time I had to sit waiting in expectation before the empty throne. My servants informed me that Munza had attended the market in his ordinary costume, but that he had been seen to hasten home to his private apartments, where he was now undergoing a process of anointing, frizzling, and bedizening at the hands of his wives, in order that he should appear before me in the imposing splendour of his state attire. I had thus no other alternative than patiently to abide my time; for what could be more flattering to a foreign guest than for a king to receive him in his costliest toilet?

In the interval of waiting there seemed a continuous uproar. The fitful beating of kettle-drums and the perpetual braying of horns resounded through the airy building until it shook again, and mingling with the boisterous strains rose the voices of the assembled courtiers as they whiled away

the time in loud and eager conversation. There was no doubt that I was myself the main cause of their excitement; for although I sat with my back to the majority, I could not be otherwise than quite aware that all eyes were intently fixed upon me. All, however, kept their seats at a respectful distance, so that I could calmly look about me and note down my observations of what I saw.

The hall itself was the chief object that attracted my attention. It was at least a hundred feet in length, forty feet high, and fifty broad. It had been quite recently completed, and the fresh bright look of the materials gave it an enlivening aspect, the natural brown polish of the wood-work looking as though it were gleaming with the lustre of new varnish. Close by was a second and more spacious hall, which in height was only surpassed by the loftiest of the surrounding oil-palms; but this, although it had only been erected five years previously, had already begun to show symptoms of decay, and being enclosed on all sides was dark, and therefore less adapted for the gathering at a public spectacle. Considering the part of Africa in which these halls were found, one might truly be justified in calling them wonders of the world; I hardly know with all our building resources what material we could have employed, except it were whale-bone, of sufficient lightness and durability to erect structures like these royal halls of Munza, capable of withstanding the tropical storms and hurricanes. The bold arch of the vaulted roof was supported on three long rows of pillars formed from perfectly straight tree-stems; the countless spars and rafters as well as the other parts of the building being composed entirely of the leaf-stalks of the wine-palm (*Raphia vinifera*).\* The floor was covered with a dark red clay plaster, as firm

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\* This palm is found in every bank-forest in the Monbuttoo country, and its leaves vary from 25 to 35 feet in length: the midrib of the leaf (rhaehis) is of a bright brown colour, and furnishes the most popular building material throughout Central Africa.

and smooth as asphalt. The sides were enclosed by a low breastwork, and the space between this and the arching roof, which at the sides sloped nearly to the ground, allowed light and air to pass into the building. Outside against the breastwork stood crowds of natives, probably the "great unwashed" of the Monbuttoo, who were unable to obtain places within, and contented themselves with eagerly gazing through this opening at the proceedings. Officials with long sticks went their rounds and kept order among the mob, making free use of their sticks whenever it was necessary; all boys who ventured uninvited into the hall being vigorously beaten back as trespassers.

I had probably been left for an hour, and was getting lost in the contemplation of all the wonders, when a louder sound of voices and an increasing clang of horns and kettle-drums led me to suppose that there was an announcement of the approach of the king; but, no, this was only a prelude. The sovereign was still being painted and beautified by the hands of his fair ones. There was, however, a fresh and increasing commotion near the entrance of the hall, where a number of ornamental weapons was being arranged. Posts were driven into the ground, and long poles were fastened horizontally across them; then against this extemporized scaffolding were laid, or supported crosswise, hundreds of ornamental lances and spears, all of pure copper, and of every variety of form and shape. The gleam of the red metal caught the rays of the tropical noontide sun, and in the symmetry of their arrangement the rows of dazzling lance-heads shone with the glow of flaming torches, making a background to the royal throne that was really magnificent. The display of wealth, which according to Central African tradition was incalculable, was truly regal, and surpassed anything of the kind that I had conceived possible.

A little longer and the weapons are all arranged. The expected king has left his home. There is a running to and

fro of heralds, marshals, and police. The thronging masses flock towards the entrance, and silence is proclaimed. The king is close at hand. Then come the trumpeters flourishing away on their huge ivory horns; then the ringers swinging their cumbrous iron bells; and now, with a long firm stride, looking neither to the right nor to the left, wild, romantic, picturesque alike in mien and in attire, comes the tawny Cæsar himself! He was followed by a number of his favoured wives. Without vouchsafing me a glance, he flung himself upon his unpretending chair of state, and sat with his eyes fixed upon his feet. Mohammed had joined the retinue of his royal friend, and took up his position opposite me on the other side of the king on a stool that was brought for his accommodation. He also had arrayed himself in a suitable dress in honour of the occasion, and now sat in the imposing uniform of a commander of Arnauts.

I could now feast my eyes upon the fantastic figure of the ruler. I was intensely interested in gazing at the strange weird-looking sovereign, of whom it was commonly reported that his daily food was human flesh. With arms and legs, neck and breast, all bedizened with copper rings, chains, and other strange devices, and with a great copper crescent at the top of his head, the potentate gleamed with a shimmer that was to our ideas unworthy of royalty, but savoured far too much of the magazines of civic opulence, reminding one almost unavoidably of a well-kept kitchen! His appearance, however, was decidedly marked with his nationality, for every adornment that he had about him belonged exclusively to Central Africa, as none but the fabrications of his native land are deemed worthy of adorning the person of a king of the Monbuttoo.

Agreeably to the national fashion a plumed hat rested on the top of his chignon, and soared a foot and a half above his head; this hat was a narrow cylinder of closely-plaited reeds; it was ornamented with three layers of red parrots' feathers,



and crowned with a plume of the same ; there was no brim, but the copper crescent projected from the front like the vizor of a Norman helmet. The muscles of Munza's ears were pierced, and copper bars as thick as the finger inserted in the cavities. The entire body was smeared with the native unguent of powdered cam-wood, which converted the original bright brown tint of his skin into the colour that is so conspicuous in ancient Pompeian halls. With the exception of being of an unusually fine texture, his single garment differed in no respect from what was worn throughout the country ; it consisted of a large piece of fig bark impregnated with the same dye that served as his cosmetic, and this, falling in graceful folds about his body, formed breeches and waistcoat all in one. Round thongs of buffalo-hide, with heavy copper balls attached to the ends, were fastened round the waist in a huge knot, and like a girdle held the coat, which was neatly hemmed. The material of the coat was so carefully manipulated that it had quite the appearance of a rich *moiré antique*. Around the king's neck hung a copper ornament made in little points which radiated like beams all over his chest ; on his bare arms were strange-looking pendants which in shape could only be compared to drumsticks with rings at the end. Halfway up the lower part of the arms and just below the knee were three bright, horny-looking circlets cut out of hippopotamus-hide, likewise tipped with copper. As a symbol of his dignity Munza wielded in his right hand the sickle-shaped Monbuttoo scimitar, in this case only an ornamental weapon, and made of pure copper.

As soon as the king had taken his seat, two little tables, beautifully carved, were placed on either side of his throne, and on these stood the dainties of which he continually partook, but which were carefully concealed by napkins of fig-bark ; in addition to these tables, some really artistic flasks of porous clay were brought in, full of drinking water.

Such was Munza, the autocrat of the Monbuttoo, with whom I was now brought face to face. He appeared as the type of those half-mythical potentates, a species of Mwata Yanvo or Great Makoko, whose names alone have penetrated to Europe, a truly savage monarch, without a trace of anything European or Oriental in his attire, and with nothing fictitious or borrowed to be attributed to him.

He was a man of about forty years of age, of a fair height, of a slim but powerful build, and, like the rest of his countrymen, stiff and erect in figure. Although belonging to a type by no means uncomely, his features were far from prepossessing, but had a Nero-like expression that told of *ennui* and satiety. He had small whiskers and a tolerably thick beard; his profile was almost orthognatic, but the perfectly Caucasian nose offered a remarkable contrast to the thick and protruding negro lips. In his eyes gleamed the wild light of animal sensuality, and around his mouth lurked an expression that I never saw in any other Monbuttoo, a combination of avarice, violence, and love of cruelty that could with the extremest difficulty relax into a smile. No spark of love or affection could beam forth from such features as his.

A considerable time elapsed before the king looked directly at the pale-faced man with the long hair and the tight black clothes who now for the first time appeared before him. I held my hat in my hand, but no greeting had as yet taken place, for, observing that everyone kept his seat when the king entered the hall, I had done the same, and now waited for him to address me. The wild uproar of the cannibals still continued, and Munza, sitting in a careless attitude, only raised his eyes now and then from their fixed stare upon the ground as though to scan the whole assemblage, but in reality to take stray glances at my person, and in this way, little by little, he satisfied his curiosity. I could

not help marvelling at the composure of this wild African, and wondering where in the world he could have learnt his dignity and self-possession.

At length the monarch began to ask me some questions. They were fluently translated into the Zandey dialect by the chief interpreter, who always played a principal part in our intercourse with the natives. The Niam-niam in their turn rendered the sense to me in Arabic. The conversation, however, was of the most commonplace character, and referred neither to the purpose of my coming nor to the country from which I came. Munza's interrogations brought to my mind the rough reception afforded to Reinhold Forster, the companion of the renowned Captain Cook, by Frederick the Great, who bluntly asked him if he had ever seen a king? "Yes, your Majesty," was the answer, "several; two tame and three savage." Munza appeared extremely anxious to keep up to an Oriental measure the principle of *nil admirari*; nothing could disturb his composure, and even at my subsequent visits, where there was no state ceremonial, he maintained a taciturnity nearly as resolute.

My servants now brought forth the presents I had brought and spread them at the king's feet. These consisted, in the first place, of a piece of black cloth, a telescope, a silver platter, and a porcelain vase; the silver was taken for white iron, and the porcelain for carved ivory. The next gift was a real piece of carved ivory, brought as a specimen to show the way in which the material is employed; there was a book with gilt edges, a gift which could not fail to recall to my mind the scene in which Speke describes Kamrasi's first lesson in the Bible; then came a double mirror, that both magnified and reduced what it reflected; and last, though by no means least, was a large assortment of beads of Venetian glass, including thirty necklaces, composed of thirty distinct pieces, so that Munza was in possession of more than

a thousand separate beads.\* The universal principle followed by the Nubians forbade that any presents of firearms should be made to native rulers. Munza regarded all these offerings with great attention, but without committing himself to any audible expression of approval. Not so his fifty wives, who were seated on stools arranged behind his throne; they gave frequent half-suppressed utterances of surprise, and the double mirror was passed admiringly from hand to hand, its contortions eliciting shouts of delight.

There were fifty of these ladies present: they were only the most intimate, or wives of the first rank, the entire number of court ladies being far larger. Except in the greater elegance of their attire, they departed in no way from the fashion of the country, the description of which must be deferred for the present.

After a time Munza turned his attention to his refreshments. As far as I could distinguish them, they consisted of lumps of plantain-meal and tapioca piled on leaves, of dried plantains, and of a fruit which to my surprise I immediately recognised as the cola-nut of the west. From this rosy-shelled kernel the king cut a few slices, and chewed them in the intervals of smoking his tobacco. His pipe, in the shape of an iron stem six feet long, was handed to him by a chibbukchak, who was in attendance for that purpose. Very remarkable was the way in which Munza smoked. To bring himself into the correct position he threw himself far back in his seat, supported his right elbow on the arm-rest, put one leg across the other, and with his left hand received the pipe-stem. In this attitude he gravely took one long inhalation, then, with a haughty gesture, resigned his pipe to the

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\* I had obtained these little works of art from my Venetian friend Miani, to whom they had been presented some years previously by his fellow-citizens, when he was preparing to undertake a new expedition. The enterprise had failed from no other cause than from the jealousy shown by the Egyptian Government.

hands of his attendant and allowed the smoke slowly to re-issue from his mouth. It is a habit among Turks of rank to smoke thus by taking only two or three inhalations from a pipe handed to them by their servants; but where, again, may I ask, could this cannibal prince have learnt such a custom?

To my request for a cola-nut the king responded by graciously passing me a specimen with his own hand. Turning to Mohammed, I expressed my surprise at beholding this fruit of the far west amongst the Monbuttoo; I told him of its high value\* as a spice in Bornoo, where it is worth its weight in silver, and I went on to say that it confirmed my impression that the Welle was identical with the river of Baghirmy, called the Shary, and that this nut accordingly came to me like a key to a problem that I was seeking to solve. Then again addressing Munza, I made him understand that I knew the fruit, and pointing in the direction of Lake Tsad, I told him that there it was eaten by the great people of the country. I hoped in this way to induce him to give me some information on the subject; but he had made up his mind to be astonished at nothing; nor could I ever even on future occasions draw him into a geographical discussion. All that I could learn was that the cola-nut grew wild in the country, and that it was called "nangweh" by the natives, who were accustomed to chew it in the intervals of their smoking.

The performances that had been prepared for our entertainment now commenced. First of all a couple of horn-blowers stepped forward, and proceeded to execute solos upon their instruments. These men were advanced proficient in their art, and brought forth sounds of such power, compass, and flexibility that they could be modulated from sounds like the roar of a hungry lion, or the trumpeting of

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\* According to Liebig the cola-nut contains more coffeeine than the most potent coffee berries.



an infuriated elephant, down to tones which might be compared to the sighing of the breeze or to a lover's whisper. One of them, whose ivory horn was so huge that he could scarcely hold it in a horizontal position, executed rapid passages and shakes with as much neatness and decision as though he were performing on a flute.

Next appeared a number of professional singers and jesters, and amongst them a little plump fellow, who acted the part of a pantomime clown, and jumped about and turned somersaults till his limbs looked like the arms of a windmill; he was covered from head to foot with bushy tufts and pigtails, and altogether his appearance was so excessively ludicrous that, to the inward delight of the king, I burst into a hearty fit of laughter. I called him a court fool, and in many respects he fully deserved the title. I hardly know why the Nubians should have drawn my attention, as though to something quite new, to the wooden Monbuttoo scimitar that he wore in his girdle. His jokes and pranks seemed never-ending, and he was permitted to take liberties with every one, not excepting even Munza himself; and amongst other tricks he would approach the king with his right hand extended, and just as Munza had got hold of it, would start backwards and make off with a bound. A short time before he appeared, some freshly baked ears of maize, the first of the season, had been laid before me; of this delicacy the fool, with the most comical gestures, made me comprehend that he wished to partake; I therefore took up some detached grains, and threw them, one by one, into his open mouth; he caught them with a snap, and devoured them with such comical grimaces, that the performance called forth a roar of applause from the whole assembly.

The next episode consisted of the performances of a eunuch, who formed a butt for the wit of the spectators. How Munza had come into possession of this creature, no one seemed to know, and I could only learn that he was employed

in the inner parts of the palace. He was a fat grotesque-looking figure, and when he sang looked exactly like a grunting baboon; to add to the oddity of his appearance, Munza, as though in mockery of his Nubian guests, had had him arrayed in a red fez, and thus he was the only one in all the immense concourse of natives who had anything foreign in his attire.

But the most important part of the programme was reserved for the end: Munza was to make an oration. Whilst all the audience remained quietly seated on their stools and benches, up jumped the king, loosened his coat, cleared his throat, and commenced his harangue. Of course I could not understand a single word, and a double interpretation would have been worse than useless: but, from what I could see and hear, it was evident that Munza endeavoured to be choice and emphatic in his language, as not only did he often correct himself, but he made pauses after the sentences that he intended to be impressive, to allow for the applause of his auditors. Then the shout of "Ee, ee, tchupy, tchupy, ee, Munza, ee," resounded from every throat, and the musical instruments caught up the strain, until the uproar was truly demoniacal. Several times after this chorus, and as if to stimulate the tumult, Munza uttered a stentorian "brrr - -"\* with a voice so sonorous that the very roof vibrated, and the swallows fled in terror from their nests in the eaves.

The kettle-drums and horns now struck up a livelier and more rhythmical strain, and Munza assumed a new character and proceeded to beat time with all the solemnity of a conductor. His *bâton* was something like a baby's rattle, and consisted of a hollow sphere of basket-work filled with pebbles and shells, and attached to a stick.†

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\* It may interest the reader to learn that in the Shamane prayers "brrr - - -" is synonymous with "hail," and I have little doubt that it here meant some sort of applause, as it was always the signal for the repetition of the hymn in celebration of the glories of Munza.

† A similar contrivance is used on the river Gabon on the West Coast.

The discourse lasted full half an hour, during which time I took the portrait of the king that forms the frontispiece to this book. Hunger at length compelled me to take my leave of the sovereign and retrace my steps to the camp. At parting Munza said to me, "I do not know what to give you in return for all your presents; I am sorry I am so poor and have nothing to offer you." Fascinated by his modesty and indulging the idea that it was only a preface to a munificent gift worthy of royalty, I replied, "Don't mention that: I did not come for what I could get; we buy ivory from the Turks, and pay them with yellow lead and white iron, and we make white stuffs and powder and guns for ourselves. I only ask for two things: a pig (*Potamochoerus*) and a chimpanzee."

"You shall certainly have them," said Munza; but I was thoroughly deceived, and, in spite of my repeated reminders, neither pig nor chimpanzee ever appeared.

As I left the hall the king commenced a new oration. As for myself, I was so thoroughly fatigued with the noise and tumult, that I was glad to spend the remainder of this memorable day quietly in my tent.

Early on the following morning I was aroused by my people, who begged me to come out and see what the king was sending me. Looking down the road I perceived a group of Monbutto, who with a good deal of shouting were lugging up the hill something that I could not make out. Mohammed presently hurried up with the surprising announcement that he had made Munza comprehend that my valuables were all lying out in the open air and exposed to the rain, and that the king was now sending me a house as his first present. I thought at first that he was jesting, but a few minutes sufficed to convince me of the truth of his statement. I then became aware that about twenty natives were carrying on their shoulders the substructure of a small quadrilateral house, while others were following with the

roof. A very short time elapsed before they had mounted the hill and placed the erection in close juxtaposition to my tent. The light structure, woven together with the Spanish reed, looked exactly like a huge hamper, with the roof for a lid. It was about twenty feet long, and sufficiently commodious to contain all my goods, and was especially useful for protecting my paper packets.

I was thus elevated to the rank and enjoyed the rights of a householder among the Monbuttoo, and my intercourse with the natives became more intimate every day. My tent was continually besieged by a host of curious spectators, of whom the more well-to-do brought their benches, and, ranged in rows before the opening, watched in silent eagerness my every movement. Their chiefest interest seemed absorbed in contemplating my person, although many of the utensils and implements that surrounded me must have been quite as strange and incomprehensible to them. These frequent visitors at first afforded me great amusement, and I received them with friendly gestures, and combed my hair and shaved *in conspectu omnium*. Nor was the wonder all on their side; every moment revealed some novelty to myself, and I found full employment in sketching and taking notes. The great difficulty to our intercourse was in not understanding one another's language. Now and then, however, I managed to get hold of some people who could speak the Zandey dialect; and then, with the help of my Niam-niam interpreters, I could ask them questions and get my wishes conveyed to the general multitude.

“Bring your weapons,” I would say; “bring your weapons, and the produce of your handicraft, your ornaments and tools, and I will give you beautiful things in return; bring the fruits of your forests, and the leaves of the trees on which they grow: bring the skins and skulls of animals; but above all bring the human skulls that remain over from

your meals: they are of no use to you—bring them, and I will give you copper in exchange.”

I had rarely occasion to repeat my request, but almost before my wish was uttered there was opened a regular curiosity mart; goods were bartered, and a flourishing trade was done.

The stock of bones that was thus brought to me in one day was quite astonishing, and could not do otherwise than remove any lingering hesitation I might have in believing the cannibal propensities of the people. There were piles of every kind—fragments of skulls, and lower jaw-bones from which the teeth had been extracted to serve as ornaments for the neck. The belief seemed to be that I had no intention of dealing otherwise than wholesale. Proofs enough were before me; sufficient, I should suppose, to silence even the most stubborn scepticism. It cost me some trouble to convince the people that my requirements only extended to such skulls as were perfectly uninjured, and that for such only could I be content to pay. For a perfect skull I promised an armlet of copper, but I found that nearly all that were brought to me had been smashed for the purpose of extracting the brains. Out of the two hundred skulls that were produced, I was able to select no more than forty, each of which I carefully labelled for consignment to Europe. The people who brought them professed to give full particulars about them, as to where they had come from, and whether they were male or female—details which of course enhanced the value of the collection. The want of these particulars detracts very much from the worth of many collections of skulls, for, as regards the purposes of comparative ethnology, not much information is to be derived from a skull of which the only explanation is that it came from Brazil or East Africa. The great majority of those which the Monbutto brought me had been procured from the people who inhabited the districts south of their own



land, and were the result of the raids that had been made upon them; hardly any were the skulls of the Monbuttoo themselves. The condition in which I received many of the fragments afforded indubitable proof that they had been boiled in water and scraped with knives; and some, I suspect, came straight from the platters of the natives, inasmuch as they were still moist, and had the odour of being only just cooked. A good many had all the appearance of being raked out of old dust-heaps, whilst some few had been found in the streams, and had manifestly been laved by the water.

To those who brought the skulls, I thought it expedient to explain that we wanted them, so that in our far-off country we could learn all about the people who dwelt here, and that we were able, from the mere shape of the head, to tell all about people's tempers and dispositions, their good qualities and their bad; and that for this purpose we gathered skulls together from every quarter of the globe. When the Khartoomers saw that the collection was now going on for a second year, they were only the more confirmed in their belief that I submitted them to a certain process by which I obtained a subtle poison. From the more dense and stupid natives, the idea could not be eradicated that I wanted all the bones for my food. To save the honour of Europe, and in love for the science of which I was the representative, I lavished on these errors an incense unbecoming the doctrine of Gall's phrenology.

Among those who day after day entered the camp to pay me a visit, were several who had come from a great distance, and amongst them the ambassadors of the neighbouring Niam-niam king, Kanna, whose territories lie to the west and north-west of the Monbuttoo. The district had been part of the kingdom of Keefa, a powerful prince, whose enormous stores of ivory had ever constituted a great attraction for the expeditions of the Khartoomers, though they

seldom travelled as far as his dominions. Keefa, whose surname was Ntikkima, about two years before our arrival, had lost his life in a campaign against the Mabode, a black negro people to the south-west of the Monbuttoo. His four eldest sons had partitioned his extensive power between them, and the largest share of land had fallen to the lot of Kanna, who now sent the deputation to invite Mohammed to visit his country. Mohammed, meanwhile, had already determined that the land of Kanna should be the limit of the southward march of a corps that he detached; but time would not permit us ourselves to make so wide a *détour*. It would occupy the space of several months.

From these Niam-niam envoys I derived several scraps of information about the western regions, which threw some light upon the lower course of the Welle, and of that other stream to the north of it, which, from the union of several streams that rise in the district of Wando, appears very soon to become a large and copious river. Between these two rivers (the Welle and the so-called Bahr-el-Wando, which joins it in Kanna's district) was situated the residence of the deceased Keefa, which, owing to its position, was described in the Arabic way as being on an island. It was represented as being to the N.N.W. of Munza's residence, from which, according to their accounts, it was distant some forty miles.

I made inquiries amongst them about the white man Piaggia, whom the Nubians had brought into the country, and who was affirmed to have visited Keefa's residence; but my respondent replied that, though they had heard of him by report, he had never been into the country; and this corresponded exactly with what had been told me by Ghattas's company that had brought Piaggia as far as Tombo.

All that Piaggia communicated about the Niam-niam was very interesting, and remains uncontested; but he lies open to the reproof of making fictitious routes. It is evident,

moreover, that he arranges the Niam-niam princes in a false order; for example, he makes Keefa follow immediately after Malingde or Malindo; and he only assigns a period of two days for a journey which Antinori, the editor of his reports, has simply stated to be sixty-five miles. I should congratulate a company that could get a party of refractory bearers to accomplish more than a dozen leagues a day, where they would have to cross a dozen brooks and marshes, many of them taking half an hour to accomplish. Not a word, moreover, does he utter about the strange people who reside to the south of the Niam-niam. At Indimma, the population is a very intermingled race, the Niam-niam scarcely making up one-half, and in Keefa's region scarcely making up a minority. Elsewhere Piaggia's observations seemed acute enough, but here he has nothing to remark.

Many as were the visitors that I received at my tent, none awakened greater interest than one of the sons of Munza. The name of this distinguished personage was Bunza, and he was about the lightest-skinned individual that I had here beheld. His complexion could not have been fairer if he had been a denizen of Central Egypt. His hair was equally pale and grizzly; his tall chignon being not unlike a bundle of hemp, and standing in marked contrast to the black tresses which were stretched across the brow. As the hair about the temples does not grow sufficiently long for this purpose, the Monbuttoo are accustomed to use false hair; and as fair heads of hair are somewhat uncommon, false hair to match the original is difficult to purchase. This young man, of whom I was successful in taking a deliberate sketch, exhibited all the characteristics of pronounced albinism, and in truth to a degree which can be often seen in a fair individual of the true Semitic stock, either Jew or Arabian. The eyes seemed painfully affected by light, and had a constant objectless leer; the head, supported on a shrivelled neck, kept nodding with an involun-

tary movement, and whenever it rested it was sure to be in some extraordinary position. Bunza reminded me very vividly of some white twins that I once saw on the Red Sea: they were fishermen of Djidda, and looked as like each other as eggs from one nest. I do not know that I am warranted in drawing any definite inferences from my observation; but I cannot suppress the remark, that to my mind the Monbutto have the tokens of a Semitic origin most thoroughly impressed upon their countenance, to which in particular the nose (which does not at all approach to the common negro outline) very much contributes. Bunza's nose was a regular hawk's-bill.

Of the other members of the royal family, several of Munza's wives and his eldest sister came to inspect our camp. This latter woman was repulsive-looking enough, and did not appear to possess any of the warlike virtues attributed to one of her sisters named Nalengbe, who is since dead, but who had once arrayed herself in a man's dress, and entered into personal conflict with the Nubians. This weak woman's vanity made her the laughing-stock of strangers and acquaintances alike; she perambulated the camp, displaying the grossest familiarity with the soldiers. She begged me to make her a present of some lead, which the Nubians from motives of policy had withheld. Lead was still in this region as much of a rarity as though it was just discovered, and produced among them for the first time. Munza's sister used to hammer bright ear-rings out of whatever musket-balls she could procure.

One morning about thirty of the royal ladies came, all together, into the camp to receive the presents which Mohammed had provided for them. They all had comely, youthful, well-knit figures, and were for the most part tall, but much cannot be said in favour of their expression. They emulated each other in the extent of their head-gear and in the profusion with which they adorned the body. Two of

them submitted to have their portraits taken; the whole party sat in a circle, taking up their position during the time that I was sketching the likenesses on the little single-stemmed stools which they had brought with them; when they took their seats they threw their bands across their laps. Some of the group stood out in marked contrast to the rest by their light complexion and fair hair, whilst others approximated very nearly to the colour of *café-au-lait*. When I had finished my drawing, I was anxious to show my appreciation of the ladies' patience, and accordingly offered to present them with some beads, but they at once begged to refuse the proffered necklace, explaining that they were not at liberty to accept presents from any one but "Mbahly" (Aboo Sammat). These they had come to fetch, but they had had no orders to receive anything from "Mbarik-pah;" it might arouse suspicion, and suspicion with Munza, the interpreters insisted, was tantamount to death.

However interested I might be, just at first, in the vivacious movements of the people as they thronged around me, it did not take long to make me feel that they were a weariness and a nuisance. On the very next day after our arrival I was obliged to encircle my tent with a thorn-hedge to keep off the press of the inquisitive crowds; full many, however, there were who would not be deterred by any obstacle of this kind; regardless of the obstruction, they penetrated right into my presence. I was interrupted at every moment by these intrusions. My next resource was to have a lot of water dashed over the encroaching rabble, and finding that fail, I fired some trains of gunpowder, and, in the hopes of alarming the natives, I proceeded to set light to a few shells; but even the explosions of these did not take much effect. It seemed as if nothing could keep the curious crowds at a distance, and, at my wits' end what to do, I applied to Mohammed for assistance. He assigned me a guard of men; but even this scheme only partially succeeded;



it answered very well as long as I kept within the bounds of my asylum, but I had only to venture beyond, and I found my retinue as large as ever. The majority of those who harassed me in this way were women, who, by keeping up with me step by step, thoroughly baffled me in all my attempts to botanize; and if perchance I managed to get away into the wood, they would find me out, and trample down the rare flowers I had laboriously collected, till I was almost driven to despair. When thus escorted by about a hundred women I was marching down to the streams in the depth of the valleys, I might indulge the fancy that I was at the head of a triumphal procession, and as often as our path led us through villages and farms the numbers in the train were swollen prodigiously.

Sometimes I was in a better mood, and indulged in a little joke. I had picked up some of their words, and when I shouted one of these out loud it was taken up merrily by the whole party, and passed on from mouth to mouth. Their word "hosanna," for instance, means "it is not," and on one occasion having happened to shout out this, I proceeded for a quarter of an hour while the women around me paused not a moment in making the air resound with the cry "Hosanna." Not unfrequently I would try them with some hard crack-jaw German word, in order to enjoy their conscientious endeavours to reproduce it; but perhaps best of all for producing a characteristic scene was the choice of one of their imitative names of animals, where the appellation is derived from the sounds uttered by the creatures themselves. A goat is in this way called "memmeh." I once seated myself in the centre of a concourse of women, and drew a picture of a couple of goats, and the keynote being given, every time a fresh woman came up she found herself greeted with the universal bleating cry of "Memmeh, memmeh—eh?" "What's the row? What's up?" would be her question. "Memmeh, memmeh" (a goat, a goat), would be all the answer.

These Monbuttoo women, who were so intolerably obtrusive whilst I was amongst other folks, were reserved enough about themselves; however much I might be anxious to investigate their domestic habits, I had but to present myself at the entrances of their huts, and off they were in an instant to the interior, and their doors barred against all intrusion.

There were delicious places where, encircled by the luxuriance of a tropical vegetation, the clear and sparkling pools invited me to the enjoyment of a safe and refreshing bath, an irresistible attraction after the numberless mud baths of the Niam-niam country. Everything seemed to conspire to render the scenery perfect in its bewitching grace; each winding of the brook would be overarched by a magnificent canopy of gorgeous foliage; the waving pendants of the blooming shrubs would shadow the secluded stream; a fantastic wreath of elegant ferns growing up amongst the goodly leaves of the aroideæ and the ginger-plants would adorn the banks; gigantic stems, clothed with accumulated moss, would rise upwards in majestic height and reach down like steps in romantic beauty to the bathing-place. But, alas! even this nook, where the delights of paradise seem almost to be perpetuated, may not be secure from the torment of humanity. It happens here according to the teaching of the poet, that—

“every prospect pleases,  
And only man is vile.”

Nature is only free and perfect where man comes not with his disturbing foot. In my romantic bathing, this disturbance, ever and again, would come in the shape of some hideous and inquisitive Monbuttoo woman, who had posted herself on the overlooking heights, either to enjoy the picturesque contrast of light and shade, or to gratify her curiosity by getting a peep at my figure through the openings of the foliage as I emerged from the dim obscurity of the wood.

A day seldom passed without my making some addition to

my botanical store. Beside a pathway in the wood I chanced to come upon the great seeds of a legumen which hitherto was quite unknown to me; the natives, when I showed them to them, told me that the name of the plant which bore them was the "morokoh;" after a while I succeeded in getting an entire pod, and recognised it as the produce of the *Entada scandens*, known in the West Indies as the sword-bean. These seed-vessels attain a length of five feet, and are about as wide as anyone could span, the seeds themselves being flat, and having their corners rounded off, and (with the exception of the produce of some palms) are the largest that are known, their flattened sides not unfrequently measuring three square inches. Their size gives them a great capability for resisting the influence of the sea, and they retain their germinating power for many months, so that, carried over by the ocean-currents, they are borne to every quarter of the globe. They have been observed in the arctic regions and on the northern shores of Nova Zembla, and within the tropics they have found their way to both the Indies and to many islands of the Pacific. These enormous beans bear signal witness to the course of the Gulf Stream. Their proper home would seem to be the tropical regions of Africa, as their occurrence in the Monbuttoo lands, equally distant from either ocean, manifestly witnesses. Anxious to investigate where the "morokoh" could really be found, I devoted a special excursion to the search, and went out for a couple of leagues or more in a south-westerly direction from the camp. Crossing several brooks and passing through many a grove of oil-palms, we reached some farmsteads that were erected in a welcome shade. All along our steps we were followed by a group of people who continually fell out and squabbled with the Bongo and other natives belonging to our caravan, but who towards myself personally were as courteous and amiable as could be wished. It might be expected that my bean-pods, five feet long, would be found upon some enormous trees of







corresponding growth, but in truth the *Entada scandens* is a weak deciduous creeper, which climbs along the underwood that abounds in the depressions of the brooks.

The twenty days of our residence in this interesting spot slipped away only too quickly. There was, however, a series of fresh surprises awaiting me. How I made acquaintance with the Pygmies is a tale that must be told in a later chapter. High festivities in the court of the king—the general summons of the population to take their share in the hunt as often as either buffaloes or elephants came within sight—the arrival of vassals conveying their tribute and making a solemn entrance with their attendant warriors—all these events succeeded each other in rapid order, and gave me ample opportunity of studying the peculiarities of the people from many a different point of view.

I paid repeated visits to the king, sometimes finding him in his granaries engaged in distributing provisions to his officers, and sometimes in the inner apartments of his own special residence. One afternoon I received permission, in company with Mohammed, to inspect all the apartments of the royal castle. The master of the ceremonies and the head-cook escorted us round. Mohammed was already familiar with all the arrangements, and was consequently able to call my attention to anything worthy of particular notice. What I call "the castle" is a separate group of huts, halls, and sheds, which are enclosed by a palisade, and which may be entered only by the king and by the officers and servants of the royal household. All official business is transacted in the outer courts. Trees were planted regularly all round the enclosure, and contributed to give a comfortable and home-like aspect to the whole. Not only did the oil-palms abound, but other serviceable trees were planted round the open space, and declared the permanency of the royal residence, in contradistinction to the fluctuating and unsettled dwelling-places of the Niam-niam chieftains.

I was next brought to a circular building with an imposing conical roof, which was appropriated as the arsenal, and was full of weapons of every variety. Sword-blades and lances were especially numerous, and I was at liberty to make my selection out of them, as the king had chosen in this way to make his return for the presents he had received from me. The superintendents and keepers of the armoury did all in their power to interfere with the freedom of my choice, and as often as I showed my fancy for any piece that was particularly rare, they hesitated before surrendering it, and made a condition that the express consent of the king must be secured before a specimen so *recherché* could be given up. As the result of this exchange of presents, I found my tent loaded with an immense assortment of knives, scimitars, lances, spears, bows, and arrows. At the subsequent conflagration all the wooden portions of these were destroyed, but the metal work was safely remitted to Europe as a proof of the artistic taste and industry of the people.

The same day I had the opportunity of seeing the splendid oxen which Munza had received from the friendly king in



Breed of cattle from the Maoggoo country.

the south-east, and to which I have already had occasion to refer.\* A representation of one of these animals is now introduced, showing the great fat hump, which is larger than any that I had hitherto seen.

All attempts to elicit any information about the country to the south of their own were quite unavailing; the people were silent as the tomb. Nor did I succeed much better when I came to inquire of King Munza himself. Every inquiry on my part was baffled by the resolute secrecy of African state policy, and the difficulties of the duplicate interpretation gave Munza just the pretext he wanted for circumlocution and evasive replies.

I was most anxious to obtain correct information as to whether the great inland lake to which Piaggia had referred had any real existence in the district or not, and I satisfied myself by positive testimony that the natives had no actual knowledge about it. But it was really very difficult to convey to them any notion whatever of what was intended; there was an utter absence of any simile by which the idea of a lake, a great inland expanse of fresh water, could be illustrated, and the languages of the interpreters (Arabic and Zandey), however copious they might be, were yet inadequate in this particular matter. Neither in Egypt nor in the Egyptian Soudan is there a proper term for a lake. There are indeed the terms "birket," "foola," and "tirra," but these only signify respectively a pond, a rainpool, and a marsh; and Piaggia, who, as I have pointed out, did not actually reach Keefa, spoke only from hearsay, either from the reports of the Nubians, to whom probably some vague information of Baker's discoveries had reached, or by an erroneous conception of the explanation of the natives when they described the "great water," which in reality was the river flowing past Keefa's residence. Monbuttoo and Niam-

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\* *Vide* vol. i. chap. xiii.

niam alike are entirely incapable of comprehending what is meant by an ocean. Anything contrary to this statement which may have been spread abroad by Khartoom adventurers\* I do not think I need hesitate to describe as sheer nonsense or as idle fancy. The tales of steamers and of ships with crews of white men, which are said to have been described by the natives as having come along their rivers, and the stories that pictures of these ships have been found in their dwellings, are doubtless circulated amongst travellers to the Niam-niam lands, but without any assignable grounds.

After much demurring and waiving the question, the king's interpreter did affirm that he knew of such standing water in the country: he pointed towards the direction of the W.S.W., and said its name was "Madimmo," and that it was Munza's own birthplace. The place was called "Ghilly" by the Niam-niam; but when I inquired more accurately, and began to investigate its extent, I received an answer which set my mind entirely at rest that it was as large as Munza's palace!

I nurtured the silent hope that by mentioning certain names that perchance might be known to the Monbuttoo, I should succeed in breaking down their reserve. I asked the king if he knew anything of the land of Ulegga and of its king Kadjoro, or whether he knew King Kamrasi, whose dominions were beyond the "great water," and behind the mountains of the Malegga; and I pointed at the same time towards the S.E. Then I mentioned Kamrahs, repeating the word and saying "Kamrahs, Kamrahs," in the way that the Nubians are accustomed to do, but both Munza and his interpreter were silent, or proceeded to speak of other matters. But while this conversation was going on, a significant look that Munza gave his interpreter did not escape my notice,

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\* Compare Dr. Ori's letter to the Marquis Antinori in the 'Bolletino della Soc. Geogr. Ital.,' i. p. 184.

and very much confirmed my suspicion that he was not altogether unacquainted with Kamrasi.

Some time afterwards Munza, in the most off-hand way, complained that I had not given him enough copper. Knowing the general expectations of an African king, I was only surprised that he had not urged his demand before. He reminded me of the quantity of copper that Mohammed had given him: "Mohammed," he said, "is a great sultan; but you are also a great sultan." When I reminded him that I did not take any of his ivory, he seemed to acquiesce in my excuse; but he very shortly afterwards sent me some messengers to request that I would make him a present of the two dogs which I had brought with me. They were two common Bongo curs of very small growth, but by contrast with the mean breed of the Monbuttoo and the Niam-niam they were attractive enough to excite the avidity of Munza. He had never seen dogs of such a size, and did not want them as dainty morsels for his table, but really wished to have them to keep. However, he had long to beg in vain; I assured him that the creatures had grown up with me till I was truly fond of them; they were, as I told him, my children; I was not disposed to part with them at any price, and might as well be asked to give the hair off my head. But my representations had no effect upon Munza; he had made up his mind to have the dogs, and did not pass a day without repeating his request, and enforcing it by sending fresh relays of presents to my tent. Nothing, however, moved me. At last some slaves, both male and female were sent, and the sight of these suggested a new idea. I resolved to give way, and to exchange one of my dogs for a specimen of the little Akka people. Munza acceded at once, and sent me two of them. He could not suppress his little joke. "You told me," said he, "not long since, that the dogs were your children; what will you say if I call these my children?"

I accepted the smallest of the Akka, a youth who might



be about fifteen years of age, hoping to be able to take him to Europe as a living evidence of a truth that lay under the myth of some thousand years. I shall give a fuller account of this little specimen of humanity in the chapter that will be devoted to the subject of the Pygmies.

It had, moreover, become high time for me to give way, and not to put the cannibal ruler's patience to too severe a test. The exchange which had been effected restored me to the royal favour, and a prohibition which had been issued to the natives, warning them not to have any transactions with me by selling me produce or curiosities, was withdrawn. I received now such quantities of ripe plantains that I was able to procure an abundance of plantain-wine, an extremely palatable and wholesome drink, which is obtained after being allowed to ferment for twenty-four hours.

During this time Mohammed had begun to find that the supply of provisions was growing inadequate, and that he would find some difficulty in meeting the necessities of his numerous bearers and of his heterogeneous caravan. He accordingly resolved to make a division of the entire company, and to send a detachment back to Izingerria beyond the Welle, where they might get corn and other supplies. In my own case, I was obliged to do without proper bread; no eleusine was to be had, and I was reduced to a flat tough cake made of manioc and plantain-meal.

As no cattle-breeding is practised among the Monbuttoo, I should have been fastened down to a uniform diet of vegetables if I had not happened to be aware that in the last raid against the Momvoo a very considerable number of goats had been driven into the country. I induced the king to become my agent for getting me some of them, and sent him three large copper bracelets, weighing about a pound, for every goat that he would let me have. In this way I gradually obtained about a dozen fat goats, and more beautiful creatures of the kind I had never seen since I had left

Khartoom. They were of two different breeds: one of them was singularly like the Bongo race, which has been before described, and which are remarkable for the long hair that hangs from their neck and shoulders; the other differed



Goat of the Momvoo.

from any type that I had previously seen in having an equally-distributed drooping fleece, which serves as a covering for its short-haired extremities, and in its nose being very considerably arched. The ordinary colour of these graceful animals is a uniform glossy black. They are fed almost exclusively upon plantain leaves, a food which makes them thrive admirably. When I had got half-a-dozen of them together I had them all killed at once. I had the flesh all taken off the bones, the sinews carefully removed, and then made my bearers, who had no other work to do, mince it

up very fine upon some boards. The entire mass was next thrown into great vessels and boiled; it was afterwards strained, and when it had got cold it was freed from all fat and finally steamed until it was a thick jelly. The extract of meat obtained in this way had to serve throughout our return journey, and in the sequel proved a very remunerative product. It was not liable to decomposition, and its keeping so well made it an excellent resource in time of want and postponed the evil day of our actual suffering from hunger.

Besides the company of Mohammed Aboo Sammat, there were two other companies that for some years had been accustomed to carry their expeditions into the Monbuttoo country, namely, Agahd's and that of the Poncets, which was afterwards transferred to Ghattas. It was a matter of arrangement that these should confine their operations to the eastern districts, where Degberra was king. At their departure they always left a small detachment in charge to look after their business interests and to prevent any competition. Agahd's and Poncet's soldiers had been left in the garrisons in the districts that were under the control of Degberra's generals, Kubby and Benda, and they were only too glad to embrace the present chance (as we were only distant a two days' journey) of coming to see their friends and acquaintance from Khartoom and to hear the news.

To all appearance the Monbuttoo air agreed excellently with them all, which is more than can be said of those who reside in some of the northern Seribas. They had wives and families in the country, and made no other complaint than that their life was somewhat lonely and monotonous and their food so different to what they had been accustomed to; but what the fanatical Mohammedans had most readily to avow was that they really held the natives in admiration and respect, notwithstanding their intense detestation of the cannibalism which was attributed to them. Mohammed also left some of his people in the neighbourhood of Munza; and these strangers

had permission to erect Seribas and to plant their environs with sweet-potatoes, manioc, and plantains. Their prerogative extended no further than this, and they had no authority at all over the natives; however small might be their number in any place (sometimes not a score of men altogether) they were sure to be sufficient to restrain the inhabitants from any attempt at surprise. The African savages are not like the American Indians, who are always prepared to see a few of their party killed at the outset, provided that they can only make sure of ultimate success and can get their plunder at last; not that the Africans underrate the advantage they possess in the superiority of their numbers, nor that they entertain too high an estimate of the bravery of the Nubians, but they are conscious that no attack could be ventured without one or two of them having to pay the penalty of their lives. No one is ready for his own part to run the risk of his own being the life that must be sacrificed; and thus it happens that the prospect of a few deaths is sufficient to deter them, though they might be reckoned by thousands, from making that outbreak which their numerical strength might guarantee would be finally successful.

As soon as Mohammed became aware that he had got to the end of the king's store of ivory he began to think of his ways and means, and contemplated pushing on farther to the south and opening a new market for himself. With the greatest enthusiasm I entered into his design, and taking up his cry, "To the world's end!" I added, "Now's the time, and onward let us go!" But, unfortunately, there were insuperable obstacles in the way. In the first place, there was the decided opposition of the king, who entertained the very natural belief that the farther progress of the Khar-toomers to the south would interfere with his monopoly of the copper trade; and in the next place there was the impossibility of Mohammed being able, without Munza's co-operation, to procure sufficient provisions for so arduous

an undertaking. To put the former difficulty to the test, Mohanmed despatched his nephew with the conduct of an expedition just sufficiently large to venture the attempt. For three days this expedition pressed on, until upon the River Nomayo, an affluent of the Welle, they reached the residence of one of Munza's sub-chieftains, whose name was Mummery. Halfway upon their route they had rested at the dwelling-place of another chieftain, named Nooma. Both Mummery and Nooma, it should be said, were Munza's own brothers; but neither of them would venture to open commercial transactions of any kind without the express orders of the king, and consequently the expedition had to return at once and leave its object unaccomplished.

The disappointment was very keen: it was a bitter grief to see one's most cherished projects melt thus thoroughly away. Nor was it a much smaller matter of regret that Mohammed felt himself obliged to curtail even our few weeks' residence with Munza; he might propose, indeed, to advance to the south from the eastern portion of the Monbuttoo country, but that was a project that was little likely to be accomplished.

For a long period I held fast to my intention of remaining behind alone in Munza's country with the soldiers who would be left in charge of the Seriba; and I indulged the fascinating hope that I should find an opportunity of penetrating into that farther south which I longed so earnestly to investigate; but my protector would not acquiesce in this for a moment, nor did any of my own people show an inclination to support my wishes. It was very doubtful if we could be relieved during the next year, or the year after, if at all; my resources even now were hardly enough to take me home again; the wherewithal for further enterprise was altogether wanting; if I should entrust my collection, which I had so laboriously gathered, to the care of others, there was every risk of its becoming wet and even spoiled; the



prospect, too, of penetrating into the interior under the escort of the Monbuttoo themselves was not altogether inviting: I should only have accompanied their plundering raids, where I should have been compelled to be a daily witness of their cruelties and cannibalism; thus upon serious deliberation I was driven to the conviction that my scheme was not feasible.

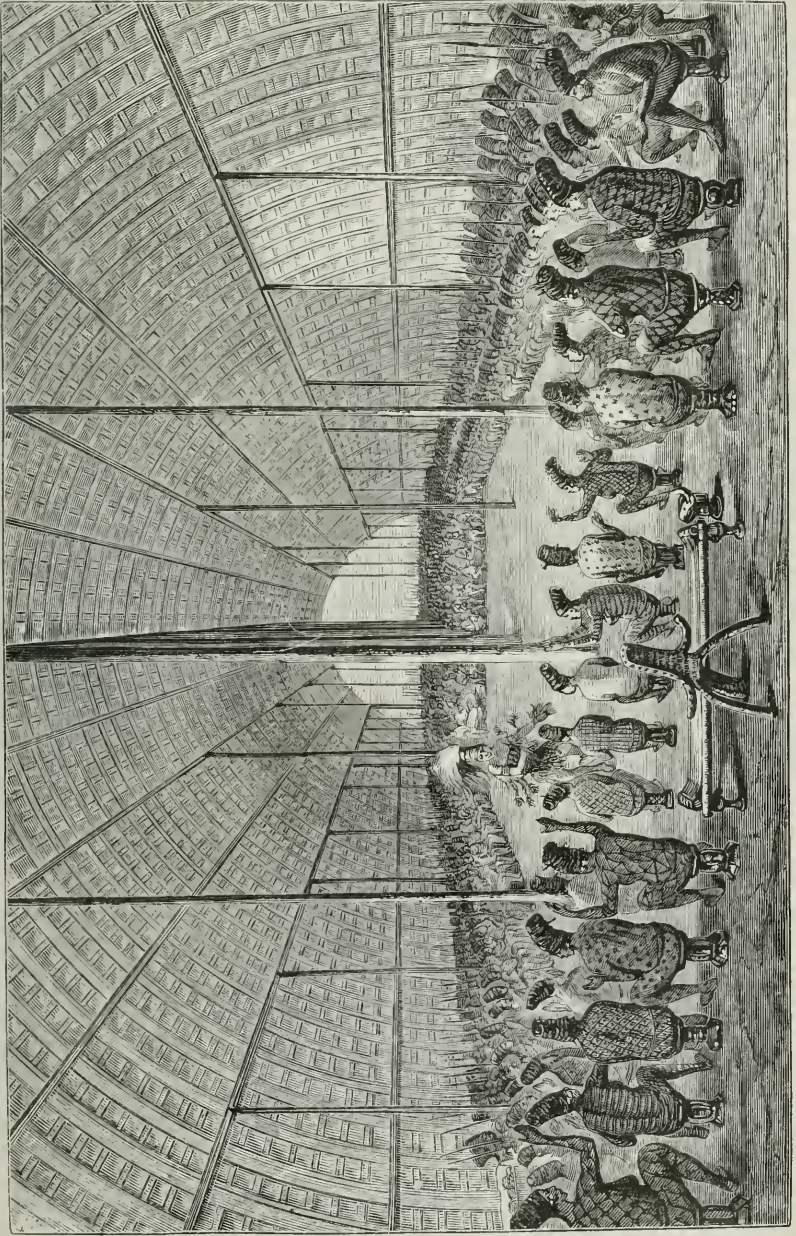
No doubt a very different vista would have opened itself before me into the untraversed interior of the continent if I had chanced to be one of those favoured travellers who have unlimited command of gold. But fortune and money appear, with regard to African travel, to stand very much in the same relation to one another as force and time in physics; what you gain in one, you lose in the other. The fortunate and healthy travellers, like Karl Mauch and Gerhard Rohlfs, have generally been very limited in their means; whilst rich travellers, such as the Baron von der Decken and Miss Tinné, have succumbed to difficulties, sickened, or died. Any expedition that was fitted out with a liberality proportioned to that of Speke's would have been capable of advancing from Munza's to the south, defiant of opposition; enough copper would have neutralised the resistance of the king; if force could be opposed by force, and threats could be met by threats, the native princes would all declare themselves to be friends, and, like Mtesa and Kamrasi, would meet them with open arms. But, as I say, the resources must be adequate. With two hundred soldiers from Khartoom, not liable to fever, and capable of existing upon food of any sort, and who were up to all the dodges and chicaneries of the African chieftains, any one could penetrate as far as he chose. If I had possessed 10,000 dollars in my purse, or had them invested properly in Khartoom, I would have guaranteed to bring my leader on to Bornoo. The sum would have sufficed to keep his soldiers up to their duty; and under those circumstances I

should have been master of the situation, and Mohammed would have had means to get as much ivory as he could desire.

These intimations may suffice to show that, in my opinion, with the aid of the Khartoom merchant companies, access could be had to the remotest parts of the continent without any exorbitant outlay of money; but conditions so favourable for prosecuting the work as those which then fell to my lot, I fear may be long before they occur again.

Munza's visits made a diversion in our camp life. The finest entertainment, however, which chanced to occur was the celebration of the victory which Mummery had obtained over the Momvoo. As the produce of his successful raid, Mummery brought the due contributions of ivory, slaves, and goats, to lay before the feet of the king, and the occasion was taken to institute a festival on the grandest scale. In consequence of Munza's establishment being already taxed with the entertainment of so many strangers, Mummery only stayed for a single night. The morning after his arrival was appointed for the feast.

The early part of the day was cold and rainy; but quite betimes, the shouts and cheers that rang around the camp told us that the rejoicing already had begun. Towards mid-day the news was brought that the excitement was reaching its climax, and that the king himself was dancing in the presence of his numerous wives and courtiers. The weather was still chill and drizzly; but, putting on a long black frock-coat as being the most appropriate costume for the occasion, I bent my steps to the noble saloon, which resounded again with the ringing echoes of uproarious cheers and clanging music. The scene that awaited me was unique. Within the hall there was a spacious square left free, around which the eighty royal wives were seated in a single row upon their little stools, having painted themselves in honour of the occasion with the most elaborate care; they were











on I did not quite understand; I only know that I found Munza raving in the hall with all the mad excitement which would have been worthy of the most infatuated dervish that had ever been seen in Cairo. Moment after moment it looked as if the enthusiast must stagger, and, foaming at the mouth, fall down in a fit of epilepsy; but nervous energy seems greater in Central Africa than among the "hashishit" of the north: a slight pause at the end of half an hour, and all the strength revived; once again would commence the dance, and continue unslackened and unwearied.

So thoroughly were the multitude engrossed with the spectacle that hardly any attention at all was given to my arrival, and a few who noticed it did not permit themselves to be diverted from the enjoyment of their pleasure. I had an opportunity, therefore, of transferring the scene to paper, and of finishing a sketch which embraces its prominent features.

But above the tumult of men was heard the tumult of the elements. A hurricane arose, with all the alarming violence of tropical intensity. For a little while the assembly was unmoved and disposed to take no notice of the storm; but soon the wind and pelting rain found their way into the openings of the hall; the music ceased, the rolling drum yielding to the thunder; the audience in commotion rose, and sought retreat; and in another instant the spectacle was over; the dancing king was gone.

The floods of rain compelled me to remain upon the spot, and I took advantage of the opportunity to make an undisturbed inspection of the other and larger hall, which was situated just opposite to the one in which I was. A low doorway led into the edifice, which was 150 feet long and not less than fifty feet high; it was lighted only by narrow apertures, and the roof was supported on five rows of columns. On one side of it was a wooden partition which divided off

rom the spacious edifice a small apartment, where the king was accustomed, according to the imperial wont of altering the sleeping-place, occasionally to pass the night. An enormous erection, ponderous enough to support an elephant, served as a bedstead; on each side of this were several posts each encircled by forged iron rings that could not weigh less than half a hundredweight. In this royal bed-chamber I noticed a large number of barbarous decorations, and I observed that the pillars and the timberwork were rudely painted with numerous geometrical designs, but that the artists seem to have had only three colours at their command; blood-red, yellow-ochre, and the white from dogs' dung (*album græcum*).

Munza twice honoured our camp with a visit. His majesty's approach was announced long beforehand by the outcries of the teeming people that thronged along his way. On entering the encampment he found the German flag waving from a tall flagstaff that I had erected in the immediate proximity of my tent; he was curious to know what it meant, and had to be initiated into the object of a national symbol, and to be informed of the tragical experiences of King Theodore in Abyssinia. It was a great relief to me that he did not require to enter either into my tent or into a large grass-shed which had been recently erected for me. Altogether the monarch displayed much less covetousness than I had reason to expect. Recognising this moderation on his part, I endeavoured to entertain him by showing him my collection of pictures, and amongst others I submitted to him the one of himself in the copper habiliments which he had worn on the day of our first audience. They were the only portraits he had ever seen, and his astonishment was very great; the play of the muscles of his face displayed the interest he took, and, according to the custom of the land, he opened his mouth quite wide, and covered it with his open hand, betraying thereby his surprise

and admiration. I had afterwards to open my bosom for his inspection, and when I turned up my shirt-sleeves, he could not suppress a cry of amazement. The interview ended, as such visits generally did, by his expressing a wish, with which I had not the least intention to comply, that I would take off my boots.

The date of our departure was now drawing near, and yet neither my promised chimpanzee nor guinea-hog\* had appeared. About the chimpanzee the truth was that not one could be found in the district, which was far too densely populated, and where the woods upon the river-banks were very light and traversed by frequent pathways; but with regard to the guinea-hog it was quite different; they were to be found in the nearest environs of the royal residence, and, if only Munza had been inclined, he could have redeemed his promise and secured me a specimen without difficulty. He left me, consequently, to get one, if I could, for myself; but this, to a novice in the chase, was more easily said than done, and I had to ramble in the thickets, rifle in hand, under the vain hope that I might secure a specimen.

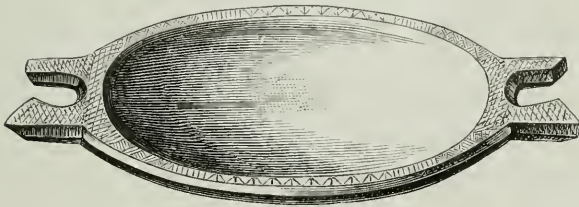
Only once, and that was just when evening was coming on to close a cloudy day, and a drizzling mist was giving obscurity to the woods, I caught sight of one of these animals. Its red bristly head and long pointed ears peered out from behind the prostrate stem of a great tree, and I was just concluding that it was within gunshot, when at the very instant two of my native attendants were seen beside it rolling on the ground and bleeding at the nose. My people were not remarkable for pluck, and nothing would induce

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\* The Guinea-hog (*Potamocheerus penicillatus*) is called "Napezzo," or "fat," by the Monbuttoo, and its flesh is considered very choice. These animals, which are not nearly so wild as the wart-hogs (the blabark of the South African Boërs), and are indeed capable of being partially tamed, are found throughout the tropical regions of Africa, from the west coast to Zanzibar. Burton met with them in Ugogo. In early times they were already introduced into Brazil.

them to a second venture with the beast. Thus I was compelled to renounce my hope of getting a guinea-hog.

During the earlier hours of the morning and the later hours of the afternoon, I spent the time, day after day, in continual excursions, which enabled me to add to the novelties of my collection. The middle of the day I devoted to the necessary supervision of my household. The periodic washing day had come, and I was at a loss to find a washing-tub that could contain the accumulated linen. Mohammed's ingenuity came once more to my aid. He borrowed King Munza's largest meat-dish for my use. A lordly dish it was; more like a truck than an article for the table. It was five feet long, and hewn from a single block.



King Munza's dish.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE MONBUTTOO. Previous accounts of the Monbuttoo. Population. Surrounding nations. Neglect of agriculture. Products of the soil. Produce of the chase. Forms of greeting. Preparation of food. Universal cannibalism. National pride and warlike spirit. Power of the sovereign. His habits. The royal household. Advanced culture of the Monbuttoo. Peculiarities of race. Fair hair and complexion. Analogy to the Fulbe. Preparation of bark. Nudity of the women. Painting of the body. *Coiffure* of men and women. Mutilation not practised. Equipment of warriors. Manipulation of iron. Early knowledge of copper. Probable knowledge of platinum. Tools. Wood-carving. Stools and benches. Symmetry of water-bottles. Large halls. Love of ornamental trees. Conception of Supreme Being.

It was in December 1868, just before starting from Khartoom, that I received, in a somewhat circuitous way, the first intelligence of a people called the Monbuttoo, who were said to dwell to the south of the Niam-niam. Dr. Ori, the chief official physician at Khartoom, in a letter to the Marquis Antinori, had detailed all the most recent particulars of the ivory traffic in the remote districts south of the Gazelle, and had specially referred to the transactions of Jules Poncet. These particulars were published without much delay in the journal of the Geographical Association of Paris; and I chanced to find Dr. Ori's letter quoted entire in the Italian Geographical Society's 'Bolletino,' which was transmitted to me by the Marquis Antinori himself just before I was setting out on my expedition.

Although the intelligence conveyed by Ori and Poncet failed utterly in giving either clearness or consistency to the confused depositions of those ignorant and uninformed men



who had been their authorities, it still had the intrinsic merit of enlarging the domain of geographical knowledge by some matters of fact which it was reserved for me individually to confirm by my own observation. It laid down as facts, first, that to the south of the Niam-niam territory there is a river flowing towards the west;\* secondly, that this river is not tributary to the Nile; and, thirdly, that its banks are populated by a race quite distinct from the ordinary negro race, its inhabitants being of a brownish complexion, and exhibiting a grade of civilization which is considerably in advance of what is elsewhere found in Central Africa.

These people were designated by the name of the Monbuttoo, and by the ivory traders they were known as Gurrugurroo, a definition that is derived from an Arabic word which refers to their universal habit of piercing their ears.

No sooner had I really reached the district of the Gazelle than I discovered from my conversation and intercourse with the leaders of the ivory traffic that the Monbuttoo were regarded as holding a very peculiar and prominent place. Their country never failed to furnish a theme of general praise. It was declared to be prolific in ivory; it was profuse in its natural products; the pomp of its sovereign was unrivalled; but, above all, the skill of its people, in the fabrication alike of their weapons for war and their utensils for peace, was assumed to be so striking that they were comparable to the denizens of the civilized west, and that in some respects the Franks themselves did not surpass them in the exercise of an æsthetic faculty.

That I might succeed in making my way onwards to the territory of this problematical people, naturally became more and more my impatient and ardent desire; and it will

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\* Heuglin in 1863, had received intelligence of what was now proved, viz. that the same district from which issues the White Nile also gives birth to another stream, called by him the river of Sena.

readily be understood how eagerly I recognised Aboo Sammat as offered by a propitious fate to be the conductor upon whom I might rely for being introduced to a closer view of this undefined race, which might be likened in a way to a nebula in the geographical firmament. Very much I now rejoice at being in a position to submit, upon the evidence of my own observation, a somewhat detailed account of this race, who may be described as constituting a sort of remote island of humanity. Surrounded as it is by the waves of fluctuating nationalities, it is, as it were, an "*ultima Thule*" of geographical research; or perhaps still more appropriately it might be likened to a boulder thrown up from a lower formation, and exhibiting a development of indigenous culture, entirely different to what can be witnessed all around.

The territory of the Monbuttoo, as it lies in the heart of Africa, does not cover an area of more than 4000 square miles, but the ratio of the census of its population is hardly exceeded by any region of the entire continent. Estimating the density of the people by the districts through which we travelled, and observing that cultivated farms followed upon cultivated farms, without a barren spot between, I suppose that there are at least 250 inhabitants to the square mile, which would give an aggregate population of about a million. The position of the country is embraced very nearly between the parallels of  $3^{\circ}$  and  $4^{\circ}$  north latitude, and  $28^{\circ}$  and  $29^{\circ}$  east longitude from Greenwich. To the north of the country there is a large river, usually copious in its stream, called the Keebaly. This is joined by the Gadda, which flows from the south-east. After the junction it is known as the Welle, and has a breadth of about 800 feet, whilst never, even in the driest season, does its depth diminish to less than fifteen feet. It proceeds to the west along the southern portion of the adjoining Niam-niam district, and being swollen by the accession of numerous tributaries from the southern districts of the Monbuttoo, it very rapidly assumes its large dimen-

sions. Beyond a doubt it is the upper course of the most easterly of the two arms which, after they have united in Baghirmy, flow onwards under the name of the Shary, that river to which Lake Tsad owes its existence.

There are two chieftains who, with regard to the extent of their dominions and the numerical strength of their armed forces (for their sway extends far beyond the populous districts of the Monbuttoo), may well be designated as kings. They have partitioned the sovereignty between them: the eastern division being subject to Degberra, the western division is governed by Munza, who exercises a much more powerful control; he is a son of King Tikkiboh, who had once enjoyed the undivided rule over the entire Monbuttoo land, but thirteen years previously had been murdered by his brother Degberra.

Sub-chieftains or viceroys are distributed over various sections of the country, and these are accustomed to surround themselves with a retinue and state little inferior to those of the kings themselves. In Munza's realms there are three of these dignitaries; viz. his brothers Izingerria, Mummery, and Nooma; subordinate to Degberra there are his four sons, Kubby, Benda, Koopa, and Yangara.

The country of the Niam-niam constitutes the northern and north-western boundaries of the Monbuttoo. This comprises the territories of Kanna and Indimma, sons of the once powerful Keefa, and, farther on, the district of Malingde or Marindo, which approaches in an easterly direction more towards the territory of Wando; each of these countries are, however, separated by wildernesses which it requires two days to cross. The southern limits of the Monbuttoo are enclosed, as it were, by a semicircle of typical negroes, whom they embrace in the comprehensive definition of "Momvoo," a disdainful epithet implying the extremity of their degradation. From this category we are possibly called upon to exclude in this quarter (as perchance in every other region

of Africa) those isolated races of dwarfs, familiarly known as "Pygmies," of which the Akka, who reside in the S.S.W., and have their abodes close to the confines of the kingdom of Munza, may be quoted as examples. The bulk of this apparently thickly-peopled race is subject to independent chieftains, but there is one section which is tributary to Munza in so far as this, that it makes its contributory payments to Mummery, as being Munza's vicegerent. According to the depositions of some Nubians who have been stationed for some years past in the Monbuttoo country, the language of the Babuckur is found to be spoken among the Momvoo. To support their opinion the Nubians affirm that women-slaves brought from Babuckur have always been found able to converse with the natives of the land just to the south of the Monbuttoo; a circumstance which is not without its signification as explaining the most recent migration of nations into this part of Africa. Since the two *enclaves* of Babuckur on the eastern boundaries of the Niam-niam appear only to be removed from each other by an interval of sixty miles and to be hemmed in by hostile neighbours, the fact, taken in connection with the above, may serve to demonstrate that Monbuttoo and Niam-niam alike must have been advancing in an easterly direction.

Munza's neighbours towards the south-west and south of the kingdom of Kanna are the Mabohde. This is a people whom Keefa, Kanna's father (known also as Ntikkima), was accustomed to harass in war till he met with his own death. Farther on towards the S.S.W., and separated from Munza by the Mabohde and the Akka, there lies the district of the Massanza, a tribe which is held in subjection by the formidable hand of Kizzo. To the south and south-east are found the Nemeigh, the Bissangah, and the Domondoo, tenanted a mountainous region, which not improbably is the western declivity of that important mountainous formation to which Baker, in describing the north-west of Lake Mwootan, has

referred under the name of the Blue Mountains. The settlements of the Domondoo are the usual limits to which the Monbuttoo are accustomed to carry their plundering expeditions. Some Nubian soldiers who had been quartered in the country of Munza, and who had accompanied him in some of his marauding exploits have given a description of the general mountainous character of the land, and, moreover, have asserted that goats, which are known neither to the Niam-niam nor to the Monbuttoo, have been captured there in great numbers. The Babuckur also, notwithstanding the frequent incursions which their neighbours, ever greedy of animal diet, have made upon their over-populated and oppressed communities, are always found in possession of herds of goats so numerous that they might be described as inexhaustible. Many days' journey to the south and south-east of Munza's realms are the abodes of the Maoggoo, over whom a powerful sovereign exercises his authority, and who seems to have various transactions with Munza, if I may judge from the splendid cattle which had been sent him as a present. Maoggoo is not improbably the same as Malegga, the appellation of a people, which appears in Baker's map to the west of the Blue Mountains in an extensive country (Ulegga), of which it is affirmed that the king is named Kadjoro, and that the population is especially devoted to the breeding of cattle.

Having thus minutely taken a survey of the surroundings of the Monbuttoo, we may in the next place proceed to observe the land itself, regarding it as the substance of the picture of which we have been thus accurately surveying the background.

The Monbuttoo land greets us as an Eden upon earth. Unnumbered groves of plantains bedeck the gently-heaving soil; oil-palms, incomparable in beauty, and other monarchs of the stately woods, rise up and spread their glory over the favoured scene; along the streams there is a bright



expanse of charming verdure, whilst a grateful shadow ever overhangs the domes of the idyllic huts. The general altitude of the soil ranges from 2500 to 2800 feet above the level of the sea: it consists of alternate depressions, along which the rivulets make their way, and gentle elevations, which gradually rise till they are some hundred feet above the beds of the streams below. Upon the whole the soil may be described as far more diversified in character than what is observed in the eastern parts of the Niam-niam land. Like it is there, it is rich in springs, wherever there are depressions, and in a network of "desaguaderos" associated with the watercourses, and justifies the comparison that has already been suggested between the entire land and a well-soaked sponge, which yields countless streams to the pressure of the hand. Belonging to one of the most recent formations, and still in process of construction, the ferruginous swamp-ore is found very widely diffused over the Monbuttoo country, and indeed extends considerably farther to the south, so that the red earth appears to be nearly universal over the greater part of the highlands of Central Africa. The denser population has involved, as might be expected, more frequent clearances for the sake of establishing plantain groves, and promoting the culture of maize and sugar-canes, but even here in the deeper valleys trees grow to such a prodigious height, and exhibit such an enormous girth, that they could not be surpassed by any that could be found throughout the entire Nile region of the north. Beneath the imposing shelter of these giants other forms grow up and, rising one above another, stand in mingled confusion. In its external and general aspect the country corresponds with the description which Speke has given of Uganda; but the customs of the inhabitants of that land, their difference of race, and their seclusion from all intercourse with commercial nations stamp them as being of a type which is of a very contrasted character.

It seems almost to involve a contradiction to give the title of agriculturists to a people whose existence indeed depends upon the easy securing of fruits and tubers, but who abhor the trouble of growing cereals. Sorghum and penicillaria, which are the common food of the population in nearly the whole of Central Africa, are absolutely uncared for amongst the Monbuttoo; eleusine is only grown occasionally, and maize, which is known as "Nendoh," is cultivated quite as an exception in the immediate proximity of their dwellings, where it is treated as a garden vegetable. The growth of their plantain (*Musa sapientium*) gives them very little trouble; the young shoots are stuck in the ground after it has been slackened by the rain; the old plants are suffered to die down just as they are; and this is all the cultivation that is vouchsafed. In the propagation of these plantains, however, the Monbuttoo have a certain knack of discrimination for which they might be envied by any European gardener: they can judge whether a young shoot is capable of bearing fruit or not, and this gives them an immense advantage in selecting only such shoots as are worth the trouble of planting. They are not accustomed to bestow any greater amount of attention to the planting either of the tubers of their manioc (or cassava), their sweet-potatoes, their yams (neggoo), or their colocasiæ. A very limited range of plants embraces the whole of what they take the pains to cultivate, and that cultivation is all accomplished in the narrowest bounds. The entire produce is summed up in their sesame (mbellemoh), their earth-nuts, their sugar-canes, and especially their tobacco. The Virginian tobacco is the only kind which is seen; it is called Eh Tobboo, its name betraying its American origin. The *Nicotiana rustica*, which is of such constant growth amongst the Bongo, Dyoor, and Dinka, is here entirely unknown.

Very little care, moreover, is given to the sugar-cane, which may be found amid the thinned woods that line the

banks of the rivers. It is grown only as a sort of delicacy, being found nowhere in any great quantity, and its quality is far from good. One ever-thriving supply, which is of the utmost importance for maintaining the population, is provided in all the valleys by the cassava (*Manihot utilissima*); but the cultivation of the sweet-potato, equally extensive as it is, demands a somewhat more careful attention, requiring the sunny soil of the upper slopes of the valleys above the line of the plantain groves and nearest to the edge of the depressions. Both sweet-potatoes and cassava here attain the very fullest standard of perfection, as far as regards either size or quality. But the staple food is the plantain. This is generally gathered in a green condition, dried, ground into meal, and boiled to a pulp; occasionally, but not so often, it is dried after it is ripe for the purpose of being kept for a longer time. Very few countries of the world have a soil and atmosphere so favourable as these for insuring the abundant produce of this serviceable plant. The fruit when dried is a very choice delicacy, but any fermented drink made from plantains I found to be almost unknown among the Monbuttoo.

Owing to the thorough isolation in which the Monbuttoo have lived, holding no intercourse with Mohammedan or Christian nations, the art of weaving has not found its way amongst them, and woven material is consequently nowhere to be seen. Their clothing, as in many other regions of Central Africa, is contributed by their fig-trees (*Urostigma Kotschyana*), of which the bast from the bark, with the help of some strings and shreds, is worked into a substantial and enduring fabric. Hardly a hut can be seen that is without its own fig-trees, which, however, will not grow without due care and cultivation. The people are never known to wear skins attached to their girdles after the fashion of the Niam-niam; the only occasion when skins are worn being when they are made into a fancy dress for dancers.

On the south of the Welle there is a very extensive cultivation of the oil-palm (*Elais guineensis*). It is a tree that, although common to the west coasts, has not hitherto been found in the Nile districts, and consequently, like the colanuts, which the wealthier of the Monbuttoo are accustomed to chew, it yields a significant evidence of the western associations of the people.

Every kind of cattle-breeding is quite unfamiliar to them; and if the common little dogs known as the "nessy" of the Niam-niam breed be excepted, and no account be taken of their poultry ("naahle"), the Monbuttoo may be said to be absolutely without domestic animals at all. In a half tame state they keep, as I have said, the potamochoerus, which is their only representative of the swine family. From the marauding excursions with which they harass their southern neighbours they bring back a prodigious number of goats, but they make no attempt to rear them for themselves. Their hunting expeditions supply them with meat enough for their requirements, their taste leading them to give the preference to the flesh of elephants, buffaloes, wild boars, and the larger kinds of antelopes. Although the denseness of the population precludes any such increase of game of this kind as is universal in the more northern and less cultivated regions of Central Africa, yet the yield of their chase would be adequate for their own wants, because the abundance of their supply at certain seasons is very great, and they have the art of preserving it so that it remains fit for food for a very considerable time. With this fact capable of being substantiated, it is altogether a fallacy to pretend to represent that the Monbuttoo are driven to cannibalism through the lack of ordinary meat. To judge from Munza's accumulated store of ivory, which is the result of the combined exploits of all the men in his dominions capable of bearing arms, the provision of elephant's meat alone must be sufficient to keep his people amply supplied. Nor should

the immense quantity of poultry be forgotten, as there is hardly a dwelling that is not conspicuous for having a considerable stock, in the same way as dogs are an especial subject of interest amongst the Niam-niam, who have a very decided partiality for the flesh of that animal.

A bird very common in the Monbuttoo lands is the grey parrot (*Psittacus erythacus*), which is very eagerly sought by the natives, who not only adorn their heads with the bright red feathers from its tail, but have a great relish for its savoury flesh. Other sport in the way of birds is very inconsiderable, guinea-fowls, francolins, and bustards being all caught by means of snares. The herb *Tephrosia Vogelii*\* is cultivated in nearly all the villages for the purpose of poisoning fish, and the fish that is thus secured forms a very considerable addition to the supply of food.

Whilst the women attend to the tillage of the soil and the gathering of the harvest, the men, except they are absent either for war or hunting, spend the entire day in idleness. In the early hours of the morning they may be found under the shade of the oil-palms, lounging at full length upon their carved benches and smoking tobacco. During the middle of the day they gossip with their friends in the cool halls, which serve for general concourse, where they may be seen gesticulating vigorously to give full force to their sentiments. The action of the Monbuttoo in speaking exhibits several singularities, as, for example, their manner of expressing astonishment by putting their hand before their open mouth, very much in the same way as a person does when he is gaping. It has been said that the North American Indians have the habit of showing their surprise in the same way.

Smiths' work, of course, is done by the men, but, just as in most other parts of Africa, the pottery is exclusively made by

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\* A kindred plant of this genus is used in the West Indies, where the practice is generally carried on by slaves.



the women. Wood-carving and basket-weaving are performed indifferently by either sex. Musical instruments are not touched by the women.

The universal form of salutation consists in holding out the right hand, and saying, "Gassiggy," and at the same time cracking the joints of the middle fingers.

The two sexes conduct themselves towards each other with an excessive freedom. The women in this respect are very different to the modest and retiring women of the Niam-niam, and are beyond measure obtrusive and familiar. Their inquisitiveness was a daily nuisance: they watched me into the depth of the woods, they pestered me by flocking round my tent, and it was a difficult matter to get a bath without being stared at. Towards their husbands they exhibit the highest degree of independence. The position in the household occupied by the men was illustrated by the reply which would be made if they were solicited to sell anything as a curiosity, "Oh, ask my wife: it is hers."

Polygamy is unlimited. The daily witness of the Nubians only too plainly testified that fidelity to the obligations of marriage was little known. Not a few of the women were openly obscene. Their general demeanour surprised me very much when I considered the comparative advance of their race in the arts of civilization. Their immodesty far surpassed anything that I had observed in the very lowest of the negro tribes, and contrasted most unfavourably with the sobriety of the Bongo women, who are submissive to their husbands and yet not servile. The very scantiness of the clothing of the Monbuttoo women has no excuse.

Carved benches are the ordinary seats of the men, but the women generally use stools that have but one foot. On the occasion of paying a visit or going to a public gathering the men make their slaves carry their benches for them, as it is their custom never to sit upon the ground, not even when it has been covered with mats.

The care that is given to the preparation of their food is very considerable, and betokens their higher grade of culture. The unripe produce of the plantain and the manioc, that in all districts is ready at their hand without the trouble of cultivation, make good the deficiency of corn. Their mode of treating manioc is precisely the same as that which is adopted in South America for the purpose of extracting the fine flour called tapioca. For spices they make use of the capsicum, the malaghetta pepper, and the fruit of two hitherto unspecified Solaneæ, and for which I regret that I cannot select the name of *S. anthropophagorum*, because it has been already assigned to the "cannibal salad" of the Fiji Islanders. The flavour of both these is very revolting, having a detestable twang, something between a tomato and a melongena. Mushrooms are also in common use for the preparation of their sauces.

All their food is prepared by the admixture of oil from the oil-palms. In its unpurified condition when first expressed from the pods, this oil is of a bright red colour, and of a somewhat thick consistency; for a few days it has an agreeable taste, which, however, soon passes off and leaves a decided rankness. By subsequently submitting the kernels to fire, a coarse, inflammable oil is obtained, which is used for the purpose of lighting their huts. Other vegetable oils in considerable abundance are obtained from earth-nuts, from sesame, and from the fruit of a forest-tree, *Lophira alata*. From the fat thick bodies of the male white ants they boil out a greasy substance which is bright and transparent, and has a taste perfectly unobjectionable.

But of most universal employment amongst them is human fat, and this brings our observations to the climax of their culinary practices. The cannibalism of the Monbuttoo is the most pronounced of all the known nations of Africa. Surrounded as they are by a number of people who are blacker than themselves, and who, being inferior to them in culture,

are consequently held in great contempt, they have just the opportunity which they want for carrying on expeditions of war or plunder, which result in the acquisition of a booty, which is especially coveted by them, consisting of human flesh. The carcasses of all who fall in battle are distributed upon the battle-field, and are prepared by drying for transport to the homes of the conquerors. They drive their prisoners before them without remorse, as butchers would drive sheep to the shambles, and these are only reserved to fall victims on a later day to their horrible and sickening greediness. During our residence at the court of Munza the general rumour was quite current that nearly every day some little child was sacrificed to supply his meal. It would hardly be expected that many opportunities should be afforded to strangers of witnessing the natives at their repast, and to myself there occurred only two instances when I came upon any of them whilst they were actually engaged in preparing human flesh for consumption. The first of these happened by my coming unexpectedly upon a number of young women who had a supply of boiling water upon the clay floor in front of the doorway of a hut, and were engaged in the task of scalding the hair off the lower half of a human body. The operation, as far as it was effected, had changed the black skin into a fawny grey, and the disgusting sight could not fail to make me think of the soddening and scouring of our fatted swine. On another occasion I was in a hut and observed a human arm hanging over the fire, obviously with the design of being at once dried and smoked.

Incontrovertible tokens and indirect evidences of the prevalence of cannibalism were constantly turning up at every step we took. On one occasion Mohammed and myself were in Munza's company, and Mohammed designedly turned the conversation to the topic of human flesh, and put the direct question to the king how it hap-

pened that just at this precise time while we were in the country there was no consumption of human food. Munza expressly said that being aware that such a practice was held in aversion by us, he had taken care that it should only be carried on in secret.

As I have said, there was no opportunity for strangers to observe the habits of the Monbuttoo at their meals; the Bongo and Mittoo of our caravan were carefully excluded by them as being uncircumcised, and therefore reckoned as "savages;" whilst the religious scruples of the Nubians prevented them from even partaking of any food in common with cannibals. Nevertheless the instances that I have mentioned are in themselves sufficient to show that the Monbuttoo are far more addicted to cannibalism than their hunting neighbours, the Niam-niam. They do not constitute the first example of anthropophagi who are in a far higher grade of culture than many savages who persistently repudiate the enjoyment of human flesh (for example, the Fiji Islanders and the Caraībs). It is needless for me to recount the personal experiences of the Nubian mercenaries who have accompanied the Monbuttoo on their marauding expeditions, or to describe how these people obtain their human fat, or again to detail the processes of cutting the flesh into long strips and drying it over the fire in its preparation for consumption. The numerous skulls now in the Anatomical Museum in Berlin are simply the remains of their repasts which I purchased one after another for bits of copper, and go far to prove that the cannibalism of the Monbuttoo is unsurpassed by any nation in the world. But with it all, the Monbuttoo are a noble race of men; men who display a certain national pride, and are endowed with an intellect and judgment such as few natives of the African wilderness can boast; men to whom one may put a reasonable question, and who will return a reasonable answer. The Nubians can never say enough in praise of their faithfulness

in friendly intercourse and of the order and stability of their national life. According to the Nubians, too, the Monbuttoo were their superiors in the arts of war, and I often heard the resident soldiers contending with their companions and saying, "Well, perhaps you are not afraid of the Monbuttoo, but I confess that I am; and I can tell you they are something to be afraid of."

As matter of fact the Khartoom traders, some years before, had had a definite trial of arms with the Monbuttoo. Shortly after his accession to power, Munza had of his own accord and by a special embassy invited Aboo Sammat to extend his transactions beyond their present limits in Nganye's and Wando's territories; but in the year previous to that, the Nubian merchant Abderahman Aboo Guroon, having endeavoured to penetrate from Keefa's dominions into the Monbuttoo lands, was attacked on the north of the Welle by the Monbuttoo forces, who opposed his advances upon their territory. At that time Munza's father, Tikkiboh, had absolute rule in the country, and the achievements of his daughter Nalengbe, a sister of the present king, are still fresh in the memory of all who were present at the engagement; eye-witnesses gave me detailed accounts of the exploits of this veritable Amazon, whom I have mentioned before, and related how, in full armour, with shield and lance, and girded with the rokko apron of a man, she had with the utmost bravery led on the Monbuttoo troops, who then for the first time came in contact with firearms; and how her exertions were attended with a complete success, the adventurous Aboo Guroon being repulsed with considerable loss, and forced to relinquish altogether his design of entering the country. In the following year, 1867, Mohammed Aboo Sammat, invited as I have said by the king himself, crossed the Welle and entered the land, thus, as the first explorer, opening the ivory traffic under conditions of peace, which have ever since remained undisturbed.



The Monbuttoo potentates enjoy far higher prerogatives than the Niam-niam princes. Besides the monopoly of the ivory, they claim regular contributions from the products of the soil. In addition to his special body-guard, the sovereign is always surrounded by a large body of courtiers, whilst an immense number of civil officers and local overseers maintain the regal dignity in the various districts of the land. Munza's three brothers, Izingerria, Mummery, and Nooma, perform the office of viceroys, and subordinate to these again are sub-chieftains of the second rank, who act as governors of provinces.

Next in rank to the sub-chieftains, who are generally chosen from the numerous members of the blood-royal, are the principal officers of state. These are five in number: the keeper of the weapons, the master of the ceremonies, the superintendent of the commissariat stores, the master of the household to the royal ladies, and the interpreter for intercourse with strangers and foreign rulers.

Munza never leaves his residence without being accompanied by several hundred of his retinue, and, in token of his dignity, a long array of drummers, trumpeters, and couriers with great iron bells are sent at the head of the procession. The harem, in the immediate vicinity of the palace, consists of eighty young ladies, who, with their attendant women slaves, occupy as many huts erected in a wide circuit within the precincts of the royal halls and private apartments. Enclosed by these huts is a smooth and ample space, where the well-trodden red soil offers a fine contrast to the deep green foliage of the groups of oil-palms, bread-fruit trees, cordiæ, trumpet-trees, urostigmæ, and other trees by which it is overshadowed. Munza holds his councils in the great halls, and on appointed days grants audiences, and occasionally gives one of the extensive feasts, accompanied by music and dancing, such as I have already described.

The royal ladies are divided, according to age and seniority, into several classes. The elder matrons occupy villages built for their accommodation at some distance from the residence; their number amounts to several hundred, for, besides his own wives of the first and second rank, Munza is bound to maintain the ladies inherited from his father, and even those belonging to a deceased brother. It is a long-established African custom that at a king's death his wives should fall to the lot of his successor, who never fails to annex to their number a large addition of his own. In the sixteenth century the wives of the King of Loango were estimated at 7000.

Whenever at night the king leaves his private apartments to visit his wives, the place re-echoes with the shouts of the courtiers, accompanied by the strains of horns and kettle-drums, and then, too, may be heard the Monbuttoo hymn, "Ee, ee, Munza, tchuppy, tchuppy, ee." Eye-witnesses state that the king spends his night in passing from one hut to another, and without favouring any with an especially long visit; but it is all done in the strictest *incognito* and under cover of the darkness. Besides the courtiers, the royal household contains many officials appointed to some peculiar functions; there are the private musicians, trumpeters and buglers, whose productions testify to the time and labour spent upon their acquirement; there are eunuchs and jesters, ballad-singers and dancers, who combine to increase the splendour of the court, and to provide general amusement for the festal gatherings. In addition to these there are numbers of stewards, who keep order at the feasts and, by a free use of their rods, restrain the over-obtrusiveness of the younger portion of the community.

The king's private residence consists of a group of several large huts, each of which is set apart for one of his daily occupations. They are enclosed, like a Seriba, with a palisade, and are shaded by plantations of well-kept trees. The

king's food is always prepared by one of his wives, who perform the office in turn, relieving one another at stated intervals. Munza invariably takes his meals in private; no one may see the contents of his dish, and everything that he leaves is carefully thrown into a pit set apart for that purpose. All that the king has handled is held as sacred, and may not be touched; and a guest, though of the highest rank, may not so much as light his pipe with an ember from the fire that burns before his throne. Any similar attempt would be considered as high treason and punished with immediate death.

As permission was granted me to inspect the internal arrangements of the royal palace, I was enabled to survey the whole series of huts. The king's wardrobe alone occupied several apartments. In one room I saw nothing but hats and feathers of every variety, special value being laid upon the red parrot's feathers, which are arranged in great round tufts. One hut there was in which were suspended whole bundles of the tails of civets, genets, potamochoeri, and giraffes, together with skins and thousands of the ornaments with which the king was accustomed to adorn his person. I observed also long strings of the teeth of rare animals captured in the chase. One ornament alone, composed of more than a hundred lions' fangs, must have been a costly heirloom to be handed on from father to son. For the first time I noticed the skin of the *Galago Demidoffi*, an animal hitherto only observed in Western Africa.

A little conical hut that I was shown was set apart for the privacy of the royal retiring-room, the only one of the kind that I came across in Central Africa. The internal arrangements of this corresponded exactly with what is seen in Turkish dwelling-houses. The heathen negroes are generally more observant of decorum in this respect than any Mohammedan.

On another occasion I was conducted through the armoury.

The store of weapons consisted principally of lances tied up in bundles of two or three hundred together, which in times of war are distributed amongst the fighting force; there are also piles of the knives and daggers which are borne by Monbuttoo warriors. In the same place were kept the ornamental weapons which are used for decorating the royal halls on festal occasions, consisting for the most part of immense spears, formed head and shaft alike of pure copper, and brightly polished.

The storehouses and corn-magazines were provided with well-made, water-tight roofs, and Munza spends a portion of every day in the several sections, personally superintending the distribution and arrangement of the stores.

From these details it may be understood that the Monbuttoo are subject to a monarchical government of an importance beyond the average of those of Central Africa; and in its institutions it appears to correspond with the descriptions of negro empires long since passed away. The half mythical empire of the powerful Mwata Yanvo, whose influence doubtless extended to the Monbuttoo lands, may probably, to a certain extent, have furnished the type for many of these institutions; but be that as it may, it is an indisputable fact, that of all the known nations of Central Africa the Monbuttoo, without any influence from the Mohammedan or Christian world, have attained to no contemptible degree of external culture, and their leading characteristics prove them to belong to a group of nations which inhabit the inmost heart of Africa, and which are being now embraced in the enlarging circle of geographical knowledge. The land of the Manuyema, visited by Livingstone, and the states of Mwata Yanvo, frequented by the Portuguese traders, form respectively the south-western and south-eastern limits of this immense territory, which in area surpasses half of European Russia.

In turning to the national characteristics of this people,

we may notice in the first place that their complexion is of a lighter tint than that of almost all the known nations of Central Africa, the colour of whose skins may be generally compared, by the test I have frequently adopted, to that of ground coffee. It is this peculiarity that forms a great distinction between the Monbuttoo and the Niam-niam, whose complexions are more aptly compared to cakes of chocolate or ripe olives. It cannot fail to strike the traveller as remarkable that in all African nations he meets with individuals with black, red, and yellow complexions, whilst the yellow tribes of Asia and the copper-coloured tribes of America each present a remarkable uniformity in the tone and shade of their skins. Barth observed this peculiarity among the Marghi; he noticed some individuals who were quite black, and others who had coppery-red skins, or, as he describes them, rhubarb-coloured, in distinction to those which he compared to *chocolat-au-lait*. His supposition that an intermingling of races was the sole cause of this diversity of complexion is probably incorrect, as it appears to be a characteristic of the entire series of the red-skinned races of Africa.

The Monbuttoo have less fulness of muscle than the Niam-niam, without, however, any appearance of debility. The growth of the hair is much the same, and the beard is much more developed than that of the Niam-niam.

But there is one special characteristic that is quite peculiar to the Monbuttoo. To judge from the hundreds who paid visits of curiosity to my tent, and from the thousands whom I saw during my three weeks' sojourn with Munza, I should say that at least five per cent. of the population have light hair. This was always of the closely frizzled quality of the negro type, and was always associated with the lightest skins that I had seen since leaving Lower Egypt. Its colour was by no means like that which is termed light hair amongst ourselves, but was of a mongrel tint mixed with grey, suggesting the comparison to hemp. All the individuals who



had this light hair and complexion had a sickly expression about the eyes, and presented many signs of pronounced albinism; they recalled a description given by Isaac Vossius, in his book upon the origin of the Nile, of the white men he saw at the court of the King of Loango: he says that "they were sickly-looking and wan of countenance, with their eyes drawn as though they were squinting." In the previous chapter I have given a similar description of one of the king's sons, named Bunza. This combination of light hair and skin gives the Monbuttoo a position distinct from all the nations of the northern part of Africa, with the single exception of the various inhabitants of Morocco, amongst whom fair-haired individuals are far from uncommon.

It has been already observed that in the physiognomical form of the skull the Monbuttoo in many ways recall the type of the Semitic tribes; and they differ from the ordinary run of negroes in the greater length and curve of the nose. All these characteristics betoken an affinity with the Fulbe, and as such the Monbuttoo may probably be included amongst the "Pyrrhi Æthiopes" of Ptolemy. This would, however, be but a vague supposition if it were not supported by the fact that the Fulbe are of eastern origin, although in later times a portion of them have made a retrograde movement from Senegal towards the east. It must be understood that I do not intend by these remarks to offer a bridge for carrying over Eichwaldt's theory of the affinity of the Fulbe with the Malays, nor do I intend by such a national migration to add a new link to what he declares to be accomplished in the case of Meroe. Barth considers these Fulbe to be the issue of a double cross, a cross between the Arabs and people of Barbary on the one hand and the people of Barbary and the negroes on the other. This hypothesis, I believe, would also hold good for the Monbuttoo; but altogether it is a question too vague to be capable of being here discussed with any justice.

On account of the loss of the specimens of the Monbuttoo dialect, which I had been at great pains to collect by means of a double interpretation, I am unfortunately not in a position to give much information about the dialect; this much, however, I can confidently assert, that it is a branch of the great African language-stock north of the equator, the greater number of the words belonging to the Nubio-Lybian group.

Still more than in the colour of their skin do the Monbuttoo differ from the neighbouring nations in dress and habits. This appears to be a land where costume is a settled matter of rule, for the uniformity of attire is as complete as it is rapidly becoming under the sway of fashion in all classes of our civilized communities.

Weaving is an art unknown to the Monbuttoo, and their only material for clothing is obtained from their fig-tree (*Urostigma Fotschyana*), the bark of which is found to be in a condition most serviceable for the purpose when the trunk of the tree is about as thick as a man's body; the stem is then peeled in rather a remarkable manner: two circular incisions, four or five feet apart, are made right round the trunk, and the bark is removed entire; strange to say, this does no harm to the tree, and in a very short time a peculiar growth or granulation takes place along the edge of the upper incision in the form of little fibres, which gradually descend along the bare cambium or sap-wood, until the tree is once more clothed with a fresh layer of bast. The only explanation that can be offered for this unusual growth is, that in peeling off the bark the entire layer of bast is not removed, but that some portion of it is left hanging to the wood and retains its vitality.\* In the course of three years the fresh growth is complete, and the bark is in a con-

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\* Livingstone observed a similar new growth of bark on the trunk of the Baobab (*Adansonia*), from which the Matabele obtain material for cord.

dition to be again removed; apart from this property, the rearing of these rokko-trees would not compensate the natives for the trouble of planting them.

The rokko bark has a certain resemblance to the lime-bast, which is so important an article of commerce in Russia; its fibres, however, have not the smoothness and paper-like



Monbutto Warriors.

thinness of the Russian product, but are tangled together almost like a woven mass. By a partial maceration and a good deal of thrashing, the Monbuttoo contrive to give the bark the appearance of a thick close fabric, which, in its rough condition, is of a grey colour, but after being soaked in a decoction of wood acquires a reddish-brown hue, something like ordinary woollen stuff. Fastened at the waist with a girdle, one of these pieces of bark is sufficient to clothe the body, from the breast downwards to the knees, with a very effective substitute for drapery. Representations of two Monbuttoo warriors in full array are given in the illustration on the preceding page.

The women go almost entirely unclothed; they wear nothing but a portion of a plantain leaf or a piece of bark about the size of their hand attached to the front of their girdle; the rest of the body being figured in laboured patterns by means of a black juice obtained from the Blippo (*Randia malleifera*). Whilst the Dinka women, leaving perfect nudity as the prerogative of their husbands, are modestly clothed with skins—whilst the Mittoo and Bongo women wear their girdle of foliage, and the Niam-niam women their apron of hides, the women of the Monbuttoo—where the men are more scrupulously and fully clothed than any of the nations that I came across throughout my journey—go almost entirely naked.

Whenever the women go out, they carry across their arm a strap which they lay across their laps on sitting down. These straps or scarfs are about a foot wide, and something like a saddle-girth, and as they form their first attempt in the art of weaving, their texture is of the clumsiest order, possessing no other recommendation than their durability; they are appropriated to the further use of fastening infants to their mothers' backs.

The women can be distinguished from one another by the different tattooed figures running in bands across the breast



Monbuttoo Woman.

and back along the shoulders; their bodies, moreover, are painted with an almost inexhaustible variety of patterns. Stars and Maltese crosses, bees and flowers, are all enlisted as designs; at one time the entire body is covered with stripes like a zebra, and at another with irregular spots and dots like a tiger; I have seen these women streaked with veins like marble, and even covered with squares like a chess-board. At the great festivals every Monbuttoo lady endeavours to outshine her compeers, and accordingly applies all her powers of invention to the adornment of her person. The patterns last for about two days, when they are carefully rubbed off, and replaced by new designs.

Instead of this paint the men use a cosmetic prepared from pulverised cam-wood, which is mixed with fat and then rubbed over the whole body. The Niam-niam also make use of this powder, but they only apply it partially in irregular



spots and stripes, delighting especially in staining the breast and face to increase the ferocity of their appearance.

The *coiffure* of both sexes is alike; the hair of the top and back of the head is mounted up into a long cylindrical chignon, and being fastened on the inside by an arrangement made of reeds, slopes backwards in a slanting direction. Across the forehead, from temple to temple, the hair is twisted in thin tresses, which lie one above another, closely fitting the skull until they reach the crown of the head. Their own hair is rarely long enough to form this portion of the head-gear, but the deficiency is supplied from the heads of those who have fallen in war, or, since hair is an article of traffic in the country, it is procured from the market. On the top of their chignon, the men wear the cylindrical straw-hats so often referred to. These are without brims, square at the top and circular at the base, and are adorned either with the tufts of red parrots' feathers that I have described in connection with Munza's wardrobe,\* or with the long feathers of eagles and falcons. The hats, of course, follow the slanting directions of the chignon, and fall back diagonally to the head, and altogether the head-gear is remarkably similar to that worn by the Ishogo women in Western Africa. The Monbuttoo women wear no hat on their chignon, which is merely adorned with little hair-pins attached to combs made of the quills of the porcupines.

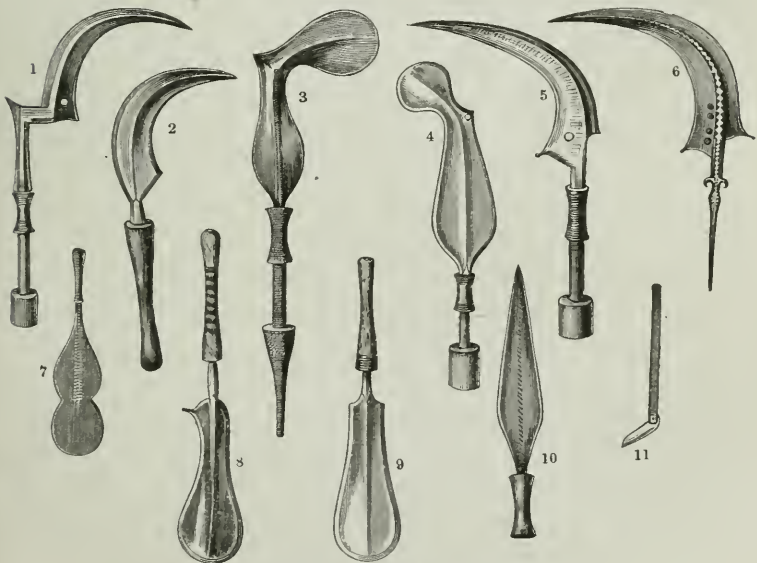
These details may suffice to give a fair notion of the external appearance of the Monbuttoo, and if I add that their only mutilation of the body consists in boring the inner muscle of the ear for the purpose of inserting a bar about the size of a cigar, I shall have described all the fashions in vogue, from which no individual is at liberty to make marked deviation. They neither break out their lower incisor teeth,

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\* In the woodcut which represents Munza in full dress, the king has one of these clusters of feathers in his hat.

like the black nations on the northern river plains, nor do they file them to points, like the Niam-niam; neither do they imitate the Bongo and Mittoo women in the hideous perforation of their lips; and I repeat that, if we except circumcision (which, according to the accounts of all the heathen negroes of equatorial Africa, is a custom they have received from their remote ancestors), this piercing of the ear is the one disfigurement of nature adopted by the Monbuttoo. On account of this practice the Khartoomers have conferred upon them the title of "Gurrugurroo," *i.e.* "pierced," in contradistinction to the Niam-niam in general, Niam-niam being, as I have said, the term used by the inhabitants of the Soudan for all cannibals, irrespective of their various nationalities.

The weapons of the Monbuttoo warriors are very numerous. Besides shields and lances, they also carry bows and arrows, a combination somewhat rare amongst Africans; in addition



WEAPONS OF THE MONBUTTOO.

Figs. 1-9. Various scimitars.

10. Large dagger.

11. Hand-knife, for carving and peeling bark.

to these, in their girdles they are accustomed to have scimitars with curved blades like sickles, whilst some of them use daggers and spatular knives of all shapes and sizes. The projectiles which are in use among the Niam-niam are not included in the equipment of the Monbuttoo.

Since the Monbuttoo dwell upon the red ferruginous soil extending from the Gazelle over a large portion of Central Africa, it may be assumed as a matter of course that smiths' work must play an important part in their industrial pursuits, and indeed in this respect they excel all other natives of the districts through which I travelled, whilst in other branches of their manufacture they surpassed even the Mohammedans of Northern Africa.

The smelting process is of the most primitive description, and is the same that has been described by travellers in all parts of Africa. The simplicity of the arrangement is caused by the ventilating apparatus; for as the construction of valves is unknown, a continual draft is produced by means of two clay vessels, of which the openings are covered by the Monbuttoo smiths with plantain leaves, which have been allowed to simmer in hot water until they have become as flexible as silk: other nations cover the openings with soft skins. Although entirely without our pincers, hammers, and files, the Monbuttoo have a set of implements of their own, by means of which their iron-work is more carefully manipulated than that of any of their neighbours. Instead of the usual stone anvil, they use a miniature one of wrought iron, and on this each separate weapon is cut out with a chisel, and hammered until an approximate degree of sharpness is attained; the edge being brought to its finish by a piece of fine-ground sandstone or gneiss, which answers the purpose of a file. As a general rule, no special form is given to the iron used as a medium of exchange, unless indeed the great semicircular bars in the royal treasury be considered as currency, and which remind one of the rough copper rings

that are brought from the mines of Darfoor.\* Neither plates of iron nor round spades (melots) are in vogue, but the smiths have to work from great lumps of iron as large as the fist. The dexterity of these artificers is wonderful, and the short space of time in which they will convert the raw material into spades and lances is, I should think, unrivalled. The Monbuttoo smiths often joined our Bongo workmen at their forges in our camp, and as I had frequent opportunity of observing and comparing the two, I do not hesitate in asserting the decided superiority of the workmanship of the Monbuttoo.

The masterpieces, however, of these Monbuttoo smiths are the ornamental chains which, in refinement of form and neatness of finish, might vie with our best steel chains; in fact, according to the judgment of *connoisseurs*, many of these specimens of autochthonic art may well bear comparison with the productions of our European craftsmen. The process of tempering is quite unknown to them, the necessary hardness being attained by continual hammering: the material used is singularly pure and homogeneous, qualities acquired not from any perfection of the smelting apparatus, but from the laborious welding of the separate particles of iron.

Copper was already known, and the king was in possession of large quantities of the metal, before the Nubians set foot in the country; and as previously to that event the Monbuttoo (if we except the great raid which Barth reports to have been made upon them by the Foorians in 1834) had had no intercourse with the Mohammedan world, there is every reason to conclude that they must have received their supply either from the copper mines of Angola and Loango, or from some other region of the north-western portion of South Africa.

Almost all the ornaments worn by the Monbuttoo are made

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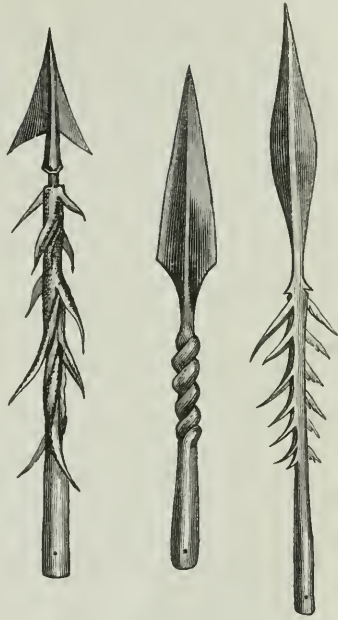
\* Iron rings of the heaviest calibre are current in Wandala, south of Bornoo.

of copper, so that it may be easily understood that the demand for the metal is not small. One of the most frequent uses to which it is applied is that of making flat wires, many yards long, to wind round the handles of knives and scimitars, or round the shafts of lances and bows. Copper, as well as iron, is used for the clasps which are attached to the shields, partly for ornament and partly to prevent them from splitting. Copper necklaces are in continual wear, and copper fastenings are attached to the rings of buffalo-hide and to the thick thongs of the girdles. The little bars inserted through the ear are tipped with the same metal; in fact there is hardly an ornament that fails in an adjunct of copper in some form or other; persons of rank not unfrequently pride themselves in having ornamental weapons formed entirely of it. All other metals being unknown, iron and copper are estimated by the Monbuttoo as silver and gold by ourselves, and the silver platter with which I presented the king failed to elicit any comment beyond the observation that it was white iron. Lead and tin have been introduced as curiosities by the Nubians, but previous to their arrival had never been seen. Information, however, which was incidentally dropped by a Niam-niam, led me to suppose that fragments of platinum about the size of peas have been found in these lands: he told me that a white metal, as hard as iron and as heavy as the lead of which the Nubians made their bullets, had been discovered, but that its existence was always carefully concealed from the strangers. I see no reason to doubt the truth of this statement, since it originated from a people who in no other way could have become aware of the existence of such a metal, which has been hitherto as unknown to the Nubians as silver and gold to the Monbuttoo.

It would require many illustrations to convey an adequate idea of the various forms of the heads of the arrows and lances: suffice it to say, that the symmetry of the various



barbs, spikes, and prongs with which they are provided is always perfect. The prevailing forms of the spear-heads are hastate, whilst the arrows are generally made flat or spatular, as inflicting a deeper and wider wound than the pointed tips. All weapons of the Monbuttoo and the Niam-niam are provided with blood gutters, a mark which serves to distinguish them at once from those of the Bongo and Mittoo. The shafts of the Monbuttoo arrows are made of reed-grass, and differ from all others of the Bongo territory by being winged with pieces of genet's skin or plantain leaves. The bows are rather over three feet in length, and in form and size



Spear-heads.

correspond very nearly with those used by the Mittoo and Bongo; the bow-strings being made of a strip of the split Spanish reed, which possesses more elasticity than any cord. These bows are provided with a small hollow piece of wood for protecting the thumb from the rebound of the string. The arrow is always discharged from between the middle fingers.

The perfection of their instruments gives the Monbuttoo a great advantage in the art of wood-carving, and they are the only African nation, including even the modern Egyptians, who make use of a graving-tool with a single edge, an instrument which, by supporting the forefinger, enables the workman to give a superior finish to the details of his productions. The wood used for carving is generally that of

the stem of one of the Rubiaceæ (*Uncaria*), of which the soft close texture resembles that of poplar-wood. The felling of these giant-trees, which vary from six to eight feet in diameter, and often shoot up to a height of forty feet without throwing forth a single branch, is performed by means of their small hatchets, with a most tedious amount of labour. The hatchets are like those which are used in other parts of Central Africa, and consist of a sharpened iron wedge inserted through the thick end of a knotted club; thus every blow tends to fix the blade firmer in its socket. The number of blows necessary to fell one of these ponderous trees must amount to several thousand, and yet I often noticed stems lying in the forest the ends of which were as smooth as though they had been cut with a knife, a circumstance that attests their correctness of vision, a quality in which the negroes outshine the Arabs and Nubians, as much as in their appreciation of sound and musical talent. The first crude



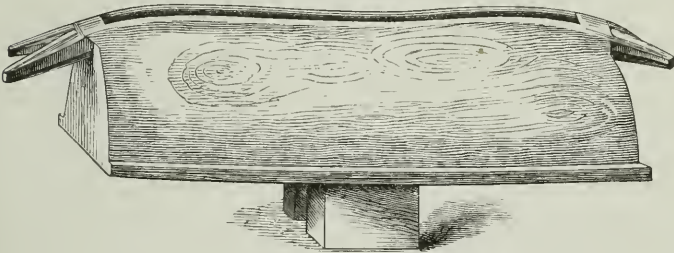
Hatchet, spade, and adze, of the Monbuttoo.

form is given to the larger blocks of wood by means of a tool something like a cooper's adze.\* When first hewn, the wood of the *Uncaria* is white, but it is afterwards blackened by exposure to fire, or still more frequently by being allowed to lie in the dark soil of the brooks.

\* One of these tools is represented in the accompanying illustration.

Platters, stools, drums, boats, and shields constitute the chief items of their handicraft. Upon the Lower Shary, the boats which are in common use are manufactured by fastening together wooden planks, but here, on the Welle, canoes are hewn out of a solid stem, and are in every way adapted for their purpose. I saw some of them upwards of thirty-eight feet long and five feet wide, quite large enough for the conveyance of horses and cattle.\*

The large signal-drums of the Niam-niam are to be seen in every Monbuttoo village. They stand sometimes upon



Wooden kettle-drum.

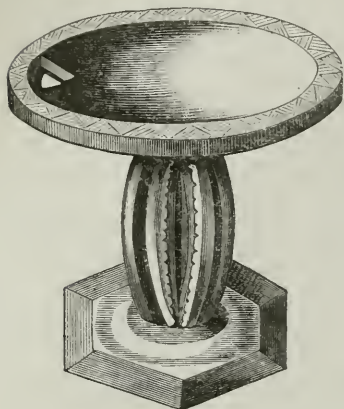
four, and sometimes upon two, feet, and are like the instruments which are seen upon the West Coast. Another smaller kind is made in a semicircular shape, very compressed, and fitted with a handle at the top; the opening for the sound is below, and the instrument may be compared to a flattened bell.

Benches and stools, such as are exclusively used by the women, are made in every diversity of shape. They are carved out of a single block, for, to say the truth, no people of Central Africa seems to have acquired the art of joining one piece of wood to another, so that the craft of the cabinet-maker may be said to be unknown. The seats of these stools are circular and somewhat hollowed out, surmounting a

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\* A boat of this kind is seen in the view of the rapids of the Keebaly, in Chap. XVII.

prettily carved stem, which rises from a circular or polygonal base. Close to the edge of the seat is a triangular aperture, which serves as a handle. They are usually made from



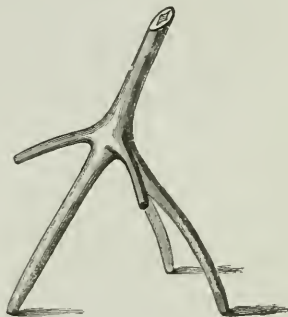
Single seat used by the Women.

twelve to sixteen inches high, and are hardly to be distinguished from certain contrivances for meal-times, which are here made so as to serve at once for table and plate. Wooden platters there are of every possible size: one kind of them has two open ring-shaped handles; another stands upon four feet, and both are patterns quite worthy of our own factories at home. Besides the single

seats they are in the habit of making long benches also with four feet. The practice of making all their utensils to stand upon feet is all but universal among the Niam-niam and the Monbuttoo, even the little cylindrical boxes covered with bark for storing away their knick-knacks being finished off in this fashion. The ordinary seats of the men are made exclusively from the leaf-stalks of the *Raphia* palm: they always keep to precisely the same form, and in their manufacture appear to indicate a first attempt at the joiner's art. The benches of the Monbuttoo men are about five feet long and of corresponding width; they are made of such lightness that one of our bearers, without any apparent exertion, carried six of them at once; but they are nevertheless of very extraordinary firmness, and the way in which the separate parts are fixed together is really very ingenious. The Monbuttoo do not fasten their benches or any of their structures by means of nails or pegs, but they sew them, as it were, together by fine split Spanish reeds, which by their unyielding toughness

answer as admirably as in the manufacture of our cane-chairs.

Backs are not attached to the Monbuttoo seats; but as some support of the kind is clearly indispensable, they endeavour to supply its place by placing by the side of their benches a singular sort of crutch. This is obtained by taking a young tree and cutting a section of it, where what botanists call its "verticillate ramification" has developed itself into four additional separate limbs: the main stem and two of the boughs supply the three feet, the other two boughs serving, with the continuation of the stem, to make the arms and back. No wood is so available for the purpose as that of the cotton tree (*Eriodendron*).



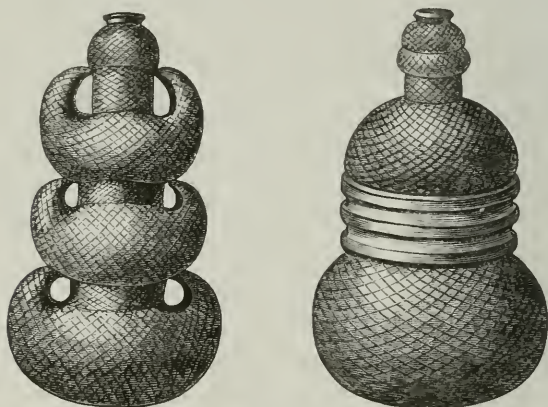
Seat-rest.

The shields of the warriors are hewn out of the thickest stems by means of the axe, and consist of perfectly smooth rectangular boards, not more than half an inch thick, but which are long enough to cover two-thirds of the person. These inelegant instruments of defensive warfare, in which the recommendation of solidity is ill sacrificed for the sake of their lightness, require to be protected from splitting or starting, and to secure this a number of parallel seams of rotang are fixed across the width, and both the upper and lower edges are provided with a strong border of rotang twist, and a strong rib run across the middle gives them an additional firmness. They are generally decorated with tails of the guinea-hog (*Potamochoerus*), and are invariably stained quite black. If any fissures or cracks should be detected, they are at once drawn together by iron and copper braces.

Contrasted with the rest of Africa, and even with the



Bongo, whose comparative skill was noticed on a previous page,\* the district shows a very considerable advance in the manufacture of their pottery. Although they remain as unacquainted as other races with the use of the wheel, their productions, besides being of a superior quality, are of a more perfect symmetry than any which are elsewhere observed. All the vessels and drinking-cups of the Africans in general



Water-bottles.

have the character of urns, being made without handles and being never otherwise than spherical in form; but those of the Monbuttoo exhibit a manifest improvement, and by having the surface decorated either with some raised symmetrical pattern (which is especially the case upon their oil vessels) or with some ornamental figures, they afford a firm hold to the hand, and thus make good the lack of handles for lifting them. It is, however, principally upon the water-bottles that the greatest care is bestowed, some of which may fairly be said to rival in symmetry the far-famed examples of Egyptian art, and to betray a considerable faculty of plastic genius.†

\* *Vide* vol. i. page 292.

† The two examples of water-bottles given in the engravings are copies of the originals, which are deposited in the Ethnographical Museum in Berlin.

For the bowls of pipes, upon which other of the native populations lavish so much care, they have no use. They smoke only the Virginian tobacco, and for this purpose employ the midrib of the plantain leaf in the way that I have already described,\* superseding entirely the necessity for a solid bowl.

They are very ignorant of the art of leather-dressing, and are no more acquainted with the use of tan than any of the rest of the tribes that have their homes in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district.

Their baskets and nets are woven out of rotang, the form of the baskets in which they bear burdens on their backs being very similar to those which are seen amongst the Thuringians. Their mode of dressing their hair necessarily prevents them from ever carrying a load upon their heads.

They are in the habit of twisting ornaments for themselves out of reeds and grass, which they wear like rings round their arms and legs, and which make a rustling sound as they walk. They bestow a great amount of care in weaving the fine webs which hold on their hats and chignons. The rattles, filled with shells and pebbles, that are used for beating time to the music of the drums and horns at the great festivals are also woven from reeds.

The Monbuttoo musical instruments require no particular description. They do not include the pretty little mandolins of the Niam-niam, nor any other stringed instruments, and their horns, trumpets, and drums may be said to be little short of universal throughout Africa. Wooden dulcimers (Marimba) are met with neither here nor in South Africa.

But the artistic versatility of the people reveals itself more than anywhere else in their architectural skill. It would hardly be credited that Africa would be capable of rearing

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To the one in three compartments handles are attached, being the only instance of the kind that I ever saw.

\* *Vide* vol. i. page 547.

any erection so spacious and well proportioned as the hall of Munza's palace. This was little short of 150 feet in length and 60 feet in breadth, and rose to the height of about 50 feet. Combined with these imposing dimensions were a lightness of character and solidity of structure that were quite remarkable. The ever-useful leaf-stalks of the wine-palm form the principal building-material, and its natural polish and bright brown colour give every building for which it is used an aspect of finished grace. The flat horizontal roofs of their huts, as distinguished from the conical roofs which we have hitherto observed as almost universal throughout the rest of Central Africa, mark out these Monbuttoo in a fresh respect as being allied to the natives of the west, viz., the Ishogo, the Ashango, the Bakalai, the Ashiva, the Camma, the Mpongwe, and the Fan—a relation that is further confirmed by the physical character of the land, the streams of which flow to the west instead of to the north. Some of the huts, however, have conical roofs, and these are generally appropriated, either as kitchens, because they allow better escape for the smoke, or as granaries, because they throw off the rain more rapidly.

The dwellings of the ordinary population are by no means large, being seldom more than thirty feet long, and twenty feet wide; the roofs project considerably, and are slightly rounded with a bend corresponding to the natural curvature of the palm leaves from which they are made, and which furnish the ribs of the roof. They are rendered water-tight by a lining of plantain leaves, which is frequently covered again with grass, straw, or skin. The walls are built up to a height of five or six feet, and are lined like the roof and bound together by the split Spanish reed. This, again, is the mode of erecting the huts upon the West Coast. It offers an astonishing power of resistance to the fury of the elements, which, left to play upon rows of posts or to range through open halls, might be expected to work complete destruction;

yet such is the stability with which the Monbuttoo huts are raised, that they never totter in a storm, and only show by a slight trembling in the walls that they are exposed to the violence of a hurricane.

A spacious doorway is the only aperture for light and air, the door itself being made in one piece; the interior is divided into two apartments, the more remote of which is reserved for the stores.

Plantations of trees are frequent, and still more frequent are patches of shrubs, which are intentionally suffered to grow, and which, as being serviceable, are permitted to survive the extirpation of the ancient forests. These are generally to be seen in the immediate vicinity of the unenclosed farms. In addition to them, many trees are allowed to stand for the sake of the shelter they afford; and some are kept because of their useful products, as for example, the *Tephrosia Vogelii*, which furnishes the powder for poisoning fish; or the *Randia malleifera*, which produces the pigment for the staining of the skin, and of which the white funnel-shaped blossoms are a striking ornament to the bushes; and some are retained merely for ornament and for increasing the pleasantness of the external aspect of their dwellings. As examples of this superfluous indulgence I may refer to the marvellous *Mussaenda*, with its glowing bracts, and to the variety of resplendent orchids. Here, too, I noticed what I must not omit to record, the turf-like *Chlorophytum*, with its variegated leaves of mingled white and green, which is employed among the Niam-niam as a charm to detect a thief, much in the same way as the *Canavalia ensiformis*, known as the "overlook" or horse-bean, is employed in Jamaica and Haiti, where it is sown in the negro-plantations for that purpose.

The huts are arranged in sets following the lines of the brooks along the valleys, the space between each group being occupied by plantations of oil-palms. The dwellings

are separated from the lowest parts of the depressions by the plantain-grounds, whilst above, on the higher and drier soil, extend the fields of sweet-potatoes and colocasiæ.

No one could seriously expect a traveller, after a transient residence of five weeks, to pass anything like a decided judgment upon the religious ideas of a people like the Monbuttoo. A wide scope for speculation is undoubtedly opened, but it would ill become a stranger to pretend to pronounce a conclusive verdict. I must be excused, therefore, from drawing any very definite inference from the fact that they adopt the rite of circumcision so far as to have it performed on boys when they come to an age of puberty, a period of life which is neither in accordance with the original prescription, nor with the doctrine of Mohammed. I may say, however, that I never allowed myself to be unconcerned with regard to any of the people amongst whom I journeyed as to their opinions about a presiding Deity, but, by collecting all the proofs I could from their habitual speech, I endeavoured to learn what were their conceptions about the sovereignty of an invisible power, and its influence upon the destinies of men.

The Monbuttoo have undoubtedly very intelligent ideas of what the Nubians mean by their bowing of the knee, their prostrations to the ground, and their cry of "Allah!" The very designation which they use to express their conception of God as the concentration of the Supreme Being, opens a long vista into the kindred association of African people. In the district of the Mahas, the word now employed for the God of the Nubians is "Nor," and, upon the authority of my interpreters, I may state that "Noro" was the term by which, after the double interpretation, "Allah" was rendered to me. When the question was put as to where "Noro" resided, the Monbuttoo, who was familiar with the Niam-niam dialect, pointed upwards to the sky; but when he was further pressed with the inquiry whether he could



see him, he only answered with a smile. Whether the Monbuttoo are in the habit of consulting oracles, or whether they have any reliance upon auguries from fowls, or any fortune-telling apparatus corresponding to the "damma" of the Niam-niam, my residence among them was not long enough to permit me to ascertain.



Bongo woman.

Dinka woman.

(See description, vol. i., p. 296.)

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE PYGMIES. Nubian stories. Ancient classical allusions. Homer, Herodotus, Aristotle. My introduction to Pygmies. Adimokoo the Akka. Close questioning. War-dance. Visits from many Akka. Mummery's Pygmy corps. My adopted Pygmy. Nsewue's life and death. Dwarf races of Africa. Accounts of previous authors: Battel, Dapper, Külle. Analogy of Akka with Bushmen. Height and complexion. Hair and beards. Shape of the body. Awkward gait. Graceful hands. Form of skull. Size of eyes and ears. Lips. Gesticulations. Dialect inarticulate. Dexterity and cunning. Munza's protection of the race.

WHENEVER two or three Egyptians are found in company, the chances are very great that their conversation, if it could be overheard, would be found to relate to the market prices of the day, or to some fluctuations in the state of trade. With the romantic sons of the Nubian Nile-valley the case would be very different. Ample opportunity of making this comparison was continually afforded me during the long evenings which I passed in my transit upon the waters of the Upper Nile; and even now I can recall with vivid interest the hours when, from my detached compartment on the stern of the boat, I could, without being observed, listen to the chatter by which the Nubians on the voyage beguiled their time. They seemed to talk with eagerness of all the wonders of the world. Some would expatiate upon the splendours of the City of the Caliphs, and others enlarge upon the accomplishment of the Suez Canal and the huge ships of the Franks; but the stories that ever commanded the most rapt attention were those which treated of war and

of the chase ; or, beyond all, such as described the wild beasts and still wilder natives of Central Africa.

It was not with stories in the sense of 'The Thousand and One Nights' that this people entertained each other ; neither did they recite their prolix histories as though they were reading at the celebration of Ramadan in Cairo, amidst the halls where night by night they abandoned themselves to the enjoyment of their coffee. These things I had now long ago left far behind ; however, occasionally, as the expiring strain of Arabia, I might still hear the song of Abd-el-Kader the sheikh, or of Aboo Zeyd the hero. My whole style of living seemed now to partake of the character of an Odyssey ; it appeared to be adapted for the embellishment of an Homeric episode, and such an episode in truth was already awaiting me.

Of the Nile itself, which had the appearance, day by day, of becoming wider as farther and farther we progressed towards the south, they affirmed that it issued from the ocean by which Africa was girt ; they would declare that we were on the route which would lead us, like the cranes, to fight with the Pygmies ; ever and again they would speak of Cyclops, of Automoli, or of "Pygmies," but by whatever name they called them, they seemed never to weary of recurring to them as the theme of their talk. Some there were who averred that with their own eyes they had seen this people of immortal myth ; and these—men as they were whose acquaintance might have been coveted by Herodotus and envied by Aristotle—were none other than my own servants.

It was a fascinating thing to hear them confidently relate that in the land to the south of the Niam-niam country there dwelt people who never grew to more than three feet in height, and who wore beards so long that they reached to their knees.\* It was affirmed of them that, armed with

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\* It may be remarked that the people of the Soudan when they depict a dwarf, ordinarily, like we should ourselves, represent him as a diminutive man with a long beard.

strong lances, they would creep underneath the belly of an elephant and dexterously kill the beast, managing their own movements so adroitly that they could not be reached by the creature's trunk. Their services in this way were asserted to contribute very largely to the resources of the ivory traders. The name by which they are known is the "Shebber-digintoo," which implies the growth of the disproportioned beard.

I listened on. The more, however, that I pondered silently over the stories that they involuntarily disclosed—the more I studied the traditions to which they referred—so much the more I was perplexed to explain what must either be the creative faculty or the derived impressions of the Nubians. Whence came it that they could have gained any knowledge at all of what Homer had sung? How did it happen that they were familiar at all with the material which Ovid and Juvenal, and Nonnus and Statius worked into their verse, giving victory at one time to the cranes, and at another to the Pygmies themselves?

My own ideas of Pygmies were gathered originally only from books, but the time seemed now to have come when their existence should be demonstrated in actual life.

Legends of Pygmies had mingled themselves already with the earliest surviving literature of the Greeks, and the poet of the *Iliad*, it will be remembered, mentions them as a race that had long been known:—

"To warmer seas the cranes embodied fly,  
With noise, and order, through the midway sky;  
To pygmy nations wounds and death they bring,  
And all the war descends upon the wing."

*Pope's 'Homer's Iliad,'* iii. 6-10.

But not the classic *poets* alone; sober historians and precise geographers have either adopted the poetic substance of the tradition or have endeavoured, by every kind of conjecture, to confirm its accuracy. Nothing, for instance, can be more

definite than the statement of Herodotus about the Nasa-monians after they had crossed the Libyan deserts: "They at length saw some trees growing on a plain, and having approached they began to gather the fruit that grew on the trees; and while they were gathering it some diminutive men, less than men of middle stature, came up and seized them and carried them away."\* The testimony of Aristotle is yet more precise when he says plainly: "The cranes fly to the lakes above Egypt, from which flows the Nile; there dwell the Pygmies, and this is no fable but the pure truth; there, just as we are told, do men and horses of diminutive size dwell in caves;" † a quotation this, which would seem to imply that the learned Stagyrte was in possession of some exact and positive information, otherwise he would not have ventured to insist so strongly upon the truth of his assertion. Very likely, however, we should be justified in surmising that Aristotle mentions cranes and Pygmies together only because he had the passage of the Iliad floating in his memory, and because he was aware of the fact that cranes do pass the winter in Africa. For my own part, I should be inclined to doubt whether cranes ever reach the Victoria and Albert Nyanza; on the Red Sea I saw them in latitude 20° N., and Brehm observed them in Sennaar; on the White Nile, however, and farther inland, I only found the native Balearic crane, which could hardly have been the species mentioned by Aristotle. But whether cranes were really capable of fighting with Pygmies or not, or whether (as Pauer attempts to prove) the Homeric tradition was derived from ancient Egyptian symbolism, and so was an emblematic representation of the cranes battling with the falling waters of the Nile stream, this is now immaterial; all that concerns us, with regard to the present topic, is that three or four

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\* Herodotus, ii. 32.

† Aristotle's 'Hist. Animal,' lib. viii. cap. 2.



centuries before the Christian era the Greeks were aware of the existence of a people inhabiting the districts about the sources of the Nile, who were remarkable for their stunted growth. The circumstance may warrant us, perhaps, in employing the designation of "pygmy," not for men literally a span long, but in the sense of Aristotle, for the dwarf races of Equatorial Africa.

Throughout the time that I had resided in the Seribas of the Bongo territory, of course I had frequent opportunities of enlarging my information, and I was continually hearing such romantic stories that I became familiarised in a way with the belief that the men about me had really been eye-witnesses of the circumstances they related. Those who had been attached to the Niam-niam expeditions, whenever they described the variety of wonders about the splendour of the courts of the cannibal kings, never omitted to mention the dwarfs who filled the office of court buffoons; every one outvying another in the fantastic embellishment of the tales they told. The general impression that remained upon my mind was that these must be some extraordinary specimens of pathological phenomena that had been retained by the kings as natural curiosities. The instance did not escape my recollection that Speke had given the description and portrait of a dwarf, Kimenya, with whom he had become acquainted at the court of Kamrasi;\* but that there could be a whole series of tribes whose average height was far below an average never really found a reception in my understanding, until at the court of Munza the positive evidence was submitted to my eyes.

Several days elapsed after my taking up my residence by the palace of the Monbuttoo king without my having a chance to get a view of the dwarfs, whose fame had so keenly excited my curiosity. My people, however, assured me that

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\* 'Speke's Travels,' p. 550.

they had seen them. I remonstrated with them for not having secured me an opportunity of seeing for myself, and for not bringing them into contact with me. I obtained no other reply but that the dwarfs were too timid to come. After a few mornings my attention was arrested by a shouting in the camp, and I learned that Mohammed had surprised one of the Pygmies in attendance upon the king, and was conveying him, in spite of a strenuous resistance, straight to my tent. I looked up, and *there*, sure enough, was the strange little creature, perched upon Mohammed's right shoulder, nervously hugging his head, and casting glances of alarm in every direction. Mohammed soon deposited him in the seat of honour. A royal interpreter was stationed at his side. Thus, at last, was I able veritably to feast my eyes upon a living embodiment of the myths of some thousand years!

Eagerly, and without loss of time, I proceeded to take his portrait. I pressed him with innumerable questions, but to ask for information was an easier matter altogether than to get an answer. There was the greatest difficulty in inducing him to remain at rest, and I could only succeed by exhibiting a store of presents. Under the impression that the opportunity before me might not occur again, I bribed the interpreter to exercise his influence to pacify the little man, to set him at his ease, and to induce him to lay aside any fear of me that he might entertain. Altogether we succeeded so well that in a couple of hours the Pygmy had been measured, sketched, feasted, presented with a variety of gifts, and subjected to a minute catechism of searching questions.

His name was Adimokoo. He was the head of a small colony, which was located about half a league from the royal residence. With his own lips I heard him assert that the name of his nation was Akka, and I further learnt that they inhabit large districts to the south of the Monbuttoo between lat. 2° and 1° N. A portion of them are subject to the

Monbuttoo king, who, desirous of enhancing the splendour of his court by the addition of any available natural curiosities, had compelled several families of the Pygmies to settle in the vicinity.

My Niam-niam servants, sentence by sentence, interpreted to me everything that was said by Adimokoo to the Monbuttoo interpreter, who was acquainted with no dialects but those of his own land.

In reply to my question put to Adimokoo as to where his country was situated, pointing towards the S.S.E., he said, 'Two days' journey and you come to the village of Mummery; on the third day you will reach the River Nalobe; the fourth day you arrive at the first of the villages of the Akka.'

"What do you call the rivers of your country?"

"They are the Nalobe, the Namerikoo, and the Eddoopa."

"Have you any river as large as the Welle?"

"No; ours are small rivers, and they all flow into the Welle."

"Are you all one people, or are you divided into separate tribes?"

To this inquiry Adimokoo replied by a sudden gesture, as if to indicate the vastness of their extent, and commenced enumerating the tribes one after another. "There are the Navapukah, the Navatipeh, the Vabingisso, the Avadzubeh, the Avagowumba, the Bandoa, the Mamomoo, and the Agabundah."

"How many kings?" I asked.

"Nine," he said; but I could only make out the names of Galeema, Beddeh, Tindaga, and Mazembe.

My next endeavour was directed to discover whether he was acquainted in any way with the dwarf races that have been mentioned by previous travellers, and whose homes I presumed would be somewhere in this part of Africa. I asked him whether he knew the Malagilagé, who, according

to the testimony of Escayrac de Lauture, live to the south of Baghirmy. My question, however, only elicited a comical gesture of bewilderment and a vague inquiry, "What is that?" Nor did I succeed at all better in securing any recognition of the tribes of the Kenkob or the Betsan, which are mentioned by Kölle. Equally unavailing, too, were all my efforts to obtain answers of any precision to the series of questions which I invented, taking my hints from Petermann and Hassenstein's map of Central Africa, so that I was obliged to give up my geographical inquiries in despair and turn to other topics. But in reality there did not occur any subject whatever on which I obtained any information that seems to me to be worth recording. At length, after having submitted so long to my curious and persistent questionings, the patience of Adimokoo was thoroughly exhausted, and he made a frantic leap in his endeavour to escape from the tent. Surrounded, however, by a crowd of inquisitive Bongo and Nubians, he was unable to effect his purpose, and was compelled, against his will, to remain for a little longer. After a time a gentle persuasion was brought to bear, and he was induced to go through some of the characteristic evolutions of his war-dances. He was dressed, like the Monbuttoo, in a rokko-coat and plumed hat, and was armed with a miniature lance as well as with a bow and arrow. His height I found to be about 4 feet 10 inches, and this I reckon to be the average measurement of his race.

Although I had repeatedly been astonished at witnessing the war-dances of the Niam-niam, I confess that my amazement was greater than ever when I looked upon the exhibition which the Pygmy afforded. In spite of his large, bloated belly and short bandy legs—in spite of his age, which, by the way, was considerable—Adimokoo's agility was perfectly marvellous, and I could not help wondering whether cranes would ever be likely to contend with such creatures. The little man's leaps and attitudes were accompanied by such

lively and grotesque varieties of expression that the spectators shook again and held their sides with laughter. The



Bomby the Akka.

interpreter explained to the Niam-niam that the Akka jump about in the grass like grasshoppers, and that they are so nimble that they shoot their arrows into an elephant's eye and drive their lances into their bellies. The gestures of the Akka, to which I shall have occasion again to refer, always reminded me of the pictures given by travellers to represent the Bushmen of the south.

Adimokoo returned home loaded with presents. I made him understand that I should be glad to see all his people, and

promised that they should lose nothing by coming.

On the following day I had the pleasure of a visit from two of the younger men. I had the opportunity of sketching their likenesses, and as one of the portraits has been preserved it is inserted here.

After they had once got over their alarm, some or other of the Akka came to me almost every day. As exceptional



cases, I observed that some individuals were of a taller stature; but upon investigation I always ascertained that this was the result of intermarriage with the Monbuttoo amongst whom they resided. My sudden departure from Munza's abode interrupted me completely in my study of this interesting people, and I was compelled to leave before I had fully mastered the details of their peculiarities. I regret that I never chanced to see one of the Akka women, and still more that my visit to their dwellings was postponed from day to day until the opportunity was lost altogether.

I am not likely to forget a *rencontre* which I had with several hundred Akka warriors, and could very heartily wish that the circumstances had permitted me to give a pictorial representation of the scene. King Munza's brother Mummery, who was a kind of viceroy in the southern section of his dominions, and to whom the Akka were tributary, was just returning to the court from a successful campaign against the black Momvoo. Accompanied by a large band of soldiers, amongst whom was included a corps of Pygmies, he was conveying the bulk of the booty to his royal master. It happened on the day in question that I had been making a long excursion with my Niam-niam servants, and had heard nothing of Mummery's arrival. Towards sunset I was passing along the extensive village on my return to my quarters, when, just as I reached the wide open space in front of the royal halls, I found myself surrounded by what I conjectured must be a crowd of impudent boys, who received me with a sort of bravado fight. They pointed their arrows towards me, and behaved generally in a manner at which I could not help feeling somewhat irritated, as it betokened unwarrantable liberty and intentional disrespect. My misapprehension was soon corrected by the Niam-niam people about me. "They are Tikkitikki,"\* said they; "you imagine

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\* Tikkitikki is the Niam-niam designation of the Akka.

that they are boys, but in truth they are men; nay, men that can fight." At this moment a seasonable greeting from Mummery drew me off from any apprehension on my part and from any further contemplation of the remarkable spectacle before me. In my own mind I resolved that I would minutely inspect the camp of the new-comers on the following morning; but I had reckoned without my host: before dawn Mummery and his contingent of Pygmies had taken their departure, and thus,

"Like the baseless fabric of a vision,"

this people, so near and yet so unattainable, had vanished once more into the dim obscurity of the innermost continent.

Anxious, in my contact with this mythical race, to lose or pass over nothing which might be of interest, I very diligently made memoranda after every interview that I had with the Akka. I measured six full-grown individuals, none of whom much exceeded 4 feet 10 inches in height, but, unfortunately, all my notes and many of my drawings perished in the fire.

A brief account may now be given of the little Pygmy that I carried off and kept with me during the remainder of my wanderings till I was again in Nubia, who for a year and a half became my companion, thriving under my care and growing almost as affectionate as a son.

I have already explained in a previous chapter the circumstances under which the little man came into my keeping. I succeeded tolerably well in alleviating the pain of the lad's parting from all his old associations by providing him with all the good living and bestowing upon him all the attention that lay in my power. To reconcile him to his lot I broke through an old rule. I allowed him to be my constant companion at my meals—an exception that I never made in favour of any other native of Africa. Making

it my first care that he should be healthy and contented, I submitted without a murmur to all the uncouth habits peculiar to his race. In Khartoom at last I dressed him up till he looked like a little pasha. The Nubians could not in the least enter into my infatuation, nor account for my partiality towards the strange-looking lad. When he walked along the thoroughfares at my side they pointed to him, and cried, with reference to his bright-brown complexion, "See, there goes the son of the Khavaga!" Apparently they overlooked the fact of the boy's age, and seemed not to be in any way familiarised with the tradition of the Pygmies. In the Seribas all along our route the little fellow excited a still greater astonishment.

Notwithstanding all my assiduity and attention, I am sorry to record that Nsewue died in Berber, from a prolonged attack of dysentery, originating not so much in any change of climate, or any alteration in his mode of living, as in his immoderate excess in eating, a propensity which no influence on my part was sufficient to control.

During the last ten months of his life, my *protégé* did not make any growth at all. I think I may therefore presume that his height would never have exceeded 4 feet 7 inches, which was his measurement at the time of his death. The portrait on the following page may be accepted as a faithful representation of one who was a fair type of his race.

Altogether very few examples of the Akka came under my notice; but so ample was my opportunity of studying in detail the peculiarities of this individual specimen, that, in the course of any observations that follow, I shall feel justified in referring to Nsewue, when the rest of my experience furnishes no other illustration.

The Akka would appear to be a branch of that series of dwarf races which, exhibiting all the characteristics of an aboriginal stock, extend along the equator entirely across



Nsewue the Akka.

Africa. Whatever travellers have penetrated far into the interior of the continent have furnished abundant testimony as to the mere fact of the existence of tribes of singularly diminutive height; whilst their accounts are nearly all coincident in representing that these dwarf races differ in hardly anything from the surrounding nations excepting only in their size. It would be entirely an error to describe them as dwarfs either in the sense of the ancient myths, or in the way of *lusus naturæ*, such as are exhibited as curiosities amongst ourselves; most of the accounts, moreover, that have been given, concur in the statement that

these undersized people are distinguished from their neighbours by a redder or brighter shade of complexion; but they differ very considerably in the reports they make about the growth of the hair. The only traveller, I believe, before myself that has come into contact with any section of this race is Du Chaillu, who, in the territory of the Ashango, discovered a wandering tribe of hunters called Obongo, and took the measurements of a number of them. He describes these Obongo as "not ill-shaped," and as having skins of a pale, yellow-brown, somewhat lighter than their neighbours; he speaks of their having short heads of hair, but a great growth of hair about their bodies. Their average height he affirms to be 4 feet 7 inches. In every particular but the abundance of hair about the person, this description is quite applicable to the Akka. According to Battel,\* there was a nation of dwarfs, called the Matimbos or Dongo, to the north-east of the land of Tobbi, which lies to the north of the Sette River, and consequently in the same district as that in which Du Chaillu discovered the Obongo. Portuguese authorities, moreover, quite at the beginning of the seventeenth century, contain a distinct reference to a dwarf nation called Bakka-bakka. Dapper furnishes corresponding information on the same subject; and all that he relates about the dwarfs coincides very accurately with what is known about the Akka, whose name had penetrated even at that date to the western equatorial coasts. It is to be understood that districts were known by the name of the people who chanced to be occupying them, and not by any permanent name of the soil itself. After Dapper, in his compilation, had told the history of the Yagas, who is said in olden time to have spread fear and destruction as far as the coasts of the Loango, a hundred miles away, so that it took three months for caravans to come and go, he proceeds

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\* *Vide* Battel. 'Purchas his Pilg.,' II. London, 1625, p. 983.



to state that the greater part of the ivory was obtained still farther inland, and was brought from a people who were tributary to the great Makoko, and called Mimos or Bakkebakke. "These little men," he writes,\* "are stated by the Yagas to have the power of making themselves invisible, and consequently can slay an elephant with little trouble." And this dexterity in killing elephants seems to be implied in another place,† where, in describing the court of Loango and the dwarfs who took up their positions before the throne, he says, "the negroes affirm that there is a wilderness inhabited by those dwarfs, and where there are many elephants; they are generally called Bakke-bakke, but sometimes Mimos." Farther on again‡ he speaks of the empire of the great Makoko (described as lying beyond the kingdom of Kongo, and some 200 miles or more inland, north of the River Zaire), and proceeds to specify that "in the wilderness of this country there are to be found the little people that have been mentioned before, who carry on the greater part of the ivory trade throughout the kingdom." Besides this it is expressly stated that the ivory was bartered for the salt of Loango. Now in none of the countries that I visited in Central Africa was either sea salt or common salt ever an article of commerce, but each separate nation produced its own supply from ashes: but whilst I was at the court of Munza I learnt from the Khartoomers who had settled there that, as matter of fact, king Munza did receive tribute from the Akka in the shape of "*real good salt*," which was brought from the far south. Taken in connection with Dapper's account, this statement would seem to justify the hypothesis that even at this day there may be commercial transactions between the very heart of Africa, where the Akka dwell, and the western coasts.

Still more demonstrative than any reports about Matimbos

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\* Dapper, Germ. ed., Amsterd., p. 571. † *Ib.*, p. 527. ‡ *Ib.*, p. 573.

and Bakke-bakke, as proving the identity of my Akka with the abnormally-formed folks previously named, is the evidence that is furnished by the natives of the Upper Shary districts. Escayrac de Lanture\* was told of a Lake Koeidabo, which was said to be a two months' journey to the S.S.E. of Masena, the capital of Baghirmy, and to unite the source-affluents of the Shary just at the spot where, according to the Monbuttoo, the Welle widens into a boundless expanse of water. Somewhat to the west of this lake, he was informed, were the dwellings of the Mala-gilageh (literally, men with tails), who were of small stature and reddish complexion, or, as the Africans expressed it, "*white*," and covered with long hair. The fabulous tails must be supposed to be added by a kind of poetic licence, or as a concession to the belief in marvellous stories that were rife throughout the Soudan. It may with much probability be assumed that the same districts in Central Africa must be the homes of the Kenkob and Betsan, of whom Kölle,† residing in Sierra Leone, heard reports from those who professed to have actually seen them. In these reports the great lake was very often referred to. One of Kölle's informants called it "Leeba," and said that he had on one occasion personally accompanied an embassy that was commissioned to convey a present of salt to the king who governed over the territories by the shores of the lake; and he distinctly affirmed not only that the Kenkob lived in close proximity to the same lake, but that they were a people only three or four feet in height, but who nevertheless possessed great strength and were excellent hunters. Another witness informed Kölle that he only knew of "a river Reeba" in that part of the country; but it is extremely likely that in reality he was referring to the same Lake

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\* 'Bulletin de la Soc. de Géograph. de Paris,' tom. x., 1855.

† 'Polyglotta Africana,' p. 12.

Leeba which, by repeated geographical investigation, has been proved to be a part of the Shary:\* he went on to describe that by this river Reeba there dwelt a diminutive race called Betsan, varying from three feet to five feet in height, and stated that they had very long hair and very long beards, adding that they supported themselves entirely by the produce of the chase.

Both these witnesses agreed in describing the hair of the dwarfs as long; and I always found that the Niam-niam laid particular stress upon their having long beards; but I must confess I never observed this characteristic in any of the Akka who came under my notice.

Nor is east Tropical Africa without its representatives of people of this stunted growth. Of these I may especially mention the Doko, who are reported to dwell to the south of Enarea and Kaffa on the Upper Juba. Krapf, who has with much diligence compared the various accounts of many slaves who have been carried away from the district in question to Shoa, fixes the habitation of the Doko as being below the latitude of  $3^{\circ}$  north. Their height is compared with that of boys ten years of age. Even those who have seen them and (like A. d'Abbadie) deny that they are *dwarfs*, yet admit that they are under a medium stature. On the coast itself, in Zanzibar and at Brava, where, occasioned by the Mohammedan Somali, there is a considerable intercourse with the districts said to be populated by the Doko, stories of these dwarfs are in every one's mouth, and they are termed the "Berikeemo," *i.e.* people two feet high.

This rapid summary of the dwarf races that are known in Africa would be incomplete without a passing reference to the Kimos of Madagascar, of whom, from the middle of the seventeenth century down to our own time the most contradictory

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\* In nearly all the negro dialects the letters *l* and *r* are used indifferently; and Africans, as a rule, very much confound the ideas of lake and river.

reports have been in circulation. Any detailed accounts of these would of course be here entirely out of place. Madagascar, too, from its isolation, must ever be treated independently. The relation of its inhabitants to the inhabitants of Central Africa is very doubtful. It will now suffice to say generally that the evidence appears to lie open before us of there being a series of unestablished and imperfectly developed nations which, although they are now in their decline, extend from ocean to ocean across the entire equatorial zone of Africa.

Scarcely a doubt can exist but that all these people, like the Bushmen of South Africa, may be considered as the scattered remains of an aboriginal population now becoming extinct; and their isolated and sporadic existence bears out the hypothesis. For centuries after centuries Africa has been experiencing the effects of many immigrations: for thousands of years one nation has been driving out another, and as the result of repeated subjugations and interminglings of race with race, such manifold changes have been introduced into the conditions of existence that the succession of new phases, like the development in the world of plants, appears almost as it were to open a glimpse into the infinite.

Incidentally I have just referred to the Bushmen, those notorious natives of the South African forests, who owe their name to the likeness which the Dutch colonists conceived they bore to the ape, as the prototype of the human race. I may further remark that their resemblance to the equatorial Pygmies is in many points very striking. Gustav Fritsch, the author of a standard work upon the natives of South Africa, first drew my attention to the marked similarity between my portraits of the Akka and the general type of the Bushmen, and so satisfied did I become in my own mind that I feel quite justified (in my observations upon the Akka) in endeavouring to prove that all the tribes of Africa whose proper characteristic is an abnormally low stature belong to one and the self-same race.

According to Fritsch the average height of the genuine Bushmen is 1·44 metres, or about 4 feet 8½ inches; the height of the two Akka, whose portraits I have inserted, were 4 feet 1 inch and 4 feet 4 inches respectively; and, as I have said, I never saw any instance in which the height materially exceeded 4 feet 10 inches. The skin of the Akka is of a dull brown tint, something of the colour of partially roasted coffee. As far as I can remember, the colour would correspond nearly with Nos. 7 and 8 in the table of skin-tints in Plate 49 of Fritsch's work, and these are the numbers by which he indicates the complexion of the Bushmen. It is somewhat difficult to discriminate between the complexion of the Akka and that of their neighbours the Monbuttoo, since the latter exhibit a variety of shades of the same tint; but I should be inclined to say that the distinction lies in the somewhat duller hue of the Akka, such as might be understood by comparing No. 2 with No. 8 in the table to which I have referred.

The hair and beard are but slightly developed. All the Akka that I saw wore the ordinary costume and cylindrical straw hat of the Monbuttoo; but, in consequence of their hair being short as well as woolly, they are unable to form a chignon like their neighbours. The colour of their hair corresponds with their complexion; in texture it may best be compared with the waste tow from old cordage. This absence of the beard is characteristic also of the Bushmen. The Nubians indeed used to tell me of the dwarfs about the courts of the Niam-niam princes being noted for long hair, and they affirmed that some of them, in the fashion of the West Africans, were in the habit of stiffening out their long pointed tufts of hair on their chin with pitch; no doubt, too, their common designation for this people (Shebber digintoo) has reference to this characteristic; but I could never succeed in getting any accurate or more definite information about dwarfs of this species. The Akka resemble the majority of



the Monbuttoo in having brown hair, other nations of a reddish tone of complexion not sharing this peculiarity.

Taking, as I have said, my little *protégé* Nsewue as a fair type of the Akka in general, I will proceed to enumerate the most prominent marks in their common appearance.

The head of the Akka is large, and out of proportion to the weak, thin neck on which it is balanced. The shape of the shoulders is peculiar, differing entirely from that of other negroes in a way that may probably be accounted for by the unusual scope required for the action of the shoulder-blades; the arms are lanky; and altogether the upper portion of the body has a measurement disproportionately long. The superior region of the chest is flat and much contracted, but it widens out below to support the huge hanging belly, which gives them, however aged, the remarkable appearance of Arabian or Egyptian children. The look of the Akka from behind is very singular, their body seeming then to form a curve so regular and defined that it is almost like a letter S; this is probably to be accounted for by an exceptional suppleness in the lower joints of the spine, since after a full meal the centre of gravity is shifted, and the curve of the back accordingly becomes more or less concave. All the various personal traits of the Akka to which I have thus referred are illustrated very plainly in Fritsch's work by the figure (No. 69) which represents an old Bushman.

The joints of the legs are angular and projecting, except that the knees are plump and round. Unlike other Africans, who ordinarily walk with their feet straight, the Akka turn them somewhat inward. I hardly know how to describe their waddling; every step they take is accompanied by a lurch that [seems to affect all their limbs alike; and Nsewue could never manage to carry a full dish for any distance without spilling at least a portion of its contents.

Of all their members their hands were undoubtedly the best formed. These might really be pronounced elegant,

although I do not mean that they were in the least like the long narrow ladies' hands that are so lauded in romance, but which Carl Vogt has characterised as appropriate to the monkey type. Nothing about my poor little favourite ever excited my admiration to the same degree as his pretty little hands, and so attentively have I studied every part of his singular form that not even the smallest detail has escaped my memory.

But all the peculiarities of the race culminate in the shape of the skull and in the physiognomical character of the head. As matter of fact, history has not exhibited that any general degeneracy in a nation has ever been attended by a general decrease in a people's stature; but still it is quite possible that the peculiarities I have already mentioned might originate in some modification of the way of living. Any attempt, however, to attribute the formation of the skull to the effects either of circumstance, of food, or of climate must at once be rejected as inadmissible. The most noticeable points in the structure of the heads of the Akka is their high degree of *prognathie*. The two portraits that are given exhibit facial angles of  $60^{\circ}$  and  $66^{\circ}$  respectively. Besides this they are remarkable for the snout-like projection of the jaw with an unprotruding chin, and for the wide skull which is almost spherical, and which has a deep indentation at the base of the nose. These leading resemblances indubitably exist between the Akka and the Bushmen; and where the general similarity is so great, all minor discrepancies must sink into insignificance.

All the accounts of the South African Bushmen agree in representing that their eyes are small and their eyelids contracted. "Their eyes," says Lichtenstein, "are small, deeply set, and so compressed as to be scarcely visible." Fritsch lays special stress upon this peculiarity of the Bushmen, but at the same time draws attention to the likeness of expression between them and the Hottentots, who otherwise differ from

them so widely. Now the Akka, on the other hand, have large eyes, wide open, so as to give them the bird-like appearance of Azteks; and does not Bomby's portrait,\* I may ask, recall the Azteks who a few years ago were exhibited in Europe? Amid the multitude of resemblances this may be said to be the only important difference between the Akka and the Bushmen, and probably even this may be accounted for as being the effect either of food or climate, in the same way as the weather-beaten countenance of the mariner may be attributed to the life of exposure that he has led.

Setting aside, however, this diversity with regard to the eyes, the heads of the Akka and the Bushmen will be found to present various points of similarity in other respects. The Akka are distinguished from all other nations of Central Africa by the huge size of the ear. Now, however small, in an æsthetic sense, the negroes' pretensions to any beauty may ordinarily be supposed to be, it must be conceded that they can vie with any race whatever in the elegance and symmetrical shape of their ears; but no share of this grace can be assigned either to the Bushmen or to the Akka.

The lips project in a way that corresponds completely with the projecting jaw. They are long and convex; they do not overlap, and are not so thick as those of the generality of negroes. What really suggests the resemblance to an ape is the sharply-defined outline of the gaping mouth; for the pouting lips of most negroes convey no idea at all of relationship with inferior animals. These gaping lips, again, are possessed by the Akka in common with the Bushmen, whose profiles may be seen in the illustrations given by Fritsch; they are not found at all amongst the Monbuttoo.

The continual changes of expression which, as Lichtenstein observes, play upon the countenance and render the Bushmen like apes rather than human beings are exhibited to a

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\* *Vide antè*, p. 130.

very remarkable degree by the Akka. The twitching of the eyebrows (in this case still more animated by the brightness of the eyes), the rapid gestures with the hands and feet while talking, the incessant wagging and nodding of the head, all combine to give a very grotesque appearance to the little people, and serve to explain the fund of amusement derived from the visit of Adimokoo.

Of the language of the Akka I must confess my entire ignorance, having lost the few notes that I possessed. I remember that I was much struck by the inarticulateness of the pronunciation. During the year and a half that my *protégé* was domesticated with me he was unable to learn sufficient Arabic to make himself understood; in this respect he was very different to the other natives about me, who made themselves masters of a copious vocabulary. He never advanced beyond stammering out a few Bongo phrases, which no one except myself and a few of my own people could comprehend.

Although I was informed that circumcision was practised by the Akka, I could never ascertain whether it was really an indigenous custom, or whether it was merely borrowed from the Monbuttoo, and so adopted by such of the Akka as had settled near the court of Munza.

In acuteness, dexterity, and it must be added in cunning, the Akka far surpass the Monbuttoo. They are *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, a nation of hunters. The cunning, however, which they display is but the outward expression of an inner impulse which seems to prompt them to find a delight in wickedness. Nsewue was always fond of torturing animals, and took a special pleasure in throwing arrows at the dogs by night. During the period in which we were involved in war, and while my servants were almost beside themselves with anxiety, nothing afforded him greater amusement than to play with the heads that had been severed from the slain A-Banga; and when I boiled some of the skulls his delight knew no bounds; he rushed about the camp shouting,

“Bakinda,\* nova? Bakinda he he koto” (Where is Bakinda? Bakinda is in the pot!) Such a people as this would naturally excel in the inventive faculty for laying traps and snares for game.

Like the Obongo and the Bushmen, as I myself experienced during my first *rencontre* with Adimokoo, the Akka are extremely shy with other men.

Their only domestic animals are poultry; and it struck me as a coincidence somewhat curious that one of the Pompeian mosaics which I saw in the National Museum at Naples represents the Pygmies in the midst of their little houses, which are depicted as full of common fowls.

It is notorious that the natives of South Africa in general have vowed death and destruction against the Bushmen, reckoning them as incorrigibly wild and in no way superior to apes of the most dangerous character. Now the dwarfs of Central Africa, although they fall little short of the Bushmen in natural maliciousness, are not regarded as mischievous fiends who must be exterminated like a brood of adders, but they are considered rather as a sort of benevolent spirits or mandrakes who are in no way detrimental. They are of assistance to the Monbuttoo in securing them a more abundant produce from the chase, and so they enjoy the protection of their neighbours very much in the same way as (according to Du Chaillu) the Obongo enjoy the protection of the Ashango. These amicable relations, however, would not be possible but for the reason that the Monbuttoo possess no herds. If the Monbuttoo were a cattle-breeding people, it cannot be doubted that the Akka would consider all their animals as game, and could not deny themselves the delight of driving their spears into the flanks of every beast they could get near, and by these tactics would very soon convert their guardians into enemies.

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\* “Bakinda,” is a mere derisive nickname.



Munza supplies all the Akka who have settled near him with the best of diet, and Nsewue was never weary of descanting in praise of the flasks of beer, the plantain wine, the ears of corn, and all the other delicacies with which his people were feasted.

I will only add that a debt of gratitude is due from the students of ethnology to the Monbuttoo king, who has been instrumental in preserving this remnant of a declining race until the time has come for the very heart of Africa to be laid open.



Dinka Pipe. (See description, vol. i., p. 292.)

## CHAPTER XVII.

Return to the North. Tikkitikki's reluctance to start. Passage of the Gadda. Sounding the Keebaly. The river Kahpily. Cataracts of the Keebaly. Kubby's refusal of boats. Our impatience. Crowds of hippopotamuses. Possibility of fording the river. Origin and connection of the Keebaly. Division of highland and lowland. Geographical expressions of Arabs and Nubians. Mohammedan perversions. Return to Nembey. Bivouac in the border-wilderness. Eating wax. The Niam-niam declare war. Parley with the enemy. My mistrust of the guides. Treacherous attack on Mohammed. Mohammed's dangerous wound. Open war. Detruncated heads. Effect of arrows. Mohammed's defiance. Attack on the abattis. Pursuit of the enemy. Inexplicable appearance of 10,000 men. Wando's unpropitious omen. My Niam-niam and their oracle. Mohammed's speedy cure. Solar phenomenon. Dogs barbarously speared. Women captured. Niam-niam affection for their wives. Calamus. Upper course of the Mbrwole. Fresh captive. Her composure. Alteration in scenery. Arrival at the Nabambisso.

AFTER a sojourn of three weeks, the 12th of April was fixed for the raising of our camp and for the departure of our caravan from the residence of the Monbuttoo king.

For myself it was with a sad and heavy heart that I had to begin retracing my steps towards the north. How bitter was my disappointment may well be imagined. I could not be otherwise than aware that I was leaving behind my only chance of answering some of those important questions that might be propounded to me; and my regret was aggravated by the conviction that a journey comparatively short would now have brought me to the sources of the three great rivers of the west, the only streams that are absolutely closed to our geographical knowledge, viz, the Benwe, the Ogawai, and the Congo. Distant as I was hardly more than 450

miles from the limit that had been reached by Livingstone, I could discern, as I fondly imagined, from Munza's residence, a path clearly open towards the south-west which would conduct me to the Congo and to the states of the mighty Mwata Yanvo; it appeared to me to be a path that, once explored, would solve the remaining problems of the heart of Africa as decidedly as the sword of Alexander severed the Gordian knot, and now, just when there was only one more district to be traversed and that not larger than what we had already passed since leaving the Gazelle, to be obliged to abandon further progress and to leave the mysterious secrets still unravelled was a hardship to which it was impossible patiently to submit. But there was no alternative, and, however reluctantly, I had to yield.

I have already spoken of the various obstacles to any further advance; I must, however, again insist upon my conviction that any single traveller, provided he had not an undue proportion of flesh (for to be fat would be fatal), might march on unhindered down the Welle as far as Baghirmy, since the population was all well disposed enough as far as regards the white man. But any attempt to carry on an entire caravan in that direction would have met with the most strenuous opposition on the part of King Munza; his indirect influence might have enabled travellers to descend as far to the south as lat. 2° N.; but for this his sanction would have had to be purchased by an enormous contribution of copper.

The first event of the morning of our start occasioned no small stir amongst the Nubians. Mohammed Aboo Sammat had established a Seriba in the place, for the garrisoning of which twenty-eight men had to be left behind, and several hours elapsed before the necessary conscription could be accomplished. Apart from myself, depressed as I was by my disappointment, every one else was elated at the prospect of returning, so that no penalty could be considered much

heavier than being compelled to tarry in this remote region for one or two years, and possibly longer, to be the associates of cannibals; each man accordingly upon whom the unlucky destiny chanced to fall received his orders to remain with the loudest murmurs of dissatisfaction, and the outcry and contention threatened to be interminable. At length, by cajoling, by bribing, by promises of ample pay, and, it must be added, by the representation of the lives of frolic they would lead with the Monbuttoo women, the malcontents were persuaded unwillingly to acquiesce in their fate.

It was noon before the column was actually in motion. The Nubians parted from their companions with the most touching embraces; the crowds of chattering Monbuttoo surrounded the encampment and watched with vivid interest the thousand gestures of farewell, whilst the negro-bearers, silent and stolid as ever, set forward on their way.

During this parting scene my little Tikkitikki (as the Niam-niam called the Pygmy who had been presented to me a few days previously) was seized with an apparent fit of home sickness; he set up such a dismal howling and sobbed so bitterly that I confess I was for a while undecided whether I would really carry him away, but I soon discovered that it was only the uninitiated who could be imposed upon by his behaviour. He was not bewailing the loss of his home, for he was utterly ignorant as to where that home had been; neither was he deploring his separation from his kinsfolk, for they stood by, gesticulating wildly, and only mocked at his distress. The fact was, he was influenced solely by his dread of strangers. He was in mortal fear of being eaten up. It very rarely happens among the Monbuttoo that natives are surrendered to the Nubians for slaves: the occasion therefore of a present being made of a human creature would only too readily suggest the thought that some ulterior destination for cannibal purposes was in view. Altogether inadequate to appease Tikkitikki's fears as to his

approaching fate was the gorgeous silk jacket in which I arrayed him, and it was with no little satisfaction that I found I could pacify him by offering him the choicest morsels that I could procure for him to eat. After spending a few days with me in my tent, and finding himself treated with all the dainties that the country could produce, he forgot his troubles, laid aside his apprehensions, and became as happy as a little prince.

From the splendid thickets upon the banks of the rivulets which streamed across our path I gathered all the specimens I could of the flora of this distant land, and all along our return journey I lost no available opportunity of contributing any novelty to my botanical store.

For about five miles we followed the route by which we had arrived, proceeding in a north-easterly direction until we reached the mounds of gneiss that lay before the third stream. Making a little *détour* to the left I mounted the eminences, which were crowned with some fine fig-trees, whence I could watch our long caravan winding amongst the plantain-groves; now and then my view of the *cortége* would be obstructed by some rising oil-palms, and finally the train would disappear in the obscurity of the gallery-forest. The streams were now much swollen, and their passage entailed not only a considerable loss of time but some trial of strength. The paths were so narrow that we were compelled to proceed in single file, not unfrequently being obliged to halt in places where the shadows of the forest were far too light to afford us any protection from the raging heat. Upon these occasions I found a draught from a calabash of plantain-wine very refreshing. Every now and then I had recourse to a pipe. Altogether, however, in spite of its inconveniences the journey was through scenery so charming that it could not be otherwise than enjoyable.

After crossing the third brook we made a turn to the right, thus entering upon a way that was new to us. Having



traversed an open steppe along the edge of a gallery extending to the north-east, we encamped at nightfall at a farmstead near the river Gadda. Half-an-hour's march in the morning brought us to the river bank.

In its dimensions the Gadda resembles the Wow just above its junction with the Dyoor, but it does not exhibit the same periodical changes in the volume of its waters; its bed remains full throughout the year, and at this date (April 13th) I found that it was 155 feet wide and but 3 feet deep, its velocity being 57 feet in a minute. The banks were bounded by light woods, and the soil not being subject to any further inundations had only a gentle slope; the flood-marks on the shore proved the difference between the highest and lowest conditions of the river to be 20 feet. The Gadda has its source far to the south-east, and, flowing across the dominions of the Monbuttoo king Degberra, joins the Keebaly: the united streams then receive the name of the Welle.

Without unnecessary loss of time we forded the sandy river-bed, and, continuing our march for about another half hour, arrived at the left bank of the Keebaly. The river here exhibited much the same character as the Welle at the spot where we had forded it upon our outward journey, but I presume it was somewhat narrower, as by trigonometrical measurement I found that its width was only 325 feet.

By the orders of the king boats were in readiness to convey the caravan across, and the ferrymen did their work so well and quickly that the entire passage was accomplished in three hours. While the transit was being effected I took the opportunity of embarking in a canoe for the purpose of estimating the depth and velocity of the stream, an operation in which I was materially assisted by the greater experience of my servant Mohammed Ameen. In the same way as I noticed on the Welle, the current was much stronger on the northern or right shore; by throwing a gourd upon the flood

and observing the number of feet it progressed in a minute, I estimated the ratio of the currents upon the opposite banks to be as 15:19. The depth was between 12 and 13 feet, and there were neither rocks nor sand-banks in this part of the river-bed.

As I stood in the long grass superintending the stowage of the baggage, I was very considerably inconvenienced by the inquisitiveness of the natives, who persisted in thronging close around. In order to get free from their intrusion I was glad to resort to all kinds of artifices, such as throwing some lighted touchwood amongst them, and treating them to a few cartridges. After the last bearer had started and they observed that I still continued to paddle up and down the stream, their curiosity knew no bounds. Trusting to the superiority of our firearms and the protection of my own servants, I felt perfectly secure and enjoyed the bewildered surprise with which the natives who crowded the banks surveyed our evolutions. The dexterous swimming and diving of my Nubians excited the liveliest interest, and every time the sounding-lead was dipped it was watched as eagerly as if it were about to draw forth from the deep some treasure of the Nibelungen.

Northward again. We passed the farmsteads of the local overseer Parra, crossed the brook Mboolah, and pitched our camp at a hamlet but a few miles from the stream. The remainder of the day I spent in botanizing. I made my way into the thickets, and found some splendid representatives of such large-leaved plants as the philodendra, calladia, and marantha, which gleamed with a metallic sheen. The overseer was very liberal: he supplied us freely with beer, and the greater part of the night was spent in friendly intercourse with the natives, who found, as ever, my hair and my lucifers to be an unfailing source of interest. Myself the people designated as "a good man," and, satisfied that I had come from the skies, they interpreted my arrival as a token of peace and happiness.

Our road on the following day lay through a country that was generally open, and we had no stream to cross until we reached the brook Bumba, near the village of Bongwa. Here we regained our former route. The country was perfectly safe, and I was accordingly able to march with my own people in the rear of the caravan, and devote my attention to my botanical researches. The hamlets that we passed were pleasant resting-places, and as we halted under the welcome shade of the foliage, the natives rarely failed to hasten out and bring fresh plantains for our refreshment.

At Bongwa we made a halt for a whole day, for the purpose of giving the smiths an opportunity of working, as it was necessary for our copper bars to be transformed into some thousands of rings. For my own part I found ample employment in sketching, and in adding what I could to my store of curiosities. The victualling of the caravan, moreover, had become a matter of increased difficulty; it was now the season for planting out, and all the roots and tubers which the natives had spared from the preceding year had just been put into the ground, so that there was a general scarcity of provisions; a fact that was brought home to our own experience, when we found that the yams that were supplied to us had already commenced throwing out their fresh sprouts.

Retracing our former track we crossed by fording the six approximate streams that it may be remembered I noticed on our advance. On our arrival at Nembey's residence, we at once found shelter in the camp-huts that had been erected at our last visit, and which were still in a very fair state of preservation. I took a long ramble and made a careful inspection of the plantations of sugar-cane in the adjoining wildernesses upon the river-banks; my first impression was that the canes were a rank spontaneous growth, but I was distinctly and repeatedly assured that they were nowhere, by

any chance, found wild, and would not thrive without the aid of man.

Wando's territory was before us. It now became a matter of serious consideration how our progress across that hostile district should be accomplished. Mohammed's first suggestion was that we should take a circuitous route far to the east, and then that he should himself return with his armed forces strengthened by a complement from his head Seriba on the Nabambisso, and thus proceed to rescue the store of ivory that had been entrusted to Wando's care. To this scheme no doubt there were various objections. The new route would be entirely unknown to the Nubians, and as, beyond a question, it would lead across wildernesses utterly void of any population, the caravan would necessarily have to endure no small measure of privation. In any case trustworthy guides would be necessary in order that the caravan might arrive at its destination in any seasonable time. Notwithstanding all difficulties, Mohammed resolved to attempt to penetrate to the eastern Monbutto country, although for this purpose we should be obliged to recross the Keebaly. Nembey was tributary to Degberra, the king of the eastern Monbutto, and it had been necessary for Mohammed thus to proceed in the first place to his village; the fact being that the enmity between Munza and Degberra was so bitter that there was no possibility of passing *directly* from the territory of one to that of the other. We started accordingly, and the whole train having crossed the brook Kussumbo, we turned to the south-east along an open steppe, and proceeded for about half a league until we reached a deep hollow from which there issued one of the smaller tributaries of the Kussumbo. This hollow was formed by one of the landslips so common in this part of Africa, caused by the gradual washing away from below of the ferruginous swamp-ore, which was here at least 50 feet thick. The depth of the defile itself was about 80 feet; its sides were enveloped

in dense bushes, and the masses of rock which were quite homogeneous were adorned with a covering of hitherto unknown fern of the genus *adiantum*, which, in spots like this, clothes the reeking stones with a complete down of feathery fronds.

Another half league across the steppe and I was surprised to find that we were on the banks of a copious river that about eight miles to the south-west joined the Keebaly. Astonished at the sight of the rushing waters I turned to my Monbuttoo guide, and, availing myself of the few words in his dialect with which I was familiar, I asked him "*Na eggu rukodassi?*" (What do you call that river?) From his reply I discovered that it was the Kahpily, not the Keebaly. The similar sound of the names of these two collateral streams warned me afresh how carefully the traveller should render the names of rivers which he hears; time passes on and the names of places are changed with their chiefs, but the names of their rivers are handed on by the Africans from generation to generation as long as their language and nationality remain unaltered;\* only where these change do the names of the rivers fall into oblivion. The Kahpily has a rapid current from north-east to south-west; its depth here was only 4 feet, but its bed, 40 feet in width, and its steep rocky walls, 40 feet in height, demonstrated that this important stream must be subject to a considerable increase in its volume. In my own mind I was convinced that all these rivers, meeting within so limited an area, must have their sources in some mountain region at no great distance, little

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\* It may be objected that this theory does not hold good for many parts of Central Africa. Barth (vol. iii., p. 266) gives twelve instances to prove that all the tribes of the Central Soudan have no other distinctions for any of their streams beyond the general terms of "water" or river. But I must be permitted to urge that the Arabs of the Eastern Soudan have their Atbara, Sobat, &c. At any rate, the people amongst whom I travelled, especially the Niam-niam and the Monbuttoo, formed remarkable exceptions, for they invariably gave all localities the names of the adjacent rivers or brooks.



as the aspect of the surrounding country seemed to warrant the supposition. It was evident to my mind that the Kahl-pily must rise near the source-streams of the Dyoor, and from a mountain-chain extending to the south-east from Baginze, a district which would appear to be the nucleus of a whole series of source-streams that flow thence to the north and west.

While the caravan was being carefully conducted across the river by means of an immense stem of a tree that stretched over from bank to bank, I enjoyed a refreshing bath in the foaming waters. Proceeding next in the direction of E.S.E., we passed over a level steppe. As we approached the river that next intercepted us we found that we were on the recent track of a lion; the vestiges in the red clay were all so well-defined that the natives, with their keen hunting instinct, pronounced without hesitation that they had been made by an aged male. The steppes extend for a long distance along the right bank of the Keebaly without being relieved by human habitations, and the district naturally abounds with game. Herds of leucotis antelopes animated the plain and tempted me to devote an hour to the chase. Drenched with perspiration, almost as if I were in the tumult of a battle, and aimlessly following the impulse of the moment, I pushed my way through the tall savannah-grass. Hunting in Africa may be fairly described to be one continual whirl and scramble; the very abundance of game confuses the vision; one object of attraction rises rapidly after another, and baffles any attempt at deliberation. After considerable perseverance I succeeded in bringing down a buck antelope, much to the astonishment of the natives, who were watching my movements from the road, and persisted to the last in questioning the efficiency of my firearms. I hit a second antelope, but did not kill it. It was pursued by the natives for many miles, and only just before sunset did they succeed in surrounding it so that they

could despatch it by means of their lances. In the middle of the night I was called up, and naturally supposed that something serious had transpired, but I soon discovered that the reason why my rest had been disturbed was merely that I might be shown the mark of my bullet in the animal's thigh. The men insisted upon my feeling the depth of the wound with my finger, and seemed unable to comprehend that they were showing me nothing that was new.

A little rivulet, called the Kambeley, wound down a hollow incline of which the sides were indented with many a vale of different level. The sides of the hollow were covered for a considerable height with a tangled jungle from which the great leaves of the trumpet-tree (*Cecropia*) rose like brilliant fans; and interwoven amongst its thickets there was a new species of palm, something akin to the rotang, of which every leaf terminated in a long spray, armed with prickles, like a pike-hook. From this palm the Monbuttoo cut canes as thick as their arms, which are reputed to be so difficult to break that they are not unfrequently used as a criterion in testing strength. Above the primeval wood the narrow valley was crowned with a number of small and graceful huts. Altogether the spot was so romantic and wild, and yet withal it had an air of so much snug and cosy comfort, that it seemed to entice one to choose it for his home.

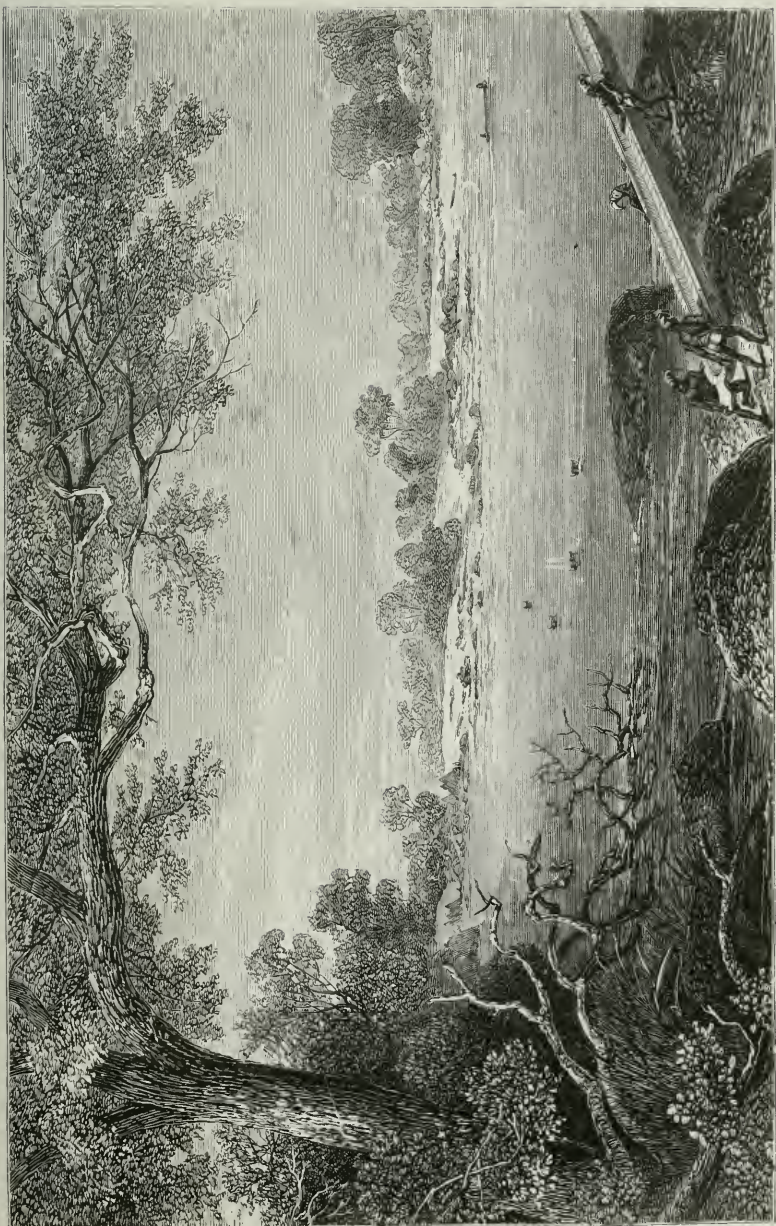
At this point our caravan was joined by a party of people sent by Kubby, one of Degberra's sub-chieftains, from beyond the Keebaly, to open ivory transactions with Mohammed, a circumstance that boded us no good, and forbade us from being in any way sanguine of a hospitable reception from Kubby. This half-way meeting was only a blind; it was a pretext to prevent us from alleging that his subsequent refusal to allow us to cross the river was actuated by any hostile motive. An African chief always likes to have a loophole as long as it is doubtful whether peace is preferable to war.

The ground, with its continual indentations, slanted gradually downwards as we approached the great river. Several ravines and clefts with their flowing source-springs had to be traversed before we reached the river bank, and even then, with the roar of the cataract close beside us, we were obliged to trace and retrace our steps up and down the shore before we could find a suitable place for an encampment.

At this date (April 18th) the Kcebaly filled a bed more than 1200 feet in width. The main current followed the left or southern shore, along which a great bank of guciss lay exposed, now stretched out in wide flats, and now piled up in countless fragments like huge lumps of ice. The extreme height of this bank never exceeded fifty feet, while the northern bank, on which we had our station, was covered with the most splendid forest and rose to a height of at least a hundred feet. Higher up, the stream was parted into numerous channels, and amidst these was a profusion of woody islands, against which the foaming waters broke, throwing the sparkle of their spray into the darkness of the thicket.\* The channels appeared to be all quite navigable, although the sound of the rapids could be distinctly heard. "Kissingah" is the general name by which these rapids are distinguished; but the Monbuttoo are accustomed simply to refer to them as "the islands." We could observe the conical roofs of the fishing-huts peeping out from amidst the foliage, and noticed the canoes of the unfriendly natives darting rapidly across from one islet to another. Not one, however, of these fishing-boats came near us; nor was there the least indication of the coming of any of Kubby's messengers to assist us in our passage across the stream. We became aware only too soon of a resolution to obstruct our progress, the cause of which was readily to be explained.

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\* The accompanying drawing, taken on the spot, will convey a correct idea of the scene.



VIEW ON THE KEEBALY, NEAR KUBBY.







Poncet's (subsequently Ghattas's) company had a Seriba in Kubby's district, and the Nubians who had been left in charge had succeeded in inducing the chief to refuse us the assistance of his boats, for no other reason whatever than that they feared Mohammed's competition with themselves, and that they were eager to monopolize the entire ivory-trade of the district.

For the next day we waited on. No boats arrived. This waste of time suited the plans neither of Mohammed nor of myself. Our provisions, moreover, were getting low. There was no prospect of revictualling. Accordingly our resolution was taken: without delay we would return to Nembey.

During the day of indecision, I exerted myself as best I could to explore the wildernesses of the Keebaly. My attention was chiefly attracted by a fragrant crinum, in shape and size resembling a white lily. The diversity of the trees seemed almost endless, and I was especially amazed at the variety of the anonaceæ and fig-trees, of which I found little short of forty species.

An infallible proof of the size and copiousness of the river was afforded by the number of hippopotamuses that were floundering about. I amused myself by clambering along the smooth rocks that projected into the water, and testing my bullets on the hides of the unwieldy brutes; having an ample store of ammunition, for which there did not seem to be much demand in the way of regular hunting, I fired away over the surface of the water, for the hour together. My sport created a vivid sensation amongst the natives upon the opposite bank, for although they had the prudence to keep carefully out of sight, they could not resist surreptitiously spying at our camp from behind their bushes; they manifested their surprise at the enormous range covered by my rifles, being acquainted only with the guns of the Nubians, the best of which could not carry half the distance.

The waters of the Keebaly have the repute of affording a

home to a very remarkable animal that has never been observed in any of the streams that rise from the Nile basin. The Nubians, who have a habit of calling anything with which they are not familiar by whatever name may come uppermost at the moment, have given this animal the designation of a "Kharoof-el-bahr," or river-sheep; they describe it in such a way that there can be little doubt that it is a manatus or lamantin (probably *M. Vogellii*), which is so frequently found in the rivers of Western Africa that flow into the Atlantic. My short and unsettled sojourn on the Keebaly prohibited me from securing, out of these tropical source-streams, a specimen of this strange representative of the Sirenia family.

I am perfectly certain that if Mohammed had pleased he could have forced his way across the river. The dexterous Nubians had but to swim over with their guns upon their heads, and they could readily have taken possession of the canoes which, too large and cumbrous to be transported by land, were concealed in the thickets upon the opposite shore. I merely mention this to illustrate my opinion that, with a company of Nubians, the great African rivers in themselves offer no insuperable obstacles to a resolute traveller.

As already affirmed, the Keebaly is to be considered as the main stream of the river that, in its lower course, is known as the Welle. Before quitting it we may do well to give our brief attention to the geographical questions that are associated with this discovery.

In the accounts collected from his agents, and published by Poncet, the river is called the Boora or Baboora;\* but as I never heard this name, I can only surmise that Poncet's informants had somehow misunderstood or misinterpreted the regular name Keebaly or Keebary. In the same way I

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\* In many Central African dialects, such as the Baghirmy and Bongo, the monosyllable "ba" means "river."

never heard anything of a king mentioned under the name of Kagooma, or of a tribe called the Onguroo. The Nubians seem never to recollect the native names of rivers, and invariably pronounce all names whatever most incorrectly; the information derived from that quarter is of little value to the geographer, and it is very much to be regretted that the most travelled and experienced leaders of the Khartoom expeditions should have failed so much in acquiring definite details; had it been otherwise, their knowledge would have been of great assistance in laying down more complete and accurate maps of the country.

The probability that the Keebaly and the Welle are identical with the upper course of the Shary appears to become at once almost a positive certainty when we ask the counter-question, "If this is not the Shary, whence does the Shary come?" All that we know and all that we do not know about the north and north-western districts conspire to satisfy us that in that direction there is neither a sufficient reservoir, nor an adequate space, for the development of a network of streams large enough to form a river which is half a mile broad at its mouth, and which fills a lake as large as the whole of Belgium. The waters of the Welle, however, do not rise till April, while the Shary occasionally rises in March. In order to explain this earlier rising of the lower river, we seem to be compelled to adopt the supposition that there must be some *second* main stream which issues from a latitude more southerly than the Keebaly. Quite insignificant are the two affluents, the Nalobey and the Nomayo, which the river receives on the left from the south of Munza's territory.

There can be little doubt about the real origin of the Keebaly. Although, as delineated on my map, the river has a position as though it issued directly from the north-west angle of the Mwootan Lake (Albert Nyanza), nothing was more remote from my intention than to jump to such a

precipitate conclusion; there was nothing either in the nature of the river and its tributaries, or in the information received from the various natives, which could, in any way, justify such a hypothesis. On the contrary, I am quite convinced of the correctness of Baker's statement. I entirely concur with his view that Lake Mwootan is the great basin of the Nile, and that the Bahr-el-Gebel is its only outlet. That Lake Mwootan, simply on account of its abundance of water, must necessarily have *several* outlets, and that the Ayi (the river which Baker calls the Ye) is one of those outlets, is only a geographical chimera which, in the Old World at least, has no analogy, and which would only be admitted to the theories of *dilettanti*. According to Baker's measurement Lake Mwootan (Albert Nyanza) is 2720 feet above the level of the sea. But by comparing the rapids of the Keebaly with the height of Munza's residence (2707 feet), which has been verified by the most rigid scientific appliances, I have ascertained that they are almost on the same level as the lake. The river and the lake being thus at the same altitude constitutes decisive evidence that the Keebaly does not issue from the lake, from which it is distant about 170 miles.

All the rivers that were embraced within the compass of my journey appeared to me to have their source in the spur of the Galla-Abyssinian highlands, through which the Bahr-el-Gebel passes in the Madi country. Those which belong to the Nile system would seem to spring from the mountains of Koshi on the north of Lake Mwootan, whilst those which are tributary to the Shary have their source in what Baker designates the Blue Mountains, which he observed to the north-west of the lake. Including the Mfumbiro group on the north of Lake Tanganyika—that group which under Speke's name of "the Mountains of the Moon," has obtained a certain geographical notoriety—this mountain system apparently forms a section of that conspicuous terrace-chain

which (with the only exceptions of the Niger source-territory and the lofty isolated coast ranges by the equator) divides the continent of Africa, not according to the prevailing idea into a northern and southern, but into an eastward and westward half of highland and lowland. The highland embraces a large number of inland lakes, some of which allow their waters to escape most diffusely, whilst others appear to have no outlet at all. Many of these lakes are found close to the western ridge of the high ground. Besides the Keebaly, the Lualaba amongst other rivers may be named as forcing its way through the mountains of Rua, and apparently flowing in a westerly direction towards the lowland. If we imagine a prolonged line to cut the entire continent from Massowa to Mossamedes, it would coincide almost precisely with the terrace-chain of which I have spoken; it would answer very much to a corresponding line of division between the highlands and lowlands of South America which, like an Africa turned right over, has its coast-chain on the western side.

Nurtured as I had been upon the banks of the Dūna, my earliest memories were associated with the aspect of a majestic river with its foaming waves, and it was consequently with no ordinary pleasure that I gazed upon this stream which hitherto no white man had ever beheld. I retain the most vivid recollection of the last evening that I spent upon the banks of the Keebaly, when both time and place contributed to provoke a geographical discussion. The Nubians are always ready to talk about rivers. They will enlarge freely upon their source, their aspect, and their connection; but, carried away by their imagination, they never fail to represent their own incomparable Nile as *par excellence* the river of rivers, the very spring and reservoir of all the goodliest waters of the earth. A compendium of all their geographical delusions would form an interesting study, and might furnish a key to many antiquated traditions. It is well known that



the Nubians and Arabians always give the name of "island" to the projecting point of land which lies at the confluence of any two rivers; thus Sennaar would be described as the "island" between the White and the Blue Nile; and it was in the same sense that the ancients applied the name to Meroë, the land between the Nile and the Atbara. It is a matter of remark again that the Nubians are accustomed to invert, as it were, the upward and downward courses of a stream, and to describe the confluence of two rivers as the separation of the main stream into two branches. This habit may possibly account for the frequent mention of "arms" in all their descriptions of their rivers: it is in accordance moreover with the practice of the ancients, who referred to the junction of the White and Blue Nile at Khartoom as a partition of the entire stream, "*ubi Nilus iterum bifurcus*;" a notion probably only derived from the habitual expressions of the natives which would thus appear to have remained unaltered for many centuries.

A corresponding difference between the Nubian mode of expression and our own is observable in all their allusions to the motions of rivers, and they would speak, for example of the Nile as going *towards*, and not as descending *from* the mountains. On the bank of the Keebaly I sat discussing the topic of river-systems with Mohammed Aboo Sammat and his people; but as we argued over the many hydrographical problems that were yet unsolved I detected him in the most flagrant contradictions. At length, losing my patience, I desired him to show me with his hand which way he supposed the Keebaly to flow; the whole party simultaneously motioned towards the east, and turning to the west declared that that was the direction from which the river came. Startled from my composure, I rated them soundly upon their inconsistencies. "Why, you Mussulmen," I said, "twist and turn everything upside down. We can comprehend you in nothing. What is sin with us is righteousness

with you. The day you call night.\* In your Ramadan, *you* fast during the daytime ; *we* do all our fasting at night. Go to a strange place and you expect the people to be the first to visit you. Go to a feast and you take the place of the host, and treat the servants to their beer. Your bridegrooms, too, you make them pay for their brides instead of taking them with a dowry of their own. You talk of what is 'pure and impure;' but for yourselves you are always dirty. Your names for colour are contradictions ; 'akhdar' is green and grey ; 'azrak' is both blue and black. You call your drums trumpets;† and your trumpets drums.‡ In bed you wrap up your heads and leave your feet uncovered. To tell the truth, I could go on and enumerate a hundred of your vagaries, and I can only wonder that you do not stand on your heads and eat with your feet." The incredible confusion in the ideas of this people involves the traveller in continual tedious explanations. Speke § complains in the same way about the geographical blunders of his retinue.

We made our way back to Nembey by the same route that we had come. Before regaining the place we very narrowly escaped coming into collision with the inhabitants of some hamlets through which we passed. The entire caravan for some days past had been placed upon reduced rations, and when some of the bearers caught sight of the manioc roots that had been planted close to the dwellings, the temptation of pulling them up was too great to be resisted. The women were highly indignant, assailed the offenders lustily, and shrieked at them with the loudest imprecations. The caravan came to a standstill. As those in the rear never knew what was happening in front, Mohammed, attended by his body-guard, hurried up to inquire into the cause of the disturbance. Having ascertained the circumstances, he came to

\* Referring to the Soudan Arabic word "to-day," which is literally "in the night."

† Drombeta.

‡ Tamboor.

§ Vide 'Speke's Journal,' p. 90.

the resolution that it would be his best policy to make an example of the thieves. Accordingly he gave his instructions, and the delinquents received a sound thrashing with the kurbatch, while the injured women looked on with mingled satisfaction and derision.

On arriving at Nembey we found our grass camp-huts in flames, the inhabitants having set fire to them as a token of their sense of having had enough of our company. They had evidently no wish for us to tarry among them any longer. Without halting, therefore, we continued our march, recrossed the Kussumbo, and, towards dark, reached the last of the villages before the frontier wilderness, where I and my people found comfortable accommodation in a large shed belonging to the local chief. We were here informed that Wando was bent upon our destruction, the entire population of the frontier being already in arms, and the women and children having been removed to a place of safety.

Mohammed by this time had been driven, however unwillingly, to the conclusion that he had neither competent guides nor adequate provisions to enable him to carry out his original project of avoiding the enemy's territory by taking a circuitous route to the east. There was no alternative for us except to continue our old road over the wilderness that bounded the frontier. Meanwhile, repeated showers of rain had fallen, and had contributed very much to the difficulty of crossing the swamps by making them unusually humid. So much time was occupied in conveying the caravan across the brook that bounded the Monbutto district that I had leisure to make a sketch of the gallery-forest, which, however, very inadequately represents the splendour of its luxuriance.\*

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\* The annexed woodcut is too minute to represent the details, but it may give some idea of the plantain-groves in the obscurity of these forests. The cumbrous stems are thickly overgrown with wild pepper, and the spreading branches are loaded with long bead moss (*Usnea*), and with that remarkable









The sun was still high when we made our first camp in the wilderness. We were upon the third of the gallery-brooks. Since our former visit new blossoms had unfolded themselves, and seemed to give a fresh aspect to the scene. In every quarter of the thickets, gleaming like torches, there rose the imposing clusters of the combretum, with its large bright-red bractæ; and, as if to rival them in splendour, every branch of the spathodea put forth a *thyrsus* of large orange-coloured balls.

In the midst of my enjoyment, as I was admiring the beauties all around me, I was startled by a cry, like a shout of triumph, that came from a party of our negroes who were scouring the woods in the hope of securing something good to eat. I hurried in the direction of the sound, and found the men all clustered round the stem of a tree, to which they were busily applying firebrands. Having discovered a quantity of honey in a hollow tree, they adopted the most effectual measures to secure their treasure, and very soon the honey, the wax, and the very bodies of the bees themselves were indiscriminately devoured. If any one could persuade the inhabitants of Central Africa to desist from their habit of consuming this wax, he would do no small service towards accelerating the civilization of the continent. At present, with the exception of ivory, no article of traffic from these districts repays its transport: but the inexhaustible supply of wax from these districts might be made the object of a productive trade. Hitherto Abyssinia and Benguela have been the only countries that have supplied any considerable quantities of this valuable product; yet the demand for real beeswax in the lands alone that are

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lichen to which I have given the name of elephant's ear: high among the boughs are the huge dwellings of the tree-termes. Some stems, already decayed, serve as supports for immense garlands of *Mucuna*, and, overhung by impenetrable foliage, form roomy bowers where dull obscurity reigns supreme. Such is the home of the chimpanzee.

subject to the orthodox Greek Church, where it is the only material allowed for church lights, is almost unbounded.

The ruins of the grass-huts beside the broad meadow-water brought back to our recollection the melancholy night of rain which we had to endure upon our outward journey. The spot was, if possible, more miserable and dejected now. Neither leaves nor grass could be obtained in sufficient quantity for our need. Trees had to be felled to make a path across the swamp, and even then, go carefully as we would, the mud was much above our knees. If the enemy had been sagacious enough to attack us under those adverse circumstances, we should have fallen an easy prey.

In another two days we should pass the enemy's border. The very expectation seemed to awaken our impatience, and we started off at early dawn. Already we could trace the footprints of our antagonists' outposts, who had been seen some distance along the road to watch for our approach. Towards noon we came to the official declaration of war, consisting, as I have previously described, of the maize, the feather, and the arrow, hung across our path, as the emblems of defiance. There was something of the anxiety of suspense as we found ourselves at the partition brook which marked off Wando's territory. Aware of the danger of venturing rashly into the pathless thickets, our cautious leader ordered a general halt. Small detachments were first despatched to reconnoitre and to clear the way. As soon as they had satisfied themselves that all was safe, the signal was given by the trumpets, and the column of bearers was set in motion. The crowd of women were not permitted to march as usual in single file, but for the sake of compactness were gathered in a mass and strode on, trampling down whatever vegetation came in their way; the chaos of confusion was indescribable; the shrill chatter of their voices mingled harshly with the clatter of their pots and pans; while above all rose the bellowing of the orders and the louder

volley of the oaths of the Nubians, who marched on with their guns in one hand, but making good use of their rods and kurbatches with the other.

Safely through the wood, we reached an open steppe. We were in sight of the enemy's position, and once again a halt was called. The occasional gleaming of a spear in the grass, or the waving of a plume upon a Niam-niam's hat, made us aware that we were not far from the presence of the foe. They seemed to be in a wide semicircle, that embraced the front of our halting-ground. There was, however, something in their demeanour that appeared to indicate a desire on their part for a parley. The interpreters therefore were sent forward, the trumpeter Inglerly at their head; Mohammed himself soon followed, and a conference ensued. The natives all this time took careful cognizance of the range of the Khartoomers' guns, and did not seem disposed to approach nearer than was requisite to understand what was said.

As the parley proceeded, and we saw the parties approximate nearer to each other, we began to expect a favourable termination of the interview. It turned out that the men with whom Mohammed was treating were representatives of the districts adjoining the A-Madi, the Nabanda Yuroo. They declared that though they were subject to Wando they had really no share in his hostile intentions; they were anxious to guard themselves against the mischief that might befall them from their proximity to the scene of war, and consequently were only pleading "for their hearths and homes." Mohammed was inclined to listen to their plea, although he was reckoning without his host. Meanwhile some of the actual belligerents arrived, and professed that they could give us a safe conduct across the country, declaring that they were well aware where Wando had deposited Mohammed's ivory, and upon these pretexts they urged Mohammed to accept them as guides.

I could not resist making my way up to Mohammed as he

stood surrounded by his guard, and giving his instructions to the interpreters, in order that I might point out to him the advantage of his position. I wanted him to understand how much better it would be to secure all these men as hostages than to trust to their promises and proposals; but he made light of my apprehensions, affirming that savages were all cowards and afraid of war, and that he had no doubt everything would come right at last.

Without further delay the A-Banga were then permitted to escort us to their villages on the other side of the brook, where, in spite of the suspicious absence of all the women and children, we received an abundant supply of provisions, and I was presented with a good store of the flesh of some eland-antelopes, which the natives had killed on the day before. In reality, these people amply deserved a thorough chastisement at our hands for the massacre of our women slaves during our outward journey, but Mohammed, under the hope of obtaining a safe transit and recovering his ivory, thought it more diplomatic to overlook the offence.

Before sunrise next morning all were in readiness to proceed. The day proved to myself to be one of the few unlucky days that marred the general good fortune that attended my enterprise. A slight mishap befell me in crossing the first brook, which was but the precursor of a more serious trouble to come. In crossing a swamp I fell into a deep quagmire, from which I scrambled out with everything upon me except my hat covered with the blackest and filthiest of mire. With all my might I shouted to my servants to bring me clean dry clothes. My outcry raised an alarm that spread to the rear. There arose an impression that I had been wounded, and in a short time half the caravan had crowded round. Order having been restored, we proceeded on our way, deviating, however, a little from our previous route, and passing numerous villages and cultivated spots. Owing to irregularities in the soil our caravan became somewhat broken,

and it was deemed advisable to make a halt near the huts of the next local overseer, for the double purpose of gathering the stragglers, and of allowing an interval for the morning meal.

Starting afresh, Mohammed led the way. He was himself unarmed, but he was attended by his young armour-bearers, and followed by a detachment of his black body-guard. Next in order and close behind were the men whose mediation and offers of guidance had yesterday been accepted. Somehow or other I could not get rid of my presentiment that these fellows were not to be trusted, and accordingly, contrary to my custom, I took good care to keep my trusty rifle in my hand. It struck me as very remarkable that in the villages which we passed the men, women, and children were all assembled in crowds, and calmly watched our progress, just as though there was no rumour or thought of war.

After about half a league I was at the head of a column of bearers, but I had fallen some hundred paces behind Mohammed. All at once several shots fired in rapid succession made me aware that something unusual had happened in front. Looking to the right I saw some natives rushing away at full speed across the steppes; a hasty fire was opened upon the fugitives, and their savage yells of pain betrayed that some of them were wounded, although they contrived to make good their escape. Another moment and I caught sight of Mohammed being carried back towards us with a broad streak of blood across his white sash, and close beside were the two little armour-bearers writhing with their faces to the ground, their backs pierced by the native lances. It was a ghastly sight. Dashing up to Mohammed I ripped up his clothes, and discovered at a glance that my poor friend had received a deep spear-cut in his thigh. I did not lose an instant in adopting what measures I could. As fate would have it, I had a box of insect needles in my pocket. Water, of which we were always careful to have a supply,



was close at hand. Mohammed's own muslin scarf was just the thing for a bandage. Having carefully been washed, and then bound together with half-a-dozen of the strongest of the pins, and finally enveloped in the scarf and tied with yarn, the gaping wound was completely dressed, and began to heal almost as soon as it was closed.

The sad event had occurred in this way. One of the pretended guides forced his way between Mohammed and his young shield-bearers, and brandishing his lance cried out, "The people of Yuroo are for peace; *we* are for war." Mohammed instinctively made a sidelong movement to escape the falling blow, and thus probably saved his life. Meanwhile the other natives attacked the boys and stabbed them between the shoulders. Although Mohammed had escaped the direct blow that was designed, the huge lance, with its head a foot and a half in length, had sunk deep into his flesh. With the fortitude of desperation he dragged the murderous weapon from the wound, hurled it after the fugitive assassin, and then fell senseless to the earth. The injury caused by the barbs of the spear (which were an inch long) was miserably aggravated by the impetuous fury with which the weapon was extracted. The wound was broad and deep enough to admit my whole hand, and had only just escaped the kidney, which was visible through the open flesh.

In their first surprise at the sudden attack, Mohammed's personal retinue had fired almost at random after the fugitive traitors; but as their guns were only loaded with deer-shot, they for the most part hit the enemy without killing them. Immediately upon this there ensued a general chase, and during the time that I was engaged in binding up Mohammed's wound, I could hear the reports of firearms along the whole line of our procession.

And now again a halt was ordered, the columns of bearers were collected, their loads were deposited in piles upon the

ground, and the signal was given for a general plunder. Joyfully enough was the order hailed; it was especially welcome to the hungry Bongo after their scanty fare on the previous days.

As a proof that the natives were in league together, I noticed that directly after the treacherous attack upon Mohammed, all spectators disappeared from the road; and although the Nubians, considering themselves perfectly justified in taking what slaves they could, went in pursuit of women and children, I did not see that their exertions were attended with any success. They secured a number of unfortunate boys, but they let them loose again, persecuting them with gun-shot and lances as they took to flight. The air rung with their shrieks, and it was only the long grass, I cannot doubt, that prevented my seeing not a few of these undeserving victims sink and die upon the earth.

Within an hour not only were the granaries of the villages around so effectually ransacked that abundance of corn was piled up around our quarters, but the villages themselves were involved in flames. With an expedition quite astonishing, the conical roofs were removed from the nearest huts and employed in the construction of an improvised camp for ourselves, which was subsequently surrounded by a substantial abattis. The woodwork from the adjacent dwellings furnished the material for this defence, which we presumed might be necessary in case of attack.

Meantime our fighting force was adequate to keep the natives, who had assembled to do battle with us as intruders, at a safe distance from our camp, where our own negroes were busily storing whatever they had captured. While this was going on some of the fighting men came in, and approaching their chieftain, who, wrapped in wet bandages, was reclining on a couch beneath a tree, laid at his feet their first trophies of war, consisting of several heads of the A-Banga. It was in the first excitement of battle that

these heads had been taken off the bodies of the fallen, and in revenge for the slaughterous attack upon Mohammed; but throughout the whole period of hostility, although some twenty natives were killed, this was the first and last instance that came under my notice of the barbarous custom. All the negroes attached to our caravan had a superstitious horror of the practice of decapitating the dead, and the Nubians would have deemed themselves defiled by touching the corpse of a heathen. As no value appeared in any quarter to be attached to the heads I appropriated them to myself, and was thus able to add to the variety of my collection of skulls.

The scene of these adventures was within gunshot of a bank thicket, through the deep hollow of which flowed a copious brook that a little farther north joined the Assika. On the opposite bank, which was considerably higher than the side on which we were encamped, there were several groups of hamlets scattered about the open plain, and between these numbers of armed men could be distinguished hurrying about, the precise object of whose activity we were at a loss to determine. Amongst the Nubians who were with us were some of the stoutest and most resolute men in the whole of Aboo Sammat's corps, and these had come to the resolution that they would force their way through the natives who might be hidden in the jungle, cross the brook, and carry an attack over to the opposite bank. All the ivory that had been purchased on the outward route and deposited in the land seemed to be in peril of being lost, and it was the conviction of the Nubians that their only chance now of recovering their property was by capturing some of the native women, who would have to be redeemed. Things seemed to promise favourably for the undertaking. The soil was suitable, the network of brooks and trenches interspersed with grass plots opened certain facilities for encompassing an adversary, and if the Nubians had acted

with greater determination they could hardly have failed in securing the desired hostages, but the passage across the woods on the river-banks was their first difficulty. They had to contend at a great disadvantage, for they could only squander their bullets uselessly or at random among the trees; while the natives from their lurking-places could do good and sure execution with their spears and arrows.

I accompanied our party of assailants for some distance, and had a better opportunity than had ever presented itself before of observing the effect of the native arrows. The arrows that had wooden heads I observed to have a range of at least 300 paces, and to fall with scarcely a sound; such as had iron tips on the contrary came whizzing through the air, but would not carry half the distance; these appeared only to be used when the natives felt tolerably sure of their aim.

The A-Banga have a war-dress and equipments that would seem to be entirely derived from the Monbutto: they dance and jump about behind the bushes as if they were taking part in a pantomime, generally trying to keep a crouching posture, and only rising to discharge their arrows. The storm of arrows which they hurled against us as we advanced fell like strays from a waggon-load of straw, and yet our enemy could not be detected anywhere, excepting at intervals a form would be seen to rush across as it changed its place of ambush. Just at the beginning of the fray one of our side was struck by a wooden arrow in rather a remarkable way; the point, which was some inches long and as hard as iron, having caught the inner corner of his eye, remained sticking close to the side of the lachrymal cavity; the fellow roared out lustily, but he was found to have sustained no serious hurt. It was said that a casualty of this kind was by no means unusual, because the natives always aimed at the eye as the most vulnerable quarter; but as the arrows are very light, and have to describe a curve before they can reach

their mark, I should presume their destination is altogether a matter of chance.

On the border of the wood, close to the pathway as it emerged, some of the more courageous of the natives made a stand and received our people with gestures of defiance, brandishing their weapons, and tossing their plumed heads. From the thickets beyond, the war-cries of those who were less venturesome could be distinctly heard, and from the distance, beyond again, resounded the clang of the kettledrums. One of the savages sprang forward towards us, and holding up his shield denounced us with a volley of maddened imprecations. A bullet quickly pierced alike his shield and his breast, and he sank mute and senseless to the earth. A second ventured forward, but only to succumb to the same fate. Then the savages thought it was time to retreat, and accordingly wheeling round they disappeared into the obscurity of the wood, where the rustle of the foliage gave witness to a general flight. Now was the opportunity to cross, of which the Nubians took advantage, but though they reached the farmsteads without opposition they could only fire into the air without an aim, as though they were greeting the new moon after the fast of Ramadan.

For myself curiosity alone had led me on. I had no warlike ardour, I had no feeling of vengeance against the natives, and consequently I took no personal share in this mild skirmish, but those who were present delighted afterwards in telling wonderful stories of the daring prowess I had displayed in penetrating the enemy's ranks. Such reports often follow a traveller's reputation for years, and whoever repeats them is pretty sure to append some marvel of his own fancy. "*When fame paints a serpent, she attaches feet to its body.*"

The savages had no idea of the velocity of a bullet; they invariably ducked their heads as often as they could hear a ball whistling in the air; and it was a very ludicrous spec-







tacle when hundreds of black heads that had been peeping from behind the trees would simultaneously disappear.

By sundown the whole region about us was clear of the enemy, and as darkness came on the bearers returned within the shelter of our abattis, laden richly with spoils that they had secured in the adjacent villages. Sentries and watch-fires were established, and the night was passed in a stillness that was rarely broken by a stray and distant shot. With the exception of a few Bongo-bearers who, yielding to their marauding propensities, had pushed too far into the hamlets, we had suffered no loss. Two of the Nubians, however, had received severe lance-wounds, and had to be carried back to the camp on litters.

It was currently reported among the natives that Mohammed was mortally wounded. Encouraged by the accession of fresh contingents during the night, they once again made the woods re-echo with their savage war-cries, amidst which could be heard the vilest and most abusive Arabic invectives that they seemed to have learnt for the mere purpose of vituperating their enemies. Mbahly's death, however, was the burden of their chorus. "Mbahly! Mbahly! Give us Mbahly. We want meat." Mohammed would not submit to these taunts. In spite of his weakness he insisted upon showing himself. With his wound firmly bandaged, he was conveyed beyond the camp to a white ant-hill, from whence he could be seen far around. For nearly a quarter of an hour he stood upon this elevation swinging his scimitar, and shouting with the full strength of his voice, "Here I am, Mbahly is not dead yet." He then challenged them to come with a hundred lances if they dare, and retorted upon them in jeering scorn their cry of, "Pushyo! pushyo!" (meat, meat), always using the Niam-niam dialect, in which he was tolerably fluent.\*

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\* In the woodcut that depicts this scene, the background gives a representation of the splendid forest scenery that marked the spot.

Mohammed was at once to be recognised by his Monbuttoo straw hat, with its bright-red feathers. Although all his compatriots would have considered it a degradation to adopt a savage costume, he always delighted, in these expeditions, to dress himself like a native chieftain. In order to give the natives a still further demonstration of his safety, in the course of the afternoon he made his nephew array himself in his own state attire, his flowing rokko-coat, and his stately plumes, and sent him to conduct a sally towards the north. This party, however, returned without coming to any engagement.

I spent the whole day in my own tent preparing the ammunition which I supposed would be requisite for my people if the state of warfare should last. Deer-shot, with some of a heavier description, I considered would be of the greatest service in the hands of unskilful marksmen. I had another occupation, which made me feel like a very Nemesis. I manipulated the heads of the A-Banga men which I had so recently appropriated. Probably with their own eyes these heads had watched the stewing of other human heads, but now they had to simmer on in my caldron. Although I was quite aware that the Nubians reckoned the bones of all heathens and unbelievers as entitled to no more respect than the bones of brute beasts, yet for decency's sake I preferred performing the operation in the seclusion of my tent. Notwithstanding that my dogs had not had any animal food for several days, they could not be induced to eat a morsel of the boiled human flesh.

Just as it was growing dark we were startled, if not alarmed, by the appearance of a great troop of natives. The attack was not made, as hitherto, from the dense dark woods at our feet, but proceeded from our old path upon the south. Only the foremost ranks were visible, the rear being hidden by the high grass and bushes; but the wild cries, like the howling of a coming storm, testified to the overwhelming



numbers of the aggressors. Half of our armed force issued from the camp in a compact line, and fired a volley straight upon the nearest of the assailants, five of whom were seen to fall dead upon the ground. The altered tone of the war-cry proved that many more were wounded, and as all the guns were loaded with a good handful of heavy shot this was sure to be the case; but this time the conflict came to such close quarters that two more of our men were severely wounded by the native lances. As soon as the attack was thus diverted, and the front ranks of the enemy began to retreat, the negroes of our caravan, who had been placed in reserve immediately behind the soldiers, started off at full speed in pursuit of the fugitives, and their lances made far greater havoc than all the bullets of the Nubians. Before leaving Munza's residence our bearers had all been provided with new weapons, and thus our little negro band was able to hold its own against greatly preponderating numbers of the enemy, who, I should imagine, were at least 10,000 strong.

The weight and diversity of the weapons of the A-Banga, added to the inconvenience of their costume, necessarily prevented them from making a rapid flight; they were consequently obliged to keep throwing off one impediment after another until the ground was strewn with shields, lances, clothes, and sometimes with their false chignons, ornaments and all. When the negroes returned to camp, bringing in their spoil and swinging the chignons on the points of their lances, they were greeted alike with the glad shout of triumph and the loud ring of laughter.

It was near midnight when the pursuers came back. They had prosecuted their chase to the frontier wilderness; they had found the villages all deserted by their inhabitants and had obtained such stores of plunder that enough was accumulated to keep our whole caravan for a month.

This had been the most energetic attack that the enemy had yet attempted; it was made exclusively by the A-Banga,



no Niam-niam having as yet appeared upon the scene. The arrival of Wando, with all his force, was expected the next day.

Early, therefore, on the following morning half of our little armament was sent forward to the north, not merely to anticipate any movement on Wando's part, but, if possible, to accomplish the object of obtaining some women as hostages, who might be exchanged for the still undiscovered ivory. Mohammed was annoyed at the previous failures to secure any women, knowing by experience that hardly any ransom is accounted too large by the Niam-niam for the recovery of their wives.

About two hours after the departure of our soldiers a singular sight arrested our attention. Marching along in single file upon the top of the opposite slope, which was separated from our camp by the woody depression and the brook, we saw a lengthened train of armed natives, who by their large quadrangular shields gleaming in the sun could be at once recognised as A-Banga. The procession seemed unending; it occupied fully three hours in passing, and at the lowest computation must have consisted of 10,000 or 12,000 men. It was at first the general impression that the chieftain had arrived with the main body of his troops. It was conjectured that he intended to make a circuit to the west, and, having crossed the brook, to attack us at nightfall from the same quarter as our assailants of the previous day. But our fears were not realised, and we remained utterly unable to reconcile the manœuvres we had witnessed with the absence of Wando, which was still a mystery to us, as he might have been joined by all his allies in the course of a single day. Everything, however, was made clear to us when our soldiers returned at night from their plundering expeditions. They told us that on arriving in the morning at the hamlets they had found the fighting force of the A-Banga all drawn up, evidently waiting in anxious suspense

for the assistance of Wando, but that on their approach this large body of men immediately vacated their post. Thus the long train that had caused us so much bewilderment was simply the 10,000 natives retreating at the advance of a detachment of forty or fifty of our soldiers.

Upon the gradual slope on which our camp-enclosure was situated, the white ant-hills, that often rise to an altitude of ten feet, were the only eminences whence any extended view could be obtained across the long grass of the steppe. These were nearly always occupied by the natives, who mounted them for the purpose of getting a better vantage-ground for shouting their menaces and invective insults, but occasionally they answered another end: they served to allow the outposts of the contending parties to hold communication with each other. Amongst Mohammed's trained soldiers he had no less than forty Niam-niam, who were very devoted to him. These would appear to have held some correspondence with the enemy, and from them we learnt that the A-Banga were greatly irritated at the conduct of Wando, who, after urging them to attack us, had left them in the lurch. They complained that all they had got from their acquiescence in his wish was that the "Turks" had killed their fellow-comrades and laid waste their land. Wando himself, they said, had had an unpropitious augury at the beginning of the fray, and, intimidated at the prospect, had abandoned his scheme; he had withdrawn to the recesses of the forest, and, in spite of the remonstrances of the A-Banga, he now refused to render them any aid.

The little wooden bench, the "boroo," which I have already described, was also consulted in our own camp. My two Niam-niam, who were no great heroes, although they had an almost unlimited confidence in Wando's power, had a still more unbounded reliance upon the answers of their wooden oracle. The test had been very unfavourable for one of them, but I was told that it had promised a safe escape for

myself, a circumstance that once again confirmed my people in their opinion of my unchangeable good luck. The A-Banga did indeed make an exception in my favour when they shouted their defiance from the ant-hills; the Turks, they vowed, should perish, but the white man might go scot-free, because it was the first time of his coming to their land. The quietness and retirement of my daily occupation, my interested delight in studying the peculiarities of those I saw, and perhaps, too, my reputation of being a harmless "leaf-eater," all seem to have conspired to gain me a general good-will.

Little Tikkitikki was perfectly unmoved by all the proceedings; he showed no sign of fear; he skipped about and played with the war-trophies; but chiefly he stuffed himself with sesame-pap, of which there was a lavish abundance at his disposal.

On the fourth morning the enemy had entirely vanished; the inhabitants, too, had all utterly gone. Throughout the period of warfare, the Nubians, neither in courage nor in endurance, had come out particularly strong. The main burden of the contest had fallen upon the "Farookh." As a matter of fact, however, the Nubian regulars and the black Farookh are equally indispensable to every commander of an expedition. The native soldiers may be the better shots, and they have the advantage of knowing the country more thoroughly and of being accustomed to the climate; moreover, on rainy days (when the Nubians would sit shivering in their huts) they will wrap their guns in their girdles and with the greatest alacrity go perfectly naked over wood and steppe to repel an advancing foe; but, at the same time, there is always the risk of their decamping at a moment's provocation,—a dilemma into which a commander would not be led by the Nubians, who would be afraid of deserting at such a distance from Khartoom. The Nubians, however, are much more often ailing; they are never per-

fectly tractable, having an unconquerable aversion to all restraint; they never showed themselves as remarkably valiant in our conflicts with the savages, and were in continual apprehension of being devoured. It was not so much death in itself of which they were afraid, as of being deprived of the rites of burial, which are prescribed in the Koran as indispensable for obtaining the palm of Paradise. The lack of a grave is abhorrent to the notions of every Mussulman, but the idea of being destined for the unclean stomach of a cannibal was intolerable.

Mohammed, encouraged by the favourable progress of his wound, now expressed his desire to quit our present quarters. I endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, and represented to him that, although the wound had closed without any suppuration, any exertion would have a tendency to open it afresh; but he persisted in his purpose, and determined upon being carried in a litter across the hostile territory. In consequence of the journey the complete healing was thrown back for a fortnight; but altogether I congratulated myself that my amateur surgery, which had hitherto been practised mainly on horses and mules, had proved so satisfactory.

By sunrise on the fifth morning after arriving at this inhospitable spot, our caravan was again in motion. The camp was burnt, and great heaps of corn, sesame, kindly, earthnuts, and other provisions, were scattered about, and as a matter of necessity left behind upon the ground, much to the chagrin of the bearers, who had once again to face the deprivations of the wilderness.

It was not without some confusion that we crossed the Assika. The way before us seemed clear of enemies, and our crowd moved fearlessly on amongst the thickets. The white ant-hills on the outskirts of the forest continued to afford admirable stations for reconnoitring, and for enabling the advanced party to announce that all was safe.

Quitting again our previous line of march, we continued our journey towards the north, and crossed three more brooks, each of them conducting us to a fresh grass plain. Once, just as we approached the edge of a gallery, we were assailed by a shower of arrows, but the volley of bullets that we sent in reply very quickly deterred the invisible foe from any further attack. No doubt the enemy were close enough upon us to make certain of their mark, as the number of iron-headed arrows was usually large; yet they did not succeed in inflicting a single serious wound. It happened fortunately that the bearers, who were more especially exposed to the arrows, were thrown into no disorder; they had had the careful protection of the Farookh, who had made a fresh path for themselves through the wood, on either side of the beaten track.

After passing the last of the three brooks which I have just mentioned, we came to a cultivated district, and as it was near midday we made a short halt beside the hamlets. The Bongo had now free scope for their destructive propensities; they proceeded to cut down the standing maize to their hearts' content; they not only plundered all within their reach, but laid waste the land in every direction. All the world over, war is ever war.

In ransacking the huts the plundering parties had had the luck to discover some of the missing ivory. A number of valuable tusks were recognized as being those which had been purchased from Wandø, by means of some incisions that Mohammed had made upon them; the magazines in which they were concealed being revealed by the cackling of a lot of hens down amongst some unthrashed eleusine. When the hens were found a quantity of eggs was found with them, and I was in consequence treated to a very choice breakfast. Eggs are very rare throughout the district, the Niam-niam hens being as niggardly with them as the Dinka cows are with their milk.



At noon the sun became overcast, and the whole sky veiled in a grey vapour that reminded one of a late autumn day in the north. A phenomenon then ensued which is by no means uncommon in these regions; the disk of the sun turned quite red, and was seen to be encircled by two distinct concentric halos, which in rings of shadowy brown embraced at least a third of the firmament above.

Turning to the E.S.E. we kept now to the right of the depression of the brook, passing numerous groups of huts upon our way. Isolated dome-palms (*Hyphæne thebaïca*), rare in the Niam-niam lands, reared themselves at intervals like landmarks on the route. Farther on we crossed the Diamvonoo, which flowed through a ravine precipitous and obscure, and subsequently, leaving the old road to the west, we had to ford a succession of gallery-brooks. We had already made our way through four of these, when on approaching to the fifth we caught sight of a number of natives who, surprised at our appearance, slunk away from their huts, and tried, like beasts of prey, to find a safe lurking-place in the adjacent thickets. The capture was effected here of two Niam-niam women. They were bringing water from the brook, and being espied by the advanced guard were soon secured and conducted to the caravan, where, after the failure of the previous days, their arrival was hailed with a shout of glee. The women themselves were perfectly composed, and apparently quite indifferent, making themselves at once thoroughly at home with such of their countrywomen as they found already in our train.

It was later than usual before we halted for the night, and our men were more than ordinarily fatigued. In consequence of this our camp was pitched with haste and carelessness. The weather turned out cold and very rainy; the ground became so soft and soddened that it would afford no hold for the tent-pegs; and so all prospect of rest had to be abandoned. Every moment the pole that upheld the frail shelter above

me threatened to give way. I held tightly on, and shouted through the commotion of the storm for my servants to make haste, and they only came in time to save me from a thorough drenching. This scene had to be repeated more than once.

It was touching, through the moaning of the wind, to catch the lamentations of the Niam-niam men bewailing the loss of their captured wives; cannibals though they were, they were evidently capable of true conjugal affection. The Nubians remained quite unaffected by any of their cries, and never for a moment swerved from their purpose of recovering the ivory before they surrendered the women.

Anxious next day to continue our course to the east we had to cross so many streams that they seemed to make a labyrinth of waters. The windings of the interlacing brooks and the network of entangled streams apparently corresponded almost precisely with what Livingstone describes as the hydrographical character of the country on the west of Lake Tanganyika, and which he has compared to frosted window panes in winter. This great explorer (who has been over at least a third of the vast continent of Africa) noticed a similar source-territory through which flowed the Lualaba,\* at that time quite an enigmatical stream. Its course, indeed, was towards the north, but Livingstone was manifestly in error when he took it for a true source of the Nile; a supposition that might have some semblance of foundation, originating in the inexplicable volume of the water of Lake Mwootan (Albert Nyanza), but which was negatived completely as soon as more ample investigation had been made as to the comparative level, direction, and connection of other rivers, especially of the Welle.

We now found ourselves in a locality with which our own Niam-niam were by no means acquainted, and there was no

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\* In one of his letters, Livingstone describes the Lualaba as "a lacustrine river."

facility for getting any proper guides; just, therefore, as might be expected, we missed our way, and proceeded (without knowing whither we should come) for a couple of leagues along a splendid gallery, where numbers of silver-white colobus-apes were merrily taking their pleasure.

I had my suspicions that we were going wrong, and by referring to my journal in which I had entered the details of our former route, I ascertained that we were now taking the same direction as we had followed then. Further inquiry soon convinced us that we were proceeding straight towards the spot where we had last met Wando, and that in fact we were not distant more than three miles from his residence. We were quite aware that he was not just then at his Mbanga, but still there was no doubt that if we would ensure reaching Mohammed's Seriba unmolested, it would be politic to make a wider circuit round the hostile district, and accordingly, without delay, we retraced our steps for a considerable distance.

On the confines of the gallery, the land had just been cleared for a crop of sweet-potatoes, and a number of women was occupied in the work. They had a lot of dogs scampering about, and the sight of these caused quite an excitement amongst our Mittoo-bearers, who darted at them with their spears, and slaughtered them in the most remorseless fashion. Pitiabie and heartrending in the extreme it was to see the poor brutes writhing upon the lances. I must confess to have felt more sympathy for the dogs in this country than for all the men. Perchance some one is inclined to reprobate such a sentiment; but I think I could show him a picture where his own best sympathies would hardly be with his fellow-creatures. I could paint for him the spectacle, as it has been seen on a Sunday morning in some thriving town, when all the residents are sallying out in their best attire, and in mournful contrast a string of poor ill-clad, dejected emigrants passes by. What is it then, I would ask, that gives the

deepest, truest pathos to the scene? It is not the sight of the human wretchedness, which probably is the penalty of indolence or crime, but rather it is more than all the sight of the faithful dog that has followed its master through weal and woe, never quitting his side, and taking its share in all the vicissitudes of his lot.

We had now turned due east along a road that led us across the Dyagbe, the brook that ran past Wando's residence; and, after marching for three hours over a desert steppe, we finally encamped upon the left bank of a large gallery-wood, where the vegetation was so luxuriant, that, forgetting all my fatigue, I botanised until night stopped my further researches. Game was abundant, and we had a savoury supper of roast antelope.

The next morning was wet and gloomy. In forcing our way through the dripping thickets, in order to reach the river, we got thoroughly drenched to the skin. We had also to endure incessant torture from the barbs of the calamus (the generic name of the rotang), which like so many little pike-hooks insinuated themselves through our clothes to our flesh: attached to the twigs and universally diffused among the bushes, they were a perpetual irritation for the traveller. After we had accomplished this irritating passage, we proceeded northwards, crossed two more brooks of a similar character, and arrived at a cultivated and populous district on the banks of the Mbrwole.

The Farookh, who had been sent on for a league in advance, had effectually scoured the district, and had been rewarded by the capture of a young lady of rank: she had been taken by surprise, and in the wonted manner of the country endeavoured to save herself by taking refuge in the forest, but she was tracked like a deer, and captured after a short chase. She was attired in a magnificent apron of skins, and was elaborately as well as fantastically adorned with strings of teeth; and to judge from the numerous trophies

of the chase with which she was decorated, she might be suspected of having a mighty Nimrod amongst her circle of admirers. Full-grown men are never seized on these occasions, and that for two reasons; in the first place because considering capture as identical with death, they defend themselves with the fury of desperation; and secondly, because they are of no value as slaves. In these expeditions, it is an understood thing that the sheyba, or yoke, is never employed to fetter strong men; it would be far too much trouble to look after them and to drive them along when all one's energies are required for the protection of the baggage.

The Mbrwole, which, ten miles lower down, after receiving a number of rivulets from the south, becomes a considerable stream, had here the appearance of being nothing more than an ordinary gallery-brook; and if I had not heard the name from the Niam-niam, who are always accurate in the nomenclature of their waters, I should have never imagined that it was the main stream. The Bahr-el-Wando, as it is called by the Khartoomers, flowed due west; and though doubtless it was fed by various minor brooks, it was here little more than a ditch of a few feet in breadth; yet the entire depression, clothed with its woody heights, was scarcely less than 1500 paces broad.

The abject terror which the Niam-niam men displayed, lest they should be devoured, formed a very remarkable contrast to the quiet composure of the young woman who had just been captured, and who, without any sign of fear, entered into conversation and was ready to furnish us with whatever geographical information she could. Her calm demeanour led me to the conclusion that the Niam-niam forego eating their female prisoners of war, for the advantage of reserving them as slaves.

Under the guidance of our captive, we crossed the Mbrwole, and taking possession of the huts on the opposite bank, we



found ourselves towards midday well installed in a comfortable camp.

The proximity of our position here to the thickets made a nocturnal attack more than probable. I resolved, therefore, to pitch my own tent in the middle of the huts and to keep a lamp burning throughout the night. The tent consequently became (as it was in a measure transparent) a great lantern in the darkness and formed a target for the aim of the missiles from the woods, a number of arrows being found on the following morning sticking in the top; these I have preserved as memorials of our bivouac on the Mbrwole. All night long the natives were skirmishing with our outposts, thus necessitating a continual fire in reply; but although I slept alone in my tent, the experience of the last few days had so accustomed me to the perpetual shots that my night's rest was perfectly undisturbed. I was well aware that before the enemy could get to my position in the centre of the camp, they must alarm the groups of bearers who were crouching round their fires, and must afterwards penetrate the quarters of the soldiers and of my own servants.

To get into the right road we had again to cross the Mbrwole. Another two leagues to the west along the left bank, and the river was recrossed once more. Over cultivated tracts of rising ground we proceeded to the north and came to some extensive flats of gneiss, the first we observed in the course of our return. This gneiss, being on the hither side of the river, and to the east of the furrowed soil which we noticed on our outward way between the Mbrwole and the Lindukoo, acquired an increased significance as apparently belonging to the line of elevation that traverses the watershed of the Nile.

Leaving this interesting locality, we made a palpable descent, and had next to pass over the meadow-waters, that, flowing in a northerly direction, formed affluents of the Lindukoo. No regular path conducted to the farther side;

pell-mell the caravan plunged into the long grass and clumps of *Phrynica* that made a half-floating surface to the swampy depths. Experience makes a traveller wary in getting across these marshy spots; he learns by practice how to avoid a ducking; he gets the knack of kicking down a clump of weeds without lifting his feet, and can tell to a nicety whether it will bear his weight; by caution such as this he surmounts the difficulty of "the lacustrine streams." After passing the last of these, we made our next encampment near some Niam-niam hamlets, which, in this direction, were the last before we should arrive at Aboo Sammat's territory. Our arrival here was unexpected, yet before the bulk of the caravan had come up the inhabitants had all made off, so that we found the place entirely deserted. Although the late outbreak of hostilities had put the whole district upon the alert, there were various things to prevent the foe from reckoning with any certainty upon our movements; unevenness of soil, extent of wilderness, prospect of supplies, all influenced our plans, which might be changed at any hour; and thus it happened that in spite of all the spies that might be set to watch us, the adversary was never safe from being taken by surprise.

Ten leagues still remained between our present quarters and Aboo Sammat's hospitable *Seriba*, which it was our wish to reach by the shortest route.

An early hour of the following day found us at the Lindukoo, that branch of the Yubbo, which I have already described as the last tributary of the Nile system, and which is distinguishable from the other rivers of the district by the eastward flow of its waters. It was here considerably enlarged by receiving the meadow waters from the watershed. Bounded by banks some 20 feet in height, it meandered along a deep bed that was 30 feet in breadth, through low-lying steppes, which at no great distance were replaced by woods.

The bank-forests that give the flora of the southern Niam-niam lands its singular resemblance to the West African type of vegetation here came to an end. In arriving at the gneiss-hills, we had entered upon the limits of the dense bush-forest which covers Mohammed's entire territory, an area of nearly 500 square miles. Whilst, in the region of the gallery-forests, all the trees and bushes are confined to the river-banks, the intermediate spaces being occupied by uniform grass-plains, *here*, on the contrary, in the region of continuous woods all watercourses of every kind, whether they are rivers or mere brooks are (just as in Bongoland) bounded by low open plains, which extend, without being wooded at all, to the very shores. The hydrographical system is better developed, and imparts a well-defined aspect to the scenery, the strips of open grassy steppe along the margins of the watercourses winding like streams of verdure through the dense masses of the foliage.

I swam across the narrow though copious river, while the bearers conveyed the baggage over along the trunks of trees that were thrown from side to side. Turning to the north-east we passed over two more meadow-waters and reached the Yubbo, which was now 50 feet wide, and too deep to wade; as no trees could be found of a length sufficient to serve as bridges, some grass rafts had to be extemporised.

We were now once more in our former route. Another half league brought us to the Uzze, of which, at this season, the stream was so extremely sluggish that by my usual test of a gourd-flask tied to a string I could detect no apparent current at all. The river we found was 5 feet deep and 25 feet wide.

The herds of buffaloes which we had noticed two months before seemed never to have changed their quarters. A chase was started while the sun still gave us light, and before night closed in the carcasses of two powerful brutes were seething in caldrons that had long been empty.

Early on the 1st of May we were joined by some Niam-niam who were under Mohammed's jurisdiction, and who, having been stationed as outposts on the borders of the hostile territory, had been attracted into the frontier forest by the shots of the previous evening.

The last stage of our march before reaching the Seriba was soon accomplished. The road led through a charming park-like wood, through which, by subterranean channels, the meadow-waters of the Yabo and Yabongo rolled off their verdure-hidden streams. In this latitude ( $4^{\circ} 5' N.$ ), the rain had had very little effect upon the lesser rivulets of the district, and the only signs of the advancing season were to be found in the increased variety of newly-sprouting plants and flowers.

We had a general rendezvous two leagues west of the Seriba, on the spot where we had made our first bivouac when we were starting to the south. It was here that Mohammed was desirous of erecting a new Seriba, as the buildings of the old one were becoming somewhat ruined, and this appeared a better site for defending himself against aggressors. Besides Wando on the south, he had another enemy on the west, viz. Wando's brother Mbeeh, who, as an independent chieftain, ruled the district on the lower Yubbo, before its union with the Sway; and the combined attacks of these two placed his possessions at times in considerable jeopardy. To escape this difficulty Mohammed now resolved to undertake a campaign against Mbeeh first, and, as soon as this was accomplished, to proceed with his measures of reprisal against Wando.

Until the enterprise against Mbeeh was over, I was left to take up my abode with the invalided soldiers, and my own little retinue upon the banks of the Nabambisso.

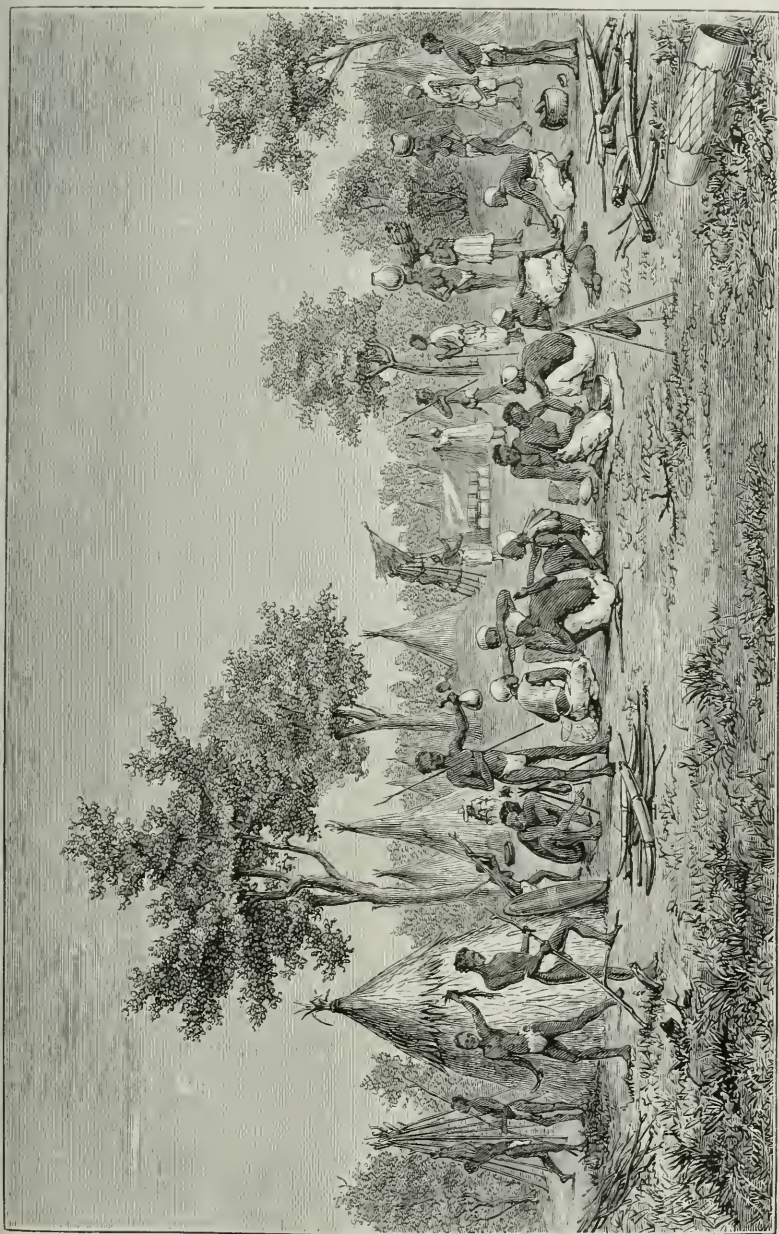
## CHAPTER XVIII.

SOLITARY days and short provisions. Productive ant-hill. Ideal plenty and actual necessity. Attempt at epicurism. Expedition to the east. Papyrus swamp. Disgusting food of the Niam-niam. Merdyan's Seriba. Hyæna as beast of prey. Losing the way. Reception in Tuhamy's Seriba. Scenery of Mondoo. Gyabir's marriage. Discovery of the source of the Dyoor. Mount Baginze. Vegetation of mountain. Cyanite gneiss. Mohammed's campaign against Mbeeh. Three Bongo missing. Skulls Nos. 36, 37, and 38. Indifference of Nubians to cannibalism. Horrible scene. Change in mode of living. Invasion of ants. Peculiar method of crossing the Sway. Bad tidings. Successful chase. Extract of meat. Return of long absent friends. Adventures of Mohammed's detachment. Route from Rikkete to Kanna. Disappointment with Niam-niam dog. Limited authority of Nganye. Suspension-bridge over the Tondy.

AFTER the fatigue and excitement of our previous journey we were glad to recruit ourselves by a comfortable camp life in the dense bush-forest on the Nabambisso. Spacious grass-huts had been erected for our accommodation until the new Seriba should be completed, and these, nestling amongst the massive foliage of the abundant vegetation, gave the spot an aspect that was almost home-like. A refreshing rain had moderated the temperature; and the air, mild and laden with the fragrant odours of the wood, gave animation both to mind and body.

Three years previously all the land had been under cultivation; but nature had soon effaced well-nigh every trace of human labour, and the roots of the trees and shrubs that had only been partially destroyed by the tillage had sprouted forth with redoubled vigour and still more gigantic development of leaf; thus attesting the unfailing power of vitality







in the wilderness and the impotency of man against the persistency of nature.

In this charming locality I passed the early days of May, a month which in these latitudes may truly be called a month of rapture, when the commencement of the rains has renewed the life and growth of all around. From morning to night I strolled leisurely about amongst the bushes, but without neglecting a chance of enriching my stores of botanical treasure by every novelty that presented itself.

Meanwhile, Mohammed was occupied in the formation of his new Seriba. Hundreds of natives were employed in conveying the trunks of trees from the neighbouring forest, and these were erected side by side and close together in a deep trench; the trench was afterwards filled in with earth, and the palisaded Seriba, a hundred feet square, was all complete. So quickly was the work accomplished that on the fifth day after our arrival the invalided soldiers, by whom it was to be occupied, were removed into their new quarters. The other soldiers in the interval had vacated the old Seriba. Everything being ready, Mohammed, accompanied by his entire marching force, started off on his campaign against Mbeeh and Wando; during his absence it had been arranged that I should make this quiet, lonely spot my temporary home.

Confined thus to a narrow area, I had now to look forward to a period of inactivity, in addition to which I had the prospect, by no means pleasant, of submitting to a scale of diet that was straitly limited. Our provisions were all but exhausted. Under the most favourable circumstances, Mohammed could not be expected back in less than twenty days, and the slender supply left for the maintenance of the few men who remained behind as my body-guard would have to be carefully doled out in daily rations to last out the time. Our cattle had all long since been slaughtered; goats were nowhere to be had; nor could any hunting-booty

reasonably be expected. For myself the only animal food on which I could rely consisted of twenty tiny fowls of the diminutive Niam-niam breed, which Mohammed, from some unknown source, had procured for me, reckoning that he had thus provided me with one daily meal during the three weeks in which he would be absent. This valuable treasure was, however, a cause of some solicitude; in the first place a strong cage had to be constructed to secure them against the robbers of the night; and, secondly, we could not help begrudging them every grain that they consumed of our scanty stock of eleusine.

My daily allowance now consisted of a fowl, scarcely as large as a partridge, and one single slice of the coarse and bitter eleusine bread; but these, in the bracing air of the Niam-niam and in the cool stimulating temperature of the early rains, were far from being sufficient nourishment, and I began to be conscious of the pangs of downright hunger. The season was very unfavourable for hunting, but even if it had been otherwise I should have felt it undesirable, under the circumstances, to have wandered far from my quarters: the ruined condition of our palisade left us especially exposed to an attack, and with our small supply of firearms it was advisable to be constantly on the spot. It is to this day a mystery to me how the Bongo bearers who remained with us supported life during this period of privation; but somehow or other they had a wonderful knack of discovering all kinds of edibles in the forest, and stirred up by their example I eagerly grasped at anything the wilderness afforded to supply the deficiency of my meagre cuisine.

In the middle of the open space of the old Scriba there happened to be a huge white ant-hill of long standing, and this rendered some timely assistance in our need; every night after there had been heavy rain, myriads of white ants appeared on the red clods and might be gathered by the bushel; they belonged to the fat-bodied, winged class, and

were what are known as "sexual males." Immediately upon issuing from their dark retreat, and after a short swarming, they assemble in masses at the foot of their hill and proceed to divest themselves of their wings, leaving their heavy bodies helpless on the ground. This removal of their wings does not seem a matter of difficulty; the instinct of the insects seems to prompt them to throw the wings quite forward till they can be so mutilated by the front feet that they completely drop off. Any insects that remained upon the wing were soon brought to the ground by bundles of lighted straw being placed under them, so that it might literally be said to rain white ants. Baskets full were then readily collected for our table. Partly fried and partly boiled they helped to compensate for our lack of grease of any kind. Not unfrequently I mixed them with uncooked corn and ate them from the hollow of my hand; they made just the kind of food that would be good for birds, and, *more avium*, I took them. If the day only chanced to be rainy, the night was sure to be provided with a feast; there was not one of us who had not cause to be thankful for the strange abundance of the ant-hill.

Fortunately I found that I had a little reserve of the extract of meat which had been obtained from the Monbuttoo goats; with this and with a fair supply of bread and vegetables I could have managed for myself very well; but unluckily there were no vegetables in the district; the last of the tubers had been devoured and the gourd-season had not yet arrived. It was revolting to me to boil and eat the gourd leaves like the natives, and I therefore endeavoured to procure some of the *Melochia* of the Arabs, a species of *Corchorus* which is found both wild and cultivated throughout the entire district of the Nile. It was upon this plant alone, boiled like spinach, that (with the aid of thyme-tea) Sir Samuel Baker records that he subsisted for some weeks at the time when he was treacherously deserted by the natives



on his way back from the lake. At this period, however, of my residence on the Nabambisso, the Melochia was only just beginning to sprout, and with all my diligence in looking for it I could never get more than the scantiest of platefuls at a time.

As the discomforts of our situation increased and became more and more trying, I was thrown upon my resources to seek enjoyment of a more ideal nature, and in the neighbouring woods I found the best of compensation for all my bodily privations. Whenever I was beginning to feel more than ordinarily disconsolate I would hurry off to the thickets, and there amongst the splendid and luxuriant vegetation I was sure to find an engagement which would, at least for a time, draw away my thoughts even from the appeal of hunger. In hardly any portion of the world ought an enthusiastic botanist to suffer *ennui*; wherever there exists a germ of life, there is also a stimulant to his spirit; but hardly a scene can be imagined calculated to enlist his whole interests more and to divert him better than the exuberance of bountiful nature such as was revealed upon the Nabambisso.

The few books that I had brought out with me I had read over and over again. The perusal of Speke's journal and Baker's accounts of his difficulties gave me great interest, and I realized very fully a situation which appeared to coincide so entirely with my own. During my forced solitary hours I was only too glad to get hold of any printed matter whatever that was new to me. My extensive store of grey blotting-paper, that served to protect the dried plants was silent enough; but the books into which every few pages of the paper were stitched were fastened on the backs by strips of paper which I carefully removed and found to be a source of occasional diversion. This paper, as being stont in quality, chanced to be cut from the *Times*; and the articles on the leading topics of the day, the correspondence with the

editor, and even the concisest of advertisements, all supplied a peculiar interest. It was strange to sit here, in the very heart of Central Africa, and to read of the tropical wonders that graced the Crystal Palace, where the music that floated round might be the echoes of the voice of Titiens. Tantalizing it was to read of "Mountain port at twenty shillings a dozen," and to learn that it was comparatively free from alcohol; it made us (involuntary abstainers as we were) thirstier than ever, and joyfully enough would my Bongo bearers have had some cases to convey. I wished myself back again in the days when we were fighting the A-Banga; for though they were days of peril, they were days of plenty, and the old Spanish proverb would ever and again force itself upon my recollection, "No misfortune comes amiss to a full stomach." At night my dream was akin to Baker's dream of pale ale and beef-steak. It seemed as though one only required a good meal's victuals that he might die in peace, and be contented to have for his epitaph the saying of the warrior of the Roman Empire, "What I have eaten and what I have drunk is all that now remains to me." Nothing could elevate the vision of the mind for long; tied down to material things, it was impotent to soar; and food and drink became the single and prevailing theme which we were capable of handling by day or dreaming of by night.

Reduced to this low and depressed condition were the feelings which I experienced during the later portion of those lonely weeks that I spent in the great shed, now half-ruined, that had formed the assembly hall of the old Seriba. The stipulated time of solitude was drawing rapidly to a close, but still nothing was heard from Mohammed. Our necessities became more and more urgent: to remain where we were became more and more impracticable; and to escape from the disasters that were threatening us I proposed to set off on an excursion to the nearest settlement of

any Khartoomers. Forty miles to the west of our present quarters was a Seriba belonging to Tuhamy, and a lofty mountain situated in its vicinity offered special attractions for a visit; the journey would be safe, as the route led across Mohammed's own territory, and on our way we should pass another Seriba upon the eastern frontiers of his district. Ten bearers would suffice to carry my baggage for this little trip, and I need hardly say how glad they were to accompany me under the prospect of ending, or at least gaining a respite from, their season of privation.

We started off on our march upon the 21st, and after crossing the Boddoh brook and two smaller rivulets we arrived at the Hoo. This little stream meandered through a wood remarkable for its diversity of trees, amongst which I was surprised to see the *Sparmannia* of Southern Africa. The banks themselves were enclosed by dense bushes of a new species of *Stipularia*, of which the numerous blossoms, half-hidden in their purple sheaths, gave a singular appearance to the plant. It belongs to the characteristic stream-vegetation of the spot.

Beyond the Hoo we came to a ravine of a hundred feet in depth with a charming hedge of zawa trees; and then crossing two more brooks, copiously supplied with water and both running to the north, we terminated our twelve miles' march and found a hospitable reception in the huts of Ghitta, an overseer of some of the Niam-niam subject to my friend Mohammed. After our recent privations we seemed quite overpowered by the liberality of the entertainment offered us by Ghitta; he procured corn for the bearers, he brought out several flasks of eleusine-beer, and more than satisfied all reasonable claims upon his hospitality. To the great diversion of the assembled villagers I shot a great number of turtle-doves in the adjacent trees. This species, with the white ring round the throat, is found all through the year in well-nigh every part of Central Africa, although

it appears to avoid certain localities, such for instance as the vicinity of our ruined Seriba, where we should have been most thankful for such an addition to our scanty stores; the birds, however, manifestly have a preference for particular places, but wherever they resort they are generally to be noticed amongst the foliage in immense flocks.

The soil of this region was once more broken by deep clefts, and was alternately a series of gentle undulations and of deep-cut ravines. Beyond Ghitta's village the road turned towards the south-east and crossed a brook; further on it passed through a district enlivened by numerous farmsteads and where some sorghum-fields testified to the influence of their neighbours on the east upon the industry of the inhabitants. The district was named Madikamm, being called so after the second brook to the east of Ghitta's hamlets. The majority of men capable of bearing arms had accompanied Mohammed on his campaign; consequently the huts had hardly any other occupants but women and children, who retreated shyly as we advanced, and shut themselves up in their pretty dwellings.

The votive pillars adorned with many a variety of skulls demonstrated that at certain seasons the hunting booty must be very large; the diversity of antelopes, however, was far smaller than amongst the Bongo and Mittoo, a circumstance that recalled to my mind an observation made by many travellers in South Africa who have affirmed that wherever there are many elephants there is comparatively a scarceness in the number of antelopes: the greater beasts, doubtless, make too much commotion in the forests, and in their wanderings by night disturb the haunts and hiding-places of the more timid game.

Leaving the villages of Madikamm in our rear, we found ourselves on the edge of a great swamp a thousand feet wide, which moved its insidious course northwards in the direction of the adjacent territory of the Babuckur. It was covered

in its entire width by a huge, half-floating mass of papyrus, which, called "Bodumoh" by the Niam-niam, gives its name to the marshy waters. This was the first specimen of the papyrus that I had seen in the depth of the interior at so great a distance from the two main affluents of the Upper Nile, and it gave a new character to the locality; it is, however, a characteristic of the swampy region on the upper course of the Sway, where the reduced and meagre remnant of Babuckur, sorely pressed on every side, drag out their miserable lives; their frontiers were only a league to the north of the spot where we crossed.

After leaving the Bodumoh, our road took an E.S.E. direction, which it retained as far as Tuhamy's Seriba. At the first hamlets we reached, the inhabitants viewed us with considerable distrust, as the soldiers from the nearest Khar-toom settlements, and those who intended to pass through Mohammed's territory, had most arbitrarily levied some heavy taxes upon them.

Beyond the huts were open steppes covered with towering grass which shadowed many shrubs that were entirely new to me, and excited my liveliest interest. Not a few of them were in full bloom, and I walked along carrying a bouquet that it was no exaggeration to call magnificent. The natives might seem fully justified in reviving amongst themselves my name of "Mbarik-pah."

I may mention that careful as was the method which I have described of our wading over the marshy swamps it was not uniformly attended with success. More than once in attempting to cross without assistance at the head of my little troop I had come to grief; and now once again, at the very next swamp we came to, it was my fate to have an involuntary bath. The dilemma caused us some delay. I was proceeding leisurely along, but coming to a deep hole concealed completely by the long swamp grass I suddenly fell in and was fished out again by my people thoroughly



drenched and plastered over with an envelope of mud. It took an hour while I changed my clothes and while the filth was cleansed from the articles I was carrying.

Although the temperature was really as high as that of a July day in our northern clime, the sky nevertheless was overcast and the weather windy, so that it was with chattering teeth and an inward chill that I continued my march along the steppe. All prospect of the surrounding country was obstructed by the towering grass. There was no distant vision to fill the eye, and there was little to relieve the monotony but the radiant blossoms, red and blue, of the flowering shrubs.

After a while our course was interrupted by a brook fifteen feet in width called the Kishy. This was too deep to ford; the method therefore was adopted of bending down the boughs of the largest shrubs upon the banks, thus forming a fragile bridge, over which, by dint of caution, we contrived to make our tottering way without the misadventure, only too probable, of losing our balance. The Kishy speeds swiftly along over the level steppe in the Babuckur country, and, after receiving the Bodumoh, contributes materially to the volume of the Sway, which in that region has already assumed the dimensions of a considerable river.

The country beyond the Kishy retained the same character as that along which we had been passing. By the side of a little spring called Nambia, that went rippling between the bare gneiss flats, we made a halt for the purpose of following up some guinea-fowl, of which the notes could be heard at no great distance; the whole district teemed with these birds, and I could now again anticipate a daily meal such as I had not had for months.

Hidden deep amongst the long thick grass I here found an aloe, of which the blossoms were of a greenish cast; it was a plant that except to an eye keenly looking for botanical rarities would have been overlooked entirely.

Whilst we were making our halt, I was surprised by a visit from Merdyan, the local chief; he had heard of my arrival, and, accompanied by several natives, he had now come to give me welcome. Merdyan was one of Mohammed's black body-guard, and had been entrusted with the supervision of the eastern frontier of his territory; with three guns at his disposal, he had been appointed to the command of a little Seriba surrounded with fine fields of maize, which were bounded by a ravine watered by a copious brook. To reach this settlement we had to retrace our steps for a full league along a road that gradually descended through a cultivated country. A fine prospect lay open before us; upon the south-eastern horizon rose the imposing mass of Mount Baginze, and a little to the north a pointed hill called Damvo. On this day's march we accomplished a distance of about eight leagues; towards the close of it we came to one of the groves of *Encephalartus*, which are scattered about the district, and known amongst the Niam-niam as Mvoeh-piah.

We enjoyed very comfortable accommodation in Merdyan's Seriba; the huts were clean and well-built, and I had an opportunity of renewing my observations on the domestic arrangements of the Niam-niam. A delicacy to which I had long been unaccustomed was provided for me in some fresh ears of maize, and corn was not wanting for all my people. There were two things, however, which could not be obtained. We had neither salt nor any kind of oil or grease. Riharn, having lost his proficiency, seemed to be now losing his memory; he had quite forgotten to bring the salt that would be required on our way, and the little grease that could be procured had far too much the suspicion of being mixed with human fat to make it in any way a desirable adjunct to my dishes. Our own supply of butter had been left behind intentionally, as it would be required during our coming journey to the north. Whatever food

the natives offered to my people, even to my negroes, only filled them with horror and disgust. Amongst many others who came to the Seriba to satisfy their curiosity about me, there was one fat old man who had his wallet full of victuals hanging to his side, without which no Niam-niam ever quits his home. My little Bongo, Allagabo, spying out two tempting little brown paws, like those of a roast sucking-pig, projecting from the bag, was inquisitive enough to peep in to make a closer investigation of the contents. He got a sharp cuffing for his pains, but he was not likely to have been much tempted, as the delicacy in question turned out to be a roast dog! At another time, my Niam-niam interpreter, Gyabir, who was here in the full enjoyment of his native food, offered Allagabo a dish of lugma (corn-pap), in which were some fragments of flesh that looked like the limbs of a little bird; but Allagabo's disgust can be better imagined than described when he discovered he was eating the legs of a frog!

I spent one day with Merdyan for the purpose of inspecting the neighbourhood, and in the course of my rambles I bagged enough guinea-fowl to supply my whole retinue. For the first time, too, I killed a black rhinoceros-bird (*Tetmo-ceras abyssinicus*). I had previously seen these birds in the Seribas in Bongoland, where they are so far tamed that they strut about fearlessly amongst the other denizens of the poultry-yard.

As I was returning in the evening I was witness of a circumstance that I imagine very rarely could be seen. In the twilight two great forms rushed past us, and were so close upon us that we involuntarily started on one side; the pursuit was so hot that neither of the two animals seemed to be aware of our presence, as in a few seconds they doubled and rushed by us for a second time. My people persisted in saying that it was a hyæna chasing an antelope; but as I was aware that a hyæna seldom hunts down any living prey,

I was unconvinced, and went early on the following morning to investigate the traces that were left. On arriving at the spot I found that the assertion of my attendants had been correct, and that the footmarks were undoubtedly those of a spotted hyæna and a hartebeest; the tracks were deep and multifold, and testified to the violence of the pursuit.

The spotted hyæna (*H. crocuta*) is somewhat rare so deep in the interior of the continent, and even in the cattle-countries of the Dinka it can hardly be said to be common. It is probably driven, through lack of carrion left by the lion, to seek for its subsistence by chasing living prey. This species is far more savage, as well as more powerful, than the striped hyæna of the northern deserts, and appears to be distributed over the whole of Africa below the latitude of 17° N. The skins are frequently used by the Niam-niam for aprons; they exhibit a great variety of markings and differ considerably in colour, the spots being sometimes light and indistinct, sometimes, on the contrary, dark and well-defined. The reports of the Niam-niam refer to two species, one large and one small, as being found in their land; the smaller kind being probably the variegated hyæna observed by Speke upon the eastern coast, and apparently a cross between the spotted and the striped.

The route from Merdyan's Seriba to Tuhamy's was through an uninhabited district, and was crossed by so many streams that it was quite a matter of difficulty to determine it. Merdyan undertook to provide me with guides, if I desired it; but as any intercourse between the two Seribas was exceedingly rare, and as I heard a long and loud discussion, before we started, as to which was the right direction, I could not place much reliance upon my conductors. The country through which we had to pass was perfectly flat; the trees, too, were frequently so high and the paths were so narrow that we were unable to get a glimpse of either of the two mountains which we had previously observed from

the high ground on the west. Neither of these mountains could be much more than seven leagues distant. The ignorance of our guides caused us considerable embarrassment. We were in continual dread of encroaching upon the adjacent territory of the hostile Babuckur, where we should be entirely at the mercy of the cannibal tribe.

On leaving the Seriba we followed the eastward course of a little brook named the Nakemaka. We kept beside it until it reached the spot where it joined the larger stream called the Mahbodey, which we crossed by our previous method of bending down the pendant branches of the overhanging bushes, and then hopping like birds from branch to branch as best we could. All these affluents of the Upper Sway inclined to the north; all of them, moreover, had a marked descent. The next of them was known as the Meiwah, and about a league beyond we came to the actual mainstream of the Sway, which was here thirty feet in width, and really wider than the united measurements of the two streams above; such of them as we did not cross by our improvised bridges we had to pass by swimming.

After a while we came to a large forest of butter-trees, the first and last that I saw in the country of the Niam-niam. The underwood was so dense, and its foliage so fully developed, that we could not see more than ten paces in any direction; our guides completely lost their way, and, without a clue to our proper path, we wandered on. To add to our perplexity the sky became overcast with the tokens of an approaching storm, and we thus lost whatever aid we might have got from the direction of the shadows. With a vista contracted as ours the compass was of little service, and in a country like this it was very unadvisable to leave the beaten paths or to penetrate into any untried thickets. We were glad enough when we at last caught sight of two deserted huts in the middle of the wilderness. The floods of rain were beginning to descend, and we were thankful for



any shelter. The storm that had burst upon us continued with such unremitted violence that we were compelled to resign ourselves to the necessity of passing the night in this wild spot. The interior of the huts swarmed with creeping things of the most revolting character, in comparison with which the most obnoxious vermin that are ever found in houses within the range of civilization would appear mere mild and insignificant domestic nuisances. By heaping up a pile of fresh leaves and grass, I contrived a sort of covering that protected me from actual contact with the crawling things, but the lullaby that buzzed and hummed around me was none of the pleasantest. There were the swarms of white ants that were incessantly gnawing and scratching at my leafy coverlet; there were snakes and lizards rustling in the cobwebbed thatch above: there were mice scampering and squeaking on the ground below. However, for the condition of things there was no help: the best must be made of it; so I shut my ears to the commotion, and resigned myself successfully to the blissful unconsciousness of slumber.

When I awoke at dawn the rain was still falling, the heavy drops pattering down like lead upon the leathery leaves of the butter-trees. Hungry and shivering, I sat upon my grass couch and peered out through the narrow doorway into the obscurity of the thickets, where I could see the broad backs of my negroes as they grubbed away with all their might, defiant of the storm, in the hopes of getting something from among the roots to appease their craving. Hunger at last compelled us to brave the weather, and to take our chance at proceeding. We directed our movements at starting towards some mounds of gneiss, that at a little distance we could see picturesquely rising above the trees. Our intention at first was to ascend these elevations, that we might make a better survey of the land around us; but we were spared the necessity of climbing up them, as on reaching their base we fell into a well-defined path which

we did not hesitate to follow. It led us to the brook Shöby, and shortly afterwards to some human habitations.

Our arrival made no little stir among the natives, who had received no intelligence of the presence of a white man in that part of the country, and at first they were inclined to suspect that we must have come with hostile intentions. My Niam-niam, however, soon reassured them, and induced them to provide us with guides for our route. They led us out in an easterly direction, passing through a country that was fairly cultivated, and along which the numbers of guinea-fowl were so large that they kept me fully employed during the march. We had now only one more brook to pass, which was called the Mossulongoo, and this we accomplished in such good time that it was still daylight when we reached the Seriba of Tuhamy. Amongst the inmates of the Seriba my servants recognised several of their former acquaintances at Khartoom, and very enthusiastic were the greetings that were mutually exchanged. The controller of the Seriba received me with the most cordial hospitality, and cleared out his best hut for my accommodation. The hut was enclosed with a high palisade, which gave it an additional protection. The controller's superior and principal in Khartoom was a personage no less important than the chief writer of the *Hokkumdarieh*; and this influential authority had in the previous year given instructions to his subordinate that he was to show me every possible attention if I should chance to pay him a visit.

The Seriba was a halting-place for Tuhamy's ivory expeditions from the Rohl to the Monbuttoo country. Situated as it was on the extreme eastern limit of the Niam-niam territory, it formed an outpost towards the Babuckur land, which Tuhamy's companies were accustomed to consider as their corn magazines, and on which they relied for their supplies to carry them onwards to the south. But the Babuckur were already wearied by the depredations to which

they were thus continually exposed; their impatience made them desperate and exasperated; and a very few days after my departure they made an attack upon the Seriba, burnt it to the ground, and compelled the inhabitants to evacuate the place. Many Nubians as well as many Niam-niam lost their lives in the engagement, and the few that escaped had to make their way to the nearest Seriba, which was that established in Mondoo, at the distance of a long day's journey, situated amongst the Zilei mountains, of which the spurs and projecting terraces were visible on the eastern horizon. Subsequently to this, all Tuhamy's settlements passed by a special contract into the hands of Ghattas's son.

The brook upon which the Seriba was situated was called the Annighei. The chieftain in command of the Niam-niam in the district had formerly been independent, but had been deprived of his authority by Tuhamy's companies. His name was Indimma, and he was one of the numerous sons of Renje, but not to be confounded with the powerful chief of the same name, who was a son of Keefa. He came now to offer me his welcome, and communicated to me many interesting details about the surrounding country.

I made a little excursion to an elevation of gneiss a few miles to the east of the Seriba, so as to gain a point from which I might survey the surrounding mountains and make some observations to verify the position of the various peaks. The detached ranges for the most part were situated from ten to fifteen leagues from the site I had chosen for my survey, and I should imagine their height to vary from 4000 to 5000 feet above the level of the sea. All those who were capable of giving me any information at all upon the subject agreed in representing that the entire district was distinguished as Mundo or Mondoo, and that the principal chain of hills was called Mbia Zilei; also that at the foot of the mountains was the village of Bedelly, the native local overseer, close to which was another Seriba belonging to

Tuhamy. Between me and the mountains flowed the river Issoo, a stream which I was assured was at this season fifty feet broad, and so deep that whoever attempted to ford it would be immersed up to the neck. The entire region was rich in corn, especially in sorghum. Several hundred bearers laden with it arrived during my stay at the Seriba, and I took the opportunity of laying in a stock for myself; it is difficult to obtain sorghum in the Niam-niam countries, and it was long since I had had grain of such a superior quality.

All the Niam-niam of whom I was able to make inquiries assured me that the natives of Mundo are a distinct people, differing from themselves both in habits and in dialect; their precise ethnographical position I could never determine, but I should presume that they approximate most nearly to their Mittoo neighbours on the north, and more especially to the Loobah and Abakah.

This Mundo or Mondoo is not to be confounded with the Mundo to the south of the Bongo, which Petherick reports that he visited in February 1858; it is the name of the western enclave of the scattered Babuckur. But the Mundo of which I am speaking is marked upon the map by Peney, who in 1861 penetrated westwards from Gondokoro as far as the Ayi or Yei; Petherick too has inserted the district upon his map,\* under the name of the Makaraka mountains, and has assigned it to exactly the same locality as I have myself done. In spite of Petherick's protestation, many geographers have made the two Mundos identical, and have thus fallen into the not unnatural conjecture that the Yei is the upper course of the Dyoor, a conjecture of which my journey has fully demonstrated the fallacy.

The Issoo, as the upper course of the Tondy is here called, forms the western boundary of this mountainous district;

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\* 'Journal of the Royal Geographical Society,' vol. xxxv.

along the south and far to the east (probably as far as the source-regions of the Yei) there stretches an offshoot of the Niam-niam territory. This section of the Niam-niam is called Idderoh, and is subject to an independent chieftain, a brother of Indimma's, named Bingio, who had formerly been an interpreter in Petherick's station in Neangara. The river that waters his district is called the Nzoro. On all maps this territory of the Idderoh figures as Makkarakka; but, as I have observed, this is merely a collective name given to the Niam-niam by their neighbours on the east.

We had a day's rest in the hospitable Seriba, and were well entertained with meat and vegetables. The neighbourhood was interesting, and yielded several novelties for my collection. One very brilliant ornament of the woods at this season, which I had never seen in greater abundance, was the Abyssinian Protea, a shrub about four or five feet high, with great rosy heads like our garden peony. Another plant, one of the Araliaceæ, the *Cussonia*, which is usually only a low shrub, here attained quite the dimensions of a tree, and its fan-shaped foliage crowned a stem little less than thirty feet in height. In the damp grass near the brooks flourished a number of ground orchids with remarkably fine blossoms.

A yet richer booty, however, was in store for me. A few miles to the south of the Seriba, jutting up like an island from the surrounding plain, and visible from afar, rose the massy heights of Mount Baginze. There I did not doubt I should realize the fruition of many expectations.

We started upon the 27th, under the escort of a small body of native soldiers, from the Seriba. Gyabir was in the best of spirits. He had just achieved a great object of his desire in attaining a wife. The controller of the Seriba had a large number of slaves, and as one more or one less made no appreciable difference to him, he had presented Gyabir with a young girl of the Loobah tribe. My interpreter had



long been desirous of securing a partner of his lot, and had many times solicited both Mohammed and Surroor to procure him a consort, but hitherto his request had been made in vain. It is not an easy matter for a man without some means to get married in Africa: if he negotiates for himself he has to satisfy the demands of the bride's father; but by applying to the controller or ruler of the district, who can exercise an absolute authority in these matters, he may succeed in obtaining a wife without previously paying down any sum by way of compensation.

We marched for about two leagues in a west and south-west direction, and once again crossed the little brooks that the Sway receives on its right-hand bank; at length we reached the pointed gneiss mound called Damvo, which rises about 200 feet above the level of the plain. I mounted the eminence, so as to employ its summit as the second station for my observations of the mountain chains. The rugged rocks were clothed with *Sansevieria*, and to the very top charming shrubs made good their way from between their clefts. The view was magnificent. It was the first mountainous landscape that I had seen during my journey that exhibited the true characteristics of African orography. All around were elevations, more or less conspicuous, rising like bastions isolated on the plain; whilst high over all reared the crest of Mount Baginze. The western side of the mountain was precipitous, and might almost be described as perpendicular; towards the north, on the other hand, it sloped downwards in gradual ridges: in form it reminded me of many of the isolated mountains of Southern Nubia, and more especially of those in the province of Taka.

Mount Baginze is only four miles to the S.S.E. of Damvo, but this short distance had to be accomplished by a circuitous and troublesome route leading across deep fissures and masses of loose rock, and often through grass of enormous height; half-way we came to a rapid brook hastening along

through a deep cleft, which we were able to leap across. This was *the source of the Dyoor*. It was the first actual source of any of the more important affluents of the White Nile to which any European traveller had ever penetrated. My Niam-niam escort, who were natives of the district, positively asserted that this brooklet was the Sway, and thus plainly demonstrated that, however insignificant this little vein of running water might appear, they were accustomed to consider it as the highest section of the waters that contributed to the formation of the Dyoor. The Sway, they said, was the largest and longest river of their land; Baginze was their loftiest mountain; and this was the most important stream that issued from its clefts.

Before actually setting foot upon Baginze we had still to make an ascent through a fine forest, but in due time we reached the mountain and made our encampment close beneath the perpendicular wall of the western flank. The halting-place was upon the edge of a deep ravine, where a bright thread of water rippled merrily along over rocks covered with moss and graceful ferns. It was too late in the day to attempt to ascend farther than to the summit of a sloping spur projecting towards the north-west from the southern side of the mountain, and which was about half the height of the mountain itself.

The first few steps that I took were quite enough to convince me of the entire accordance of the flora with that of the Abyssinian highlands. Masses of brilliant aloes, with their scarlet and yellow blossoms, grew luxuriantly upon the slopes of gneiss; the intervals between them were overspread with a mossy carpet of *Selaginella rupestris*, whilst clusters of blue lobelia reared themselves like violets, only of a brighter hue, from the surface of the soil. Here and there, in singular contrast to the tender foliage of the shady hollows, lending moreover a new and striking character to the vegetation, I found, cropping up from amidst the rocks, the thick fleshy

leaves of that remarkable orchid, the *Eulophia*; and on the still higher declivities I met with yet another true representative of the Abyssinian flora in a new species of *Hymenodictyon*, a dwarf tree of the class of the *Rubiaceæ*, which in some form or other appear to embrace at least a tenth of all the plants of Africa in these regions.

Wherever one of the bright bubbling streams was seen, like a shining thread upon the grey monotony of the rocks, there I was pretty sure to find the *Ensete*, or wild African plantain. This is a plant which is never seen below an altitude of 3000 feet above the sea. It was now to be observed in every stage of its growth, sometimes being small like the head of a cabbage, and sometimes running out to a length of twenty feet with its fruit attached to a short thick stem in the form of an onion. The tender leaves were marked with a midrib of purple-red. It struck me that here in the wilderness this plant, which has become so common a favourite in our greenhouses, is distinguished by a much shorter leaf-stem and by a more compact appearance than it bears in its cultivated form when its growth is spreading and graceful. Not unfrequently the *Ensete* of the mountains bore a striking resemblance to young specimens of the *Musa sapientium*, though it exceeded it in the number of the leaves it bore, there being occasionally as many as forty on a single plant. I found it here in full bloom, but without any prospect of fruit; it differs from other representatives of its class by losing its leaves at the time of its flowering, and then has the appearance of an elongated onion on a shaft some six or eight feet in length, on the top of which rests a compact truss of bloom. Although I never observed any side sprouts from the wild *Ensete*, it by no means follows that they are never to be seen: a single authenticated instance of the kind would demonstrate almost beyond a doubt what is already in so many respects probable, namely, that the *Ensete* is the original stock of the cultivated African plantain.

We had quickly improvised some huts from the long grass at the foot of the mountain, and they afforded us secure and sufficiently comfortable shelter from the down-pour of rain that lasted throughout the night. On the following morning I was disappointed to find that the sky was still burdened with storm-clouds, whilst a fine, drizzling mist obscured the greater part of the view that we had proved to be so lovely.

My sojourn in the neighbourhood was limited to a single day, since the Seriba was suffering from the general dearth of provisions, and could ill afford to entertain us: there was consequently no help for it, but if the ascent of the mountain were made at all it must be made in defiance of the heavy rain. I was quite aware that the adverse weather would make the task altogether uncongenial to my guides, and I was not very much surprised to find that they had made off during the night. I had thus to start off on my own responsibility. My Nubian servants remained behind to warm their shivering limbs over the camp-fires, so that, followed only by my two Niam-niam, carrying the portfolios for my plants, I set out upon my enterprise.

I turned towards the northern declivity, which slanted in almost an unbroken line from the summit to the base. At first my view was necessarily circumscribed, and it was only after a good deal of clambering and by a very circuitous route along rugged places, overhung with bushes, and across fissures full of water, that I succeeded in finding the correct path. The wind was so strong that although my broad hat was weighted with pebbles I was obliged to leave it below. The highest point of the ridge I found to be at the south of the summit, and thence I had a magnificent prospect, being able to see for fifty or sixty miles in an east and north-east direction. Not far short of a hundred different mountain-peaks were visible, and of these I took measurements of the angles between the more im-

portant, which I subsequently combined with the angles which I had already observed. I also made a drawing of the entire panorama around me.

The upper course of the Tondy was plainly visible, and beyond it were caught the terraced ridges of the country to the east. The northern and eastern spurs of Baginze were especially picturesque; the elevated level of the ground at the base was not apparent from above, so that they stood out like isolated eminences from a uniform plain: three more spurs a few miles to the south-east also appeared completely detached: they were in a straight line one behind another, the names of the two most northerly being Bonduppa and Nagongoh. Somewhere near them was a Seriba belonging to Poncet's company, who had reduced the former independent chieftain Bendo (another of the many sons of Renje) to the same state of submission as Tuhamy's company had brought his brother Indimma.

The measurement that I took upon the spot gave Baginze a relative height of 1350 feet; but the barometrical observations made at the base, which would have determined its exact altitude above the level of the sea, have unfortunately been lost; I believe, however, that I am not far wrong in estimating the entire height to be about 3900 feet.

The bulk of the rock of which the mountain was composed consisted of a gneiss that was so abundant in mica that in many places it had the appearance of being actual mica schist; a speciality in its formation being the immense number of cyanite crystals that pervaded it in all directions: a similar conglomeration of "cyanite gneiss" is very rare, but amongst other places it may be observed on Mount St. Gotthard in Switzerland. Wherever the springs issued at the foot of the mountain there were wide boulder-flats of broken stones, and here the sheets of mica and the prisms of cyanite, an inch or two in length, lay cleanly washed and strewn one upon another in such thick confusion that I



had to wade through them as through a pile of rubbish. I collected several specimens of the rock, which I brought to Europe.

Massive in its grandeur, isolated, and worn by time, Mount Baginze thus stood before me as a witness of a former era in the world's history and as a remnant of the lofty mountain-chain which must have once formed the southern boundary of the Nile district.

There was an entire absence of large trees everywhere, and the higher regions of the mountain bore but a very scanty vegetation. Contented, however, with the few botanical discoveries that the toilsome trip had yielded, I began to think of returning. It had taken me four hours to make the ascent of the mountain, but being now aware of the correct path, a single hour was all I spent in getting back to our encampment. In spite of the unpropitious weather I felt that I could have enjoyed myself for some days in exploring this enticing neighbourhood: the mountain air was even fresher and more invigorating than what I had been breathing in the Niam-niam country—and this is saying not a little; for, in spite of their meagre diet, the Nubian soldiers who came thither sickly and weakened by their idle Seriba-life always returned from their Niam-niam campaigns fat and healthy, and with renewed strength and vigour. My attendants unfortunately did not sympathise with my ideal enjoyments, but made such loud and bitter complaints at the increasing inclemency of the weather that I should not have dared to prolong my stay, even if I could.

On the third morning, then, after our arrival we began to return. Although continually in doubt as to our path, we were fortunate in hitting upon the route that was shortest, and, crossing the Shöby at a spot where it was contracted by gneiss walls and made a bend to the north, we reached the rocks in the forest of butter-trees at which so recently we had passed such a wretched night. Before it was dark we

once more entered Merdyan's Seriba. The long march of nine hours, made doubly arduous by the many watercourses that had intercepted it, had been one of the most fatiguing that I had experienced. I took a day's rest, and amused myself by shooting guinea-fowl, the sport being so successful that I supplied my people with as many of the birds as they could eat in two days. We performed the rest of our journey through incessant rain, and on the evening of the 1st of June found ourselves reinstated in the old Seriba on the Nabambisso.

Here I received satisfactory intelligence from Mohammed. The condition of things had decidedly improved. Still the store of corn was small; but the gourds had ripened during our absence, fresh maize had been brought to the Seriba, and, best of all, the guinea-fowl had effected a lodgment in the neighbourhood, so that we had a constant supply of animal food ready at hand. As a consequence of the continual rains edible funguses had sprung up in such abundance that for days together I dined off guinea-fowl's liver and mushrooms. In every respect the mushrooms resembled those which we use in Europe.

I may mention that a large buffalo-hunt, to which all the Bongo were invited, came in as a timely diversion, and that day after day, with my gun in my hand, I was up and doing.

Before many days had elapsed the main body of Mohammed's corps returned from their campaign. Only a portion of the missing ivory had been recovered, for Wando, under a superstitious dread of the intimations of his augury, had persistently remained concealed in the most inaccessible places, and consequently the hostilities had been mainly directed against his brother Mbeeoh. Contrary to the general practice of the Niam-niam princes, Mbeeoh had been personally engaged in the conflict and had exhibited remarkable bravery. On one occasion it had been with the greatest difficulty that Mohammed had held his own against.

the hordes of his opponent, and in a raging storm had been obliged to erect a kind of rampart, made of straw, to afford a shelter from which anything like a steady fire might be opened upon the assailants. The chances were dead against Mohammed's side, but it is notorious that the natives hardly ever follow up any advantages offered to them either by a downpour of rain or by the obscurity of night; and very frequently they lost the most promising of opportunities for crushing their Nubian oppressors.

Just before Mohammed himself returned there was a considerable commotion amongst our Bongo bearers. A circumstance occurred that naturally excited some consternation. The bearers who had been left with me in the old Seriba were in the habit of scouring the neighbouring fields and forests every day in search of victuals for themselves. One evening three of the party who had gone out did not return, and their companions had no hesitation in avowing their belief that they had been captured, and that they would most certainly be killed and eaten by the inhabitants of the adjacent district. Early on the following morning all the Bongo and most of the Nubians who were with me started off in a body to explore the neighbourhood and to follow up as best they might the traces of the missing men. According to the statements of the Bongo, the crime had been committed in the district under the control of Maddah, to the north of the Seriba. In that direction the party bent their steps. Their supposition was apparently correct, for after following the tracks into a wood they found that they terminated in a ghastly pool of blood. Maddah was forthwith seized and hurried to the Seriba, where he was charged with being answerable for the disappearance of the men. In evident confusion and with much excitement he began a long and incoherent preamble; he declared that the blood was that of an animal which had been slaughtered on the previous day; he owned, indeed, about the three Bongo

that he had seen them running across his territory and had had no doubt that they were making an escape to their own homes. This explanation was objected to on the ground that the obstacles on the way were far too great for them ever to have entertained such a design. Maddah then went on to say that some of his Niam-niam people had noticed the fugitives, and had shouted after them to know where they were rushing to, and why they were scampering along at such a pace, but they had received no answer; and deeming it wrong to stand idly by and let the fellows decamp from their owners they had not only pursued them, but had effected their capture and put them into safe custody. To complete his tale he affirmed that, somehow or other, during the night they had contrived to escape; and this was all he knew about them.

The settlement of the business had ultimately to be left to the surviving Bongo. They were not easily satisfied; they insisted most strenuously that, even allowing that there might be some truth in the statement that the Niam-niam had pursued the fugitives, they had only done so with the object of sacrificing them in order to indulge their appetites, and to convert their flesh into food. The representation which Maddah gave of the pool of blood was held to be especially unsatisfactory; the bones of the slaughtered animal were demanded as a proof of the fact, but nothing was forthcoming at the hands of the Niam-niam but a few fragments that could be recognised at a glance as belonging to some game that must have been killed months before. Everything, in fact, seemed to confirm the accusation. All agreed that there was nothing to exonerate either Maddah or his people from suspicion. It was consequently decided that as Surroor, the lieutenant in command, was absent, as well as Mohammed, on the campaign, Maddah should be reserved for judgment, and meanwhile must be kept in confinement and placed under the yoke of the sheyba to await his sentence.

But when Mohammed returned he professed to be occupied by more pressing and important business. It did not require much penetration to perceive that there were certain motives of policy which were prompting him to procrastinate the investigation of the affair. The truth was he was anxious, if he could, to keep on good terms with the Niam-niam, knowing that their services were indispensable to him for the usual raid against the Babuckur that had to be undertaken for the purpose of getting a supply of corn to avert the prospect of his caravan being starved. Without their co-operation it would be impossible for his soldiers to cross the marshy swamps. Had the disaster befallen any of the Nubians or Mussulmen at all, there can be no doubt that Mohammed would have acted very differently, and would not have suffered considerations of policy to deter him from making an example of the delinquents.

The raid upon the Babuckur was an expedition that Mohammed did not accompany in person. He entrusted it entirely to Surroor, who took the charge of as many of the subordinate Niam-niam as could be gathered. Just as might be expected, the most savage brutalities were practised on either side. Besides securing the store of corn, which was the main object of the incursion, the Nubians were on the look-out for a capture of female slaves, which they claimed as their special perquisite. The Niam-niam on their part followed the example and did some private kidnapping on their own account; the females that they entrapped they disposed of in the following way: the youngest were destined for their houses, the middle-aged for their agriculture, and the eldest for their caldrons!

The skulls in the Anatomical Museum of Berlin that are numbered 36, 37, and 38 might be supposed capable of unfolding a deplorable tale of these depredations. Some natives brought them to me fresh boiled, only a few days after the raid had been perpetrated; they had heard from



the Monbuttoo that I was accustomed to give rings of copper in exchange for skulls, and as I was not able to bring the poor fellows to life again I saw no reason why I should not purchase their remains in the interests of science. Often I reproached the Nubians of my retinue with allowing such abuses to go on before their eyes, and under the sanction of the flag bearing the insignia of the Holy Prophet; but just as often I received the answer that the Faithful were incompetent to change anything, but must submit to the will of God; it was impressed upon me that the Niam-niam were heathen, and that if the heathen liked to eat each other up, it was no concern of theirs; they had no right to be law-givers or teachers to cannibals.

I had repeated opportunities of observing that the ivory-expeditions of the Khartoomers, although actuated by a certain spirit of enterprise, did not at all contribute to any propagation of Islamism. Negro nations once converted to Mohammedanism are no longer considered as slaves, but are esteemed as brothers. For this reason it was inexplicable to me how Islamism had spread so far in other parts of Central Africa; for although, on the one hand, Islamism is a faith that puts a pressure upon its converts by compelling them to submit to its external prescriptions, such as circumcision; yet, on the other hand, the very conforming to the prescriptions exempts them for ever from all oppression: thus I could not understand why in other parts of the continent the more powerful party had not maintained its material interests by displaying the same indifference as was shown by the Mohammedans in the countries through which I travelled.

Some days after the raid on the Babuckur I was witness of a scene that can never be erased from my memory. During one of my rambles I found myself in one of the native farmsteads; before the door of the first hut I came to, an old woman was sitting surrounded by a group of boys and

girls, all busily employed in cutting up gourds and preparing them for eating; at the door of the opposite hut a man was sitting composedly playing upon his mandolin. Midway between the two huts a mat was outspread; upon this mat, exposed to the full glare of the noon-day sun, feebly gasping, lay a new-born infant: I doubt whether it was more than a day old. In answer to my inquiries I learnt that the child was the offspring of one of the slaves who had been captured in the late raid, and who had now been driven off to a distant quarter, compelled to leave her infant behind, because its nurture would interfere with her properly fulfilling her domestic duties. The ill-fated little creature, doomed to so transient an existence, was destined to form a dainty dish; and the savage group was calmly engaged in their ordinary occupations until the poor little thing should have breathed its last and be ready to be consigned to the seething caldron! I profess that for a moment I was furious. I felt ready to shoot the old hag who sat by without displaying a particle of pity or concern. I was prompted to do something rash to give vent to my sensation of abhorrence; but I was swayed by the protestations of the Nubians ringing in my ears that they were powerless in the matter, and that they had not come to be lawgivers to the Niam-niam. I felt that I was as helpless as they were, and that it would be folly for me to forget how dependent I was upon them. What influence, I was constrained to ask, could my interference have exercised, what could any exhibition of my disgust and indignation avail to check the bias of an entire nation? Missionaries, in their enthusiasm, might find a fruitful field for their labours, but they must be very self-denying and very courageous.

The departure of the caravan for the north was delayed for several days in expectation of the return of the corps that had been sent to the west with Ghattas's company, but as no tidings of it were forthcoming we determined, without further procrastination, to proceed upon our way.

Shut out from all prospect of this year making any farther progress to the south, and debarred from the hope of accomplishing any fresh explorations, I own that I began to long for the flesh-pots of Egypt; I confess that the stores that were on their way from Khartoom to await me in my old quarters at the Seriba in Bongoland had a wondrous fascination to my eager imagination. I was also now looking forward that I might make several excursions during the return journey, from which I was sanguine that I might not only make fresh botanical discoveries, but might enlarge my general knowledge of the country.

Our first night-camp was made on the northern frontier of Aboo Sammat's territory, on the banks of a brook near the hamlets of Kulenjo. Until we reached the Hoo we observed no alteration in the condition of the brooks; but the galleries which I was now traversing for the last time seemed in bidding me farewell to have donned their most festal covering, being resplendent with the luxuriant blooms of the *Spatholœa*, one of the most imposing representatives of the African flora. The waters of the Hoo had risen to no inconsiderable degree, and they had so much increased in breadth that they filled the whole of the level bed, which was 35 feet in width. The current flowed at the rate of 150 feet a minute, the water being nowhere more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet deep. Our second night-camp was pitched half-way between the Hoo and the Sway, at a spot where the bush-forest was densest and most luxuriant.

The advancing season brought several changes in our mode of living. I had become so far initiated into African habits, that I now very much preferred a grass hut to a tent. I was moreover getting somewhat out of patience with the ever-recurring necessity of holding up the tent-pole with all my strength during the storms of night, whilst I roused half the camp with my shouts for assistance. At the height of the rainy season the weather, by a beneficent arrangement of

Nature, fortunately follows certain rules from which it deviates very exceptionally; the first few hours of the morning always decided the programme for the day; when once the sky had cleared, we knew that we might resume our march in perfect confidence, and I had the satisfaction of feeling that my papers and herbarium were in no danger of being spoilt by damp, and my companions had the same security for the preservation of their powder and provisions. Towards five in the afternoon, when the sun began to sink, and the distant thunder gave warning of the renewing of the storm, we made a halt, and directed our best attention to prepare our nightly lodging in the wilderness. The baggage was first piled together and protected by the waterproofs, and as soon as this was effected, a number of knives and hatchets were produced and distributed among the "builders." Off they were sent with all despatch. "Now, you fellows, quick to your work. Four of you," I should order my servants, "must be brisk, and get together the grass. *You* two must hack me down the branches, long and strong, and be sharp about it. No shirking now. And *you* have to get the bast. Quick, away! and quick back!" And with this hurrying and driving the work was soon done. Ten minutes, or a little more, brought the men back with the requisite materials. The framework was first erected, the forked boughs being driven into the ground and firmly fastened at the top with ligatures of bast; meanwhile the grass was being bandaged into a huge hollow sheaf, and this, when all was ready, was raised above the structure and fitted like a cap. Thus, in about half an hour, with alacrity, one of these grass huts could be reared, small indeed, and snug as a nest, but nevertheless perfectly waterproof; and thus a sufficient shelter against the nightly rains. The storm might rage and the thunder roll without, but here the weary traveller, in safe and reliable retreat, might enjoy his well-earned repose without misgiving.

By the glimmer of a little oil-lamp of my own contrivance, in which I burnt some questionable-looking grease, of which the smell could not fail to rouse up one's worst suspicions against the natives, I would sit and beguile the hours of the evening as best I could by writing down the experiences of the day. The negroes had no such protection: they would crouch round the camp-fire, which would make their faces glow again with its fitful light, while the rain would pelt pitilessly down upon their backs.

Such was the arrangement of our camp night after night throughout our return journey. But my recollections of the nights spent on the way between the Hoo and the Sway are altogether very unpleasant.

The rain on the following morning did not cease so soon as usual, and our departure was somewhat delayed. We were all of us intensely interested in keeping our own little dry spot free from the drenching force of the rain, when all at once I found my cosy quarters invaded by a whole army of ants. They had succeeded in discovering the driest and warmest place within a circuit of many miles, and now, in countless legions, they took up their quarters in my palliass, which was placed upon a lofty pile of leaves and grass. Their encroachments seemed to come from every side. For a long time I was in perplexity what to do; to leave my hut was impossible, the rain was falling almost in sheets. I endeavoured to protect myself with my clothes, but all in vain. Presently a stratagem suggested itself to my mind; by a happy thought I managed to divert the ants from myself. Dragging some bundles of grass from my bed, I threw them down in detached patches all over the floor, and by way of bait I sprinkled them over with the fragments of food that remained from the supper of the previous night. The scheme answered admirably, and I had the satisfaction of finding the unwelcome guests draw themselves away and give me no more personal annoyance.



Meanwhile a large portion of our caravan had gone on in advance to make the necessary preparations for crossing the Sway. I did not reach the banks myself until nearly noon, and by that time the people were busily employed in conveying the baggage across. The aspect of the Sway was entirely different to what it had been on the 13th of February. The water had risen to the very top of the banks, and was twenty feet deep, with a velocity of two hundred feet a minute. Although the stream was only thirty-five feet wide, the passage over it, in consequence of the entire absence of tree-stems and the small number of bushes on the banks, offered unusual difficulties. The men who had had experience in these Niam-niam expeditions had a method of effecting a transit over the river that I think was peculiar to themselves: they set all the bearers to work to gather as many different kinds of bark as they could, and to extract all the bast out of it, and then to twist it into long stout ropes, a handicraft in which the negroes are very skilful, as in Bongo-land there is an unfailing demand for cordage for hunting-snares and fishing-nets. Having fabricated their ropes, the next thing was to get them stretched across the river. This was effected by practised swimmers, who attached one end firmly into the ground by means of pegs, and swam over with the other. The arrangement of the ropes was such that they were suspended in double rows, one precisely underneath the other, the upper rope being above the stream, the lower being some feet below its surface. Ten expert swimmers then took their stand upon the lower rope, and allowed the stream to force their weight against the upper rope, which supported their chests, but permitted them to have their arms perfectly free for action. Thus supported, in a half-standing, half-floating position, they contrived to keep their hands at liberty, and to pass the packages from one to another.

I confess that it was with a beating heart that I stood

and watched my precious baggage thus handed along over the perilous flood; but the lank, lean arms of the Nubians were competent to their work, and everything was conveyed across in safety. This business of crossing occupied several hours of real exertion. The difficulties of the transit may be conceived, when it is remembered that three-fourths of the negroes are entirely ignorant of the art of swimming, and that there were elephants' tusks being transported which weighed not less than 180 lbs., and consequently required two men to lift them.

We passed the night near Marra's villages, and though it was only a league from the river, it was quite dark before we entered our quarters. The residents had all vacated the district, leaving their fields of half-ripe maize to the mercy of the new comers; although plunder was ostensibly forbidden, it was surreptitiously carried on by our bearers to a very gross extent under cover of the darkness.

The whole of the next day we halted to recruit our strength. I found my amusement in scouring the neighbourhood in search of game. Huts were dotted about here and there, but the country generally was covered with such a wonderful grass vegetation, that any deviation from the beaten paths would have involved the wanderer in great perplexity, and only too probably he would have rambled about for hours before he could recover his way.

As the caravan was on the point of starting on the succeeding morning, and I had just set out at the head of the procession, we were brought to a standstill by the arrival of some messengers bearing a letter to Mohammed from the commander of his corps, that had been sent towards the west. To judge from the date of the letter, the Niam-niam who brought it must have travelled at least forty miles, and perhaps considerably more, in a day.

The letter contained evil tidings. Ghattas's agent and Badry, Aboo Sammat's captain, wrote in the utmost despair.

Three chieftains had combined to attack them as they were crossing a gallery on Malingde's territory; three of their number had been slain, and out of their ninety-five soldiers, thirty-two had been so severely wounded as to be *hors de combat*. They had now been closely besieged for six days, and were with extreme difficulty defending themselves behind their abattis; provisions were fast failing; and even water could only be obtained at the risk of losing their lives. Ahmed, the other captain, had fallen at the first outset of the engagement, and his body had not been recovered for interment, but had fallen into the hands of the cannibals. The only means of rescuing the wounded soldiers would be to carry them away in litters, and this could only be effected at the cost of abandoning seventy loads of ivory that had been buried in a swamp. The letter concluded with an urgent appeal for speedy succour, and Mohammed determined to send it without delay; two-thirds of his armed men should be despatched to the relief of the sufferers.

The selection of this relieving-force had to be made at once, and it may be imagined that it was no easy matter for Mohammed to overcome the repugnance of those who had no relative or personal friend in jeopardy. It was naturally a bitter disappointment to those men who were thus marked off for this unexpected service to have to renounce the pleasant prospect of the toils of their expedition being so near its termination, and to be compelled to expose themselves anew to the dubious fortune of war. However, in spite of remonstrances and murmurings, the conscription was completed in a very summary fashion, and it was still early when the remnant of our party, with its undue proportion of bearers, continued our northward march.

It was a bright and lovely forenoon; the steppe was adorned with its summer verdure; what had before been bare red rock, was now covered with tender grass, which reminded one of our own fields of sprouting corn. Africa

seemed like a universal playground, exciting our people to sport and merriment.

We persevered in following our previous well-beaten track. The six meadow-waters that lay between Marra and the hill of Gumango had increased but little since we had last seen them. The lovely park-like country, with its numerous scattered bushes, offered unusual facilities for the chase, and small herds of antelopes, a long unwonted sight, appeared and as rapidly disappeared in the surrounding landscape. Once, however, five hartebeests, at a little distance from our road, made a stand, and eyed the caravan as intently as if they were rooted to the spot. I took deliberate aim at the breast of one of them, and although the whole five wheeled round and galloped off into the thickets, I felt sure that my shot had taken effect; on running up to the spot where the antelopes had been standing, we found enough blood to show us that one of them had certainly been wounded, how severely of course we could not tell. The dogs that I had were of no service for hunting, and had to be kept along with the caravan in the care of servants; but notwithstanding this want of sporting dogs, and in spite of the confusion caused by the multiplicity of tracks, we managed, by following the spots of blood, to make out the proper traces of the wounded hartebeest. As I was approaching one of the smaller thickets, I observed a couple of kites making their circling flight just above the trees; this was a manifest token that the wounded animal was not far off; in another few minutes, as I entered the grove, I caught sight of the yellow body of the beast skulking painfully away from me as best it might, a patch of blood-stained, trampled grass betraying the place where it had thrown itself down.

The arrival of the birds was to me very inexplicable: ten minutes had hardly elapsed since the shot had been fired, and yet here they were, awaiting their prey. The sportsman in Africa (and this is especially the case on bright, sunny

days) has constant experiences of this kind. A few minutes after he has succeeded in bringing down his game he may see some black dots in the sky, which gradually, as they come nearer and nearer, will assume a definite shape and ultimately develop themselves into groups of kites, vultures, or other carrion birds, ever ready to arrest their flight and to appropriate to themselves whatever relics of his booty the hunter may leave behind. It might almost seem, according to the fiction of the ancients, that the sky above was divided into several storeys, and that the birds were ever ready, at the sight of a tempting meal below, to hurry downwards from their topmost region in the sevenfold heaven.

This, however, is mere digression. I return to my hartebeest. After a considerable search we came upon the creature lying lifeless in the grass. It proved to be an animal in suck, and my Niam-niam people, after the wild hunting-custom of the country, filled a small gourd-shell with milk expressed from the udder, and mutually drank to each other's courage and good luck. I had not happened to see the fawn; probably it had not been with the hartebeests when we first caught sight of them.

It may be readily understood from these details, that without dogs, and over so bewildering a country, the capture of game, even after it has been shot, is very often a matter of no trifling difficulty. Moreover, time and distance have to be taken into consideration. Our caravan was often half a league in length, and it was important not to leave any gaps in the procession, as nothing would be easier than for the rear division to mistake the narrow path they had to follow. However fleet the huntsman may be, the antelope is fleetest still, and the impatience and excitement exhibited by the sportsman, hurried because he is travelling, have a tendency to increase the alarm of the animal of which he is in chase, and which is already terrified by the unwonted sight of man. On the level steppe, where the grass grows to a height of



five or six feet, the pursuer can only get momentary glances of the creatures' horns, and all along in his chase he is hardly conscious of making any more advance than if he were buffeting with the waves of the sea.

The animal I had killed was soon cut up, and I made a meal off its roasted liver. Leaving some of my people in charge of the carcase, I set out, designing to return at once to the caravan to despatch some bearers to bring in the spoil to the encampment; but I missed my road, and, notwithstanding the help of my compass, I lost an hour or more in wandering over the rugged paths of an extended elephant haunt. Coming to a depression that was partially under water I saw several leucotis antelopes turn off in front of me, and as the water obstructed my farther progress I made a venture and fired my last shot at a solitary buck that was standing at a distance of not much less than five hundred paces. The animal instantaneously disappeared, and the noise of the report caused several others, in a state of affright, to scamper across the swamp. My Niam-niam were soon at the place where the antelope seemed to have fallen into the earth; to my surprise they soon began to make signs of triumph, and I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw them dragging the victim along the ground. It was quite dead and the bullet was in its neck.

Wonderful good fortune had thus, at very slight cost to myself, thrown into my hands an ample supply of meat, which after their recent deprivations gave unbounded satisfaction to my people. But I will not weary the reader with further details of my hunting adventures. Lovers of the chase and admirers of good marksmanship will find a richer field for their entertainment in the record of Sir Samuel Baker's exploits about the Albert Nyanza, which rivals Herodian's description of the sports and prowess of the Emperor Commodus. My own hunting experience, however interesting to myself, was comparatively on a very limited scale.

Carrying with us the piece of meat that was designed for our supper, we entered the camp just as darkness was coming on. I found the people quartered on the slope of a ridge of hills near the frontier of Bendo's district, a league and a half to the south of the residence of the behnky himself. For half the night I sat up making extract of meat from the best parts of the leucotis; a large copper vessel, originally a spirit-still, but now used for preparing the pap for Mohammed's slaves, was a most serviceable utensil for the purpose. From about 70 lbs. of the meat, which was very tender, I obtained the unusually large proportion of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of extract of excellent quality and of the consistency of firm honey, the whole produce being perfectly free from any glutinous matter. The product was altogether superior to what I had obtained from the Moubuttoo goats, not only being larger in quantity, but infinitely more palatable, thus demonstrating that the flesh of the leucotis justified the reputation for flavour with which it was generally credited. I had an opportunity subsequently of comparing it with what I received amongst my fresh stores from Khartoom, and am satisfied that it was in no way inferior to that from Fray Bentos. Only those who like myself have existed for months together upon an inadequate and monotonous diet, or those who on long desert journeys have been limited to farinaceous food, can estimate the strengthening effect produced by ever so small an addition of this preparation to other food which is not of itself sustaining. Extract of meat thus is not the mere seasoning which many consider it; not simply does it give a relish, and draw out nutritious properties from indifferent food, but it is in itself a nutritious substance of the highest rank.

The process of boiling the meat is very long; while it was being completed next morning I had time to explore the magnificent vegetation of the adjacent hill. The wild vine (*Vitis Schimperi*) was loaded with its ripe clusters and

afforded me a refreshment to which I had been long unaccustomed. These grapes were less juicy than those that grow upon the vine-clad hills of Europe, and they left a somewhat harsh sensation upon the palate; but altogether, and especially in colour, they reminded me of our own growth. Towards the south-east I had a view of the hills of Babunga, about ten miles off on the frontier of the Babuckur territory.

All the huts in Bendo's mbanga had been lately rebuilt in a style that displayed considerable taste, the tops of the straw-roofs being so much decorated that they looked like various specimens of ornamental basket-work. We were able to procure a good stock of maize, which made a welcome change from the uniformly bad bread which we had been eating previously for so long. Bendo himself was quite a character; his singularities amused me; he was a kind of fine gentleman, extremely particular about his *toilette*, and would never allow himself to be seen unless he had been carefully painted and adorned with his high-plumed hat.

I did some botanising on the hill of Gumango and found it full of interest. We next crossed the Rye, and proceeded to the adjacent villages of Gumba. Our camp was scarcely pitched there when a message was received from Mohammed instructing us to wait for him. On returning to his Seriba he had found that all the soldiers for whose fate he had been concerned, and whom he was hurrying off to rescue, had already arrived there safe and sound, having succeeded in breaking through the enemy and in carrying off their wounded. He was now returning to us with his full force. Pending his arrival we remained in Gumba's villages for the two succeeding days.

He came back at the appointed time, and the recovery of the parted friends caused great joy and excitement in the caravan; innumerable were the questions asked, and no accumulation of answers seemed to allay the curiosity.

My own attention was very much engaged by the accounts given by Badry, the captain who had been appointed to the command of the corps in the place of Ahmed; I knew that his word was to be relied on, and his information was of great value to me as throwing light upon the geography of the country about the lower portions of rivers, some of which I had crossed only in their upper course and sometimes quite close to their fountain-heads.

I heard many details of the conflict between Mohammed's party and the Niam-niam, the leading incidents of which I will now proceed briefly to relate.

It was while they were crossing one of the brooks overhung with the dense forests which now for so long I have designated as galleries that the fatal attack took place; the consternation of the defenceless bearers, and consequently the confusion of the whole party, would seem to have been very terrible. The first discharge of Niam-niam lances had strewn the ground with dead and wounded, the column of the unfortunate bearers furnishing the larger proportion of the victims. Previous to the attack not a native had been seen. Nothing could be more crafty than their ambush. Some of them had taken up their position behind the larger trees; some had concealed themselves in the middle of the bushes; whilst others, in order to get an aim from above, had ensconced themselves high up, contriving to lie full length upon the overhanging boughs where the network of creepers concealed them from the keenest vision. Badry's recital brought vividly to my mind the battles with the Indians in the primeval forests of America, where similar stratagems have been continually resorted to.

The soldiers kept up their fire with energetic vigour; they are accustomed to carry a number of cartridges arranged like a girdle right round their waist, and having their ammunition thus conveniently at hand they kept up their discharges unintermittingly until they had collected their

wounded; but the bodies of those who had been actually killed all fell into the hands of the assailants and were carried off without delay, all attempts at recovering them being utterly unavailing, because the irregularity of the ground prevented any organised plan of attack.

The bearers, meanwhile, had flung away their heavy loads, and in wild flight had retreated to an adjacent hill that rose above the steppe; here they were in a short time joined by the Nubians, who sought the eminence as commanding a view whence they might survey their position and concert measures for their future protection. Most of the deserted ivory, of course, had become the prey of the foe, but some of the Nubians had taken the precaution of burying the burdens in a swamp within the gallery, under the hope that they might recover it in the following year. Thus deprived of their proper occupation, the bearers were at liberty to carry the wounded, and a treaty was concluded with the enemy so that the party ventured to quit their quarters. The natives, however, were utterly treacherous; they were bent upon the annihilation of the intruders, and so, reinforced from the neighbouring district, they made a fresh and savage attack. In consequence of this the Nubians were compelled to come to a stand in the open plain, and lost no time in collecting whatever faggots they could get to make an abattis.

Behind this abattis they had to hold out for three entire days. The excited Niam-niam persevered in harassing them with unwearied assaults; and as three independent chieftains had summoned their entire forces for the attack, the combined action was unusually formidable; not until the store of lances and arrows was all used up were the furious sallies brought to an end and the Nubians permitted to go upon their way. The enemy, it was said, displayed such unabated energy that when all their ordinary lances had been spent they procured a supply of pointed sticks, which



they proceeded to hurl with all their might against the Nubian band; it was, moreover, asserted that the quantity of shields and lances was so large that the besieged used no other fuel for their camp-fires during the entire period of their detention. Besides the weapons that were burnt, the negroes attached to the caravan brought away a considerable number of lance-heads, which they had tied up in bundles of nearly a hundred and designed for trophies to decorate their own huts.

Having thus spoken of the disasters of war that befell Aboo Sammat's company, I will proceed to give a short outline of the route which they took, and which lay to the west and south-west of the districts through which I had myself travelled. It may be remembered that the corps had been detached from our caravan at Rikkete's village on the Atazilly. It started off in a W.S.W. direction, which it followed during the greater part of the journey. A march of six leagues brought the men, in the first place, to the village of Garia, one of Wando's brothers, who, like most of the sons of the wealthy Bazimbey, had after his father's death, without recognising the hereditary claims of his elder brother, set himself up as an independent prince in his own district. From this locality it was described as "a good day's march" of six leagues to the residence of Malingde or Malindo. This prince was the aforesaid eldest son of Bazimbey, and had consequently a more extensive territory than any of his brothers, with whom he was at that time on quite friendly terms.

A morning's march of about four leagues brought the party onwards to one of the other brothers, named Moffi, who held office as a behnky in a district under the jurisdiction of Malingde; and between two and three leagues to the west again they found another behnky, also Malingde's brother, called Bazia. Beyond this place was a wide tract of wilderness separating Malingde's territory from that of

Indimma. Shortly after reaching Bazia's residence they had to cross a river, which they said was as large as the Rohl at Awoory, and joined the Mbrwole on its right-hand side: three other smaller streams flowed through this wilderness, all of them affluents of the Mbrwole. As it took them four days and a half to travel from Bazia to the residence of Indimma, the distance may probably be estimated at between twenty and thirty leagues.

Indimma was a son of Keefa, and one of the most influential Niam-niam princes of his time. He had taken up his abode on the summit of a lofty and isolated mass of granite or gneiss, which, according to some accounts, was as high as the hills near Awoory (relatively 300 feet); or, according to others, it stood even higher than the Wohba mountain near Deraggio (relatively 500 feet).

At the top of this eminence was an extensive plateau, laid out in cultivated tracts; in the centre, like a small town, stood the residence of the king, embracing, as my informants unanimously declared, more than a thousand houses.

The mountain must extend several miles, both in length and breadth, for the tedious ascent took many windings, and compelled the caravan to make repeated halts. At no great distance to the south was another smaller hill, and looking towards the west they had a view of numerous lofty ranges, amongst which was that of the Gangara mountains.

The population of Indimma's territory is a mixed race, consisting partly of true Zandey-Niam-niam and partly of A-Madi, a tribe nearly related to the A-Banga, and corresponding in general features with the Monbuttoo.

After leaving Indimma, the caravan commenced the four days' march which would carry them on to Kanna, who bore the surname of Bendy, the most powerful of all the reigning sons of Keefa. In the middle of the first day they had to cross a large river, which the travellers identified with

Wando's river, the Mbrwole, and compared for magnitude with the Blue Nile at Khartoom; they all persisted in saying that it was not the river that they had to cross in canoes on their way to Munza, and therefore not the Welle. They had still to march on for three days before reaching Kanna, so that there was no doubt that the entire distance between him and Indimma could not be much under thirty leagues. I asked one of Kanna's Niam-niam, who had attached himself to the party on their wanderings, how far it was from Kanna's to Munza's residence, and he replied that, marching at the Niam-niam rate of eight or ten hours a day, the journey would occupy about five days; the direction, he added, was E.S.E. and S.E.; and his entire statement coincided very much with what Abderahman Aboo Guroon had told me when he affirmed that the journey with his heavily-laden caravan had required fifteen days to accomplish; this was the same length of time that it had taken us to travel a distance which I imagine is nearly the same, viz., that from the Nabambisso to Munza's dwelling.

From all I could gather, I should conclude that the arrangements and habits of Kanna's court were very similar to those of the Monbutto sovereigns: like them he had his great palatial halls, where he celebrated the national festivals with dancing and music, and where the nobles were assembled for councils of state.

About four leagues, or half a day's march, from Kanna the detachment had come to the residence of Bakinge, the king's brother, who had a limited district specially assigned to him. Just before reaching this spot, the caravan had been conveyed across "the great river" that flows from the land of the Monbutto. The river so distinguished was undoubtedly the Welle. The Khartoomers described it as being as wide as the White Nile at its mouth; and the Niam-niam interpreter, who accompanied them, in reply to my direct inquiry as to the proper name of the great river of Kanna,

informed me that it was called the Welle or Bee-Welle,\* thus establishing, by a fresh confirmation, its identity with the river of Munza. I was told that in this district it makes a semicircular bend. Close to the spot where the caravan crossed it, was the residence of the king's brother and subchieftain named Mbittima, and at a short distance beyond stood the abode of Zibba, Kanna's son, who was governor of an independent district. Before they passed to the other side of the river, Aboo Sammat's company had also visited the settlement of another brother of Kanna, named Gendwa, which was about two days' journey to the north-west of the king's dominions.

Having thus related the main particulars of the route of the detached party during their absence, I will return to the narrative of our own proceedings.

Our old friend the "minnesinger" paid us another visit in our camp, and entertained us once again with the droll elaboration of his poetic faculty; as the theme on this occasion upon which to exercise his epic muse, he chose the heroic deeds of Mohammed, which he chanted out with characteristic energy.

As I was quite aware that in a few days more I should have taken my leave, perhaps for ever, of the Niam-niam lands, I was particularly anxious to secure a dog of the unique race belonging to the country, that I might exhibit it as a novelty on my return to Europe. For a couple of copper rings I made purchase of a specimen of the breed, which was quite satisfactory, as the creature was not only very intelligent, but attached itself to me in a very few days. My hope, however, of introducing the breed into Europe was doomed to be frustrated; by dint of watchfulness, and at the cost of no little inconvenience, I succeeded in conveying

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\* "Bee," like "ba," in many of the dialects of Central Africa, means "river." It was an appellation that I was surprised to find in use here, and was a confirmation of the supposed connection of these lands with Baghirmy.

the animal safely as far as Alexandria; but while I was staying there, it leapt from the hotel window, two storeys high, down into the street, and was killed on the spot. Whoever has experienced the bother of dragging a dog across the desert on the back of a camel, or of rescuing it times out of number from being drowned during the passage of a Nile-boat, will readily sympathise with the annoyance I felt at the waste of all my pains.

As our train proceeded along the hilly region between Gumba and Nganye, it was easy to make the observation that there was no appreciable difference in its magnitude compared with what it had been when we traversed the same district more than four months previously. A considerable number of the wounded were still carried on litters, and formed a new feature in the procession. One poor fellow had had the entire sole of his foot literally peeled off by a lance. Ali, the leader of Ghattas's company, had also two severe wounds, one on the neck, the other on the thigh; but although both of them were still open, the sturdy negro made light of his trouble, marched on merrily enough, chattering to his companions every now and then according to the current phraseology of the Nubians, enforcing his assertions by the ejaculation, "Wollahi! wollahi!" ("by Allah! by Allah!") These people are far greater heroes in enduring pain than would be expected from their pusillanimity in battle.

With Nganye the Nubians spent a day of riot and revelry in honour of the African Gambrinus. The chieftain had already prepared for their entertainment, and had sent to Mohammed's hut an enormous vase of beer, the vessel being a fine specimen of native pottery, a masterpiece in its way, and so heavy when it was full that it required two men to lift it. I spent the day in a hunting excursion. I started towards the west, and succeeded in killing two small antelopes and in bagging a large number of guinea-fowl that,



in a liberal mood, I distributed amongst my companions; the chieftain himself, when he visited me on the following day, enjoyed a meal off the tender flesh of the birds, which during the rainy season is particularly rich and savoury.

During my stay with Nganye, I had incidentally a further demonstration of what is the limited measure of authority really possessed by the Niam-niam princes. I had discarded, as I have said, the use of my tent: in return for its torn covering, which, with the lining, would have furnished material for more than a hundred aprons, Nganye had covenanted to supply me with twenty baskets of eleusine corn, which would be required by my people during their coming march across the desert; but in spite of the number of his wives and slaves, who I should have imagined would very soon have got together without difficulty whatever he directed, he was only able to furnish me with half the stipulated quantity. This meagre species of grain was all the corn-provision that could be obtained, and very thankful we were that we could get even that.

Before leaving his Seriba, Mohammed had sent a message to Nganye to warn him of the advance of the caravan, so that he might have sufficient time for the preparation of the bridge by which it could cross the Tondy. This work was executed without delay. A suspension bridge of a very curious and original construction had been thrown across the rushing waters. Some of the strongest trees on each bank had been chosen for supports, and the bridge consisted simply of strong ropes attached to them with some planks or poles laid upon as cross-bars. This aërial pathway, as might be expected, oscillated like a swing; but dangerous as it was, it permitted a passage by carefully crawling from one cross-piece to the next.

The march from Nganye's residence to the river led through the marvellous grass-thickets which I have already described. The grass was now shooting up afresh in all its

wild luxuriance. The season for the great elephant-hunts was at an end, and Mohammed was well satisfied with the quantity of ivory his friend had secured. He told me that Nganye, although he ruled over a district that was smaller in extent (though it contained nearly as many hunting-grounds as that of Munza), had furnished him with a much larger supply of ivory than the powerful Monbnttoo king.

It was near the river, in some huts newly-built in Peneeo's district, that we passed our last night in the Niam-niam country. A wide tract of wilderness had been lately rooted up in order to acquire fresh arable land against the time when the soil already in cultivation should be exhausted. In these places it is wonderful to see how the masses of shrubs that have been oppressed by the exuberant growth of the trees, sprout out with renewed vigour: free, as it were, from a long restraint, and reanimated by an open sky, these step-children of the sylvan flora seem to overwhelm the wanderer with their beauteous bounty.

On the 24th of June we reached the Tondy and its hanging bridge. To convey the baggage across this tottering erection was the work of nearly an entire day. The place of our present transit was four miles to the east of the spot at which we had crossed on our outward journey; it had been chosen higher up the river for several reasons, not only because the stream was narrower and the banks were higher, but principally because the trees were of a larger, more substantial growth, better adapted for the purpose of being converted into piers for the suspended ropes which formed the bridge. The river was here sixty feet wide, but near the banks it was so full of fallen trees and bushes, of which the boughs projected as though growing in the water, that the width of the stream was practically diminished one-half. The velocity of the current was about 115 feet a minute, the depth nowhere being less than 10 feet.

The materials of the suspension-bridge consisted exclu-





sively of branches of the wild vine intertwined with thick elastic ropes of unusual strength. The French traveller d'Abbadie noticed a similar stratagem for crossing rivers on his tour to Enaŕea, and bridges improvised very much in the same manner are constructed from creeping plants in South America. In order to get the ropes raised to a sufficient height, a regular scaffolding of fallen stems has to be erected on either side of the river, by means of which the festoons of cords are raised to a proper altitude. The clambering from cross-piece to cross-piece upon this unstable structure, poised in mid-air, seemed to require little less than the agility of an orang-outang; while the very consciousness of the insecurity of the support was enough to make the passenger lose his composure, even though he were free from giddiness and already an adept in the gymnastic art.



## CHAPTER XIX.

Division of the caravan. Trip to the east. African elk. Bamboo-forests. Seriba Mbomo on the Lehssy. Abundance of corn. Route between Kudloo and Mbomo. Maize-culture. Harness-bushbock. Leopard carried in triumph. Leopards and panthers. The Babuckur. Lips of the Babuckur women. Surprised by buffaloes. Accident in crossing the Lehssy. Tracts of wilderness. Buffaloes in the bush. The Mashirr hills. Tamarinds again. Wild dates. Tikkitikki and the cows. The Viceroy's scheme. Hunger on the march. Passage of the Tondy. Suggestion for a ferry. Prosperity of Ghattas's establishments. Arrival of expected stores. A dream realised. Trip to Kurkur. Hyæna dogs. Dislike of the Nubians to pure water. Two soldiers killed by Dinka. Attempt to rear an elephant. My menagerie. Accident from an arrow. Cattle plagues. Meteorology. Trip to the Dyoor. Gyabir's delusion. Bad news of Mohammed. Preparations for a second Niam-niam journey.

THE day was far advanced when, after crossing the Tondy, we turned towards the left, and quitted the thickets in order that we might find an open grass plot sufficiently extensive to accommodate our caravan. The separate detachments were all gathered together, and then divided into two parties, as before returning to Sabby Mohammed had resolved to make an excursion eastwards as far as the borders of his Mittoo territory, so that he might fetch away what ivory he had in store there. The greater part of the bearers and soldiers were sent on direct to Sabby, and I arranged for my own bearers, under the conduct of my servant Osman Aboo Bekr, to accompany them, whilst for myself I reserved just as much baggage as was necessary, and joined the party that was proceeding to the east. It chanced that Ghattas's corps was taking the same route, and as it led through

districts which were well supplied with corn, we all marched in company.

After subduing the Mittoo who were resident close to Nganye's territory, Mohammed Aboo Sammat, in the previous February, had founded a Seriba on the Upper Lehssy, at no great distance from the villages of Uringama, one of Nganye's behnkys. On account of its singular fertility the district was a very favourite station for the various Rohl-companies on their way to and from the Niam-niam lands, and the sagacious Kenoosian, well aware of the advantages afforded by their frequent visits, and knowing, moreover, how numerous elephants were in the surrounding regions, had lost no time in making a settlement in the locality. The name of the local overseer of the Mittoo people was Mbomo. As the owners of the land were mutually satisfied with each other and on the best of terms, the soldiers of the Seriba lived on the most amicable footing with the neighbouring Niam-niam. The Seriba Mbomo was about twenty-one miles to the E.S.E. of the spot where we crossed the Tondy, the road by which we travelled lying almost in a straight line in that direction.

Soon after starting, just as we re-entered the obscurity of the forest, the men in the van of the procession made signs that there was something stirring amongst the bushes. We came to a halt, and hurrying to the front as stealthily as I could, I made out the forms of some light-coloured animals that were lurking in the shadows of the underwood. They turned out to be five splendid elands. They appeared not to have noticed our approach, and grazed on, as peacefully as oxen, under a large tree just in front of us. Simultaneously one of the blacks and myself fired at the foremost buck that chanced to be standing full broadside in our face. The startled animals made a bound, and put their running powers to the test, their short weak legs carrying their ponderous bodies at full gallop across our path. All at once a crashing

noise and a heavy fall; the wounded victim was ours: a good supper was provided for our caravan.

This antelope (*A. oreas*) is the largest and tallest of all the African species, occasionally measuring six feet high at the withers; it appears to be common to the entire continent, and perhaps does not fail in any equatorial region whatever. It is probable that the imposing animal owes its name of "eland" to the imagination of some well-read Boër, to whom it appeared like the mythical creature of his fables and heroic songs; for only as such could the elk have been known to the worthy Dutch colonists. But however little, as far as regards either the colour of its coat or the shape of its horns, the oreas may have in common with the elk, still I must confess that by its size it could not do otherwise than remind me of the stately game of my Livonian home; and the shaggy hair hanging in full crop from the neck, the bushy bristles on the forehead, and above all the thick black mane upon the withers, all combined to increase the resemblance. Far more striking, however, is the analogy of this animal with the zebu-races of Africa, which exhibit many points that are common to the whole antelope type. The short legs, the elevated round body, the long hanging dewlap, the hump-shaped withers, and the light bay colour of the skin are characteristics of this race that justify a comparison of the eland with them far more than with the elk.

In external appearance this African elk exhibits varieties as great as the hartebeest and other common species of antelopes, and on this account it seems to claim some detailed notice. In zoological gardens it is very rare to find two individual examples exactly alike, and the greatest diversity is observable in the shape of the horns; as instances of this, I may refer to the representation here introduced of two pairs of horns which I have selected from my collection, and which may be taken as examples of the two most extreme forms that came under my notice. They

are about a yard in length, the pair that is more divergent making only one spiral turn, while the other makes a turn



Horns of Central African Eland.

and a half. All the elands that I saw had extremely short sleek hair of a bright yellow tan colour verging on the flanks to a light bay; the mane was black and erect, being about three inches long. In every district through which I travelled I observed their skin to be always marked in well-defined stripes, which are not, as some travellers have supposed, to be taken as indications of the youth of the animal: I have seen full grown specimens that were marked on each side of the body with no less than fifteen parallel stripes, about as wide as one's finger, of a pure white running from the black line of the back transversely down to the middle of the belly, which is often marked with a large black

spot. The flesh of the eland ranks amongst the better kinds of antelope-meat, and is quite as palatable as that of the hartebeest.

We encamped about a league from our suspension-bridge, in the midst of a splendid wilderness, where, in spite of the torrents of rain, I passed a night of entire comfort in my warm nest of grass. A little way to the north of our encampment there was a small gneiss hill called Manga. Before halting for the night we had crossed two brooks, which with a supply of water alike copious and rapid hastened on to join the river at no great distance away; the first of these, the Mokungudduly, rippled along over smooth blocks of gneiss, and was bordered by flower-bespangled meadows that, stretching onwards in a forest glade, were watered besides by countless springs.

The march of eight leagues that lay before us would pass through an unbroken forest, and required us to make an early start upon the following morning; accordingly when we set out we found the whole wood veiled in mist and the ground yet reeking with the heavy dew. The forest flora continually tempted me to deviate to either side of the pathway. My interest was especially attracted by the splendid *Encephalartus*, which seemed abundant throughout the district. Amongst other new types of plants which met my notice was the *Tithymalus*, one of the cabbage-like euphorbiæ, the first that I had seen throughout the entire region. A large variety of conspicuous shrubs, many of them covered with fine blossoms, gave the forest almost the aspect of an artificial park; one of the most frequent of these (worthy indeed to be designated as a tree) was the *Parinarium polyantherum*, remarkable alike for its great trusses of white blossoms and for its polished leaves, which are thick and yet brittle.

No less than eight running streams had to be crossed during this march: the three first joined the Tondy, the



rest being tributary to the Lehssy. The third brook was called the Baziah, the fifth the Ulidyatibba; succeeding this, and enclosed by walls of gneiss, came the Lehssindah.

About a league to the right of our path, and to the south of the place where we forded the Lehssindah, rose several gneiss hills, of which the two highest peaks were called Ndimoh and Bondoh. Our route had hitherto been quite level, and apparently at a considerable height above the valley of the Tondy; but it now began to descend for a couple of leagues to the Morokoh. This wide and rapid stream flowed through a tray-like valley surrounded by open grass-plains that sloped downwards on either side to the meanderings of the water. In front of us, to the east, the whole country had a gentle but regular elevation, for looking over the right bank of the Lehssy we could make out the locality in which the union would have to be sought of the chain of the Zilēi mountains in Mondoo with those that extend between the Tondy and the Roah.

The scenery of the steep declivity towards the south-west which we now reached assumed a character very different to the park-like landscape through which we had been passing. For many miles the eye rested upon treeless steppes broken by bamboo jungles that seemed almost impenetrable, standing in detached groups, their dark olive-green contrasting admirably with the bright hue of the grass, and giving a novelty to the general aspect. Immediately beyond the Morokoh our path began to rise, and led us into the semi-obscurity of one of these jungles.

A short time before reaching it, we had left on our right a series of hamlets inhabited by the Niam-niam belonging to Dippodo's district: a league further on lay the villages of Uringama, on the extreme eastern frontier of Nganye's territory, the Lehssy forming the boundary between the Niam-niam and the Mittoo; and a few more leagues still in

the same direction would have brought us to the north-eastern limits of the Babuckur.

We reached the Lehssy shortly before sunset. The Seriba was built close upon the opposite bank, but it was so enclosed by the tall bamboos that towered high above the palisade that it was completely hidden from our view. The actual source of the Lehssy was at no great distance; the river here was about fifteen feet wide, and four feet deep, and flowed in a N.N.W. direction: the water was as clear as crystal, a peculiarity that appertains to all streams that are enclosed by bamboos, which delight in a soil that is intersected by springs. The stems of the bamboos rose to the height of forty feet; slender and graceful they bent themselves into an arch which stretched far across the stream; and as hardly anywhere could a more inviting spot be found for a siesta, so hardly anywhere could water be met with more tempting for a bath than that which flowed limpidly over its gravel bed.

On my arrival at the Seriba, I soon became convinced that I was in a land where corn was abundant; the very liberality of the messes of sorghum-kissere that were served up to my people was an ample proof that there was no scarcity here. In times gone by I had myself had an utter disdain for this food of the Soudan, but now, after so long a deprivation, I relished it heartily, and thought it equal to the most delicate of rolls. It was no doubt heavy and indigestible enough; still I could make a good meal of it; only on rare occasions during the Niam-niam journey had I tasted any sorghum at all, and when I had, it had been doled out in infinitesimal quantities, but with the fresh enjoyment of this luxury now, and with the returning opportunity of getting some real roast mutton, our previous privations were soon forgotten.

The Seriba Mbomo was ten leagues to the south of Kuddoo, on the Roah. Mohammed, with a thoughtful con-

sideration of my tastes, had taken means to enable me to fill up some missing links in the chain of our route. During his march in February he had made one of his men who could write take down all the information he could get from the Mittoo guides; and from the same authority I obtained verbal confirmation of the reports which I had previously gathered, so that I was able to map out the entire district with what I believe is tolerable accuracy.

In the sketch of the route there were enumerated as many as twelve brooks that had to be crossed in the interval between Kuddoo and Mbomo, all supplied more or less copiously with water, even in the dry winter season. Reckoning from north to south, the series came in the following order: the Tee, the Burri, the Malikoo, the Mari-kohli, the Mangawa, and the Wary; then came the watershed between the Lehssy and the Roah, marked by the Ghery-hills, which I afterwards visited; then followed six more brooks, the Kooluma, the Magbogba, the Makaï, the Patioh, the Manyinyee, and the Malooka. Although all these streams have their origin quite close to the left bank of the Roah, yet they take a very devious course before they actually join it; the last five, indeed, do not directly meet the river, but join another stream to the west of the route called the Dongodduloo, which unites itself with the Tee or Tay; the brook that flows past Ngoly's village, and which is known to the west of Sabby as the Koddoh, being an affluent of the Roah.

On the watershed, bamboo-jungles extend over an area of many square miles. The species which is thus found in such immense masses is the same which is so prolific in the lower terraces of the Abyssinian highlands. In the manner of their growth these bamboos remind me of an asparagus-bed in the summer-time, hundreds of sprouts start up from a single root, and in graceful curves droop over towards the ground. The habit of the plant is altogether similar to

the Indian bamboo, which has lately been successfully introduced into the pleasure-gardens of Cairo. The Abyssinian species does not grow so thick in the stem as the Indian, but it attains as great a height, often rising to forty or fifty feet.

The well-tilled soil of Mbomo's district reminded me very much of the country about Kuraggera; the land appeared well populated and covered with extensive fields of maize and sorghum. The extent to which maize was cultivated was quite surprising; whole acres were planted with it, and I obtained a large supply of fresh ears. I had these all dried and ground, and thus provided myself with a considerable quantity of flour, enough to meet the requirements of several weeks to come. The maize is here liable to the same drawback as it is elsewhere. It is very easily spoiled. This happens from two causes; it has a tendency to turn mouldy, and it is very subject to the gnawings of worms; the meal also ferments sooner than any other species of grain. The means adopted by the natives to keep it during the winter is simply to tie the ears in great sheaves and to hang them up on some detached trees, where they can have plenty of air, and yet be out of the reach of the noxious vermin.

One of the best productions of the country is the bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*), the same that is so much cultivated by the Mittoo; it is one of the most palatable species with which I am acquainted; its pods, that are short, broad, and crescent-shaped, never contain more than two large beans.

Although the settlement had been so recently established, Mohammed was very pleased with the store of ivory that had been secured.

For three whole days I rambled about on the banks of the Lehssy, meeting with excellent sport. Amongst other things, I killed my first bushbock, an animal of which the yellowish-tan skin is marked with white stripes, the lines so

arranged as if they were a regular harness. There is always to be observed some difference or other between each of these creatures and all its fellows; they are never precisely alike; either there will be some spot or speck, or stripe, which is peculiar to each, and distinguishes it from all the rest. The specimens of the bushbock that I saw were always solitary; and it would seem to be more timid than any other species of antelope. The singular marking of its skin adapted it to catch the eye, but it was rarely visible for more than a moment; its nervous sensibility made it keen to catch the slightest sound; the lightest rustling would make it bound away into the woods. I have stood breathlessly waiting with cocked rifle, but there is no time to take a proper aim; and the shot that took effect I own was directed rather by chance than skill.

The bamboo-thickets are likewise a favourite resort of wart-hogs, which there find abundant food in the tender young sprouts in which they delight. Numbers of birds, too, attracted by the grain that is formed in the round and bushy spikes of the bamboo, haunt the scene, and many varieties of sparrows (*Passeres*) build and breed in this solitude, which is well-nigh as undisturbed as any upon the face of creation.

The appearance of a herd of large eland antelopes excited the Niam-niam of the neighbourhood to organise a regular *battue*, during the prosecution of which they met with a bit of good fortune that did not often occur. They succeeded in killing a leopard, an event that was deemed so great a triumph that old and young conspired to do honour to the occasion. The first intimation that we had of anything unusual having transpired was given by the war-trumpets, the notes of which were heard in the direction of Uringama's villages; our first impression was that the Niam-niam, who were charged by the keen Kenoosian with the protection of his frontier, had been successfully repulsing some assault on



the part of the Babuekur; but very soon the report was circulated that a noble present was being conveyed to Mohammed, and, true enough, ere long there approached a formal procession bearing on a litter of leaves the blood-stained carcase of the leopard. The offering was duly laid at Mohammed's feet as a tribute, betokening the respect and friendship of the behnky. Throughout the whole of Central Africa the skin of the leopard is deemed a suitable adornment for persons of princely rank, and nowhere is it more readily admitted amongst the insignia of royalty than with the Niam-niam.

The animal that was now brought in was more than a yard in length. It had been killed in a singular way. Having encroached stealthily upon the position of the hartebeests, and not suspecting the proximity of the hunters, it had suddenly found itself beset by a body of men, and by a prodigious bound endeavoured to leap over the circle of snares that had been set. Just, however, as the leopard was effecting an escape it was struck by a couple of lances with such violence that the points darned themselves into the flesh, and left the stems protruding. Thus impeded, the wounded creature became entangled in the bushes, and, overpowered by the number of missiles hurled against it, succumbed to its destiny.

All the leopard skins that I saw in this part of Africa belonged to animals of the thick-set species, which is distinguished by large complicated spots, each spot being itself an assemblage of smaller spots, which run, generally in about five rows, along the entire body. By some naturalists this species is designated as the panther, in contradistinction to the true leopard, which is said to have a more slender body covered with more numerous rows of smaller spots. This, however, is an error; in spite of the many varieties of form and the gradations in the markings of the skin, it appears certain that but *one* species of leopard exists

throughout Africa, and that in this quarter of the globe, at least, the distinctive terms of *leopard* and *panther* are unnecessary.

On my previous wanderings I had skirted about three-fourths of the frontier of the Babuckur territory. As this territory lay but a short distance to the south-west of Mbomo, being bounded by the Tondy, I was able to obtain from the soldiers of the Seriba some particulars of the country of which I had seen the natives largely represented among the slaves of the various settlements at which I had sojourned.

The Babuckur must either have migrated to their present quarters from the south, or they must be the remnant of a nation that has been constrained to make its way to the north and to the east by the advance of the Niam-niam. It is said that their dialect is found amongst some of the tribes to the south of the Monbuttoo; this is not at all unlikely, as, like those tribes, they have an established system of agriculture and give great attention to the breeding of goats. Limited to an area of not more than 350 square miles, the eastern portion of this people is very much exposed to the raids of the Khartoomer traders and to the depredations of the Niam-niam chieftains, who for years have considered their land as a sort of outlying storehouse, from which they could at pleasure replenish their stock of corn and cattle. By reason of the perpetual persecutions to which they have been subject, their population has gradually become more and more compressed, and their very crowded condition itself probably accounts for the vigorous intensity with which they now ward off any acts of hostility; they are equally warlike and resolute; they will fight till they have shed their last drop of blood; and as cannibalism is commonly reported to be practised among them, their assailants are generally content to carry off whatever plunder is to be secured, as hastily as possible, without waiting to pursue

or trying to subjugate them. Their eastern neighbours, the Loobah, though themselves harassed by the oppressors from the north, are continually at war with the Babuckur.

The other portion of the Babuckur has withdrawn to the frontiers of the Bongo and Niam-niam that lie between the Sway and the Tondy, about sixty miles to the north-west of the portion to which I have been referring; the complete identity of the race, thus severed only in situation, is verified not only by the one term "Babuckur" being applied indiscriminately to the two sections, but still more by the complete similarity of the dialects, as I afterwards proved by comparing the vocabularies that I compiled. The Bongo call the western division of the Babuckur "Mundo."\*

The Babuckur are a tropical negro race. Their complexion is very dark. As slaves they are very useful, being of a docile and enduring temperament, handy in the house, and expert at almost any ordinary work. They are short in stature, and have a vacant, not to say a repulsive, expression. The women, when they have once passed their youth are, as a rule, the very incarnation of ugliness, for besides having extremely irregular features, they mutilate their faces in a most frightful way. All married women † pierce the rims of their ears and both their lips, and insert bits of grass-stalk about an inch long in the holes, some of them having as many as twenty of these grass-slips about their mouth and ears. The sides of the nostrils are treated in the same way as amongst the women of the Bongo, as I noticed in its proper place.

As Mohammed was anxious to inspect his Mittoo Seribas again before returning to his chief settlement, I did not wait for him, but, accompanied by a small retinue, I started off

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\* This is the Mundo of Petherick.

† The portrait of a Babuckur woman is given in the subsequent chapter on the slave-trade.

on the 29th of June, taking the nearest route to Sabby. For the first four miles we followed the same path by which we had come to Mbomo, and although the rain fell incessantly, the bamboo-forest was so unbroken that it afforded us an effectual shelter, and we reached the descent to the Morokoh with dry skins. After crossing the brook we turned off in a north-westerly direction, at an acute angle to our previous path.

An immense tract of forest, utterly barren and uninhabited, was now before us. The nearest cultivated spot would be the villages of the Bongo, near Ngoly, which could not be less than forty miles away, and certainly could not be reached within three days. After crossing four little meadow-waters, and fording the Lehssindah where it flowed between its gneiss banks, we encamped for the night about a league further on, near another of these meadow-waters, which are very numerous, and which, spreading themselves out in open glades, sometimes 500 paces wide, break the monotony of the wooded scene.

The whole region was enlivened by herds of hartebeests, and choosing my position at the head of the procession, I was ever on the *qui vive* to pursue them. My exertions in this way made the distance that I actually travelled three times as much as it need have been; but I had no other reward for my pains than the amusement I derived from the grotesque movements of the agile creatures.

After I had comfortably settled myself for the night in my grass nest, a circumstance occurred of a kind which more than once had happened to us before. I was roused by a dull heavy sound that seemed to shake the ground like an approaching earthquake. Our camp was tolerably extensive, for, besides my own retinue, a considerable number of Mohammed's bearers, conveying a large quantity of his ivory, had been sent in our party; but large as our numbers were, the whole camp was thrown into commotion, and shouts and

gun-shots were heard from every quarter. The explanation of the uproar was that an enormous herd of buffaloes in their nightly wanderings had come scampering down upon our position, and exposed us to the manifest risk of being trampled to death.

Early on the second morning we reached the banks of the Lehssy. The deep river-bed was now quite full, the stream being forty feet wide and flowing in a westerly direction at the rate of sixty feet a minute. The bearers performed the passage by the ordinary manœuvre of bridging over the water. For my own part I thought to adopt a scheme which would give some variety to the monotony of these proceedings, and became the victim of a little episode of by no means an agreeable nature. There would be a difficulty, I felt, in wearing my boots to cross the tangled branches of which the extemporised bridges are formed; they would permit no sure hold to the feet, and to walk over bare-footed would not have been a prudent experiment, as I might become footsore and prevented from marching; I therefore abandoned all idea of clambering over, but undressed myself and proceeded to swim across the flood. When I was just within a few strokes of the opposite shore, all at once I experienced a painful shock that throbbed through every limb; I had come into contact with one of the prickly mimosa-bushes, which I have already described as frequently hedging in the various streams. The river-bed being now full to its entire capacity, the water had completely risen above the dangerous shrubs, so that they had quite escaped my notice. I knew the nature of these thorny barriers by experience, and when I mention that I never found the stoutest boots able to withstand the penetrating power of the spikes, it may be imagined to a degree what agony I now suffered. It was like stranding on a reef of thorns. The utmost refinement of cruelty could hardly devise an instrument of torture much more effectual than



these mimosæ. However, swim I must. With a desperate effort I got myself free from the entanglement of the shrubs, and, bleeding from a hundred lacerations, I contrived to reach the land. I felt as if my whole body had been scarified. But there was no time to lose; so, in spite of the nervous shock, the angry wounds, and the smarting skin, I set out at once in continuation of our march.

We travelled five leagues that day and crossed six separate meadow-waters and glades of the same character as those already mentioned.

After proceeding for a considerable distance over bare red rocks, we were overtaken by a sudden storm of rain, and had to take hasty measures for protecting the baggage. But the interruption did not prevent me from doing a little interesting botanizing during the interval of delay. I found two of the prettiest plants that the land produces here, showing themselves in great abundance: a little orchid (*Habenaria crocea*) with saffron-coloured blossoms, and a sky-blue *Monbretia*, not unlike a squill. In many places the barren rocks were overspread with patches of these plants, that they looked as though a carpet had been laid out upon them, the colours blending into patterns that would not disgrace the flower-beds of our modern gardening.

In connection with the second of our night encampments a circumstance occurred, trifling in itself, but which was a convincing proof that, however deserted and free from human intrusion these forest solitudes might appear, they are nevertheless explored by the natives when they are out upon their hunting excursions. In the bustle of starting in the morning, a pair of boots, which I had hung up to dry within my grass-hut, had been forgotten and left behind. I did not miss them for a few days; but as their loss could not be replaced, I sent some people back, in the hope that they would recover them. It was found that the huts meanwhile had been ransacked by some mysterious stranger, and the

rare treasure had not escaped the keen eye of the hunter; the boots, indeed, were hanging precisely where they had been left; but every nail, and every little brass ring that formed the eyelets for the laces, had been carefully extracted from the leather, and were now probably gleaming in the nose and ears of some swarthy beauty.

Early in the morning of the third day we entered the splendid forest of Humboldtia, through which, only ten miles to the west, we had passed at the commencement of our Niam-niam campaign. After the forest came an open steppe, with a distant view of the hills in front, which we should again have to cross, though more to the east than before. The passage of the Mah being accomplished, the ascent began, and led through a wood, where the foliage was so dense that it was quite impossible to see many steps ahead. At this period I chanced to be nearly in the rear of the procession, when my attention was arrested by an old black slave in the pathway, who kept beckoning me to come to her. I found, on going up to the place where she stood, that she wanted to point out to me a black object that was about ten paces away; at first I took it to be merely a great stem of a tree that could only be indistinctly seen behind the large leaves of the Anonæ; and I was about to make a somewhat closer investigation, when all at once the mass began to move, and a fine pair of horns displayed themselves. In my impetuous surprise I fired mechanically, without an aim. My sudden shot raised a storm that I had little expected. In an instant a herd of twenty buffaloes, snorting and bellowing, with tails erect, came galloping past in mad career. Dizzy with confusion I discharged my double-barrelled rifle amongst the brutes; another moment and I could see nothing more than the massive foliage: the buffaloes had vanished, and I heard no more of them than the distant thunder of their heavy tramp.

The hills before us were called Mashirr; they were a con-

tinuation of the steep declivity of Mbala-Ngeea in the west, to which I have already alluded, extending onwards towards the south-east and forming a portion of the ridge that had been on our right during the whole of our march. On the summit, as far as the eye can reach, there is an extensive plateau, broken by detached groves and handsome trees, and sloping down towards the north, to the depression of the Tee. For the first time, after long missing them, we found some tamarinds, under the ample shade of which we made a short noonday halt, and then started off through some deep defiles that led to arid plains. Before reaching the Tee we counted four little brooks that flowed in an easterly direction to join it; the first of these, to the north of the hills, was the upper course of the Nungolongboh, and was full of water in a deep bed enclosed by an avenue of trees. A ridge of hills ran parallel to our path upon the left, and after we had crossed the second brook we observed a mass of red rock rising to about 300 feet upon our right. Many small herds of hartebeests came in sight. I lamed one of the animals with a rifle-shot, and was grieved to see how cruelly it was afterwards butchered by the Bongo, the poor brute being so unmercifully mauled by their lances that I had no little difficulty in getting a piece of solid flesh large enough to carry off and roast.

So much time was lost in our chase of the antelope that the evening came on whilst we had still some leagues to travel, and we soon found ourselves marching on in complete darkness. I was amongst the stragglers of our party, and we lost our way several times before we were finally collected by the clanging roll of the kettle-drums on the southern outposts of the Bongo. It was quite midnight when, weary with our exertions and drenched by passing through so many swamps, we arrived, after a circuitous route, at the village of Ngo·v.

At this place we remained a day to recruit our strength,

In the environs of the village I found the *Eucephalartus* (here in its most northerly position), the seeds, as large as hazel-nuts, strewing the ground in all directions.

At this season, too, the fruit of the wild date-palm was ripe, and I collected a large quantity of it, with which I made an unsuccessful attempt to concoct some African palm-wine. The fruit possesses the same pleasant aroma as the common date, but it is only a third of the size, and is very unpalatable, being harsh, dry, and woody.

On the 3rd of July we marched, without a single halt, for nine consecutive hours, until we found ourselves once again in Sabby. The last few leagues were accomplished in a drizzling rain. Large herds of antelopes frequented the district; but it was vexatious to find myself continually foiled in chasing them by the over-eagerness of my own dogs, which I was quite unable to restrain.

Our entry into Sabby made a wonderful impression upon Tikkitikki. He caught sight of a number of cattle quietly grazing before the gate of the Seriba, and, jumping to the conclusion that they must be a herd of wild antelopes that had accidentally strayed there, could not comprehend why no one endeavoured to avail himself of so splendid a chance to secure a prize. Subsequently, when he witnessed the process of milking, his delight knew no bounds; he laughed aloud, and declared that so comical a sight he had never seen before.

This journey had been one of the most pleasant and the most successful that had ever been undertaken in so remote a part of the continent. Its pleasantness was owing to my state of health and to the fine air of the Niam-niam countries; its success was due to the favourable circumstances under which I had travelled. In Europe the general idea of such a journey is that it must be a sort of martyrdom, made up of indescribable fatigue, exertion, and deprivation; but, without hesitation, I can affirm that, to a traveller who can

only maintain his strength and activity, it is far otherwise ; though he may find his enterprise laborious, he will not find it wearisome ; it will be what a German would describe as *mühsam* rather than *mühselig*. Fatigue and hardships are estimated comparatively, not so much to themselves, as to the ordinary comfort of domestic life. Those who are acquainted with such fatigue as attends our modern warfare, with its transient strain upon the powers of endurance, may probably form a fair idea of the character of my exertions ; but to all those who, like myself, have travelled by " Russian posts " my worst trials and wants in Africa would appear mere child's play. In fact, our days' marches were often so short that I became quite impatient. Our Niam-niam campaign from Sabby occupied 150 days, and in that time, apart from a few unimportant deviations, we had only travelled 560 miles in all ; according to the calculations as registered in my journal at the time, the whole distance accomplished was about 248 leagues.

After the forced marches, however, that we had just recently been making, I was heartily glad of the five days' rest which I was now enabled to enjoy in Sabby. A large packet of letters was awaiting my arrival, and to read through a correspondence which had been accumulating for a year and a half was an agreeable engagement for the period of unwonted repose. It was now for the first time that I heard of Sir Samuel Baker's adventurous expedition, and now that I got my earliest intimation of the Egyptian Government having undertaken to establish a footing in the Gazelle district. Kurshook Ali, a born Osmanli and one of the chief ivory merchants of Khartoom, who possessed a Seriba there, had been invested by the Governor-General with the title of a Sandjak, and been placed at the head of two companies of Government troops, one company being regular Turks (Bazibazuks), the other composed of negroes (Nizzam). The arrival of these troops had excited a great



amount of consternation through all the Seribas, for, apart from the fact that it too probably seemed to jeopardise the very foundation of the rights of the holders to the territory, it certainly presaged the levying of those taxes and imposts which the presence of Government soldiers always entails. What, in the first place, excited Kurshook Ali's cupidity was to get possession of the famous copper mines of South Darfoor. He was going to appropriate these in the name of the Viceroy, but Ismail Pasha was caught in a trap, and beguiled by the duplicity of a priest belonging to Darfoor, who represented the locality as being his own private property, exhibiting a forged deed of gift, purporting to be made by the late Sultan, to corroborate his claim.

Hellali, for such was the name of the skilful swindler, had for some time been employed as a secretary at the Court of the Sultan Hussein, and, being familiar with the administration of the affairs of Darfoor, turned his knowledge to account in fostering the animosity of that country against Egypt, its far more powerful neighbour. He had not, however, the slightest acquaintance with the property which he claimed as his own, and led the troops, with their Sandjak, by difficult paths to an uncertain fate, in a country that was scarcely known even by name.

In possession of the Viceregal firman, Hellali had the companies of black soldiers under his own orders, while Kurshook Ali had only the Arnauts. The story of how Hellali brought about a bloody conflict not only with the occupiers of the Seribas, but (after the death of the Sandjak, Kurshook Ali, which occurred soon afterwards) with the Turkish soldiers themselves, must be narrated on a later page.

After I had re-arranged and re-packed my collection, and seen that it had been properly enveloped in waterproof cases, I provided myself with a fresh relay of bearers, and, on the 8th of July, proceeded again towards the north. It was

nardly in human nature not to be eager to get the provisions which, having been forwarded from Khartoom, were now delayed beside the sluggish waters of the Gazelle. Mohammed, however, had not yet appeared, but was still making his requisitions of corn in his territories amongst the Mittoo. In consequence of his not returning with the anticipated contributions there was an increased dearth in Sabby, and my poor bearers were becoming absolutely destitute. Their sufferings during their arduous five days' toil were little short of incredible. The Seribas of Shereefee, which were passed upon the way, were as "hard up" for sustenance as Sabby itself; and besides this, the Bongo that were settled thereabouts were all in avowed hostility to my own Bongo, so that no spirit of hospitality was to be expected along our route.

Throughout this portion of our trying journey, the bearers, incredible as it may appear, subsisted solely upon the wild roots which they could grub up; they had positively nothing else to support them, and only digestions such as theirs could have endured the strain. The pressure under which we laboured of accomplishing the journey without loss of time was so urgent that there was not leisure to avail ourselves of any temptation to the chase, and, however much we might feast our eyes, we were under the stern necessity of keeping back our feet from pursuing the elands and waterbucks which had ventured from the wilderness and were grazing peacefully in almost close proximity to our line of march.

It was on the 10th that we reached Shereefee's chief Seriba, but we did not enter it. I had openly declared myself to belong to Mohammed's party, and indeed could not do otherwise than foresee the bitterness of those contentions which so soon afterwards broke out and led to such serious issues.

Most fortunately we were free from rain all the day. The groups of sycamores, which on our former visit had furnished

such a commodious encampment under the shelter of their splendid foliage, invited us once again to take up our quarters beneath them ; but we had hardly settled ourselves under their shade before we were surprised by the sudden outbreak of a storm, which continued with much violence. The woody landscape around was pleasant enough, and I was compensated in a way by the beauty of the scenery for the lack of provisions ; but I looked forward with eager hope for a period of refreshment when there would be an end to chilly baths and wearing apparel perpetually wet.

The passage over the Doggoroo was not made without considerable trouble, as we had to fell some trees and lay down a lot of brushwood so as to construct one of our improvised bridges. The last night-camp between the Doggoroo and the Tondy was deplorably wretched ; our provisions were positively exhausted ; all we could do was to send some messengers to the nearest Seriba to insure that we should have a supply of some kind in readiness for us on the following morning. It was also necessary to have extra bearers, as comparatively few of the Bongo of Sabby had any knowledge of the art of swimming.

After arriving at the height, from whence, for some miles round, we could survey the expanse of the submerged lowlands, we had still several hours before we could decipher in the distance the forms of the swimmers bringing the burdens of which we were in such urgent need. My bearers could not control their impatience ; greedily they pounced upon the first bags of corn that were brought to land, and without tarrying for the grain to be cooked, they thrust it by handfuls into their mouths. Their strong teeth easily crunched it up, the hard dry corn being as readily devoured by them as if they had been accustomed to it all their lives. Horses, or ruminants of any kind, could not more readily have disposed of a feed of oats.

I had thoroughly to undress myself in order to pass over

the flooded depression, and even upon the banks of the stream I stood knee-deep in water. The passage over the river was tedious, mainly in consequence of the sharp edges of the marsh-grass and the numerous pit-holes in the bottom making any rapid progress very dangerous. No less than two hours had I to dawdle away my time in this cheerless position before the caravan could be brought entirely over. A small raft, constructed of bundles of grass tied together, was used for the purpose of ferrying the baggage across; and, thanks to the excessive care that was used, not a single article failed to be transported in safety.

At this date (July 12, 1870) the Tondy was flowing with a velocity of eighty feet a minute; the depth of the channel, now over-full, proved to be no less than twenty-four feet, and the entire width of the stream, as it reached from the reedy border on one side to that on the other, extended to something more than 120 feet. The river had now risen more than four feet beyond the ordinary limits of its inundation, and our train had repeatedly to make wide deviations from its proper route in order to keep where the bottom was tolerably level and free from dangerous holes. The day was well-nigh spent in contending with rain and flood, and it was quite dusk before we hailed the welcome sight of the hospitable huts of Kulongo.

There is a way of transporting baggage across such rivers as are tolerably free from danger, which appears to me to be eminently practicable, and to be suited peculiarly well to this country, but which I was sorry never to see brought into use. It is a method recommended by Barth\* in the record of his enterprise, and consists simply of making a ferry by means of gourds. About a couple of dozen of moderate-sized calabashes are fastened together and covered over with layers of grass, and these are found to make a

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\* *Vide* 'Barth's Travels,' vol. ii. p. 254.

raft, which is quite capable of bearing several hundred-weight of goods. It has been to no purpose that I have called the attention of the Nubians to this contrivance; although they seemed forced to acknowledge the efficacy of the plan, they are not disposed to try it; however, for the benefit of future travellers, I beg to suggest it as a method which, under many circumstances, might afford them incomparable service.

Thus it was that after an absence of eight months I found myself happily back again at my old quarters. The place itself was little altered, except that the Seriba seemed to be in a more flourishing condition than in the previous year. The Bongo deserters, who had caused the failure of the Niam-niam expedition, had in consequence of a campaign against the Dinka tribes, on whose territory they had taken up their quarters, not only themselves returned to their former abode, but had induced three times as many Bongo as there were before to come and settle upon Ghattas's property. These people, who were now present in such superfluous numbers, had ten years ago all taken themselves off at the first appearance of strangers settling in their land. I saw that numerous tracts of woodlands had been cleared and brought under cultivation, and that various clusters of houses and farmsteads had grown up around. Altogether I should say that there could not have been much less than 600 fresh huts, which would represent at least 2500 souls. Since my departure, too, Ghattas senior had bidden his last farewell to earthly property, and his Seribas on the Upper Nile had all become the inheritance of his eldest son.

After being away so long I felt that it was almost like coming home, and realised something of the sensation of treading again the soil of my fatherland when I gazed afresh upon this country, so rich in its woodland charms, so abundant in its smiling sunny cultivation, so contrasted in its character to the gloomy and inhospitable forests of the



Niam-niam, which I had just quitted. I could not be otherwise than conscious that I had taken a step which brought me nearer Europe. The large establishment with its diversified population of full many a hue, the mere sight of clothes and linen that had known what it is to be washed, the unaccustomed diversity of victuals of which we could partake, all seemed so different to the contracted resources and meagre fare to which of late I had been subject, that I could hardly resist the impression that I must be living in a city, and could almost fancy myself already back at Khartoom. But before that could happen there were many obstacles to be overcome, and I must submit for various reasons to stay where I was. The journey to the Meshera, at this season of the year, presented nothing but countless marshes, the very birthplace of the miasma, which in its turn begets fever. Fresh deprivations for months to come would be the penalty of attempting at once to proceed up the river, and I had, moreover, reason to mistrust the capability of my constitution to withstand disease if I put it to too stern a test. I resolved, therefore, to tarry as patiently as I could, and to console myself with the pleasure of anticipation. In addition to this I had several important tasks which had never been satisfactorily finished, although I felt that the main object of my mission had been generally accomplished.

The temptation to a second Niam-niam tour was too strong to be resisted. I felt that it was my business to strike while the iron was hot, because future travellers only too probably would find that opportunities so good as my own were closed against them.

Exactly a month after our arrival a party was despatched for the purpose of fetching the supplies which were on their way to me. Not only my own effects, but Ghattas's too, were all lying crammed up in the meagre and not over-safe accommodation of the hold of the boats.

One occupation which engaged my attention continuously consisted in my supervision of the arrangement of my miscellaneous collection, which had increased very largely. It was necessary that everything should be put into a condition ready for its long transport.

Another demand upon my time arose from my having my correspondence for the ensuing year to complete and my journal to transcribe. My industry at this period had its full reward. The documents that I then copied and the outline maps that I dotted down were all preserved, and were the only compensation I had to make good the subsequent melancholy loss of all my other papers.

It will easily be understood how delighted I was, on the 23rd of August, to receive my new consignment of supplies. Although a good many articles had either been damaged by damp or devoured by insects, yet a sufficient proportion of them remained so uninjured that I was perfectly satisfied, and could venture with the utmost confidence to make my preparation for another journey. I was able to distribute a good number of presents of garments, pistols, and guns amongst the controllers of the various Seribas, whose acquaintance I had made, while the replenishing of my store of beads and stuffs gave me an opportunity of making certain acknowledgments of the good offices of my attendants. But the services which Mohammed Aboo Sammat had rendered me were far larger than all, and for these I had no return in my power to make.

Furnished thus afresh with a number of conveniences and luxuries which the interior did not supply, I found myself enjoying an amount of comfort that reminded me of Europe, and in the improvement of the quality of my daily food I almost forgot the hardships I had suffered.

By a somewhat circuitous route I had received several cases of wine. This was a gift which was especially acceptable, as being redolent of my distant home. That of which

I had dreamed as I tarried by the banks of the Nabambisso was now within my reach; it was no longer tantalizing to think of the "mountain port," for I had not only my bottle of wine, but a plentiful supply of other good things in addition; and nothing would have been a pleasanter task than to be able to entertain some lonely traveller like myself whom chance might have thrown across my path. To be able to open a bottle of wine at all in the heart of Africa was such an inexplicable piece of luck that it involuntarily brought to my mind the revenge of the gods and the ring of Polycrates, and to say the truth it was but a passing pleasure.

I was desirous of devoting the remainder of 1870 to the further and more complete investigation of the Dyoor and Bongo lands. With this intention I betook myself next to the Seriba of Doomookoo, and spent the first half of September in an interesting excursion to Kurkur, a district which, if ever the history of this land should be properly written, will have a claim to one of its most prominent chapters.

Kurkur, just at present a Seriba of Aboo Guroon's, twenty-eight miles to the W.S.W. of the chief Seriba of Ghattas, is a name already known, having been mentioned by Petherick, who, as the first explorer of the district, in 1856, had established a mart somewhere in the neighbourhood, making it the extreme point to which he advanced in his search for the ivory of the productive region.

Upon my route I crossed and re-crossed a number of small affluents which, coming westwards from Bongoland, joined the Dyoor. I gave, however, a particular attention to the course of the Molmul, which hitherto had been regarded merely as an arm of the Dyoor, but which I ascertained beyond a question to be an entirely independent stream. I crossed it close to Doomookoo, and again on my return at another place eight miles further to the north. It bears among the Bongo the name of Maï.

Between Doomookoo and Kurkur the scenery was pretty and undulated, wooded eminences alternating with extensive tracts of cultivated plain. The rises in the ground are made by low ridges of hills that run in a north-west direction on either side of the Nyedokoo, an affluent of the Dyoor that is always full of water. I looked in upon two little Seribas belonging to Agahd, called Kehre and Neshirr, and just before reaching Kurkur I called at Nguddoo, one of Kurshook Ali's settlements. The various territories of the different traders are quite confusing, as they lie scattered about in little enclaves like the petty Thuringian dukedoms in Germany.

The present Seriba of Kurkur is situated in a flat bushy region, rich in every variety of game. I was told that the former Seriba, visited by Petherick, stood eight miles to the south-west, on the Legbe, an important affluent of the Dyoor. Twelve miles further to the south, and parallel to the Legbe, is the Lako, which is another tributary of the Dyoor.

I remained at Kurkur for three days. Whilst I was there the natives killed a couple of giraffes. The controller had in his possession several of these animals alive, which had been caught in the neighbourhood, and for which he hoped to find a sale at Khartoom.

The spotted hyæna dogs (*Canis pictus*) are very common in this region. These dangerous animals have a partiality for the steppes and open brushwood, and, congregating in herds, hunt down the smaller antelopes, especially bushbucks. No case was known where they had attempted to attack men. Some of their skins are most brilliantly marked, and exhibit such a combination of red, white, yellow, and black spots that the hyæna dog may fairly claim to be the most particoloured of all mammalia. I saw one specimen in the Seriba that was perfectly tame, requiring no other restraint than a cord, and yielding to its master with all

the docility of an ordinary dog. This fact appears to corroborate the assertion of Livingstone (which, however, he makes with some reserve, not having personally witnessed the circumstance), that the natives of the Kalahari Desert are accustomed to break in this animal and train it for the chase.

Twelve miles to the north of Kurkur was another subsidiary Seriba, belonging to Aboo Guroon, and called Dangah, after a Bongo chief who lived there at the time when Petherick was in the country; another surviving chief named Dyow, also mentioned by Petherick, had his abode five miles further to the west; he came to pay me a visit, and retaining the recollection of the condition of the country under an earlier aspect now passed away, he made the usual lamentations over the destitution of the land and its present deficiency of game.

The Nyedokoo, enclosed by dense jungles of bamboo, passes close to Dangah, and in the rainy season is about thirty feet wide and ten feet deep. The inmates of the Seriba were supplied by its bright and sparkling waters, and I rejoiced at having an opportunity to send my stock of linen that it might be properly washed. Of the forty Seribas that I visited I saw scarcely more than three that were situated in immediate proximity to running water, the supply obtained from the wells being generally impure, besides being obtained in quantities too limited to be of much service for washing clothes.

The Khartoomers seem to have a very wonderful faculty for picking out the worst possible places for the formation of their settlements. Although they are excellent swimmers, they are so accustomed to the dust and dirt of their own home and to the turbid floods of their beloved Nile, that even here, where streams are so abundant, they have a morbid prejudice against all pure water whatsoever. They forget that the waters of the Nile are wholesome in spite



of being turbid, and make no distinction between them and the waters of the noisome swamps of Central Africa; while they heap imprecations upon the insalubrity of the climate, which, they say, gives them pestilence, guinea-worm, fever, skin disease, syphilis, and small-pox, they take no pains to avoid the very spots which are the primary cause of all their suffering.

After leaving Dangah I turned back towards the east, and, having called at Agahd's subsidiary Seriba Dubor on the way, I soon re-entered my own headquarters. The circuit I had thus completed was about sixty-five miles.

During my brief absence an event had transpired in Ghattas's Seriba that had alarmed the whole community, and which furnished a topic of anxious speculation for some weeks to come. It appeared that two of the Nubian soldiers belonging to the Seriba had betaken themselves to a Dyoor smith in the neighbourhood for the purpose of getting him to forge them some rings. While they were sitting in the smithy quietly watching the operations, all at once they were surrounded by a troop of Dinka warriors, who were scouring the country. The sight of a couple of unprotected "Turks" had suggested to the Dinka the idea of taking revenge for the last raid that they had suffered, and the unfortunate victims were attacked, cruelly tortured by lance-wounds, and carried back dead to the Seriba. The entire force turned out to punish the aggressors if they could; but the Dinka had had so good a start, that they were far beyond pursuit. The occurrence gave a general feeling of insecurity to the whole Seriba; the people were afraid to move about unarmed, and even in their ordinary domestic engagements carried their guns under their arms. This excessive prudence on their part, involving, as it did, a large increase of danger from firearms, was far from agreeable to myself. The risk of being burnt out was still greater than it had previously been, and not relishing my position in close proximity to so

many straw-huts, I was anxious to set up my quarters at some little distance away; but Idrees, the controller, declared that he should have to answer for my safety with his head, and would not permit me to build outside the palisade.

On the 15th of September Mohammed Aboo Sammat passed through the Seriba on his way to the river, with his store of ivory. It was a good opportunity for me to send intelligence of myself to Europe; and, under his care, my letters were despatched by the speediest route, so that in the course of five months they were in the hands of my friends. A fortnight sufficed for the indefatigable Mohammed to reach the Meshera, start off his boats on their way to Khar-toom, and return to our Seriba.

Mohammed upon his return made me a present of a somewhat uncommon description. On his way through the forest of Alwady he had fallen in with a troop of elephants, two of which had been killed by his people, one of them being a female that was accompanied by her still sucking calf. The little elephant had been secured and attached to the caravan, and on arriving at the Seriba was introduced to my quarters as a gift to myself. I was in possession of a milch cow, and took the greatest pains to cherish my new *protégé* by supplying it with large quantities of milk; but all my attention was in vain, the young animal had been so weakened by improper or insufficient diet, and so exhausted by the forced marches, that no subsequent care could save it, and in a few days it expired. It was quite touching to watch the poor helpless creature in its last gasps. Whoever has observed the eye of the elephant will remember that, in spite of its smallness and natural short-sightedness, it exhibits an intelligence, almost amounting to reason, that is seen in no other quadruped. My juvenile specimen had already begun to display the instinctive cleanliness of its nature. I was told that on its journey it stopped at every pool and spring while it pumped up the water with its trunk, and squirted it, as if

from a hose, all over its body to wash off the dust of the road and the mud that it had contracted in crossing the swamps.

For my own amusement I had made a collection of several other animals, which I lodged in my hut, in order to have them under constant supervision and to be able to observe their habits. My menagerie contributed very much to the characteristic features of my hut. Outside were tethered my donkey and my cow; but the calf, being too delicate to withstand the rain, was brought in at nights, and fastened to the tall scaffolding which supported my bed, the noxious miasma during the rainy period making it desirable for every traveller to spend his hours of sleep raised as much as possible above the level of the ground. Different corners of the hut, which was already encumbered with every variety of furniture, were appropriated to my dogs, two caracal lynxes a ratel, or honey-badger, and a zebra-ichneumon. These creatures lived in continual feud, and did not show the least likelihood of becoming "a happy family." The honey-badger and the ichneumon were perhaps the most amicable, but even they were continually snapping at each other; still they never came into any mortal conflict. But the caracals were utterly implacable, and fought most savagely: in spite, however, of their general faculty of self-defence, one of them in a desperate encounter with a Bongo dog was bitten in the throat and died on the spot.

I had brought a large number of lances and of bows and arrows from the Monbuttoo, and felt inclined not only to try the efficiency of the weapons, but to test the marksmanship of the representatives of the various tribes that were included in the promiscuous population of the Seriba. Accordingly more than once I set up one of the Monbuttoo shields as a target, and instituted a general shooting-match. Tikkitikki was an eminently successful shot, the grotesque attitudes into which he threw himself to exhibit his dexterity

ever causing a great diversion : I was, in fact, quite proud of my Pygmy, and his reputation was so bruited about, that many Khartoomers came from distant Seribas to gratify their curiosity by looking at him.

One evening during the exercises I met with an accident which might have been serious, if not fatal, in its consequences. An iron arrow struck my forehead and, although it only slightly grazed the skin, the pain for a moment was quite agonizing ; it soon passed off, however, and I took no further notice of the matter than applying a little goulard-water ; but, according to my ordinary habit, I sat up writing until late into the night, exposed to a draught at the entrance of my hut, and caught a cold in the wound, which became exceedingly inflamed. When I woke the next morning I was unable to open my eyes, and on lifting up my eyelids with my fingers, I could see in my looking-glass that my whole face was immensely swollen. Fearful of erysipelas, I could devise nothing better than wrapping up my face in calico and staying patiently in bed. On the third day I had the satisfaction of finding that the inflammation had subsided, and that all fear of danger was gone. In regions such as these the traveller cannot be too careful in his treatment of even the most insignificant wound. Once before I had experienced something of the sort during a forced march through the desert about Thebes : a gnat had slightly stung my instep, and such a violent inflammation had supervened that I had been obliged to keep my bed for several days.

The proceeds of this year's cattle-raids upon the Dinka had been exceedingly large ; and as Ghattas's company had been prevented from carrying out a Niam-niam campaign, they had been able to concentrate all their forces for plunder. The captured cattle, under the charge of a number of Dinka herdsmen, had been installed in a large yard set apart for the purpose close to the Seriba. There was consequently no lack of meat, and, at a very reduced price, I was allowed to

purchase whatever cattle I required to be slaughtered for myself and for my people.

My milch cow was an almost invaluable possession. In spite of its yield of milk being somewhat meagre, it supplied me for eight months with a morning draught, and in the subsequent season of necessity its contribution to my daily diet was still more precious. Half the cattle sickened with all sorts of internal disorders, and the greater proportion of the animals that were slaughtered would not much longer have endured the climate. I am sure, however, that notwithstanding the fact that these breeds have been entirely unaccustomed to salt, its admixture with their food would infuse new life and vigour into them; nothing but this, I feel convinced, kept up my own supply of milk and prevented my cow from becoming emaciated; at first the dose had to be administered by force, but the creature not only soon became accustomed to it, but would run after me for a handful of salt, like a lap-dog for its sugar.

During the rainy season of 1870 the Dinka cattle were decimated by various plagues, and the district of the Lao was especially ravaged, old Shol losing some thousand of her stock. The most common of these cattle plagues was called *Atyeng* by the Dinka, showing itself by open wounds like lance-cuts in the hoofs; sometimes the wounds would make their appearance on the tongue, rendering the animal incapable of grazing, so that it could get no nourishment, and sank through exhaustion. Another malady, called *Abwott*, to which only the cows are subject, consists of a swelling which affects the uterus, and carries them off in a night. A third, known as the *Odwangdwang*, appears just as contagious, though not so generally fatal as the two former; the animals refuse their food for forty-eight hours, but, under favourable circumstances, on the third day commence grazing again.

The Khareef of 1870 terminated on the 21st of September, no rain falling after that date. A heavy fall of hail occurred



on the 25th of August, when the hailstones were as large as cherries; this was the only time that I remember seeing hail within the tropics, although in May 1864, when I was on the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea, just to the north of the tropic of Cancer, I witnessed one of the severest hailstorms that could be imagined.

This year's rainy season was remarkable for the violence of the separate storms, but also for the small number of decidedly wet days; of these I counted ten in July, twelve in August, and ten in September, the number altogether corresponding very nearly to what I had recorded in the previous year. Nevertheless, the rainfall was so great that the sorghum in all the low-lying fields rotted in the ground; the condition of the crops, however, was equally bad in all places where the soil, although rocky, was sloping, and threw off the water too rapidly, for between the intervals of rain the heat of the sun was so overpowering that the corn was parched up through being drained of moisture.

By reference to a few notes that I saved I find that the 4th of October, in a meteorological point of view, was an important day, as being the date on which the wind first veered round to the north-east. I cannot speak positively as to the date when the south wind had first set in, as I was absent amongst the Niam-niam and Monbuttoo at the time; but my impression is that it was not far from the same time as in the year before, viz, the 16th of March; thus the entire period during which the south-west winds had been prevalent was seven months. But although the north-east wind had thus commenced on the 4th of October, there was no perceptible fall in the temperature until the 20th of November; after that the thermometer at sunrise stood at about 70° Fahr.

As the flora at this season presented little with which I was not already familiar, my time was spent very much under the same routine as in the previous autumn; I continued my occupations of measuring the natives, studying

their dialects, collecting insects, preparing skulls, and joining the people in chase of small birds. But, all along, I did not lose sight of my projected journey, and applied all the experience I had gained so that I might equip myself for renewing my wanderings with the best advantage. My health was by no means impaired, but, on the contrary, I had gained fresh vigour in the pure air of the southern highlands, where I had undergone more fatigue than I could have previously trusted myself to encounter; I came to the resolution, therefore, that I need not fear to accompany Ghattas's next expedition, and visit the central portions of the Niam-niam countries that were still unknown to me. The journey was specially attractive to me as promising to enable me to complete my exploration of the hydrographical system of the Gazelle, taking me as it would to the middle sections of those rivers, which, indeed, I had already crossed, but only in their upper and their lower courses. By this means I indulged the hope that, under favourable circumstances, I might be able once for all to settle the details of this particular district of the Nile territory, and so to make one contribution more towards building up the true theory which may solve the complicated problem of Central Africa.

Being desirous of making some exchanges and effecting some purchases to complete my supplies, I set out on a tour to Kurshook Ali's head Seriba, with which I was already well acquainted. This excursion occupied from the 24th of October until the 4th of November. The owner, as already mentioned, had been sent out by the Egyptian Government at the head of a body of troops; but before reaching the interior he had succumbed to the pestilential climate of the Dinka, and had been succeeded in command by a Turkish Aga, who had accompanied him as lieutenant, and who, having broken up his camp in the Dinka country, had turned farther to the west.

Credit had been opened for me in all the establishments

of the Khartoomers, and not only were the magazines of Kurshook Ali's Seriba amply supplied with stores, but Khalil, the controller, received me hospitably and rendered me all possible service, so that I accomplished my business most satisfactorily.

The little trip gave me another opportunity of twice crossing the Dyoor, and thus, by taking fresh measurements, of adding to the information I had already gained about this important river. At ten o'clock in the morning, when the atmosphere was at a temperature just under 80° Fahr., the temperature of the water was just over 90°.

The passage over was effected in a ferry-boat of the most wretched description; it was composed of nothing more than a couple of hollow stems bound together by ropes and caulked with common clay, the miserable craft demanding perpetual vigilance to keep it afloat at all. It is a striking proof of the unconquerable indolence of the Nubians that during their fifteen years' residence in the land, although they are beyond a question acquainted with the art of ship-building, they have never attempted to construct an ordinary boat for the daily passage of such an important river as this.

The aspect of the vegetation was very similar to that of late autumn in Europe. Quite recently as the water had left the steppes, the low parts of them were already beginning to look withered, and in the woods the trees were rapidly becoming more and more bare. Amongst smaller and less important plants I found a considerable number of new species, which either had previously escaped my notice, or which probably do not spring up until after the receding of the waters.

On our way back we were entertained in the little Seriba Dyoor Awet, where roasted elephant-foot constituted the speciality of the repast.

Before we reached Aboo Guroon's Seriba a ludicrous

circumstance occurred, which while it brought out afresh the evidence of the dastard cowardice of my Niam-niam interpreter Gyabir, who had made such an outcry when wounded in the arm by the A-Banga, at the same time exposed me to the risk of losing one of my invaluable guns. He was marching along in the rear of the caravan when a number of Dyoor chanced to come across his path; mistaking them for Dinka, to whom they bore a very decided resemblance, he took to his heels and made his way to the most inaccessible part of the steppe, where he intended to remain till night should enable him to escape unobserved. Our route led us so close to the Dinka territory that we were aware no one could wander half a league away without being in imminent peril of being captured; it was, therefore, with no small concern that on our arrival we discovered that Gyabir was missing. We could only conjecture that he had lost his way. Aboo Guroon at once despatched his black soldiers in all directions, but they returned at night without having discovered the least clue to the whereabouts of the wanderer. Early next morning, to the general surprise, Gyabir made his appearance; he acknowledged that he had heard the shouts of the men who were making the search for him, but that he could not venture to quit his place of concealment, because he was thoroughly aware that if by any misadventure he should fall into the hands of the Dinka, being a Niam-niam, he could have no hope of finding any quarter.

Whilst here I received sad news of my friend Mohammed. On his way back from the Meshera to Sabby he had hoped by taking a short cut through the wilderness to avoid all conflict with the marauding parties of his enemy Shereefee; but, in spite of all his precautions, his antagonist had gained information of his movements, and, setting an ambush in the forest, made a murderous attack upon him. The assault was far more sanguinary in its results than that of the previous

year. As usual the Khartoomers refused to fire upon their compatriots, and Mohammed was thus entirely dependent for his protection upon his black spearmen, of whom several were killed. Mohammed's cousin, who had brought the stores from Khartoom, fell a victim to a gun-shot quite at the beginning of the fray, and Mohammed himself received so many sabre cuts about his face and head that, deluged in blood, he was left on the ground for dead. Shereefee's Bongo pursued Mohammed's Bongo in all directions, and Mohammed's stores all became the spoil of Shereefee, who did not as before scatter the beads and valuables about the ground, but had everything conveyed to his own Seriba. The booty amounted in all to at least two hundred packages. The shameless marauder made an avowed boast of his achievements, ostentatiously displayed his ill-gotten wealth to all around him, and even strutted about arrayed in Mohammed's new clothes.

In the course of the night Mohammed was picked up, apparently lifeless, by his faithful blacks and carried to Sabby, where he received every due attention, but it was some weeks before he was sufficiently recovered to write an account of his misfortunes, which he despatched to the friendly Seribas, sending it by witnesses who could explain the true condition of affairs.

These events naturally excited the utmost indignation in the Seribas, all the controllers of which were friendly and well-disposed towards Mohammed. The slave-traders, on the contrary, who had settled in the country, and all their adherents, took the part of Shereefee. That a Mussulman, on a peaceful journey, should be the subject of a premeditated attack by one of his own faith, was a circumstance without a precedent even in this land of violence and club-law; but, what most provoked my own anger and disgust was the cool indifference with which the commander of the Egyptian troops (the lieutenant who had succeeded Kurshook Ali)



viewed the whole affair. When Mohammed appeared in camp and demanded that retributive justice should be exacted for the ill-treatment and loss that he had sustained, the commander endeavoured to throw doubts upon all his statements, and did not hesitate, in spite of the testimony of all the witnesses, to shield Shereefee, by whom, no doubt, he had been previously bribed. Who shall say what order or justice is to be expected in this land of license, when even the Government official, sent out as the first representative of the State to protect and administer its laws, could proceed to such a degree of avaricious partiality? And yet the people in Khartoom have the audacity to descant upon "the suppression of the slave-trade!"

Aboo Guroon, with whom I spent several pleasant days, was busy from morning to night in his preparations for the forthcoming Niam-niam campaign, and it afforded me much amusement to watch him as he sorted out and packed his varied store of ammunition. Several companies had combined for the expedition, and he invited me to remain and start with him, as Ghattas's party, to which I was attached, would not follow for some weeks later.

In this common enterprise Aboo Guroon had a special interest of his own, having but a short time since lost one of his Seribas in the Niam-niam land. The garrison had been massacred, and all the arms and ammunition had fallen into the hands of the sons of Ezo, who having got possession of the weapons turned them to such good account that they inspired the Nubians with great respect for their military skill. These events had taken place to the west of my Niam-niam route, and had an indirect connection with the proceedings taken against Mohammed by Mbeeoh, who had been surprised by Aboo Guroon's company in the same way as the combined companies of Ghattas and Aboo Sammat. The scene of war had merely been transferred from Mbeeoh's territory to that of the sons of Tombo and Ezo.

Although I should have much preferred to travel in company with Aboo Guroon rather than with Ghattas's agent, there was one insuperable impediment: my baggage was not ready, and it would require some little time to select the articles that would be of most practical use to me as well as what would involve me in the smallest outlay for bearers. I was obliged, therefore, to forego Aboo Guroon's offer. If I had joined him I should have escaped the calamity of fire from which I soon afterwards suffered so severe a loss, but perhaps only to share a worse fate, for Aboo Guroon was one of the first victims of an engagement with the Niam-niam, a very few days after he set out.

Just at this time all the controllers of the different Seribas were actively engaged in preparing for their combined and extensive ivory expedition. With their aggregated forces they hoped to subdue the refractory chieftains in the north, who had been guilty of much treachery towards the Nubians: their primary proceedings were to be taken against Nduruma, the daring son of Ezo.

It had been the rapid diminution of the ivory in these districts that had caused the Khartoomers of late to direct their expeditions to the territories of the powerful kings of the south, leaving the smaller chieftains with a comparatively insignificant interest in the traffic. These chieftains, therefore, did all in their power to obstruct the progress of the Nubians, and endeavoured by foul means, instead of by fair, to obtain a share of the copper which they coveted. They commenced a system of hostility to get possession of the store of metal which, as long as they had ivory to dispose of, had come to them in the peaceful way of commerce. To the dismay of the Khartoomers, the natives soon showed that they were quite capable of putting whatever firearms they captured to a formidable use, and I shall very soon have to relate how completely all the Niam-niam expeditions

came to grief in consequence of the vigorous opposition of the natives.

Meanwhile I was fully occupied by my preparation for the long journey before me. My anticipations were not to be realised. Just at the time when I was rejoicing that my health had braved all the perils of the climate and my good fortune seemed to be at its height, I was doomed to drink of that bitter cup of disappointment from which none of my predecessors in Central Africa have been exempt.

## CHAPTER XX.

A disastrous day. Failure to rescue my effects. Burnt Seriba by night. Comfortless bed. A wintry aspect. Rebuilding the Seriba. Cause of the fire. Idrees's apathy. An exceptionally wet day. Bad news of Niam-niam expedition. Measuring distance by footsteps. Start to the Dyoor. Khalil's kind reception. A restricted wardrobe. Temperature at its minimum. Corn requisitions of Egyptian troops. Slave trade carried on by soldiers. Suggestions for improved transport. Chinese hand-barrows. Defeat of Khartoomers by Ndoruma. Nubians' fear of bullets. A lion shot. Nocturnal disturbance. Measurements of the river Dyoor. Hippopotamus hunt. Habits of hippopotamus. Hippopotamus fat. Nile whips. Recovery of a manuscript. Character of the Nubians. Nubian superstitions. Strife in the Egyptian camp.

THE description which has already been given of the large establishment owned by the firm of Ghattas, where, with all my provisions, I was now awaiting the start of the caravan, must have made the place in a large degree familiar to the reader. For the clearer apprehension of the event I have now to relate it may be advisable to repeat the following particulars. The colony consisted of about six hundred huts and sheds, which were built almost entirely of straw and bamboo. In the intervals between the huts were erected the large sun-screens known as "rokooba," which were made of the same materials; and, to separate allotment from allotment, there were long lines of fences, which were likewise composed of straw, and these were arranged so close to each other that they scarcely admitted the narrowest of passages, perhaps but a few feet across, to run between them. Everything that human ingenuity could contrive seemed to have been done to insure that, with the cessation of the rainy

season there should commence a period of the extremest peril, and, for myself, I can avow that fear of fire became my bugbear by day and my terror by night. In spite of my remonstrances I saw the crowding together of the huts continually become more and more dense, and the enclosure packed full to the utmost limits of its capacity. It became a manifest impossibility in the case of the occurrence of fire, on however small a scale, to prevent it spreading into such a conflagration that the safety of the whole establishment must be imperilled. The material of the structures, dried in the tropical heat, would accelerate and insure the devastation that must necessarily ensue.

The catastrophe, which I had dreaded with such ominous apprehension, befell us at midday on the 1st of December.

This most disastrous day of my life had opened in the accustomed carrying out of its routine. I had been engaged all the morning with my correspondence and in arranging the notes of the various occurrences that had transpired since the despatch of my previous budget. I had partaken of my frugal midday meal, and was just on the point of resuming my writing, when all at once I caught the sound of the excited Bongo shrieking out "poddu, poddu" (fire, fire!) Long, how long none can tell, will the memory of this burst of alarm haunt my ear. It makes me shudder even now. Eager to know the truth, and to ascertain how far the ill-omened apparition of misfortune had already spread, I rushed to the doorway of my hut, and beheld that the devouring element was doing its work at a distance of only three huts from my own; the flame was rising fiercely from the top of a hut; there was no room for hope; just at that time of day the north-east wind always blew with its greatest violence, and it was only too plain that the direction of the gale was bringing the fire straight towards my residence. The space of a few minutes was all that remained for me to rescue what I could.



Without an instant's delay, my people flocked to the scene of the alarm. Without stopping to discuss what was most prudent or to consider what was most valuable, they laid hold upon anything that came to hand. The negro-boys took particular care of all the stuffs, and of their own clothes as being of the greatest consequence in their estimation, and by their means all my bedding and two of my leathern port-manteaus were carried safely out of the Seriba. I myself flung my manuscript into a great chest which had already been provided against any accident of the sort, but my care was of no avail. My servants succeeded in hastily conveying five of my largest boxes and two cases to the open space of the Seriba where the direction of the wind made us presume they would be out of danger; but we only too soon learnt our mistake; the wind chopped and veered about, and the hot blasts fanned the flames in every direction till there was hardly a place to stand, and it was hopeless to reckon upon any more salvage. A prompt retreat became absolutely necessary; great masses of burning straw began to fall in every quarter, and the high fences of straw left but narrow avenues by which we could escape. The flames sometimes seemed to rise to a height of a hundred feet above the combustible structures of dry grass, and then all at once they would descend, but only to lick with destructive fury some adjacent spot, while a perpetual shower of hot sparks glared again in the roaring air. The crowds, as they rushed away before the advancing flames, were like a swarm of flies buzzing around a lighted torch. I cast a look towards the remnant of my property which we had thought we had rescued, and to my horror I perceived that the chests were enveloped in smoke, and immediately afterwards were encircled by the flames. It was a moment of despair. How my heart sank at the sight none can imagine, for those chests contained all my manuscripts, journals, and records, in comparison with which the loss of all the effects

in my hut appeared utterly insignificant, though they were the burdens of a hundred bearers. Regardless of the shower of sparks, which singed off my very hair, I made a frantic rush forwards, the dogs, with their feet all scorched, howling at my side, and breathlessly stopped under a tree, where I found a shelter alike from the raging of the ardent flame and from the noonday glare. In the confusion of the flight I had been unable to get my hat, and was thus fully exposed to the midday heat.

Below us from amidst the crackling waves of fire came the crashing noise of the roofs as they collapsed, and ever and again there broke forth the louder report caused by the explosion of our ammunition, and many a loaded gun that had been left behind discharged itself and exposed the fugitives to a new and random danger. The Nubians behaved themselves with a strange composure, not to say indifference; the majority had little or nothing to lose, yet many an account-book must have perished in the flames, so that not a few of them hoped to turn the disaster to a profitable account. The priests, however, were not quite so unmoved; they stood before their doors and howled out the shrieking formulæ of their incantations, by which they pretended to control the course of the raging fire. It was very remarkable that the spot where a Faki had been buried, and which was marked with a white banner to distinguish it as a place for prayer, was spared from the general conflagration, although it was within a few yards of where my burnt chests had been laid. The departed Faki was now as good as a canonised saint, and had proved himself a genuine sheikh.

The entire Seriba by this time was wrapped in flames, which seemed still to spread in every quarter. The wind, as it rose, carried away with it whole bundles of smouldering straw, which it soon fanned into fire amidst the huts that were scattered round on the exterior of the palisade.

Very dry at this season, the steppe had hitherto been

preserved, because the harvest was not yet complete, and it was not very long before this too was caught by the raging fire, and even the old trees around did not escape, so that it seemed almost as if the whole district were being submerged in a sea of flame. Half an hour had completed the great work of devastation. After that period it was possible to make a dash between the charred posts of the huts, but only for a few moments, so intense was the heat of the ground and so overpowering the glowing atmosphere that pervaded the scene of destruction. A crowd of people kept on bringing vessels of water to try and extinguish the flames before they had totally destroyed the clay "googahs" which held the sole supply of corn.

After a while I succeeded in getting to my garden, which, bereft of the greater part of its recently-constructed hedge of bamboo, presented a truly melancholy aspect. As the sun sank low we began to make a search for anything that might have been spared amidst the still glowing embers of the huts. I had saved little beyond my life. I had lost all my clothes, my guns, and the best part of my instruments. I was without tea and without quinine. As I stood gazing upon the piles of ashes I could not help reckoning up the accumulation of my labours which had there, beneath them all, been buried in this hapless destiny. All my preparations for the projected expedition to the Niam-niam; all the produce of my recent journey; all the entomological collection that I had made with such constant interest; all the examples of native industry which I had procured by so much care; all my registers of meteorological events which had been kept day by day and without interruption ever since my first departure from Suakin, and in which I had inscribed some 7000 barometrical observations; all my journals, with their detailed narrative of the transactions of 825 days; all my elaborate measurements of the bodies of the natives, which I had been at so much pains and expense

to induce them to permit; all my vocabularies, which it had been so tedious a business to compile; everything, in the course of a single hour; everything was gone, the plunder of the flames. It had been for the sake of better protection, as I thought, that I had resolved not to part with my journals, and had kept my collection of insects in my own possession; I had been afraid of any misadventure befalling them; but now they might just as well have been at the bottom of the Nile.

There I sat amongst my tobacco-shrubs upon my stock of bedding that had been rescued from the flames; but I fear that I could not boast of overmuch of the spirit of resignation. The entire remnant of my property was soon reckoned up; it consisted of a couple of chests, my three barometers, an azimuth-compass, and the ironwork which survived from the different productions of the Niam-niam and Monbuttoo.

Evening drew on: just as usual, the cow with her calf came and provided me with two glasses of milk. I had a yam or two, a picking from the inside of a half-burnt tuber, a morsel from a similarly half-burnt lump of pickled meat, and I had come to the end of my slender stock of provisions. My dogs kept up a continual howling; their sufferings from their burnt feet must have been excessive, and they whined in concert with the general desolation. The servants, however, were as calm and undisturbed as usual. Neither the Nubians nor the negroes seemed to be much concerned; and why should they? They had just nothing to lose.

I looked around and counted up my party. It consisted of seven bipeds and seven quadrupeds; the same number of each, and each of about the same sensibility.

When the darkness of night had really set in, the region of the Seriba had all the aspect of an active colliery. The venerable fig-tree in front of the main entrance was still flaring away, and the palisade was yet burning, apparently shutting in the scene of ruin with a garland of light. It was

a ghastly illumination. To the Nubians the spectacle was not altogether a novelty. The sight of a negro village in flames was to them familiar enough; but now the tables were turned, and they had to learn for themselves what it is to be hungry and destitute of every prospect of supply. Such were the conditions under which that night we had to seek our rest.

Hardly anything could be more impressive than the scene that revealed itself on the following morning. Not merely the places where the fire had raged, but the regions around were strewn with a thick layer of ashes; the steppes and sorghum-fields were whitened with them. It would be easy to have imagined that the glowing green of the tropics had for a time retreated, and allowed itself to be replaced by a gloomy and wintry vegetation transported from the arctic zone. Almost as white as snow were the layers of ashes that had settled on the sorghum-fields, only broken by the heaps of half-burnt clods that rose like hillocks of turf upon a moor. The smoke still lingered on the ground, and veiled the general scene; the trees seemed to stretch out their dry bare arms to heaven, and helped to complete the resemblance to the winterly aspect of the frozen world.

It was a pitiful sight to watch the brown and swarthy figures of the negroes, wrapped in their brown and swarthy rags, run hither and thither amongst the still smouldering ruins; and the wretchedness of the view was not a little aggravated by the bloated carcasses of half-roasted donkeys and sheep that lay scattered about in various parts. Troops of women were bustling about and carrying water-vessels of every sort, eager in their endeavours to put out the lurking fire that was threatening the corn-magazines that hitherto had escaped. These clay-built reservoirs of corn were the only memorials that seemed to survive the devastation. Blackened indeed by the smoke, the "googahs" were still erect. Varying in height from five feet to seven, they were



hardly ever wanting in the homes either of the Dyoor or Dinka: and now as they stood surmounting the otherwise universal *débris*, their very numbers made them conspicuous, and, forming a fantastic feature in the scene, gave their testimony as to what had been the crowded proximity of hut to hut.

Hurrying up from the surrounding country, the natives flocked to search for beads amidst the ruins, although every bead must necessarily have been spoilt. Others of them, with a better purpose, set to work to construct sheds of straw for the shelter of the houseless.

The next day was opened with a general effort to restore the buildings of the Seriba. Hundreds of Bongo, Dyoor, and Dinka brought the necessary wood, straw, and bamboos, and proceeded to construct their new huts with much dexterity: on an average, six men would completely finish a hut twenty feet in diameter in a couple of days.

No common sense had been learnt through the late calamity, for not only was the Seriba erected on the selfsame spot, but in the selfsame manner as before. The fear of being assassinated by the Dinka was assigned as the reason for refusing to follow the example of Khalil, the controller of Kurshook Ali's Seriba, who, in rebuilding his establishment, had insisted upon placing the Vokeel's residence and the magazines alone within the palisade, leaving the soldiers' huts in detached groups outside. In vain, day after day, did I repeat my warning of the danger they were inviting of the repetition of a similar misfortune; but all my exhortations to care and prudence were utterly wasted; the people were obstinate, and I could not help passing many a sleepless night in continual dread of a second catastrophe that I was aware I was powerless to avert.

The cause of the fire, when subsequently discovered, did not give me the least surprise. One of Ghattas's soldiers had been quarrelling with his slave, having accused her of

unfaithfulness; and in order to frighten her, and extort a confession of her guilt, he had discharged a gun into the interior of his hut. I afterwards remembered hearing the report; as gunshots, however, were far from uncommon, I paid no particular attention to the circumstance: but the smouldering paper-cartridge had lodged in the straw-roof, and ten minutes later the hut was in flames. Although the origin of the fire was thus easily explained, the Mohammedan fatalists never swerved from their belief that the misfortune was unavoidable, and was ordained by the decree of destiny.

All my reproaches failed to reach the real offender, who immediately after the fire quitted the scene of the disaster he had brought about. But, in my opinion, Idrees, the controller, was himself primarily responsible for all the trouble. He allowed a senseless firing to be carried on inside the Seriba, not only at every new moon, but on a hundred other occasions, and I was in a perpetual state of vexation and anger whenever I saw the lighted wads flying about amongst the dry straw-roofs: then, again, he allowed each person to increase the number of his huts, rokoobas, and hedges, just as he liked, until the appearance of the Seriba was that of an inexplicable maze. In his capacity of Vokeel it was undoubtedly his place to allot a proper space to each individual; but so far from seeing that this was legitimately done, he himself did his utmost to increase the complication of buildings, and had erected a huge rokooba for his horse just in front of my hut; it was this very rokooba that had been the means of communicating the flames to the chests containing my manuscripts, as they stood on a portion of what, previously to its erection, had been a wide open space.

By the 11th of December some newly-built huts were at my disposal, a place of security on that day proving doubly welcome, as a heavy storm of rain came on about four o'clock in the morning, lasting for quite half an hour. This exceptional storm rose from the south-east, veered round to the

south, and finally passed away towards the south-west. The entire day remained cold and dull, with slight showers falling at intervals. For the first time the temperature fell to 65° Fahr., having previously varied between 75° and 80°. The coldest season of the year now set in, and lasted for a couple of months; during this time the thermometer in the early morning was comparatively low, and the barometer varied much more continually than in the height of the rainy season.

Bad news flies apace, and following close upon the destruction of the *Seriba* came the intelligence of the total defeat of that first detachment of the *Niam-niam* expedition that had been despatched to the south; besides a number of native bearers, 150 Mohammedans were reported to have lost their lives.

The immediate effect of these disastrous tidings was to make me know that all hope of extending my wanderings in that direction must finally be abandoned. Bitter as had been the misfortune that had befallen me, it would not of itself have deterred me from my project of a second *Niam-niam* journey, but, now that *Aboo Guroon* was killed, there was no one who could provide me afresh with such articles as I had lost. I possessed neither boots nor shoes, guns nor ammunition, paper nor instruments, and even my watches, which were so essential to me, were gone; what use then to think any further of a journey to unknown countries under such circumstances as these? Convinced of the vanity of any attempt to proceed, I was therefore obliged, with a heavy heart, to turn my thoughts towards Europe; no succours could reach me for more than a year, and even then my great distance from Egypt made their safe arrival more than doubtful.

Still more than six months remained before the trading-boats would start on their return journey down the Nile; I felt bound to employ this time to the best of my powers,

and I was not long left to make up my mind as to what I would do. Amongst the few of my effects that were snatched from the flames I discovered ink, together with materials for writing and drawing: and the sight of some sketches that had accidentally been rescued with my bedding first roused me from my feelings of total despair, and told me that I must once again begin to collect and investigate, and preserve my observations by means of pen and pencil. Necessarily somewhat depressed in spirits I once again turned to as many of my former pursuits as I could, although I felt the increasing pressure of poverty and hardship, and was as dependent as a beggar upon the hospitality of the Nubians, many of whom viewed my presence in the country with suspicion and distrust. My present discomfort was still further aggravated by its contrast with the comparative ease and abundance which the arrival of my European stores had latterly afforded me.

I came to the resolution of quitting the scene of my disaster, and, accompanied by my servants, determined to withdraw to Kurshook Ali's\* Seriba beyond the Dyoor, where I knew that Khalil, the kind-hearted controller, would render me what relief he could under my present urgent necessities, although the amenities of life to which the Nubians had any pretension were very few. Accordingly on the 16th of December, followed by a small herd of cows, I turned my back upon the Seriba that had arisen from the ashes of its predecessor, and started by a new and more southerly route for my intended quarters.

For nearly three years my watches had gone with remarkable accuracy, they were ordinary Geneva *ancres perfectionnées*, having cost about twenty-five thalers a-piece; their loss was quite irreparable, for the Nubians have no

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\* The Turkish name is properly pronounced Kutshook Aly, but I give the words as I believe they are more generally written.

other means of computing time than upon the great dial of the firmament,\* which requires no winding up, and they tell the hour of the day by simply observing the position of the sun in the heavens. The only resource left to me for estimating the distance that I travelled was to count my steps, and in my despondency over my losses I found a kind of melancholy satisfaction in the performance of this monotonous task, which probably had never fallen before to the lot of any other African traveller. My patience, however, was, as it were, an anchor of safety that I threw out after my calamity: I seemed to myself like a ship, which, though seaworthy in itself, has thrown overboard its cargo as the only hope of getting into port. An enthusiast I set out, enraptured with nature in her wildest aspect, and an enthusiast should I have remained, had not the fire clipped my wings; but now, helpless on the inhospitable soil of Africa, I could not but be conscious how powerless I was to contend with the many obstacles, both physical and material, that beset my path; but in the place of enthusiasm, patience, that overcomes all misfortune, came to my aid, did me good service, and kept me from sinking.

I must confess that the first few days' journey threatened to exhaust what spirit still remained to me, but by degrees my equanimity was restored, and persevering in my design I soon became accustomed to a practice to which I owe some of the most reliable results of the survey of my route. As a consequence of this method of counting my steps I succeeded in attaining very considerable accuracy in the relative distances noted on the map, although very probably I may have been unable to avoid an error of from 5 to 8 per cent. in the absolute distances themselves; of course, my steps were not so perfectly uniform in length as the divisions of a

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\* The negro races of Central Africa also, without any notion of hours as a division of time, are able to indicate the time of day by the same method, which for the equinoctial regions may be considered quite practical.



measuring rod; but, after all, the footsteps of a man are a much more accurate standard of measurement than those of a beast; the camel, for instance, as is well known, when it is urged to greater speed does not increase the number of its steps, but only increases their length; whilst the paces of a man, at whatever rate he may walk, do not vary much from an average length. Anyone may easily put this matter to the test for himself by measuring the distance between his footprints on the moist side of a river, and he will find that no increase nor diminution in his rate of progress will make a very material difference in their successive distances. My own paces varied, according to the nature of the roads, from two feet to two feet four inches in length, and my method of computation is readily described. I first counted hundreds, telling off each separate hundred on my fingers; when I had reached five hundred I made a stroke in my note-book, and on reaching another five hundred I made a reverse stroke upon the one already made, thus forming a cross, so that every registry of a cross betokened a thousand paces; all beyond five hundred were carried on towards the next stroke, and between the various strokes and crosses I inserted abbreviated symbols, as notes about the condition and direction of the road; thus I was prevented from either over or under estimating the number of my steps, and at the close of each day's march was able at my leisure to sum up all the entries and duly record the result in my diary. In the six months that elapsed before my embarkation at the Meshera I had in this way taken account of a million and a quarter of my footsteps.

The route which I had taken towards the Dyoor led through Dubor and Dangah. On the 16th of December the Molmul was still full of water, but had no longer any perceptible current; the brook passed along a considerable, though gradual depression, the rising ground about Dubor being visible for a long distance to the west. All the pools

and ponds by the wayside were now completely dry; a couple of swamps were all that remained of the affluent to which the copious brook near Okale,\* with its surrounding groves of wine-palms, owes its existence. The Nyedokoo was reduced to half its former dimensions, and was now but fifteen feet wide and three deep, although the current was still strong.

Before its union with the Dyoor, the Nyedokoo receives a considerable increase in its waters from the left, and on our way north-west from Dangah we had to cross two small brooks, both flowing into the Dyoor; the larger of these was called the Kullukungoo. We made a short halt in a little Seriba belonging to Agahd's company, and then began to descend the eastern side of the valley of the Dyoor, which might be described as a steep wall of rock eighty feet in height. We marched for a distance of four miles through a lovely wood on the right bank of the river, and were greatly diverted by the extraordinary quantity of hippopotamuses that frequented this part of the stream.

I had the kindest of receptions from my old friend Khalil, who did all that lay in his power to make my visit enjoyable, and showed great sympathy with me in my misfortunes. His magazines were plentifully stored with stuffs and ammunition, and, as I had unlimited credit with him, he was able to supply me with some of the articles that were more immediately necessary. In the Seriba I found some people who understood something of the art of tailoring, and with their help I set to work, to the best of my ability, to make good the defects of my wardrobe. By taking to pieces the few garments that remained to me and using the fragments for patterns, I managed to procure some new clothes, all of which I cut out myself. In none of the Seribas was there a single piece of linen or of any durable material, and I could obtain nothing stronger than their thin calico, which, however

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\* *Vide* Chapter V.

well it might do for the costume of the effeminate Arabs, was hardly adapted for the pursuits of a hunter and botanist who spent all his days in thorny thickets. But a still more serious inconvenience was the want of any proper protection for my feet, and I could not at all get accustomed to wearing the light slippers of the Turks. The loss, too, of my hat was irreparable, but I contrived a sort of substitute by pasting together some thick cartridge-paper and sewing some white stuff over the whole; this hat possessed considerable durability, and in lightness was all that I could desire. In spite of the poverty of my wardrobe I was rejoiced to find that in cleanliness at least it was a match for that of the Khartoomers, who attach great importance to their washing-garments being of a spotless whiteness. The superiors amongst them, such as the Vokeels and the agents of the trading firms, even in these remote districts, not unfrequently appear in Oriental costume as gorgeous as though they were parading the streets of Khartoom; they all possess cloth clothes made in the Egyptian Mamelook fashion, and these are donned on special occasions, as, for instance, whenever they pay formal visits to their neighbours. For my own part I could never consent to array myself in an Oriental costume, knowing that the most meagre garb of European cut commands far higher respect throughout the domains of the Egyptian Viceroy than all the most brilliant and elaborate uniforms of the East. The adoption of the European style of dress in Egypt itself has been remarkably rapid, and between the years 1863 and 1871 I noticed a very conspicuous alteration in this respect, although unfortunately the advance was limited to this external aspect.

The 25th of December was the coldest day that I experienced during my residence in the interior. Half an hour before sunrise the thermometer registered 60° Fahrenheit, whilst on the two preceding mornings at the same hour it had stood at about 62° Fahrenheit; but it never afterwards

fell so low again, and notwithstanding the coldness of the mornings the temperature at midday rose regularly above 85° Fahrenheit, and on the 28th the thermometer out of doors and exposed to a north wind registered 96° Fahrenheit in the shade, whilst inside the huts it rose no higher than 88° Fahrenheit. The uniformity of the temperature throughout the year is a remarkable peculiarity of these far inland districts, which in winter-time are neither subject to the great heat in the middle of the day nor to the cold by night, which are experienced in the steppes and deserts of Nubia. The temperature of 60° Fahrenheit was the lowest that was registered during a residence of two years and a half, and was quite exceptional, only lasting for a couple of hours just before sunrise. As a comparison between this and the relatively cool climate of Tropical America I may mention that observations in Guatemala gave the average temperature for a period of twelve years as the same as this one exceptional minimum registered throughout my two and a half years' residence in Central Africa.

The camp of the Egyptian Government troops had been removed to the west, and was now a good seven days' march beyond the Dyoor. For the maintenance of the troops, contributions were levied on all the Seribas: the Government, it is true, paid two Maria Theresa dollars for each ardeb (1½ cwt.) of corn; but as the bearers from the more remote places were obliged either to consume more than half of their own loads upon their journey, or else to obtain extra provisions from the Seribas through which they passed, this payment was necessarily very inadequate. Some of the controllers managed to raise their portion of the compulsory tribute by sending herds of cattle to those Seribas that were nearest to the camp, and there getting them exchanged for the required corn; but as some of the settlements were as much as twenty days' journey from the encampment, it was perfectly impossible to provide means of transport to such a

distance, and besides this difficulty, there was a constant occurrence of scarcity of corn in all the Seribas; the unreasonable Turkish commander, however, took not the smallest heed of these inconveniences, but, by insisting upon the full satisfaction of his demands, went far towards hurrying the settlements into bankruptcy and ruin.

Instead of introducing order and regularity into the country, the first measures of the Government official tended only to engender odium and discontent, and completely crippled all the more promising tendencies of the mercantile intercourse of the Seribas. For the suppression of the slave-trade they did absolutely nothing. Along the Nile, it is true, where the route was open and everything obliged to be above-board, the Governor-General had commenced proceedings for the suppression of the slave-trade by a series of bombastic and pompous proclamations; but here, in the deep interior, there was every facility for the carrying on of the avowedly prohibited traffic.

Nowhere in the world can more inveterate slave-dealers be found than the commanders of the small detachments of Egyptian troops; as they move about from Seriba to Seriba, they may be seen followed by a train of their swarthy property, which grows longer and longer after every halt.

In the course of my narrative I have repeatedly shown that the inadequacy of the means of transport throws great difficulties in the way of the maintenance of a large and concentrated body of men. Fifty pounds is the standard weight of a bearer's burden on the longer journeys, and it does not require much calculation to make it evident that in comparatively a few days this burden will be materially encroached upon by the bearer himself having to be maintained by means of what he carries; he must necessarily exhaust it by his own requirements. Thus, for marches of many days' duration, man becomes the most unsuitable of all instruments for transporting provisions. It was, therefore, not



unnaturally a matter of constant consideration with me as to whether this difficulty might be obviated in any way, and whether longer expeditions might be undertaken into the interior without that continual risk of the failure of their means of subsistence, which was now so perpetually threatening them as often as they had to make their way either across uninhabited wildernesses or through hostile territory.

The introduction into these lands of carts drawn by oxen, such as are in use in South Africa, could only be done with very great caution, as it would involve much outlay both of time and money; in the first place, the transport of the heavy waggons themselves into the country would be far from easy, and then drivers who could train the beasts to their work would have to be obtained from remote districts; and even if these preliminary obstacles were overcome, it remains somewhat doubtful whether the breed of Dinka cattle could produce animals of sufficient strength and powers of endurance for such a purpose. In addition to all this I have already shown, in my account of my Niam-niam journey, that it would be impossible to penetrate with bullock-waggons of any sort beyond latitude  $5^{\circ}$  N.

It has been proved by experience that all donkeys, mules, horses, and camels succumb sooner or later to the effects of the climate; thus oxen would remain the only animals available as beasts of burden; but as those of the Dinka would be as incapable of carrying loads as of drawing waggons, it would be necessary to import suitable cattle from the Baggara Arabs, thus following the example of the slave-traders from Kordofan and Darfoor, who thence obtain all the animals that they use for riding.

Any sort of hand-truck in these countries must necessarily be limited to a single wheel, for, as I have often said, the paths are everywhere quite narrow, being in fact no wider than ordinary wheel-ruts; in most cases they barely allow any one whilst he is walking to put one foot before the

other, as the tall grass closely hems in the avenue on either hand.

After giving much attention to the subject, I am convinced that the most suitable form for any hand-trucks would be something like that used by the Chinese, running upon a single large wheel, which the framework that contains the goods spans like a bridge; a construction which, it is well known, permits loads of considerable weight to be moved by one man. In Central Africa, however, these trucks would have to be made chiefly of steel and iron, and ought to be constructed so that they should be propelled by a couple of men, one pushing behind and one pulling in front, by means of two poles run longitudinally through the barrows. They would then, I think, be applicable to every variety of soil, and would be equally adapted for the swamps and for the flooded depressions of the rivers, for the rocky ground of the mountainous regions, for the densest forest, and for what to broader waggons would present hardly inferior difficulties—for the open steppes. I should estimate that, at a very moderate computation, trucks of this build could bear upwards of five hundredweight; and thus the traveller would find the number of men he wanted reduced to one-fifth, and still be in a position to convey everything that was really necessary. In 1870 I drew the attention of African travellers to this style of truck, made almost exactly upon the principle of the Chinese hand-barrows, and I have since submitted it to the notice of the German African Society, just now formed, in the hopes that it may not immaterially assist their expedition from the coast of Loango.

I spent the remainder of the year in Kurshook Ali's Seriba. Whilst I was there, some Nubian soldiers arrived, who, having been eye-witnesses of the late engagement with the Niam-niam, brought us more circumstantial evidence of the defeat that the united forces of the several trading

companies had suffered. The caravan had been composed from the three companies of Aboo Guroon, Hassaballa, and Kurshook Ali, and included a larger number of bearers than it was customary to take into the Niam-niam lands; thus the entire party numbered close upon 2250, of which not less than 300 were provided with firearms. The accompanying train of women slaves, that had never been tolerated at all in the earlier expeditions, had been gradually increasing from year to year, and was now of such dimensions as materially to impede the daily movements of the Khartoomers, as well as to increase the confusion in the event of war. The leaders had striven in vain to do away with this abuse, but as it was with some difficulty that these undisciplined soldiers could be prevailed upon to join the arduous enterprises at all, they were obliged in this respect at least to let them have their own way. The assault had been made at a spot about a day's journey to the north of the residence of Ndoruma, the son of Ezo, just as the caravan with all the baggage was entering the obscure gallery of a bank-forest, and after the two leaders, Aboo Guroon and Ahmed Awat, on their mules at the head of the procession, had already emerged from the farther end. To the consternation of the Nubians, the attack was rendered doubly formidable by the skilful use of the firearms which the Niam-niam employed against them from behind the massive tree-stems. Cut off from their people, the two leaders were killed at the outset of the conflict, the one by a lance and the other by a bullet.

During the whole course of the battle, Aboo Guroon's people alone displayed any shadow of bravery. A detachment forced their way through the gallery, and rescued the body of their leader from the hands of the enemy, so that this old servant of Petherick, one of the earliest and most experienced of the traders with the Niam-niam, was consigned to an honourable grave, whilst the dead bodies of all

his fellow-sufferers fell into the hands of the Niam-niam. Ndoruma, who led on the attack in person, had some months previously captured large quantities of guns and ammunition, and as he was in possession of several fugitive slaves from the Seribas who had been familiarised with the use of firearms, he had lost little time in compelling them to impart their knowledge to their fellow-countrymen. The Nubians have the most pusillanimous dread of bullets, and any savage nation that enjoys the reputation of having guns in its possession may be tolerably sure of being spared any visits from them. It may therefore be imagined with what success the Niam-niam pursued their victory, and with what disgrace the intruders retreated in hasty flight. All the baggage, including a hundred loads of powder and ammunition, fell into the hands of Ndoruma; and a proper value the cunning cannibal seemed to know how to set upon his booty, for I was informed, that he at once erected waterproof magazines for the protection of his treasure, and diligently set to work to have his people well-drilled in the use of the weapons they had captured.

From what I could gather from some Niam-niam with whom I had communication, Ndoruma's enmity towards the Khartoomers was not entirely founded upon the exhaustion of the ivory-produce of his country. The Nubians, too shortsighted to foresee the consequences of their folly, are accustomed, whenever they can do so without injury to themselves, to commence an unjustifiable system of depredations upon any land from which they have no longer anything to gain by an amicable trade. In this way they have acted with impunity to themselves towards the Bongo, Mittoo, and others; but with the Niam-niam, a people whose strength consists in their constitutional unity, they have exposed themselves to a severe retribution. In their repeated razzias against the surrounding nations they have been addicted to the practice of carrying off the women and

girls, and this has roused the Niam-niam, who ever exhibit unbounded affection for their wives, to the last degree of exasperation. It is this diabolical traffic in human beings that acts as the leading incentive to these indiscriminating Nubians, and has caused so much detriment, by the decimation of the Bongo, to their possessions. In one part, as amongst the Bongo, it has resulted in bringing about an insufficiency of labour, and in another, as amongst the Niam-niam, it has thrown a barricade of hostility across their further progress.

Of the three companies that had met with this serious repulse, Kurshook Ali's company had suffered the smallest loss; its column of bearers, who were bringing up the rear of the procession, had retreated in time; but of the soldiers of the company, who had naturally hastened to the assistance of their fellow-countrymen, ten were killed and four more were carried away severely wounded. According to the protocol that Khalil received, all of these had been pierced by bullets. Apart from the grievous loss of life and property that this occurrence entailed, it foreboded nothing but discouragement for the future of the ivory trade; the controllers of the Seribas felt absolutely powerless before the overwhelming fact that the Niam-niam had used firearms, and, under the circumstances, they were entirely at a loss to know how to induce their disheartened troops to re-enter the formidable country. The soldiers openly declared that they had been hired to fight against savages on the Upper Nile, and by savages, they meant people who used lances and arrows; but to do battle with people who were armed with genuine bullets was going beyond their contract, and this they positively refused to do.

All the bearers who had escaped from the conflict with their lives, hurried back in crowds to their settlements, and circulated in the environs of the Seribas the most horrible accounts of the heartrending massacre they had witnessed. As



the demands of the expedition had nearly emptied several of the Seribas of their fighting force, those settlements that were on the Dinka frontiers were consequently for the time considerably exposed to the danger of attack from their neighbours. Accordingly, in the course of a few days, it happened that we were solicited by the inhabitants of a neighbouring Seriba of the deceased Aboo Guroon to send them an armed succour, as the Dinka around them were assuming a most threatening attitude. Khalil complied with their request by sending a small detachment of soldiers to co-operate with the remnant of armed men who had been left in charge of the garrison.

All these events combined to give my life in the Seriba much more excitement than before, and my intercourse with strangers was far from unfrequent. Many of the Gellahbas, mounted upon their donkeys or Baggara oxen, passed through the place to do business in the purchase of living ebony, and their rivals, the Turkish soldiers, ever and anon paid us a visit whilst on their way to make their requisitions of corn at the adjacent Seribas.

On one occasion the surprising intelligence was brought us that a lion had been shot on the sandy bed of the retreating Dyoor. In the early morning the animal had gone to quench its thirst at the river, and had been tracked down to the water's edge by a troop of soldiers who happened to be passing by; one of their number, though but an indifferent marksman, had aimed from a short range, and had succeeded in mortally wounding the lion by a shot in the head. The skin was dressed and converted into a splendid saddle-cloth, whilst the head was stuffed, and devoted to the mysterious purposes of magic.

One night a deafening uproar suddenly arose: it was followed by a horrible yell, accompanied by what sounded like the wails, screeches, and howls of a lot of terrified women. Every one started to his feet; the soldiers seized

their weapons; the captain of the Turkish guard, who happened to be in the place with a party of bazibozuks, rushed out with his troop, and increased the confusion by sending forth a whole volley of the usual oaths and imprecations. It turned out, however, that there was no demand either for his military services or for any of his bombastic bluster. The simple cause of the tumultuous outcry was the fall of an enormous tree near the Seriba. To save the trouble of felling this monster of the woods it had been gradually undermined by fire, and the negroes, in the course of one of their nightly orgies, had been waiting for the moment of its downfall, and were now bellowing and dancing like maniacs around the prostrate and still smoking mass.

On the 25th I made an excursion to the banks of the Dyoor, for the purpose of hunting hippopotamuses, as well as of verifying the condition of the river by taking measurements in two fresh places. Six miles to the S.S.E. of the Seriba, I reached the left bank of the river at a place where it was overgrown with tall reeds, and on our return we crossed again four miles farther below. Between these two positions was a deep basin, in which a number of hippopotamuses throughout the year found sufficient water in which to perform their evolutions. A couple of miles still lower down were situated the two crossing-places of earlier date. Between the most northerly and the most southerly of the four spots I have mentioned, the general direction of the Dyoor is due north, varied by gentle windings to the N.N.E. and N.N.W. Beginning at the most northerly, and taking them in order, I will now proceed to give the result of my observations on the condition of the Dyoor at each of the four places where I crossed it either by boat or by swimming.

1. At the first spot the entire bed was 800 feet wide, but on the 28th of April, 1869, the water only extended to the width of eighty feet, being from one to four feet in depth,

The edge of the bank stood from twenty to twenty-five feet above the water.

2. At the next point of examination the measuring-line gave the width of the bed from bank to bank as 302 feet. On the 8th of May, 1869, the river was full, and three or four feet deep. On the 27th of October, and on the 1st of November, 1870, the depth was from sixteen to twenty feet, whilst the banks were already three or four feet above the surface of the water. The velocity of the current on the left and western shore was 105 feet per minute, whilst on the eastern it was  $137\frac{1}{2}$  feet. It could be seen by the flood-marks that in the height of the rainy season (*i.e.* in August and September) the entire depression, extending from 1000 to 1200 paces on the left shore, and only 100 paces broad on the right, was covered with water to a depth of three or four feet.

3. The bed of the river at the third place, where I submitted it to my examination, was 328 feet wide, and on the 18th and 25th of December was full. For a distance of sixty feet from the right-hand bank, the depth of the water was little more than a foot, then for 100 feet in the middle of the stream it was about two feet, and subsequently for the remainder of the width as far as the left bank it increased to four feet. On the western shore, where the river depression stretched out in wide tracts, the current was far stronger than on the eastern, where the wooded rocks extend close down to the edge of the water. Near this place the condition of the depression of the river was exceptional, being of an equal breadth of about 600 feet on either side of the stream.

4. The bed of the stream at the last of my points of observation was, according to the measuring-line, 492 feet wide. On the 25th of December, 1870, it was only half full of water. Near the reedy left-hand bank alone was the water of any considerable depth: at that spot it was about

four feet deep, but nowhere else was it more than two feet. The current was strongest in the middle of the stream : it is a peculiarity of the Dyoor that its current has always the same velocity, and does not appear to be at all affected by the variations in the height of the water.

I sat for hours upon the rocky slopes of the right bank of the river watching the hippopotamuses as they plunged about in the water, and occasionally firing at them as opportunities occurred for an aim ; but a light rifle was all that I had saved from the fire, and the small shot that it carried did not have much effect upon the unwieldy beasts. The range of my rifle was rarely more than 150 feet, and of the hundred shots that I discharged very few did any serious damage, and only two animals appeared to be mortally wounded. Early on the following morning the natives of the surrounding districts found the body of one of the creatures that I had killed by a bullet behind the ear lying amongst the reeds in the river-bed, and they spent several hours in cutting up the ponderous carcase.

The colour of nearly all these animals was a dark fleshy red, almost like raw meat, marked irregularly with large black spots ; I also saw specimens of a lighter shade, but never of a pure white ; in the sunshine their damp bodies assumed quite a blueish-grey hue. Half of the hippopotamuses that I noticed at this deep part of the river, which extended for about a mile, were females carrying their young, which at this season seemed very weak and undeveloped, and sat astride on the short necks of their mothers. The females appeared to rise to the surface of the water for the sake of their young far more frequently than was necessary for their own accommodation, and unlike the males, which usually show their mouth and nostrils, they only lifted their young above the water, whilst their own heads generally remained invisible. The animals seem to utter different sounds at different seasons ; they now snorted

and grunted, or rather groaned, and the sharp rattling gurgle was less distinct than in the spring. In the sunlight the fine spray emitted from their nostrils gleamed like a ray of light.

Now and then, with a frightful roar that resounded far away, the males would leap violently from the water, displaying all the forepart of their huge body; they seemed to be scuffling together, but whether they were quarrelling for a monopoly of the limited space, or whether they had been hit by some of my bullets, I could not determine. Their small pointed ears were remarkably flexible, and were continually moving to and fro as the animals listened to distant sounds or flapped away the settling insects. All other characteristics of the hippopotamus are so well known that it would be superfluous to introduce any further description of them here.

To the same degree as its waters were enlivened by fish and hippopotamuses, were the banks of the Dyoor animated by birds and many varieties of animals. The forests were denized by several species of the monkey family, that during the winter months found there an abundant harvest of ripened fruit. The grotesque form of the red-billed Nashorr-bird rocked to and fro on the half-bare branches, and one of the most splendid of African birds, the sky-blue *Elminia*, was especially frequent. The bare sand-flats in the half dry river-bed were the favourite resorts of the water-birds. The quaint-looking umbers (*Scopus umbretta*), which are generally seen sitting solitary by the shady swamps in the woods, were here marshalled along the banks in flocks of twelve or fifteen; these birds, with their ponderous crested heads pensively drooping in the noontide heat, seemed in their "sombre weeds" rather to belong to the dreary wastes of the chilly north than to the smiling grass-plains of the Upper Nile. Then there were the great herons (*Mycteria senegalensis*) gravely strutting about, or skimming the dark



blue surface of the water on their silvery pinions. The Khartoomers call this bird Aboo Mieh, or father of hundreds, in commemoration of the munificence of a traveller who is said to have given a hundred piastres (five dollars) for the first specimens of this noble bird. In other places the sacred ibises had congregated into groups, and with their bills turned towards the water, stood or squatted motionless under the vertical beams of the midday sun. The return of the dry and cool winter months regularly brings these birds, like their compatriots the Khartoomers, into the more southerly negro-countries. Ever and again the sharp cry of the osprey from some invisible quarter would rouse the traveller from his reveries, as though by its yelling laughter it were mocking at his meditations. Storks, which are so prominent a feature in the Central Soudan, and are so highly revered in Adamawa, did not appear in these regions, and throughout my journey to the Niam-niam I never saw them.

We were hard at work on the following day in turning the huge carcase of the hippopotamus to account for our domestic use. My people boiled down great flasks of the fat which they took from the layers between the ribs, but what the entire produce of grease would have been I was unable to determine, as hundreds of natives had already cut off and appropriated pieces of the flesh. When boiled, hippopotamus-fat is very similar to pork-lard, though in the warm climate of Central Africa it never attains a consistency firmer than that of oil. Of all animal fats it appears to be the purest, and at any rate never becomes rancid, and will keep for many years without requiring any special process of clarifying; it has, however, a slight flavour of train-oil, to which it is difficult for a European to become accustomed. It is stated in some books that hippopotamus-bacon is quite a delicacy, but I can by no means concur in the opinion; I always found it unfit for eating, and when cut into narrow

strips and roasted, it was as hard and tough as so much rope; the same may be said of the tongue, which I often had smoked and salted. The meat is remarkably fibrous, and is one continuous tissue of sinews.

Several hundred Nile-whips or kurbatches can be made from the hide of a single animal, and afterwards, in Egypt, my servants made a profitable little market by selling the whips, for which they found a ready demand. By a proper application of oil, heat, and friction, they may be made as flexible as gutta percha. The fresh skin is easily cut cross-wise into long quadrilateral strips, and when half dry, the edges are trimmed with a knife, and the strips are hammered into the round whips as though they were iron beaten on an anvil. The length of these much dreaded "knouts" of the south is represented by half the circumference of the body of the hippopotamus, the stump end of the whip, which is about as thick as one's finger, corresponding to the skin on the back, whilst the point is the skin of the belly.

By a remarkable accident one of my most important manuscripts, happily for me, escaped the conflagration in Ghattas's Seriba. The explosion of a chest of ammunition had sent the book flying high into the air, where it had been caught by a current of wind caused by the glow, and, being carried for some distance, fell to the ground in a wood outside the Seriba; after the lapse of many days it was picked up by some natives and brought to me with no other damage than that the edges of the leaves had been slightly singed. The manuscript contained a copious vocabulary of the Bongo dialect and a collection of carefully translated phrases and sentences. I could not fail to accept this recovered treasure as an incitement to the further prosecution of my linguistic studies, and I set to work at once to replace my Dyoor and Niam-niam vocabularies. The idioms of the far south and east, which I had so laboriously committed to writing, the dialects of the Mittoo tribes, of the

Behl, of the Babuekur, and the Monbuttoo, were unfortunately irrecoverably lost, for during my subsequent residence in the Seribas I could never meet with competent interpreters.

My old friend Khalil commanded greater respect from his subordinates, and maintained more order and discipline in his Seriba, than any other controller belonging to a Khartoom mercantile firm with whom I ever became acquainted. With him, the settler who had been longest in the country, I spent many a pleasant hour, and from his confidential gossip I gained many a hint that enabled me to form an accurate judgment upon the state of affairs. He complained very much about the undisciplined troops of his countrymen that were sent to him from Khartoom; he emphatically denounced the slave trade, and although he could not enter much into the humanity of the attempts for its suppression, yet he was fully alive to the disadvantages that it exercised upon the internal administration of the Seribas. He was extremely anxious that the natives under his jurisdiction should suffer no diminution in their numbers, and would often dispute with the itinerant slave-dealers their right to carry off property that they had obtained from his territory; he even endeavoured to exercise control over his subordinates in the subsidiary Seribas, although they generally contrived to elude his watchfulness. Whenever it happened that any orphan Dyoor or Bongo children had been sold to the Gellalibas, he would use all sorts of remonstrances and would spare no argument to induce the traders to surrender their booty.

“This boy,” he would say, “you can’t have him: in the course of three or four years he will be old enough to be a bearer, and will be able to carry his 70 lbs. of ivory to the Meshera; and this girl, you mustn’t take her: she will soon be of an age to be married and have children. Where do you suppose I am to get my bearers in future, if you run off

with all the boys? and where do you expect that I shall find wives for my Bongo and Dyoor, if you carry all the girls out of the country?"

However reserved might be my behaviour towards the Nubians, yet my long period of daily intercourse with them gave me a tolerably deep insight into their character. It may perhaps appear incomprehensible how, with any equanimity, I could have endured for two years and a half the exclusive society of what was, for the most part, a mere rough rabble; but it must be remembered that the social position that I was able to maintain amongst them was very different to what it would have been amongst a party of rude and unpolished Europeans, and their religious fanaticism, as well as the entire difference of their habits, raised a strong barrier of defence against any sort of intimacy. Amongst the thousands of Nubian colonists with whom I was thrown in contact, I never met with a single individual who offered me any insult either in word or deed; I never had occasion to enter into anything like domestic relations with them, and never did otherwise than eat and sleep perfectly alone and in the seclusion of my own hut. But in spite of all my reserve I was a constant witness of the scenes in their daily life, and I believe that very few of their habits escaped my notice; it may not, therefore, be altogether uninteresting to insert here some results of my observations upon the character of my old travelling companions.

Throughout this account of my wanderings I have, for the sake of simplicity, always used the term "Nubians" to denote the present inhabitants of the Nile Valley, in contradistinction to the Egyptians and true Arabs (Syro-Arabians) on the one hand, and to the Ethiopian Bedouins and true Negroes on the other. I do not for a moment deny that the present Nubians (meaning by this term only the people who dwell on the banks of the river) must have sprung from various races. Independently of the three dialects of

the Nubian language, which are those of Dongola, of Kenoos, and of Mahass (in which it is supposed that the still undeciphered ancient Ethiopian inscriptions are written), and independently of Arabic being the actual mother-language of the natives, who have, in fact, immigrated from Asia, and some of whom, as for instance the Sheigieh, have hitherto remained ignorant of the Nubian language altogether; they are yet all so united by one common bond alike of general habits and physical character, that they no longer exhibit any perceptible distinctions. It must also be remembered that these Nubian natives of the Nile district have for centuries not only intermarried with each other, but have also mixed so indiscriminately with slaves of every origin, that they have lost all traces of being other than a single race. Accordingly the use of the term "Nubian," under the restriction named, may be justified in more than one respect, and may be fairly employed in geographical, ethnographical, or historical relations.

Whoever has become acquainted with the passive natives of Berber or Dongola\* in Egypt only, or more especially in Alexandria, where they are trusted with the charge of house and home, and whoever has witnessed the patience with which they endure the antipathy of the residents, will be at a loss how to reconcile his own impression with the unfavourable one given by a traveller so faithful as Burekhardt,† who knew them before they were subjected to Egyptian domination, and has left on record his version of their national character.

As far as my own experience went, with regard to morality, I decidedly preferred the people of Berber to the Egyptians, and I believed that the change for the better that had taken place since Burekhardt's visit to Berber and Shendy in 1822, had been owing to the more rigid government of the Turks

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\* The Egyptians call them simply "Barābra."

† 'Travels in Nubia,' by the late John Lewis Burekhardt. London, 1822.



on the one hand, and to the increasing physical luxury of the people of Berber on the other; for in their own homes I never found them to be otherwise than quiet and harmless.

My impressions, however, were at that time very imperfect; but when I saw the people on the territory of the Bahrel-Ghazal, that pasture-land for their hungry spirits, where they are beyond the jurisdiction of the Government and are no longer in dread of bastinadoes, extortions, taxation, or summonses to the divans of the satraps, and where there are no Egyptians to mock them with the insulting cry of "Barabra,"—then I discovered the true side of their nature, and all their leading traits came fully to light. Their character, a curious mixture of exemplary virtues and most repulsive vices, was not like a mechanical medley of antagonistic qualities, but was a composition in which each single quality seemed to partake of mingled good and evil, though unfortunately the evil decidedly preponderated.

If an Alexandrian merchant were asked for a character of his Nubian servant or baob, he would probably give it something in the following way: "My servant is a man whom I would confidently trust with untold gold, and yet there is no one to whom he is more indifferent than to myself. I am convinced that if I were in danger he would not stir a finger to save me." And this judgment would indeed be perfectly fair; the faithfulness of the Nubians is merely inspired by their cowardice, otherwise it would not be limited to money or things of a similar nature. Pilfering is not one of their failings, and is unheard of even in their lawless proceedings in the wilderness of the Upper Nile. As long as I lived amongst them they never robbed me of the smallest article of my property, and in this respect their behaviour offered a very favourable contrast to what I experienced from the Egyptians, whose thievish propensities have already been placed by Burekhardt in unfavourable contrast to the honesty of the Nubians. It is not, however, a genuine

sense of right that makes the Nubians honest, but rather the want of courage that pervades all their dealings: courage, whether for good or for evil, physical or moral, is entirely wanting amongst them. Their agreement one with another, and the promptitude with which every one feels bound to check a rising quarrel, whether it concern himself or not, arises from this same defect. Their indomitable striving for freedom is only the utterance of a spirit that rebels against order of any kind, and refuses even to be compelled to cleanliness; but at the same time it cannot be denied that sparks of a nobler nature can be traced in this part of their character, and they show a degree of patriotism, a feeling of nationality, and a resistance to usurped authority, all of which are sentiments quite unknown to the Egyptians.

Untruthfulness has become to them a second nature, and most of them will tell lies by habit, even when it is not of the smallest advantage to conceal the truth.

They display a far greater amount of religious fanaticism in the Seribas than in their own homes, as may be seen in their behaviour towards the heathen negroes, and I should fill a long chapter if I were to attempt to illustrate my account by the various examples of this of which I was myself a witness. To their ineradicable belief in witches and in the periodic migration of souls into the bodies of hyænas, I have already made several allusions. But the most monstrous of all their practices was that of liver-eating, of which some of the soldiers (though I must confess they were only exceptions) were shamelessly guilty during their encounters with the heathen. In Nubia dogs are trained for the chase in rather a remarkable manner: for a long time they are deprived of all animal food, but the first time afterwards that an antelope is killed they are fed with its still reeking liver; by this means the dog is accustomed to the scent, and becomes so wild and bloodthirsty, that it is always eager to track and hunt down its prey. It is probably

this custom that has caused the liver-eating people to imagine that by a similar method they may make themselves invincible in battle; perhaps they entertain the belief, that after partaking of such food, a portion of the power and courage of their fallen foe may pass into the vanquisher.

Other notions, very similar in character, appear to be widely diffused throughout the Mohammedan world. In their bigoted prejudices the Mohammedans imagine that the Christians are just as fanatical as themselves; the pitch to which their imagination will carry them about the actions of which they believe Christians to be guilty may be illustrated by the following anecdote: A friend of mine, who held the post of Government physician in a town on the Red Sea, proposed one day, in order to gain a more accurate knowledge of a disorder that was raging in the place, to dissect the body of a pilgrim, a stranger without kith or kin, who had died in the hospital. The doctor had long been on the look-out for an opportunity of this kind, but up to this time had never had a body which he could consider as being at his own disposal; now he thought he had a chance of making his investigations in peace and quietness. But his project was quickly to be frustrated. The hospital servants, perceiving his preparations, rushed horrified to the Governor; the news spread like wild-fire through the little town; the principal inhabitants met and consulted, and authorised a deputation to wait upon the Governor, who, at their instance, commanded the physician, under penalty of forfeiting his post, to desist from the operation. The offender also received a severe reprimand from the sanitary authorities, who expressed their indignation that he should have been guilty of such an outrage upon the customs of the land. The citizens were at length pacified, but for long afterwards the revolting report was current amongst them, that the doctor, being a Christian,

had been about to take the opportunity of eating the heart of a Mussulman and of drinking his blood!

Khalil told me that in his own home it was the general belief, in which, although he now knew better, he had himself been a firm believer, that when a Mussulman enters the land of the Franks he is at once caught and put into a cage, where he is carefully fattened; as soon as he is nice and plump, he is placed upon a gridiron over a fire that has been lighted in a pit below; the fat is collected as it drops from his body, and from this fat of the faithful it is believed that the Franks prepare their most subtle poisons.

Whenever a horse or a donkey gets in any way sickly it is compelled to swallow pieces of pork; this is considered as an infallible cure throughout the whole of Nubia, and in some of the heathen negro-countries, where tame pigs are unknown, the flesh of the wild hog (*Phacochoerus*) is used as a substitute. The practice in Zanzibar and in other places subject to the Arabian semi-culture of introducing pigs into the stalls with the horses for the purpose of attracting the devil from them into the swine, is unknown to the Nubians, but probably only for the reason that stalls do not exist in the Soudan.

Amulets\* are not only worn by dozens round the arms of the "believers," but are affixed to the doors of the houses as a protection from fire, and, what may sound still more remarkable, they are hung upon the necks of horses and donkeys. The writing of amulets is one of the most remunerative occupations of the Fakis or scribes, and they are in far greater requisition in Nubia than in Egypt.

The Fakis of Darfoor are held in the greatest reverence, and they are credited with the power of securing a certain protection from bullets. They are presumed, by means of spells, to be able to make the lead to dissolve into vapour,

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\* Burekhardt gives copies of two of these amulets in his 'Travels,' pp. 210 and 211.

and to work enchantments so that the discharge becomes innocuous. There has hence arisen in the Egyptian Soudan such an exaggerated notion of the superiority of the weapons of Darfoor, that none other than white Turkish troops are considered suitable for a campaign against this stronghold of Mohammedan fanaticism. The Turks, themselves bigoted enough, naturally laugh at all their superstition, and an anecdote related to me by the Governor of Fashoda will serve to illustrate the extravagance of these delusions of the Nubians. He told me that Seebehr Rahama, the great Seriba owner, whose territory joins the southern frontiers of Darfoor, had boasted to him that he possessed a means of foiling the black art of the Foorian Fakis; he had had 25,000 dollars melted down into bullets in Khartoom, and as the amulets of the Fakis did not apply to silver, he declared these new-fashioned shot to be most effectual. This story, as I have said, had been received by the Governor from Seebehr's own lips, and as I heard it confirmed in various quarters, I have no reason to doubt its truth, especially as Seebehr's wealth and enterprising character were as well-known to me as his blind superstition. If then the Viceroy should open a war with Darfoor (and there are few who, interested in the progress of enlightenment, would not rejoice to hear of such a movement) he must first, before venturing to attack this African Bokhara, lay in a store of the precious metal, in order to make the weapons of his troops at all effective against their foes. A costly war this would be in truth.

Throughout the Mohammedan Soudan there is a widespread belief in the unfailling efficacy of water which has been subject to the charm of imbibing the virtue of leaves of paper inscribed with texts from the Koran; to the Nubians this infusion is the best of medicine.

According to their notions, all diseases may be divided into two classes; those that are caused by "haboob" (wind),



and those that are caused by "damm" (blood). For purifying and cooling the blood their specific remedies are infusions of pepper, cloves, and other spices. Not a day, and hardly an hour, passed during my residence in the Seribas without my being a witness to some action prompted by one or other of their ingrained superstitions. The "evil eye," which it is well known is dreaded by all the people on the Mediterranean, plays a prominent part amongst them. No one is ever seen to eat alone, or even known to eat in private, and no food is ever carried across the road without being carefully covered. The invitation "bes-millah," which is heard amongst the people as they sit at table, is by no means uttered because there is a lack of envy and selfishness. Before the tongue of any animal is eaten, the tip has to be cut off, for here, they say, is the seat of all curses and evil wishes, and even the tongues of sheep and oxen are not served up until they have been subject to this treatment.

It is well known that most dogs have a few white hairs at the extreme tip of the tail; this tip, they declare, must be removed, otherwise the animal will not thrive. Altogether their fancies about dogs are most absurd; they adhere to the belief that to inhale their breath would be followed by grievous consequences, and that the worst internal disorders, such as consumption and dropsy, would infallibly ensue. Every Nubian dreads hearing a dog howl, and I was not a little surprised at finding in this remote land a superstition that is common in many parts of Europe, and which I remember having met with in Hungary. The superstition to which I refer is, that whenever a dog howls (and that is not seldom, for it will do so on hearing a donkey bray) it betokens the approaching death of its master.

One of their practices is as disgusting as it is strange. They suppose it will give them strength to apply the sweat of their horses to their own bodies. After a ride they scrape off the sweat from their horse's back with their hand, and rub

it about their persons, just in the same way as if they were using one of their ordinary greasy ointments. All Moham-medans have peculiar ideas about what is clean and unclean. A horse is not an unclean animal, and therefore its sweat cannot be supposed to defile a man. By the same rule, nothing impure can proceed from a man, because man is not an unclean animal. This theory of theirs is exemplified when a group of travellers is seen squatting on the ground preparing their cooling drinks; with their dirty hands they will squeeze the tamarinds into the water, and their draught is ready; that a couple of sticks would be in any way a more wholesome or seemly device appears never to have entered their thoughts. In order to express his disgust at anything dirty or impure, the traveller must either invent some phraseology of his own, or must signify his disapprobation in the words: "Take that away: it is niggis" (*i.e.* unclean in a religious sense): the Arabic terms for dirt being quite inadequate to convey the right idea.

I should not omit to mention that there are certain prejudices about the fabrication of European products that are shared by all the inhabitants of the Soudan. They believe that gum-arabic is in such demand in Europe only because the Franks use it for making their glass-ware, and especially their beads. Cigars, they say, are rolled up from tobacco that has been soaked in spirits to give it pungency; consequently no true believer can be induced to put one to his lips. All preserves are supposed to contain pork, or at any rate to be mixed with pigs' fat; otherwise, why should they be introduced into the country? Cheese, a product that is utterly unknown amongst the pastoral tribes of Africa, from the people of Morocco to the Bishareen on the Red Sea, and from the Dinka to the Kaffirs, is imagined to be composed of pigs' milk, a fact which accounts for the predilection of the Europeans for it.

I could go on reciting a hundred of the absurd prejudices

and misconceptions of the Nubians, but having given examples of their failings, I will now say a few words in commendation and recognition of the better qualities of my old friends. There are certain peculiarities of their character that may be described as actual virtues. The Nubian is far less cringing and servile to his superiors than the Egyptian: the title "Seedy" (my lord), which is continually heard in ordinary conversation amongst the Egyptians, is never heard from his lips. One day I asked my servants why they persisted in addressing me by the meagre and pointless term "Musyoo," when their language provided them with a courteous word like "Seedy," which is always used in Egypt. They at once replied that "Seedy" meant lord, and that they acknowledged no lord but the one All-powerful Allah.

I have already mentioned the romantic tone of conversation used by all Nubians, high and low, even on the most trifling subjects, and how, in this respect, they form a striking contrast to the Egyptians, who are ever harping on money and business.

Another very laudable trait in the character of the Nubians is their moderation in eating; they eat little, but quickly; their meals seem to occupy them but a few moments, and it is remarkable with what enjoyment they will gulp down their frugal repast of tough kissere. They are not at all dainty, and do not seem to covet tit-bits of any description; they never helped themselves to any of my delicacies, though amongst the Egyptians and the true negroes, I was always obliged to keep my sugar-basin in a place of security. Their outbreaks of intemperance over their abominable merissa stand out in strong and sad contrast to their otherwise perfect moderation.

Amongst their physical qualities I may especially remark their powers of marching; they are the best walkers that I know, and seem formed for tramping along the wildernesses

of Africa. Turks and Egyptians are rarely seen in the Seribas of the Upper Nile district, and mainly for the reason that in marching they are unable to keep pace with the Nubians.

Although they are more lively and excitable than the Turks and Egyptians, the Nubians exhibit a more decided idleness and dislike to work than either of them; hence proceeds that utter want of order and regularity in their households which is so conspicuous everywhere, and to overcome which would require more energy than they are ever likely to display. It is true that they are free from some of the more revolting vices of the Turks, such for instance as opium-eating, but they indulge in the same lascivious excesses, and have the same hankering after stimulants when their physical powers flag or fail to answer to those demands of an insatiable imagination, which have become a second nature in the degenerate nations of the East.

My condition was somewhat ameliorated, but I was still in want of many common necessaries. Hitherto I had been quite unable to find anything that could compensate for the boots and shoes I had lost. In the hope, therefore, of obtaining some of the things I so much required from amongst the effects of the deceased Turkish Sandjak, I resolved to make an excursion to the Egyptian camp. A series of settlements belonging to various Khartoomers would be passed along the route, and by stopping at these I might not only break my journey, but might get an opportunity in addition of gaining information about that portion of the frontier of the Upper Nile territory.

The camp of the Government was situated close to the chief settlement of the most powerful of all the Khartoom Seriba owners, Seebahr Rahama, who himself resided there. His territory included the western portion of the district occupied by the Khartoomers, and was immediately adjacent to the most southerly outposts of the Sultan of Darfoor. A few days before I started on this little journey to the west, a

circumstance had occurred that had thrown all the inhabitants of this Seriba into a great commotion, and which did not augur altogether well for my projected tour. A conflict had broken out between the black Government troops and Seebehr's Nubian soldiers, and twenty Nubians as well as many of the negroes had lost their lives in the fray. The Turkish bazibozuks, instead of remaining neutral, had joined in the affair and taken part against the blacks. The reason of this coalition between the Egyptian Turks and the Nubian settlers was, that the Turkish commander had given orders that their common enemy, Hellali, should be seized and imprisoned. This Hellali, it will be remembered, was the man who had been appointed to the special command of the black troops of the Government, and who had represented himself as the owner of the copper-mines in the south of Darfoor, stating that they had to pay him 4000 dollars annually. He was really the cause of the present quarrel, and the events that led to his imprisonment will not take long to describe.

Hellali had drawn upon himself the odium of all the Khartoomers, because, by alleging himself to be the owner of the land in the south of Darfoor, he threw doubt upon their legal right to the soil on which they had founded their Seribas; he was consequently summoned to Khartoom to give an account of his conduct. All the representations by which he had induced the Viceroy to undertake the expedition to the Gazelle had turned out to be nothing but the fraudulent devices of a swindler; Hellali had never possessed land in this district at all, and much less had received any grant of territory from the Sultan of Darfoor. For months it had been rumoured that he intended to retire with his black troops to that part of the country, and in spite of his appeal to the seal and signature of his Highness, by virtue of which he claimed possession of the lands, the suspicion against him increased to such an extent that the Turkish



commander appeared to be justified in proceeding to violent measures against the alleged favourite of the Viceroy. The conflict that now arose determined the matter; Hellali had been the mainspring of the quarrel with Seebehr's people, and thus, as I have said, his capture brought about a reconciliation between the Turks and the Nubians.

The immediate cause of the disagreement may now be related. Hellali had ordered his soldiers to make requisitions of corn upon the natives under Seebehr's jurisdiction, who had hitherto been accustomed to furnish contributions to none but their own master. The strange troops were proceeding by violence to appropriate to themselves the contents of the granaries, when the Nubian soldiers, with Seebehr himself at their head, sallied out from the Seriba, and attempted to drive off the intruders. Hellali's people immediately opened fire upon the Nubians, and the very first shot wounded Seebehr in the ankle. This was the signal for a general battle, and many lives were lost on either side. For the first few days the Egyptian camp, so near the Seriba as it was, was in imminent danger, and could with difficulty hold its own against the ever-increasing numbers of antagonists, for of course all the neighbours hastened to the assistance of Seebehr, whose fighting force already amounted to more than a thousand. In this dilemma the Turkish commander was obliged to resort to the diplomatic measure to which I have referred, so as to avert the serious consequences that threatened himself and his troops.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Fresh wanderings, Dyoor remedy for wounds. Crocodiles in the Ghetty. Former residence of Miss Tinné. Dirt and disorder. The Baggara-Rizegat. An enraged fanatic. The Pongo. Frontiers of the Bongo and Golo. A buffalo-calf shot. Idrecs Wod Defter's Seriba. Golo dialect. Corn magazines of the Golo. The Kooroo. The goats' brook. Increasing level of land. Seebehr's Seriba Dehm Nduggoo. Discontent of the Turks. Visit to an invalid. Ibrahim Effendi. Establishment of the Dehms. Nubians rivals to the slave-dealers. Population of Dar Ferteet. The Kredy. Overland route to Kordofan. Shekka. Copper mines of Darfoor. Raw copper.

THE third New Year's Day that I passed on African soil now dawned, and it was precisely on the 1st of January, 1871, that I found myself starting off upon my long-projected tour to the west. I left my little Tikkitikki to the temporary guardianship of Khalil, and set out accompanied by two of my servants, the negro lads, and the few bearers that were necessary to carry the little remnant of my property.

My scheme was first of all to pay a visit to Bizelly's Seriba, thirty-two miles to the north-west, the same that had been Miss Tinné's headquarters seven years previously; and as the controller happened to be passing through Kurshook Ali's Seriba on his return from a business tour, I was glad to avail myself of the chance of travelling in company with one who was well acquainted with the country. The name of this man was Bakhit Yussuf; he was a negro by birth, and had formerly been in the service of Kleineznick, a Hungarian,

who at the time of Miss Tinné's expedition had owned a Seriba in the Kozanga mountains, and who by the shameless way in which he had prosecuted the slave-trade, had fallen under the censure of the Khartoom authorities.

We crossed the Wow at the same wooded spot as we had done in April 1869. This river, the Nyenahm of the Dyoor, the Herey of the Bongo, during the rainy season has a depth of fourteen to sixteen feet without ever overflowing its banks; even at this date the bed of the noble forest-stream was still quite covered with water, the depth of which near the banks was three or four feet, decreasing in the middle of the current to less than two feet. The varying depth, however, did not affect the velocity, which was uniform throughout and about ninety-eight feet a minute. The width of the Wow I found by careful measurement to be 132 feet.

Beyond the river we passed through cultivated lands, leaving Agahd's chief Seriba on our left; we then crossed a low range of hills stretching towards the north-east, and brought our day's march to an end in the hamlet of a Dyoor chief named Dimmoh, where we encamped for the night. I had purposely avoided entering the Seriba Wow, although it was quite within reach, my reason being that I had recently been aggrieved by the behaviour of the acting Vokeel, one of the few men of Turkish origin who had settled in the land. A short time previously I had despatched a document of considerable importance to myself, containing a narrative of my late misfortunes, directing it to the commander of the Egyptian camp, so that through him it might be put on the right track for Europe, *viâ* Kordofan; but although the controllers of all the other Seribas had readily passed on my despatch from place to place by means of special messengers, this Turkish Vokeel had sent it back to me with the paltry excuse that he had received no instructions from myself personally as to where he should forward it. I was thus compelled

to be the bearer of my own papers as far as the Egyptian camp in Seebehr's Seriba, whence I hoped to be able to send them on by one of the slave caravans that made the place their starting-point.

Our night-camp afforded me an opportunity of renewing my familiarity with the idyllic village life of the Dyoor. The sorghum harvest had long been gathered in, and the dokhn had been safely stored in the great urn-like bins that were so essential a fixture in every hut; a second crop was now in course of being housed, consisting of the kindly (*Hyptis*) that springs up between the stubble, many of the women being engaged in the task, which is very tedious, of cleansing the poppy-like seeds. About the fields were lying many of those strange cylinder-shaped melons, which appear to be peculiar to the Dyoor, with their rind like that of the bottle-gourd and as hard as wood. There were also large numbers of the fleshy variegated calyces of the Sabdariffa dried all ready for storing, a condition in which they retain their pungency, and serve the purpose of giving the soups of the natives an acid flavour almost as sharp as vinegar.

Several of the old men and women that I saw looked very decrepit; a circumstance which I mention, because amongst the Bongo, slaves to heathen superstition as they are, I never noticed a single individual whose hair was grey.

I was a witness here of what struck me as a very singular method of treating wounds. A boy's knee had been grazed, and I saw a woman apply some of the acrid juice of the *Modecca abyssinica*. Forskal, who discovered the plant in Arabia, where it goes by the name of "Aden," says that pulverized and taken internally it causes a swelling of the limbs that does not fail to terminate fatally. The Dyoor woman scraped the rind off a piece of the stem, and having expressed the juice from the soft pulp spread it upon a damp leaf; this was laid as a plaster upon the wound and covered with another leaf. I could not help regretting that

time did not allow me to ascertain the efficiency of the operation.

The nights were calm and beautifully starlight, so that our rest in the open air was very enjoyable, and we started off each morning before sunrise with our energies thoroughly requickened.

After going awhile uphill over some rocky ground we came to a declivity of nearly a hundred feet; at the bottom of this we had to cross a wide swampy depression covered with the *Terminalia* forests that so often characterise such localities. The holes and hollows, although they were now completely dry, gave ample testimony as to what must be the number of the pools that would obstruct the path during the height of the rainy season. In a short time we reached the hamlets of a Dyoor chief named Woll, that were scattered about an open plain covered with cultivated fields; this was the frontier of Bizelly's territory. A tree something like an acacia, the *Entada sudanica*, remarkable for its pods, a foot long and thin as paper, and breaking into numbers of pieces when ripe, was the chief feature in the bush-forests of the environs, although it is a tree which is generally rare in the country.

The bearers with whom Khalil had supplied me were here dismissed, their place being taken by others who had come up at the orders of Bakhit Yussuf. Woll's people were very busy collecting their iron-ore and putting their smelting-furnaces into readiness for use. In the vicinity of the village there was an iron-mine similar to that near Kurshook Ali's Seriba.

Over rocky soil and through tracts of dense bushwood we marched on, until in front of us we saw a kind of valley-plateau, bare of trees, apparently shut in on the farther side by an eminence extending towards the north-east, which is the general direction of the territory of the Dyoor in this district. Here we entered a little Seriba of Bizelly's, known



by the name of Kurnuk,\* where we were well entertained during the midday hours.

In the afternoon we set off again, and mounted the wooded height covered with great tracts of the Göll tree (*Prosopis*), which is noticeable for producing a fruit very like the St. John's bread. Then again descending, we came to the dried-up bed of a watercourse that was closely overhung with bushes. Beyond this were various cultivated plots, dotted here and there with huts; and we next entered a splendid forest of lofty Humboldtia, which by its extent and denseness reminded me of our own European woods. Our path was shaded by these noble trees until we reached the Ghetty, or "Little Wow," six miles above the spot where Dr. Steudner lies buried on its bank.

This tributary of the Dyoor was about as large as the Molmul near Aboo Guroon's Seriba; its bed was between fifty and sixty feet wide; its banks were ten feet high. At present it was little more than a narrow ditch, with no perceptible motion in its waters, but I was told that lower down it widened out into pools that were always full of water. But insignificant as the Ghetty looked, it was large enough to be the resort of crocodiles so daring and voracious that they were the terror of the neighbourhood, the rapacity of the creatures very probably arising from a prevalent scarcity of fish. A few weeks previously, when the stream was full to the top of its banks, a Dyoor boy as he was swimming across had been snapped at by one of these ravenous Saurians and had never been seen again. It is surprising in the dry season, into what tiny pools and puddles the crocodile will make its way, and where, buried in the miry clay, it will find a sufficiently commodious home. In comparison with these

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\* "Kurnuk" is the term used by the Nubians and Foorians for a shed; the corresponding expression in the Soudan Arabic being "Daher-el-Tor," literally, the back of an ox; thus "kurnuk" means generally any roof with a horizontal ridge.

pools the tanks with which the specimens in the aquariums of our zoological gardens are provided must be fully if not superfluously spacious. When kept in confinement the crocodile makes scarcely any perceptible growth; and from this circumstance of the slow increase of its bulk the inference seems necessarily to follow that the creature lives to a great age.

The Ghetty is bordered by bushes nearly identical with those which are found on the banks of all the streamlets of this land; the *Morelia senegalensis*, the *Zizygium*, and the *Trichilia retusa* may be noted as amongst the most common.

I was told that Bizelly's head Seriba, known amongst the Bongo as Doggaya Onduppo, was situated upon the right bank, about eight leagues to the north-west of the spot where we crossed the stream, which here forms the boundary between the Wow tribe of the Dyoor and the district populated by the Bongo. We continued to advance for another league and a half, going up a densely-wooded acclivity until at length, fairly tired out with our exertions, we entered, quite late in the evening, Bizelly's subsidiary Seriba, called by the Bongo Doggaya-morr.

Here, for the first time, I found myself on what my scientific predecessors had made what to my mind was nothing less than a classic soil. Here it was that Theodor von Heuglin had resided from the 17th of April, 1863, to the 4th of January, 1864; here, or at least in an adjacent village of the Wow tribe, had Dr. Steudner\* expired; and close in the vicinity had Miss Tinné passed through a period of wretchedness which all her wealth was powerless to prevent. Never could I leave the Seriba without being conscious that

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\* Dr. Steudner died on the 10th of April, 1863, from an attack of fever, a few days after that, in company with Heuglin, he had commenced his first journey into the interior; his object had been to reconnoitre the country to the west of the Meshera, and to find a suitable place for the accommodation of Miss Tinné's party during the rainy season.

every shrub and every plant was a memorial of those who had been before me, for all were representatives of that hitherto unknown flora of which Henglin had collected the first botanical data, and which Dr. Kotschy has depicted in his noble work 'Plantæ Tinnianæ,' partly from the drawings of Miss Tinné herself.

Within the Seriba, too, I was constantly reminded of the miserable condition to which this expedition, so comprehensive in its original design, had been reduced. The region bore every token of having an unhealthy climate. The stagnant meadow-waters and foul streams all around had all the appearance of being veritable and prolific breeding-places for fever and malaria. A great ruined tenement, now a mere lodgment for sheep and goats, marked the spot where the remains of Miss Tinné's mother, who fell a victim to the pernicious climate, were temporarily deposited until the opportunity came for them to be removed to her distant home. A dejected fate indeed, and a miserable resting-place for one who had been reared amidst the comforts and luxuries of the highest refinement.

Before leaving Bizelly's Seriba we received intelligence of the murder of our old friend Shol, the wealthy Dinka princess, into the details of whose personal charms and associations I have, in an earlier page, entered with some minuteness. The natives, it seems, had accused her of inviting the "Turks" into the country; and as many of the tribes in the neighbourhood had been exposed to attacks from Kurshook Ali's troops, they determined to avenge themselves on Shol, as being a long-standing ally of the Khartoomers. Knowing that she slept alone in her hut, a troop of men belonging to the Wady (a tribe settled to the east of the Meshera) set out by night, and under pretext of having business with Kurdyook, her husband, knocked at her door. She had no sooner appeared in answer to their summons than they attacked her with deadly blows; and setting fire

to all the huts drove off nearly all the cattle that was to be found in the place. This melancholy piece of news, coupled with the recent defeat of the Khartoomers by the Niam-niam, foreboded ill for the future prospects of the Seribas; by Shol's death the vicinity of the Meshera would lose all its peaceful character, and there was no longer the possibility of solitary boats being left there in security during the season of the rains.

A lovely march of about six miles to the north-west, through an almost unbroken and in many places very dense bush-forest, brought us to Ali Amoory's\* chief Seriba, distinguished by the natives by the name of Longo. The Parkia trees were just beginning to bloom. The wonderful spectacle that these presented was quite unique; their great trusses of bright red blossoms, large as the fist and smooth as velvet, made a display that was truly gorgeous, as they depended from the long stalks which broke forth from the feathery foliage of the spreading crowns.

Another characteristic of the scenery was the *Boxia salicifolia*, that appeared in great abundance.

In spite of the constant traffic between the different Seribas there seemed to be no lack of game; traces of hartebeests were everywhere visible, whilst the little madoqua antelopes bounded like apparitions from bush to bush. Guinea-fowls were just as prolific as in the wildest deserts of the Niam-niam. Heuglin, no inexperienced sportsman, had certainly here chosen a remunerative ground for his zoological researches.

Our path was crossed by three watercourses, which were now for the most part dry. By their confluence these three streams formed an important tributary of the Dyoor, called the Okuloh, their separate names before their junction,

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\* The real name of the firm is Ali-Aboo-Amoory, and it has acquired an undesirable notoriety for its fraudulent dealings with Miss Tinne's expedition.

reckoning from the southernmost, being respectively the Dangyah, the Matshoo, and the Minnikinyee or "fish-water;" their uniformly north-eastern direction attested the material fall in the level of the ground at the boundary between the rocky soil and the alluvial plains of the Dyoor.

Longo ranked as a first-class establishment. It contained a larger number of huts than even Ghattas's Seriba, which it surpassed also in dirt and disorder. Every hedge was crooked, every hut stood awry, and the farmsteads were as ruined as though they had for years been abandoned to the ravages of rats and white ants. Disgusting heaps of ashes and scraps of food, piles of rotten straw, hundreds of old baskets and gourd-shells stood as high as one's head all along the narrow alleys that parted hut from hut; whilst outside the Seriba, just at its very entrances, there were masses of mouldy rubbish, overgrown with the most noxious of fungus, that rose as high as the houses; at every step there was sure to be an accumulation of some abominable filthiness or other, such as nowhere else, I should think, even in the Mohammedan world, could be found in immediate proximity to human habitations; altogether the place presented such a dismal scene of dirt, decay, and disorder that it was enough to induce a fit of nightmare upon every one with the smallest sense of either neatness or decorum. Truly it was a wonderful specimen of domestic economy which this horde of undisciplined Nubians had thus elaborated.

The level country for a mile or more round the Seriba was occupied by the arable lands belonging to the settlement. Longo was one of the oldest establishments in the country, and the adjacent soil was no less productive than that around the Seriba of Ghattas. The Bongo villages were all situated at some distance to the west.

Amoory's representative agent, Zelim, had formerly been a soldier, one of the Nizzam, in the Turkish service, and was a native of the wild district of Baria, in the mountains of



Taka; he was now absent from the Seriba, but had left orders that I should be hospitably entertained and that everything which his stores could furnish should be placed at my disposal. A grove of excellent plantains was close at hand, from which I obtained a bounteous supply of that luscious fruit.

All the year round a considerable number of slave traders resided in the place, and were always attended by those wild sons of the steppes, the Baggara of the Rizegat, who, with their lean, fly-bitten cattle, had to camp out as well as they could in the environs of the Seriba. They had never before set eyes upon a Christian, and full of eager wonder they flocked together to survey me, keeping, however, at a distance of several yards from personal contact, probably dreading the malign influence of the "evil eye" of a Frank. Their curiosity was still further roused when they saw me drawing pictures of their cattle, and when I offered them my various sketches for their own inspection they appeared to lose much of the alarm which they had exhibited. I rose from my seat, and held up to them one picture after another; the effect was little short of magical; their uncouth tones seemed to soften into a murmur of delight, and so effectually had I succeeded in gaining their confidence that some of them were induced to sit for their own portraits. All those that I drew had fine light brown complexions, slim muscular frames, and perfectly regular features; the expression of the face might fairly be pronounced open and honest, and exhibited the strong resolution that might be expected of a warlike nation whose occupations, when not in the battle-field, were in hunting and cattle-breeding. Their profiles all formed quite a right angle; their noses failed to be aquiline, but were rounded and well-formed; the faces of the younger men were good-tempered looking, having a somewhat effeminate expression, which was still further increased by the high round forehead. All of them seemed to wear

their hair in long slender braids running in rows along the top of the head and drooping over the neck behind.

As I was pursuing my occupation, and quietly taking my series of portraits, watched intently by a hundred spectators, who stood around with open mouths which revealed an astonished admiration, my attention was all at once arrested by a commotion which was taking place just outside the circle of the admirers. An old fanatic from Darfoor was raving away and denouncing loudly what he pleased to call the iniquity of my proceedings; he professed that my pursuit was beyond all endurance, and that he was not going to countenance my presumptuous practices. I shouted to the old rascal to hold his tongue, to mind his own business, and be off, and most of the bystanders took up the same strain, some beginning to taunt and jeer the fellow with such a volley of satirical laughter that, completely discomfited, he was glad to skulk off as quickly as he could. I could not resist having a word of my own, and just as he was retiring I shouted after him, for his comfort, the native proverb, "Trust to the protection of the Almighty as to the shade of an acacia, but," I added, "they had need be better acacias than those of your miserable land."

On the 6th of January I resumed my progress. Taking a south-westerly direction I accomplished a good day's march of eighteen miles and reached Damury, Amoory's subsidiary Seriba on the River Pongo. A rocky soil covered with bush had predominated for the greater portion of the distance, the route having been perfectly level and unbroken by the smallest depression. We had crossed the beds of five brooks which were nearly dry. Taking them in order they were, the Okilleah, a mere line of stagnant puddles; the Kulloo,\* a larger brook overhung with sizygium-bushes,

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\* "Kulloo" is in this neighbourhood the generic name for brooks of this character.

and containing water as high as one's knees; the Horroah, a dry hollow bed; the Daboddoo, with a few pools; and the Ghendoo, with holes from which the water had either dried up or drained away. All these, when supplied with water, were tributary to the Pongo, and flowed towards the north-west.

Midday, between the Kulloo and the Horroah, we had come upon a gigantic fig-tree (*Ficus lutea*), one of those memorials of the past that are so often seen in Bongoland, marking, as they do, the site of an earlier native village. The name of the place was Ngukkoo. The enormous tree had a short stem enveloped in a perfect network of aerial roots, struck downwards from the branches, whilst at the summit it spread out into a crown of foliage that under the vertical midday sun formed a shadow on the ground of which the circumference, as I proved by actual measurement, was not less than 230 feet.

During the latter portion of the march we had seen a considerable number of candelabra Euphorbiæ and Calotropis. The appearance of the Calotropis (called in Arabic "el Usher") was indicative of a more northerly type of vegetation, as the plant is characteristic of the steppes of Nubia, Arabia, and the frontiers of India: this was the first time I had seen it in the territory of the Seribas; the "el Usher" had evidently been introduced into this part of the country by traders from the north, and the solid stems of the plants, which elsewhere are little more than shrubs, bore ample witness to the long-established traffic on this commercial highway. The explanation of the extensive diffusion of this plant may be found in the fact that the silky down that covers the seeds in their large plump pods is used as a material for stuffing cushions. In the northern steppes its appearing in sight is ever hailed by the traveller as a happy omen, as it enjoys the reputation of always having either a well or a hidden spring of fresh water in its immediate vicinity.

Damury was situated close to the right-hand bank of the Pongo, as the Bongo call this affluent of the Bahr-el-Arab. On earlier maps the river was marked as the Kozanga, but this I found to be merely the designation of a small mountainous ridge that extended for several leagues along the left bank of the river to the south-west of the Seriba. On the 17th of July, 1863, Theodor von Heuglin\* had visited the spot for the purpose of selecting a dry and rocky eminence in the woods where a camp might be erected for the headquarters of Miss Tinné's expedition. If this scheme had been carried into practice the melancholy sacrifice of life that resulted from the unwholesome atmosphere of Bizelly's Seriba might happily have been spared; but the difficulties of properly organising so large a party of travellers were insuperable, and the project of removal to that healthier resort fell to the ground.

The transitoriness which seems to be the characteristic of all the institutions of this land prevented me from ascertaining the exact site of the dwelling-place of the deceased Bongo chief Kulanda, mentioned by Heuglin in his account of the visit he made to the place; but from the comparison of certain points of correspondence, I entertain no doubt but that my footsteps were then upon the very spot.

In its upper course through the district inhabited by the Sehre, the Pongo, as already noted, bears the name of the Djee; it flows towards the north-east, and after leaving the Bongo territory beyond Damury passes through that of the Dembo, a tribe of Shillook origin related to the Dyoor: on this account the Khartoomers call it the Bahr-el-Dembo.

The Dembo are under the jurisdiction of Ali Amoory, whose territories extend far beyond the river to the north-west, and join the country of the Baggara-el-Homar, his most remote Seribas being on the Gebbel Marra, in the locality of

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\* This was the most westerly point that Heuglin reached in Central Africa.

a negro tribe called the Bambirry, probably also a branch of the great Shillook family; but it should be stated that, according to some accounts, these Bambirry are true Zandey Niam-niam who have immigrated from the south and settled in their present quarters.

The scenery about Damury was extremely like that around Awoory in the Mittoo country; in fact it altogether reminded me of what I had seen on my trip to the Rohl, especially as the Pongo exhibits not a few points of resemblance to that river. Damury is built on rising rocky ground, thickly covered with wood, and close to the eastern or right-hand bank of the river. The slopes that enclosed the river-bed were about fifteen feet in depth, and between them and the actual stream there was, on either side, a strip of soil subject to inundation during the rainy season and now broken up with numerous pools and backwaters. At this date (January 7, 1871) the water was moving sluggishly along between clay banks, some 10 feet down and 70 feet apart; but the water did not cover a breadth of more than fifty feet and was nowhere more than four feet in depth. Its velocity was the same as that of the Wow; but whilst both the Wow and the Dyoor rolled along, even at this season, in considerable volume, the Pongo was comparatively empty, and, as I saw, it must have offered a very striking contrast to its appearance during the Khareef, when no doubt it could make good its pretensions to be a river of the second class. On the other side of the Pongo there was a low tract of steppe, at least 3000 paces wide, which, of course, represented the territory subject to inundation on the left bank. I subsequently found that the entire length of the river, from its source to Damury, could not at the most exceed 200 miles, and thus became able more completely to realise the very remarkable periodic changes which occur in the condition of the stream.

In various parts of the depression the vegetation of the open steppe is replaced by close masses of stephogyne: these



form marshy clumps, and from their general habit very strongly resemble our alder-beds of the north.

Close to the Seriba a deep chasm, called Gumango, opens out into the valley of the river; it is one of the landslips, so common in this region, caused by springs washing away the ferruginous swamp-ore from below, and an inexperienced traveller might easily be led to mistake it for the bed of a periodical watercourse of considerable magnitude. It is thickly overgrown with brambles and creepers. The shrub *Tinnea* plays a prominent part in the underwoods all around Damury, and many of the plants that are found growing on the dry sand of the bed of the Pongo may be considered as true representatives of the flora of the black Nile-earth, and prove the hydrographical importance of the stream.

Just above the Seriba the course of the river was due east for a distance of four miles, and in pursuing our westward journey we marched along the left bank in the direction contrary to the stream until we arrived at the spot where it made its bend away from the south. Here we crossed. The sandy bed was not more than 100 feet wide, a grassy depression beyond was about 400 paces across. On the borders of this we came upon some ruined huts projecting above the grass, evidently the remains of a forsaken Seriba of Bizelly's, which had likewise been called Damury, after the name of the Bongo community that had had their homes in the district. The Bongo had now withdrawn beyond the right bank of the river, and thus the Pongo had been left as the boundary between the populated country and the actual wilderness.\* With very slight deviations the remainder of our journey to Seebehr's great Seriba was in a direction due west. The ground rose considerably, and on our left was a tall eminence of gneiss, called *Ida*, a northern spur of the

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\* In the dialect of the Soudan these distinctions are respectively rendered by the terms "Dar" (cultivated land) and "Akabah" (wilderness).

Kozanga ridge and (with regard to our present position) about 500 feet high. A deep brook, the Ooruporr, rising somewhere on the slopes of this Mount Ida, here crossed our path, the line of its banks being distinctly marked out by some specimens of the wild date-palm. A little farther on we came to a dry, deep chasm, that formed the bed of a periodic stream known as the Andimoh, which likewise descended from the hill of Ida; its banks were marked by crags of gneiss and studded with bamboos.

We passed onwards over masses of gneiss almost spherical in form, overgrown with moss-like clusters of selaginella, and reached the bed of the brook Karra, lying in its deep hollow. To this little stream the Nubians gave the name of Khor-el-Ganna, on account of the jungles of bamboo that enclose its rocky banks, which descend in successive steps so as to produce a series of cascades. The Bongo reckon the Karra as the boundary between their country and the country of the Golo; it is also considered to be the line which separates the domain of the landowner Ali Amoory from that of Idrees Wod Defter, whose Seriba is about thirty-five miles from Damury and, as nearly as possible, half way along our route thence to Seebehr's chief settlement.

Beyond the Karra the path led over very undulated country; and we had twice to cross a brook called Ya, which, formed mainly of a series of deep basins, worked its devious way along a contracted defile. Having at length mounted a steepish eminence of red rock we appeared to bring our long ascent to an end, and commencing a gradual descent we proceeded till we reached the brook Attidoh, beside which we encamped for the night.

Large herds of buffaloes thronged the chief pools of the swampy bed, and before it became quite dark I managed to creep within range of a group of cows with their calves. The only result of my exertions was that one calf fell dead upon the spot where it was struck, all my other shots

apparently taking no effect. Half the night was spent in roasting, broiling, and drying the flesh of the young buffalo, and all my party were in great good humour.

The forests for long distances were composed exclusively of lofty *Humboldtia*, and increased in magnitude and denseness as we advanced farther amongst them; they were so fine that they might well bear comparison with any of the best wooded districts of the Niam-niam. We crossed a half-dry khor (or stream-channel) called the Ngoory, and shortly afterwards a marshy brook, with a considerable supply of water, called the Akumunah; both of these joined the Mongono, of which the bed at the place where we crossed it was so dry that it appeared only like a tract of sand, seventy feet wide; but by turning up the loose sand to the depth of six inches, a copious stream of clear water was discovered to be running on its subterranean way over a gravelly bottom. In the rainy season the Mongono assumes quite a river-like appearance, for I discovered traces of important backwaters that had been left by its inundation, and the banks that bounded its sandy bed were not much less than eight feet high.

A little rose-coloured gentian, the *Causcora*, characterises the slopes of the banks of this streamlet, growing just in the same luxuriant manner as the kindred species that adorn the sides of our own brooks. The frequent appearance of the Abyssinian *Protea* convinced me that the elevation of the ground was greater than what we had left behind us: as matter of fact we were at an average height of 2500 feet above the level of the sea.

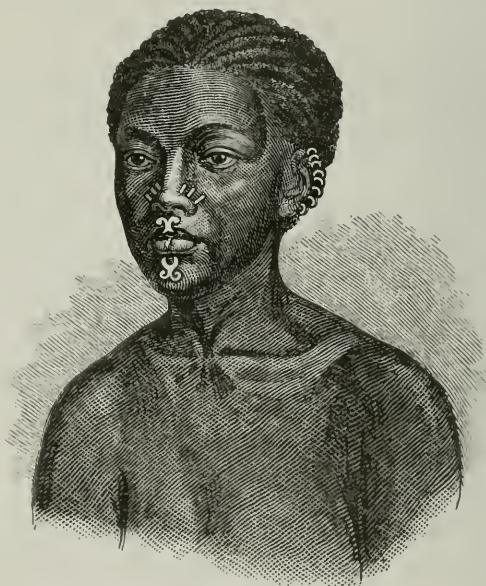
The Yow-Yow, a narrow sort of trench, made up of a series of deep pools, next intersected our path. On the other side of this I mounted a crag of gneiss, whence I obtained an extensive view towards the west, and observed an elevated line of woods stretched out with the precision of a wall from S.S.W. to N.N.E. The elevation was beyond the Athena, a brook

that we reached after first crossing two other but minor streams. The bed of the Athena was formed of sand and gravel; although it was dry, with the exception of some occasional water-pools that had not failed, it was fifty feet in width. The steepness of the banks demonstrated that in the rainy season they enclosed what would be allowed to be a considerable river. Two more brooks with deep beds had still to be crossed, and then we entered upon the cultivated land adjacent to Idrees Wod Defter's Seriba. Two miles more, along a continuous ascent, brought us to the Seriba itself.

Idrees Wod Defter was a partner in Agahd's firm. His Seriba had been built about three years previously, and was composed of large farmsteads, shut in almost with the seclusion of monasteries by tall hedges of straw-work; they were occupied by the various great slave-traders who had settled in the country. Four huts and a large rokooba had recently been erected for the accommodation of the numerous travellers who passed through, chiefly composed of second-class traders, who, like itinerant Jews, wandered about from place to place, hawking their goods. Idrees himself resided in his Niam-niam Seribas, which, I was told, were near Mofio's residence, seven or eight days' journey distant. Besides this chief settlement there were two subsidiary Seribas, one about four leagues to the south-east, on the western declivity of the Kozanga hills, and another at the same distance to the south-west, the controller of which was named Abd-el-Seed. The farmsteads of the chief Seriba stood in their separate enclosures, and were not surrounded by the ordinary palisade. Close by, on the south, a little spring trickling forth from a cleft in the ground suddenly expanded into a clear rippling brook that ran merrily to the west.

The natives that served the necessary demands of the Seriba belonged to the tribe of the Golo. In manners and

in general appearance they very much resemble their eastern neighbours the Bongo, although the dialects of the two tribes have very little in common. More than any other negro tongue with which I gained much familiarity, the Golo dialect seems to abound in sounds resembling the



Golo Woman.

German vowels *ö* and *ü*, and, like some of the South African dialects, it contains some peculiar nasal tones, which may be described as sharp and snapping, and which are quite unknown to the neighbouring nations. Another peculiarity consists in the frequent occurrence of certain lingual sounds, which in a measure may be represented by *ds* and *ts*.

Escorted by the controller of the Seriba I made an inspection of all the neighbouring hamlets, and observed that the style of the Golo architecture was far more like that of the Niam-niam than that of the Bongo. The roofs of the huts projected far beyond the clay-walls, and were supported



on light posts which formed a colonnade, the walls themselves being whitewashed with hyæna-dung.

The flora of the bush is distinguished by large numbers of *Euphorbia venenifera*, which is only sporadically represented in this district, and a tree of a type which is rare in the southern parts of Darfoor and Kordofan and in the Western and Central Soudan, the *Eriodendron anfractuosum*, being in fact the "cotton tree" of the colonist, was planted near the Seribas for its ornamental qualities. It is called "ruhm" by the Foorians, and is chiefly remarkable for the verticillate arrangement of its branches, separating the crown of the tree into divisions distinct from each other, like an araucaria—a peculiarity that results in its being resorted to by the poor heathen negroes of Baghirmy, when they are on the look-out for a place of refuge from the bands of slave-hunters: large conical prickles of an immense thickness cover the stem, almost like the clusters of barnacles on a log of wood that has been exposed to the influence of the sea.

Just as I was on the point of leaving the Seriba of Idrees Wod Defter, my old friend Mohammed Aboo Sammat arrived. He came in the train of a large party of Bongo who were conveying corn to the place, and as, like myself, he was on his way to the Egyptian camp, we joined company and started without further delay to the west.

Half a league beyond the Seriba we left the cultivated land and re-entered the forest wilderness near the village of the Golo chief Kaza. Far and wide the fields were sown with sweet potatoes, and dokhn corn was extensively cultivated. In the village of Kaza we noticed several of the peculiar corn-magazines upon the construction of which the Golo spend so much care. They are at once bold and graceful in design. The actual receptacle for the corn is made of clay and is in the form of a goblet; it is covered with a conical roof of straw, which serves as a movable lid; to protect it from the ravages of rats it is mounted on a short

substantial pedestal, that is supported at the base by stakes arranged as a series of flying buttresses. Altogether the



Corn-magazine of the Golo.

structure is very symmetrical; and the clay is worked into tasteful graduated mouldings that add considerably to the general finish of the whole. The dwelling huts of the Golo also display peculiarities in their style of building, and bear evident marks of being erected with unusual care and labour.

The Seriba we had just quitted was situated on the watershed between the Kooroo and the Pongo. We crossed the last stream in the Pongo

system just beyond Kaza's hamlets; it was called the Abbuloh, and was now thirty-five feet wide and two feet deep. Farther on the path gradually rose through a shady wood until we reached an eminence strewn over with blocks of gneiss; then descending, still through woods, we came to a copious brook of about the same dimension as the Abbuloh. This was the Bombatta, which flowed in a north-western direction and joined the Kooroo. The next brook, the Abeela, moved in the same direction, and was composed of a connected series of deep basins. Two more rivulets of the same character followed, the second of which, named the Ngoddoo, flowed past a flat bare elevation of gneiss and joined the Kooroo only a short distance to the west. Amongst the autumn flora of this region the Hydralia was very conspicuous, its brilliant sky-blue blossoms blending with the grass so as to form a charming carpet over the depressions of the brooks.

An hour after crossing the Ngoddoo we arrived at the bank of the Bahr-el-Kooroo, as this important affluent of the Bahr-el-Arab is called by the Mohammedan settlers; the name is probably borrowed from the Baggara Arabs, as amongst the Golo (whose territory it divides from that of the Kredy on the west) it is sometimes called the Mony, and sometimes the Worry; by the Sehre it is called the Wee. At the place of our transit it was flowing towards the N.N.W., and the current was rather rapid. The entire breadth of the bed was between ninety and a hundred feet, but of this only sixty feet was covered with water, the depth of which nowhere exceeded two feet. At one spot the river flowed over blocks and layers of gneiss that were overgrown with mossy *Tristichæ*. The banks stood fifteen feet high, and although there were woods on either side that grew right down to the water, many indications remained of their being subject to a periodical inundation: a canoe left high up on the dry ground was an evidence how full of water the river must be during the rainy season.

We kept continually meeting small companies of slave traders, mounted on oxen or on donkeys and having their living merchandise in their train.

The long tracts of one species of forest-tree reminded me very much of the masses of the alder-like *Vatica* on the Tondy. Beyond the west bank of the river the path led up the steep side of a valley, and the level of the soil rapidly increased. Then we came to a series of ruts like deep ditches, some quite dry and some still filled with running water. We counted six of these before reaching the Beesh, or Khor-el-Rennem, which is an affluent of the Beery and the largest of the three tributaries of the Bahr-el-Arab, which I had the opportunity of seeing.

The Khor-el-Rennem, or goats' brook, received its name from the circumstance that once, during the period of the annual rains, a whole herd of goats had made an attempt to

cross the stream and had all been drowned in the rushing flood. It was shut in by trees and bushes of many kinds, and these cast a gloomy shade over the chasm which was worn by the waters; it was now only a foot deep and fifteen feet wide.

Here, again, the land on the western shore rose suddenly like a wall, a peculiarity in the topography of the country that testified to the continual increase of its level above the sea.

Two easy leagues forward, generally over cultivated country and past several hamlets belonging to the Kredy tribe, the Nduggo, and I reached what I designed should be my resting-place for awhile at Seebehr's Seriba, which was also the Egyptian camp. The distance of seventy miles from the Pongo had been accomplished in four days. By this time I had become quite accustomed to the habit of counting my steps. I had become my own "perambulator," and could not help thinking, as I marched along, of Xenophon and his *parasangs* in the expedition of the Greeks. One day of our ordinary marching would accomplish about four or five *parasangs*.

Seebehr's Seriba was 2282 feet above the level of the sea, 464 feet higher than Bizelly's Seriba on the Ghetty, and 737 feet higher than Ghattas's chief settlement. There was but little observable change in the character of the vegetation; few new plants appeared, and almost the only difference was that the forests had apparently become more dense. But however little the gradual elevation of the land might affect the vegetation, yet the hydrographical condition of the country very plainly attested a complete alteration in the nature of the soil. Although our present latitude was  $8^{\circ}$  N., the general aspect that came under the observation of a traveller was almost identical with what he would see between latitude  $6^{\circ}$  and latitude  $5^{\circ}$  in passing southwards from Bongoland to the Niam-niam.

Immediately after crossing the Pongo we quitted the soft absorbent soil, and entered upon a region so prolific in springs that, all the year round, every rivulet, brook, and trench, and even the smallest fissure in the earth, is full of water, and that of the brightest and purest quality. Between the Pongo and Seebehr's Seriba we had crossed no less than twenty brooks and two rivers of considerable magnitude. Just as had been the case in the Niam-niam lands, water trickled from every crevice and found an outlet on every slope, whilst in the low-lying country of the Dyoor and Bongo, on the edge of the red swamp-ore, where chasms and watercourses are quite as abundant, no springs ever break forth during the winter months, and the half-dry beds are supplied by no other water than what has been left from the previous Khareef.

This circumstance seems in a certain degree to illustrate the conformation of the south-western side of the Bahr-el-Ghazal basin; for the general direction of all the streams that contribute to its volume would be at right angles to the lines of the terraces that rise one above the other at various levels above the sea.

The Seriba was enclosed by a palisade 200 feet square; hundreds of farmsteads and groups of huts were scattered round, extending far away along the eastern slope of a deep depression which was traversed in the direction of the north-west by a brook that was fed by numerous springs. The whole place, in all its leading features, had the aspect of a town in the Soudan, and vividly reminded me of Matamma, the great market town in Gallabat, where all the inland trade with Abyssinia is transacted. To establishments of this magnitude the natives give the name of "Dehm,"\* which is, in fact, an equivalent for "a town." The heights to the east

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\* The Khartoomers have given the word Dehm an Arabic plural, "Dwehm; and by this term they distinguish the great slave marts of the west.



of the place were more important than those immediately bordering on the depression, and in the N.N.E. very high ground was visible in the distance. Towards the west the country sloped downwards for a couple of leagues to the river Beery, which, it has been mentioned, is an important tributary of the Bahr-el-Arab.

The Egyptian troops were encamped at the southern extremity of the settlement, and were under the command of the Vokeel-el-urda, Ahmed Aga, who had been the lieutenant of the late Sandjak. The black swindler, Hellali, was still kept in confinement, his company of soldiers being treated as prisoners of war and placed under the surveillance of the other troops in a section of the camp allotted to the purpose. Great scarcity of provisions prevailed, for, in addition to the troops, the population had been augmented by the arrival of many hundreds of slave-dealers from Kordofan. Immediately on receiving information of the schemes that were being plotted against his copper-mines by the Egyptian Government, Husseïn, the Sultan of Darfoor, had prohibited all intercourse between his own frontiers and the Seribas of the Khartoomers; consequently the traders from Aboo Harras, in Kordofan, found themselves obliged to take a longer and more dangerous route across the steppes of the predatory Baggara; but, in spite of every difficulty, the presence of the Government troops offered such an attraction that the number of the traders was just doubled. They were enticed by the hope of carrying on a lucrative business with the avaricious Turkish soldiers, whose influential position gave them opportunities that were specially advantageous for making high profits; but besides this, the attempt, however abortive, of the Government authorities in Khartoom to suppress the slave-trade along the Nile had had the effect of driving up the traffic in the upper countries to such a premium that the dealers were spurred on to fresh energy. Since the last rainy season upwards of 2000 small slave-

dealers had arrived at the Seriba, and others were still expected.\* All these people, like the troops, lived upon Seebehr's corn-stores, and thus provisions became so scarce that they could hardly be purchased for their own weight in copper, which, with the exception of slaves, was the solitary medium of exchange.

It might not unnaturally have been expected that the Egyptian troops would have taken up their position in the richest and most prolific of the corn-lands; but instead of this they had quartered themselves on the extreme limit of the Seribas in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district. The avowed reason for this was that they might be better able to overlook the approaches to the copper-mines of Darfoor, but the real motive was in order that they might be nearer the fountain-head of the slave-trade and in direct communication with the northern territories, from which the main supply of living merchandise was obtained. I have already drawn attention to the impossibility of raising the contributions of corn required by the Egyptian commander, and I now became a personal witness of the unreasonableness of his demands; he appeared to have no other object than to exhaust the land already impoverished by the slave-trade, and in true Turkish fashion he set to work to involve all that remained in utter ruin.

In point of fact, however, it must be owned that it was a matter of considerable difficulty (after the bloody conflict that had resulted from Hellali's compulsory levies) for Ahmed Aga to raise the necessary supplies for the coming Khareef; but he made his requisitions in the most unfair way; his partiality was extreme, for while he exempted some Seribas from any contribution at all, he imposed upon others a demand for a double supply. My friend Mohammed was one of the oppressed. He had been called upon to

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\* The entire number that year rose to 2700.

furnish fifty ardebs of corn, a quantity corresponding to the burdens of 150 to 170 bearers, and not only was his Seriba at Sabby at a distance of seventeen days' journey from this spot, but his corn-magazines were still another four days' journey farther on, so that the mere maintenance of the bearers for three weeks would take thirty ardebs more. Mohammed, in truth, had not sufficient corn of his own to meet the demand of the Divan, and would be reduced to the necessity, in order to make up what was deficient, of purchasing at famine prices from other Seribas which already were well-nigh exhausted.

I took upon myself to intercede with the Aga, but to no purpose; he was utterly inflexible, and, not content with insisting upon his original demand, inflicted a heavy fine for the delay in the payment of the tribute, by exacting a contribution of 100 ardebs instead of fifty. But what irritated me more than anything else was the barefaced iniquity with which he backed up Shereefee in his refusal to make any compensation to Mohammed for the outrage, no better than a highway robbery, which he had perpetrated upon him, whilst at the same time he pretended to upbraid Mohammed for what he called his implacability. The solution of the matter was very easy. Shereefee had bribed Ahmed Aga with a lavish present of slaves, and that was a gift as acceptable as cash, just because they were a recognised medium of currency.

Notwithstanding the crowd of human beings thus aggregated together, the bill of health, as far as it was influenced by the climate, was perfectly satisfactory. There were, of course, occasional cases of hereditary or insidious disease; but even amongst the slaves, closely packed as they were, the mortality was inconsiderable, and the human bones that lay scattered about were comparatively fewer than what I had grown accustomed to notice in other places. The effeminate Turkish soldiers, however, grumbled excessively at their position; they besieged me with petitions that I would not

only represent their misery to the Governor-General in the strongest terms, but that I would do my utmost to convince the authorities that neither profit nor glory could be gained from an enterprise which was exposing their lives to so much peril. "Do this," they said, "and you will be doing us one of the greatest favours that it is in the power of mortal man to confer, and the blessing of Allah be with you!"

Certain it is that these Turks, fit for nothing better than to lounge about on a divan, were the most unsuitable beings imaginable ever to have been sent on an expedition into the wilds of Central Africa. A year of their ordeal had scarcely passed, and already their complaints were piteous enough to melt a heart of stone; they seemed helpless as babes, and I verily believe that had it not been for the Nubians they would have been cheated and trampled on and reduced to the direst necessities in this land of solitude and starvation. They were all indifferent walkers; they could not endure the food of the country; they sorely missed their "schnaps;" they were aggrieved at the loss of their wheat-flour and their rice, and did not understand going without their habitual luxuries. It was indeed a kind of set-off against all this that they could be as indolent as they pleased. There was nothing to do, and nothing they did; they did not plant out a single plot of maize, they did not lay out a kitchen-garden of the simplest kind; but, loitering about from morning till night, they kept up their unfailing growls of discontent, dealing out their invectives against the "wretched" land and its "wretched" people. No wonder they complained of *ennui*. Divest a Turk of his fine clothes, his formal etiquette, his measured speech, and his little bit of honour which may be described as "l'extérieur de la vertu et l'élégance des vices," and little remains to elevate him above a Nubian of the worst class; nevertheless, the mutual antipathy that existed between the Turks and the Nubians was very marked,

and verified the proverb that "Arabs' blood and Turks' blood will never boil together."

The remarkably large contingent of Gellahbas that chanced to be within the place gave the dirty crowds of men, such as are more or less to be invariably found in every Seriba, a more motley aspect than usual, and altogether the Dehm offered a deplorable contrast to the freshness of the wilderness that we had so long and so recently been traversing. The hawkers of living human flesh and blood, unwashed and ragged, squatted in the open places keeping their eye upon their plunder, eager as vultures in the desert around the carcase of a camel. Their harsh voices as they shouted out their blasphemous prayers; the drunken indolence and torpor of the loafing Turks; the idle, vicious crowds of men infested with loathsome scabs and syphilitic sores; the reeking filthy exhalations that rose from every quarter—all combined to make the place supremely disgusting. Turn where I would, it was ever the same; there was the recurrence of sights, sounds, and smells so revolting that they could not do otherwise than fill the senses with the most sickening abhorrence.

Such were my impressions as I made my entry into the Dehm Nduggo, as the settlement is called from the Kredy tribe with which the neighbourhood is populated. The first consideration I had to make for myself was whether I would become the guest of the Turks or of the Nubians; I had to choose whether I would sue for hospitality at the hands of Seebehr or of the Turkish Aga. After due deliberation I made up my mind to apply to Seebehr, for as the Turks had taken the smaller share in the affair with Hellali, I concluded that they constituted the less powerful element, and, in truth, they were themselves dependent upon Seebehr's liberality. But what perhaps influenced me still more was that my firman from the Government had been lost in the fire, and that consequently I was lacking in credentials to



make any formal and authoritative demands ; and I did not wish to be at the mercy of the commander. As it was, Ahmed Aga did not even fulfil the stipulations that had been made in my favour by the Government in Khartoom, and all that I could get out of him was a supply of good writing-paper to enable me to go on with my sketching.

Amongst the effects of Kurshook Ali, on which I had set my hopes, I could discover nothing that would be of the least service to me ; his successor had long since, in true Ottoman fashion, disposed of everything that could be turned to account, a proceeding that subsequently involved him in a lawsuit with the son of the deceased Sandjak.

Meanwhile I was most kindly received by Seebehr, and as long as I remained in the Seriba I had not the faintest cause of complaint. He was himself in a debilitated state of health ; the wound that he had received in the late fray had proved very dangerous, the bullet having completely penetrated the ankle-bone. The only means employed for healing the wound was repeated syringing with pure olive-oil, a remedy which, though slow, had been efficacious ; for when I saw him, after some weeks had elapsed since the casualty, the injury was all but cured.

Seebehr\* had surrounded himself with a court that was little less than princely in its details. A group of large well-built square huts, enclosed by tall hedges, composed the private residence ; within these were various state apartments, before which armed sentries kept guard by day and night. Special rooms, provided with carpeted divans, were reserved as ante-chambers, and into these all visitors were conducted by richly-dressed slaves, who served them with coffee, sherbet, and tchibouks. The regal aspect of these halls of state was increased by the introduction of some lions, secured, as may be supposed, by sufficiently strong and

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\* Seebehr's name at full length was Seebehr-Rahama-Gyimme-Abel.

massive chains. Behind a large curtain in the innermost hut was placed the invalid couch of Seebehr. Attendants were close at hand to attend to his wants, and a company of Fakis sat on the divan outside the curtain and murmured their never-ending prayers. In spite of his weakness and his suffering he was ever receiving a stream of visitors, who had something to say to "the Sheikh," as he was commonly called. I often paid him a visit, and, to my surprise at first, was accommodated with a chair by the side of his bed. He repeatedly bewailed the helplessness of his condition, saying how vexed he was at being unable personally to provide for my requirements, adding that if he had been well, he should have had the greatest pleasure in escorting me over his lands. It was a great relief to my mind that he did not apply to me for surgical advice. I was glad to encourage him by my approbation of the remedy he was using, which, if it possessed no particular virtue, had at least the recommendation of being perfectly harmless.

A draft that I made on my account at Khartoom was duly honoured, and I obtained a hundredweight of copper from Seebehr's stores; this I employed without delay as cash, and purchased soap, coffee, and a variety of small articles from the hawking hangers-on of the slave-traders, as well as a large supply of cartridge-paper for the preservation of my botanical specimens.

The greatest service, however, that Seebehr afforded me was in providing me with boots and shoes of European make; no acquisition was to be appreciated higher than this; and in finding myself fresh and well-shod I felt myself renovated to start again upon my wanderings with redoubled vigour. None but those who have been in my condition can comprehend the pleasure with which I hailed the sight of the most trivial and ordinary articles. Once again I was in possession of a comb, some pipe-bowls, and lucifers. As I was not in the least inclined to forego my smoking while on the march, I

had been obliged, in order to get a light for my tobacco, to make one of my people carry a blazing firebrand throughout the recent journey.

No sooner was I installed in the huts allotted to me than I received a succession of visitors; some of them crossed my threshold from mere idle curiosity, whilst others came either with some vague hope of profit or from some innate love of intrigue. I was honoured by a call from the great Zelim, Ali Aboo Amoory's chief controller, who came to express his hope that I had been satisfied with my reception in his Seriba, which I had visited during his absence. Then I made the acquaintance of some of the more important slave-traders, who had long been settled in the place and who came burning with curiosity to know the real object of my journey. But the most remarkable of all my visitors was a certain Ibrahim Effendi, who held the office of head clerk and accountant in the Egyptian camp. His life had been one unbroken series of criminal proceedings, and he had been guilty of frauds and swindling transactions to an extent that was absolutely incredible. Originally a subordinate in one of the departments of the Egyptian Ministry he had, during Said Pasha's Government, forged the Viceregal seal and attached it to a document professing to appoint him to the command of a regiment that was to be formed in Upper Egypt, and to prescribe that the local government there should defray all the expenses of levying and equipping the troops. This document he had the audacity to present first with his own hands to the governor of the province, and then forthwith he proceeded to present himself in the Upper Egyptian town as the colonel of the new regiment. Only those who are acquainted with the disorder and despotism that prevailed in every branch of the Administration during the lifetime of that Viceroy could believe that such a deception would be practicable; but I am in a position positively to assert that the fraudulent artifice did really for

a while succeed. Two months afterwards, the troops having meanwhile been embodied, the Viceroy happened to make an excursion up the Nile, and seeing a great many soldiers on its banks, inquired the number of their regiment and why they were there. His astonishment was unbounded when he was told of a regiment of whose existence he had never previously heard. Ibrahim was summoned at once. Throwing himself at the Viceroy's feet, the culprit colonel confessed his guilt and begged for mercy. The good-natured Said, who never suffered himself to lose his temper, far less to go into a rage, merely sentenced him to a few years' banishment and imprisonment in Khartoom. As soon as Effendi had completed his term of punishment and regained his liberty, he started afresh as clerk to some of the Soudan authorities; but his habits of fraud and embezzlement were as strong as ever, and he was caught in the act of decamping with the cash-box, and was this time banished to Fashoda, on the White Nile, as being the safest place for dangerous characters of his stamp. After he had been here for several years our friend managed to excite the compassion of Kurshook Ali, who was passing through the place, and was induced to give him his present post of head clerk to his division of the Government troops. This appointment brought Effendi to the district of the Gazelle.

Well versed as he was in the ways of the world, Effendi, by his wit and versatility, seemed to have the power of winning every heart. His position here in the Egyptian camp offered only too wide a scope for his love of intrigue. He had played an important part in the affair with Hellali, having doubtless been at the bottom of the stroke of policy that had reconciled Seebehr to the Turkish soldiers by bringing the hated Hellali to chains and to the yoke of the sheba. Probably he was again bidding for the command of some troops, and I am bound to confess that he seemed in a

fair way of being able before long to gratify his old predilection for military organisation.

The uninhabited wilderness stretching to the west of the Pongo, a district long known to the inhabitants of Darfoor and Kordofan under the name of Dar Ferteet,\* represents one of the oldest domains of the slave-trade, and at the present day, as far as regards its aboriginal population presents to the eye of a traveller the aspect of what may be described as "a sold-out land." Only within the last fifteen years have the Khartoom trading-companies penetrated into the district watered by the Gazelle, but long before that numbers of slave-dealers had already formed settlements in Dar Ferteet, then as now streaming into the country from Darfoor and Kordofan accompanied by hundreds of armed men, and coming, year after year, in the winter months so as to accomplish their business and get back to their homes before the rainy season again set in. Some of them, however, did not return, but remained permanently in the land, and, under the sanction of the more influential chieftains, founded large establishments (Dehms) to serve as marts or *depôts* for their black merchandise. As soon as the ivory-traders, with their enormous armed bands, made their appearance in the country, the Gellahbas received them with open arms; and the Nubians, in order to provide for the storing of their ivory and ammunition, forthwith combined their Seribas with the Dehms already established, so that in the course of time these places assumed the appearance of the market towns of the Soudan. The Gellahbas by remaining in their old quarters reaped a twofold advantage: in the first place, the large contingents of armed men that

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\* Ferteet is the term by which the Foorians and Baggara distinguish the Kredy tribes as a nation from the Niam-niam. In a wider sense the term is applied to all the heathen nations to the south of Darfoor. In the Soudan the guinea-worm is also called Ferteet, probably because the heathen negroes are especially liable to its attacks.



were now introduced into the country relieved them from the necessity of maintaining troops of their own; and, secondly, they were exonerated from the heavy imposts that they had been compelled to pay to the native Kredy chieftains, as these were very speedily reduced by the Nubians to the subordinate position of mere sheikhs or local overseers of the natives. In the course of my tour through Dar Ferteet I became acquainted with five of these towns, which represented so many centres of the slave-trade in this part of the country.

But although the various Khartoom companies who had thus taken up their quarters in the Dehms sent out expeditions every year to the remotest of the Kredy tribes in the west, and even penetrated beyond them to the Niam-niam in the south-west, it did not take them very long to discover that the annual produce of ivory was altogether inadequate to defray the expenses of equipping and maintaining their armed force. Finding, however, that the region offered every facility for the sale of slaves, they began gradually to introduce this unrighteous traffic into their commercial dealings, until at length it became, if not absolutely the prime, certainly one of the leading objects of their expeditions; thus the people whom the professional Gellahbas had at first hailed as friends grew up, ere long, to be their most formidable rivals. For example, Seebehr Rahama himself, who had to maintain a fighting force of a thousand men on his territories, had, as the result of his ivory expedition in the previous year, gained no more than 300 loads or 120 cwt., a quantity which realised but little over 2300*l.* at Khartoom; but at the same time he sent probably as many as 1800 slaves direct to Kordofan, there to be disposed of on his own account.

Ethnographically considered, Dar Ferteet presented a wondrous medley. Perhaps nowhere else, in an area so limited, could there be found such a conglomeration of the

representatives of different races as upon the cultivated tracts in the environs of the Dehms: they were evidently the miserable remnants of an unceasing work of destruction. As we have already observed, the neighbours of the Bongo upon the west were the Golo and the Sehre, who combine together and have their homes in common. Beyond them, still farther to the west, are the Kredy. These Kredy do not seem to be limited to any particular district, but like blades of any one particular species of grass, crop up every now and then, quite at haphazard, as it were, amongst the other species in detached groups. The tribes which predominate, or at any rate those which I had the most frequent opportunities of observing, were the Nduggo, who were settled around Seebehr's Dehm; the Bia, who were settled all about Dehm Gudyoo; and the Yongbongo, who occupied the region between the two.

Of all the people of the Bahr-el-Ghazal district with whom I made acquaintance, the Kredy, I think, were the ugliest; and whether it was in consequence of their longer period of subjection, or that they were depressed by their straitened circumstances, I cannot say, but certainly they were, to my mind, very inferior in intelligence to the Golo, the Sehre, and the Bongo. In form the Kredy are thick and unwieldy, and entirely wanting in that symmetry of limb which we admire in the slim figures of those who inhabit the swampy depressions of the Gazelle; but although their limbs are strong and compact, they must not be supposed to be like the muscular and well-developed limbs of Europeans. They are like the true Niam-niam in being below an average height, and resemble them more particularly in the broad brachycephalic form of their skulls; there is, however, a very marked difference between the two races in the growth of the hair and in the shape of the eyes. Their lips are thicker and more protruding and their mouths wider than those of any other negroes that I saw throughout the whole of my

travels. Their upper incisor teeth were either filed to a point or cut away, so as to leave intervening gaps between tooth and tooth; in the lower jaw there is no mutilation, and the teeth being left intact may perhaps account for their language being more articulate than any other in this part of Africa, although, at the same time, it bears but the slightest resemblance to any of them. Their complexion is coppery-red, the same hue that is to be noticed among the fairer individuals of the Bongo; but, like the majority of the Niam-niam, they are generally coated with such encrusted layers of dirt that they appear several shades darker than they really are: as a rule I should say that they are decidedly fairer than either the Bongo or the Niam-niam.

The Kredy are bounded on the north by the Baggara-el-Homr; on the north-west, three and a half days' journey from Dehm Nduggo, reside the tribe of the Manga, who are said to be quite distinct from the Kredy; on the west, five or six days' journey from Dehm Gudyoo, on the Upper Bahr-el-Arab, are the abodes of the Benda, whose land has long been known to the Foorians under the name of Dar Benda, and used to be the limit of their venturesome slave-raids; still farther to the west are the settlements of the Aboo Dinga, who are said to have no affinity either with the Kredy or Niam-niam. The most important of the western Kredy tribes are the Adya, Bia, and Mareh, and towards the south-west their territory is approximate to the frontier wildernesses of Mofio, the Niam-niam king. Finally, in the south, there is a mingled population of Golo and Sehre, the Sehre decidedly very much predominating in numbers.

Before I had learnt the true state of things with respect to the caravan-roads that started from Dehm Nduggo, I had indulged the hope of making my homeward journey by the overland route through Kordofan: the prospect of extending my geographical knowledge by traversing unknown lands was very attractive and almost irresistible, but when the diffi-

culties and drawbacks came to be reckoned up, I was compelled, however reluctantly, to relinquish a project so perilous as marching across the steppes of the Baggara, and to reconcile myself to retrace my course by the more secure and habitual highway of the Nile. I could willingly have borne the exposure to fatigue, and it might be to hunger; I could have risked the peril of being attacked, and could have stood my chance of procuring the necessary provisions and means of transport; but the extreme uncertainty as to the length of time which the slave-dealers' caravans would take upon their northward return was of itself sufficient to deter me from my scheme; I ascertained that, whenever it suited their interest, they would linger for weeks and weeks together at various places on their way, and delays such as this were altogether inconsistent with my present purpose and convenience.

In the meantime I found a very desirable opportunity of forwarding my long-written letters to Khartoom: the Turkish commander was about to remit his own despatches by a caravan, and he undertook to enclose my correspondence with his own. As a security against any injury that might happen to the mail-bag from the caravan being attacked by the marauding soldiers of the Sultan Hussein, Ahmed Aga had provided an ordinary Arab travelling chest with a double bottom as a hiding-place for all the papers. The chest was confided to a trustworthy Faki, who happily reached the Egyptian frontier without molestation.

Taking seven leagues as an average day's march, the journey from Dehm Nduggo to Aboo Harras on the southern frontier of Kordofan is estimated to take thirty days. This statement was confirmed by various independent testimonies, and I found moreover that it corresponded with the distance of the two places as indicated by my map, a distance which, according to the position that I assigned to Dehm Nduggo, would be a trifle under 380 miles. The route first of all

leads in a N.N.E. direction to Seebehr's most northerly Seriba, Serraggio, a distance which it takes three days to accomplish. Another day's march and the traveller reaches Dalgowna, a depôt much frequented by the slave-dealers and situated on the isolated mountain of the same name as itself, from which there is said to be an extensive view across the northern steppes. The Beery flows quite close to this Gebel Dalgowna, on its way to join the Bahr-el-Arab farther to the north-east. Three days' journey more and the Bahr-el-Arab is attained, just at a spot where it marks off the frontiers of the Baggara-el-Homr. On account of the so-called Bedouins (known as "Arabs" in the common parlance of the Soudan) residing upon its banks, the river has received, from the traders of Kordofan and Darfoor, the designations both of the Bahr-el-Arab and the Bahr-el-Homr: that these two appellations belong to different rivers is quite a fallacy, and the mistake, which has found its way into many maps, very probably originated in travellers sometimes calling the river by one name and sometimes by the other. There is really but the *one* river. After another three days' march Shekka is reached, the great rendezvous in the territory of the Baggara-Rizegat. It may thus be seen that the journey from Dehm Nduggo to Shekka may be accomplished in ten or twelve days, according to the length of the day's marching.

According to the statements that I gathered and have now recorded, Shekka, I should suppose, corresponds with a position described by Escayrac de Lauture in his valuable accounts of these regions, and which he distinguishes by the name of Sook-Deleyba (*i.e.*, the market near the Deleb palms). Shekka, in fact, appears to be an important market-place and rendezvous for the itinerant slave-dealers, as well as for the Baggara Bedouins, many of whom have permanent homes there; it is the site also of the residence of Munzel, the Sheikh of the Rizegat. But it is most notorious of all as



being the principal resort of all the great Kordofan slave-traders: being beyond the jurisdiction of Egypt and its arbitrary officials, who are in the habit of extorting a specific sum per head for hush-money on every slave that is conveyed into the country, it is a spot that enables them to transact their nefarious business free from the burdensome imposts, and to transmit their living merchandise in whatever direction may suit them, all over the provinces of the Soudan.

The journey from Shekka to Aboo Harras, I was given to understand, would require eighteen days, and even with very long days' marching could not be accomplished in less than fifteen days. All my informants agreed most positively in asserting that there were no streams of any magnitude to be crossed, and that even in the height of the rainy season there were no brooks nor swamps to offer any serious obstacle to travellers. There was, however, no time of the year, not even in the middle of winter, when the Bahr-el-Arab could be crossed by any other means than swimming, or by rafts constructed of grass.

The caravan-roads from Dehm Nduggo to Darfoor were closed at the time of my visit. They nearly all started in a N.N.W. direction. Almost immediately after leaving the Seriba, the traveller would have to cross the Beery, and proceed for three or four leagues until he arrived at the subsidiary Seriba Deleyb; another day's march to the north-west would bring him to one of the minor Seribas, of which the controller's name was Soliman; and two days more would find him at a Seriba on the Gebel Mangyat, as the natives call that district. The notorious copper-mines Hofrat-el-Nahahs\* are said to be situated six days' journey

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\* There is much uncertainty about the exact geographical position of these famous mines. The accounts differ widely, so that I can only approximately determine the precise situation. According to Brown, Hofrat is twenty-three and a half days' journey from Kobbeh, the capital of Darfoor, whilst according to Barth it is only eight good days' march from Tendelti, which is a day's

to the south of this region of the Manga, and to lie on the southern frontier of Darfoor. The copper is brought into the market either in the shape of clumsily-formed rings, full of angles, varying in weight from five pounds to fifty, or in long oval cakes of very imperfect casting. The price that I had to pay for the hundred rottoli (about 80 lbs.) that I obtained from Seebehr was 1500 piastres, or 75 Maria Theresa dollars, which would be represented by about £15 of English money.

Seebehr had a Seriba on the frontiers of Darfoor that was in constant intercourse with this important place, and through his interest I obtained a sample of the ore of these far-famed mines. It weighed about five pounds. One half of it I handed to the Khedive of Egypt at an audience with which he honoured me; the other half I deposited in the Mineralogical Museum at Berlin. The specimen consisted of copper-pyrite and quartz, with an earthy touch of malachite, commonly called green carbonite of copper, but containing a very small quantity of the real metal.

No systematic mining seems to be carried on in the "Hofrat-el-Nahahs," and the man who brought me the sample carefully concealed in his clothes, informed me that the ore was found lying like loose rubble in the dry bed of a khor. It may be presumed that by boring galleries, or even by hewing out quarries, a large supply of the metal might be obtained without any vast expenditure of time or money, for even in the present condition of things, while the solid rock still remains intact, the yield of copper for years past has been very considerable. The Foorian copper even now takes a prominent part in the commerce of the entire Soudan; it is conveyed across Wadai to Kano in Haussa, and, according to Barth, it holds its own in the market even against that imported from Tripoli.

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journey from Kobbah. I should imagine that it probably lies a little to the west of the position that I have assigned it in my map: of one thing I am certain—it lies to the west of the roads to Darfoor.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Underwood of Cycadeæ. Peculiar mills of the Kredy. Wanderings in the wilderness. Crossing the Beery. Inhospitable reception at Mangoor. Numerous brooks. Huge emporium of slave-trade. Highest point of my travels. Western limit. Gallery-woods near Dehm Gudyoo. Scorbatic attack. Dreams and their fulfilment. Courtesy of Yumma. Remnants of ancient mountain ridges. Upper course of the Pongo. Information about the far west. Great river of Dar Aboo Dinga. Barth's investigations. Primogeniture of the Bahr-el-Arab. First giving of the weather. Elephant-hunters from Darfoor. The Sehre. Wild game around Dehm Adlan. Cultivated plants of the Sehre. Magic tuber. Deficiency of water. A night without a roof. Irrepressible good spirits of the Sehre. Lower level of the land. A miniature mountain-range. Norway-rats. Gigantic fig-tree in Moody. The "evil eye." Little steppe-burning. Return to Khalil's quarters.

As time elapsed, and I considered the life that I was leading, I could not help thinking that there was something in the lines of the Russian poet that was not altogether inappropriate to myself:—

*“ Two years had passed ; the gypsies still  
 Their frank and lawless lives fulfil ;  
 From heath to heath they push, nor stay,  
 But find new quarters every day,  
 All heed for culture cast away :  
 And Aleck of their guild is free,  
 Nor kith nor kin remain his joy,  
 New pastimes every hour employ,  
 For gypsy, heart and soul, is he ! ” \**

It was on the 22nd of January that I prepared to resume my wanderings. In the evening I took my leave of Sheikh

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\* Zwei Jahre schwanden, immer wandern  
 Noch die Zigeuner friedlich fort  
 Von einer Steppe zu der andern

Seebehr, and attended by six bearers, with which he had provided me, I departed from the Seriba.

My first destination was the settlement of one of the companies associated with Kurshook Ali, which was situated on the Beery, about twenty miles from Dehm Nduggo. The route for the most part was in a south-westerly direction, over elevated ground that was channeled by no less than ten running streams and khor beds, and along country that was splendidly adorned with goodly forests. The defiles extended from the south-east to the north-west, and stretched away towards the valley of the Beery, which ran parallel to our course at a few miles' distance to the right.

The first irregularity in the soil which crossed our way consisted of a deep river-course, which was now quite dry and shaded over by thick foliage; the second was made by the stream of the Uyeely, which, flowing out from a narrow streak of thicket that corresponded very much in its vegetation with the galleries of the Niam-niam, with deliberate current passed onwards to the west. Midway between the Uyeely and the next stream, called the Uyissobba (the native word for "a buffalo"), which consisted of a series of pools that ranged themselves in a continuous series along an open swamp-steppe, there stood a grove of tall trees. I was much surprised to find the frequent occurrence of the same species of Cycadea which I had observed in the Niam-niam lands, but which here, through the absence of any underwood, made a majestic upward growth, and expanded their noble fans at the summit of a stately stem.

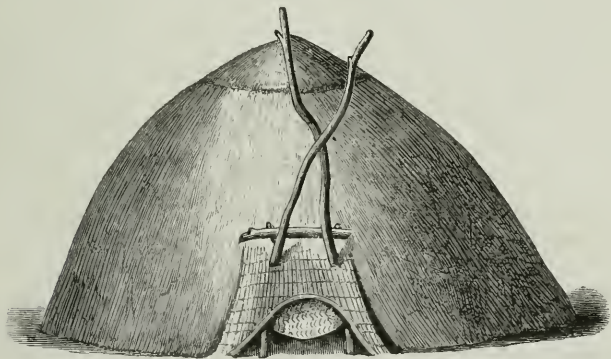
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Und finden gastlich jeden Ort;  
 Der jeden Bildungszwang verachtet,  
 Aleko ist so frei wie sie.  
 Nicht die Familie, wie sie waren,  
 Nichts weiss er mehr von frühern Jahren,  
 Ganz zum Zigeuner ward er schon.

(German translation from Puschkin's 'TZIGANI'.)

The Kredy Nduggo call the *encephalartus* "kotto," and my attendants acquainted me with the fact that they could manufacture a sort of beer out of the central portion of the stem, which was marrowy and full of meal. Some of the specimens that I saw had great cylindrical stems two feet high, a contrast very decided to those that I had previously seen, which were all quite low upon the ground. The male flowering heads were often as many as eight or ten upon a single stem. In the shadowy light admitted by the tall *Humboldtia* that towered above, their stiff crowns had all the appearance of being alien to the scene and a decoration imported from some foreign soil.

After crossing a rippling brook we came to a village belonging to the Kredy chief, Ganyong, on Seebehr's territory. The fishing-nets, forty feet long and eight feet broad, with their great meshes and floating rims made of the stalks of the *borassus*, bore ample testimony, as they hung outside



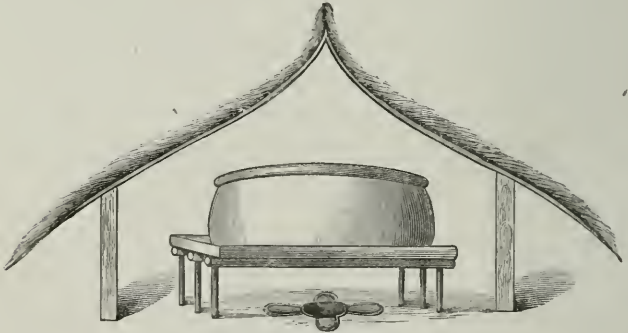
Kredy hut.

the huts, to the productiveness of the Beery. Nets so large as these I had never seen in the country, except among the tribes that people the banks of the Dyoor.

The style of building amongst the Kredy appeared to me extremely slovenly and inartistic. Most of the huts were entirely wanting in substructure, and consisted merely of a



conical roof of grass raised upon a framework of hoops. They recalled to my mind the huts of the Kaffirs. Ganyong had some corn-magazines of a very remarkable construction. They were made very much upon the principle of the "gollotoh" of the Bongo, having a kind of basket supported on posts and covered with a large conical lid; but underneath the main receptacle and between the posts there was a space left large enough for four female slaves to do all the necessary work for converting the corn into meal. A deep trench was cut, and, being firmly cemented over with clay, formed a common reservoir into which the corn fell after it had passed from the murhagas or grindstones. The stones



Interior of Kredy hut.

were arranged so as to form a cross. The women who were employed sang merrily as they worked, and in the course of a day the quantity of corn they ground was very considerable.

At the next hollow, which appeared to have been a marsh that was now dry, was a kind of defile rather thickly sprinkled over with huts, where we found the native women busily engaged in gathering the Lophira-nuts that they call "koso," and use for making oil. The succeeding brook was named the Uyuttoo, and was lined on either side by avenues of trees; it was not much more than a trench, but it was full of water. Farther on, right in the heart of the wood, we made a passage over a khor, and having for a while mistaken

our way, we made a halt at a rivulet that was but eight feet wide, but abundantly supplied with running water. It was already quite dusk, and we were obliged to abandon all hope of getting as far as the Seriba that day. I sent my bearers, therefore, to make the best investigation they could of the surrounding country, and to find out some settlement where we could encamp for the night, as it appeared to be quite impossible for us to bivouac with any degree of comfort in the midst of the still vigorous growth of grass. During the Khareef these thickets must be absolutely impenetrable.

Just in time a village belonging to Kurshook Ali was discovered, and, after making a circuitous route to the south-east, we fixed upon a convenient resting-place for the night. Next morning we proceeded down to the river over very irregular ground, up hill and down hill and repeatedly broken by deep fissures. The dimensions of the Beery in this district were anything but important: it flowed towards the west, making a good many bends and curves, and after a while turning short off to the north. At this date it extended over about two-thirds of the width of its channel, the depth of the stream varying from one to two feet, and the water flowing at the rate of about one hundred feet a minute. The banks were about eight feet high, and were crowned on either hand by trees that, rising some fifty feet, threw out their boughs and overhung the stream to a considerable distance with a leafy canopy. I found a place in the most shadowed portion of the wood where the river had formed a deep basin, and I took a bath, which I found something more than refreshing, and with the temperature at 68° Fahr. I was obliged to take a good run to get warm again.

A mile to the south of the river there was an extensive tract of land covered by farmsteads, merely separated from each other by hedges, and inhabited principally by some Gellahbas who had settled there and by some of the black soldiers. Just beyond these, in a deep depression, the

rivulet of the Rende made its way towards the north-west. Facing the settlement and towards the south, the valley sank very low, whilst towards the west and south-west, the country rose considerably in prominent wall-like ridges.

The controller of the place was named Mangoor, but he was unwell and out of temper, and consequently had no hospitality to show me, and allowed me and my people to start next day with empty stomachs and without any contribution of supplies. Nor was much to be got out of the native local overseer, Gassigombo, who had the supervision of such of the Kredy tribe of the Jongbongo who had settled there; the country was so impoverished that he had neither goats nor poultry to part with. An Egyptian, who was the representative of the sick controller, was really the person responsible for this ungracious reception, which was by far the worst of all that I ever experienced at any of the Khar-toomers' settlements. Between Nubians and Egyptians there goes on a continual jarring, and their mutual animosity is extremely bitter. The Nubians call the genuine Egyptians by the name of "Wollad-er-Reef," the designation being given to them in distinction to the other residents on the Nile, although its real meaning is simply a Nile-dweller; the word "Reef," in fact, is the name of the Nile throughout its course in Egypt.

The icy stolidness of my angry servants and the crabby resentment of the Egyptian, whom they had somehow managed to offend, gave me a vast fund of amusement in spite of my melancholy plight. On the following morning I found myself thoroughly unwell, and so weak that I hardly knew how I should hold out during the next stage of our progress to the next Dehm. I had now double cause to regret the loss of all my stock of tea, for although I tried to compensate for the want of it by taking an extra quantity of coffee, it did me but little good, and was comparatively useless in bracing up my nervous system. I made it, how-

ever, as strong as I could, and took it with me to sustain my flagging energies and keep up my elasticity as I went along.

The Dehm Gudyoo, to which I was directing my steps, was about twenty-two miles distant, and was one of the chief establishments of the slave-traders who had settled in the country. There were no less than ten brooks to be crossed, of some of which the channels were partially dried up; every one of them without exception flowed from west to east towards the Beery, which lay from this point onwards upon our left hand, apparently following a southerly direction. The altitude above the sea, which hitherto upon the route from Dehm Nduggo had been tolerably uniform, began to increase considerably. The region was less thickly covered with trees, but light brushwood took their place, whilst the monotony of the steppes was broken by dwindling watercourses. These seemed to flow from north to south, and were described to me under the following names: the first was the Rende, and had a tolerably strong current; the next was the Buloo, flowing along in a deep rift between walls of red rock; then came the Zembey, a mere meadow-brook; to this succeeded the Kungbai, flowing in its channel along the open steppe; next in order was the Ramadda, a swamp-khor, that had but little current, on the banks of which a number of little springs were constantly yielding their fresh supply.

After this, the way began to ascend, blocks of hornblend and schist occurring every now and then to vary the uniformity of the general configuration of the soil. As we again descended we came to another series of brooks. The first was named the Biduleh, and ran rapidly along, its banks being clearly indicated by rows of *Raphia*-palms; the next was of similar character, called the Gatwee, its borders again lined by the *Raphia*: then came the Gobo, a much smaller stream that murmured along its red granite channel; and then the Kadditch, shut in by a kind of gallery vegeta-

tion. The last of the series, by which we passed the night, was a stream fifteen feet wide with a rapid current, the water of which was up to our knees; it was the Gresse, a feeder of the Beery, and here it had an aspect that very much resembled the Beery as we observed it at the unfriendly Dehm. It was now full 30 feet wide, and made its way amongst blocks and over flats of gneiss between lofty banks that slanted down abruptly to the stream. The declivity, amidst the openings of the thickets, revealed the red rock of the swamp-ore in many places, whilst down below, the flats of the gneiss were everywhere apparent.

From the Gresse we had still eight miles to march along very rising ground before we reached Dehm Gudyoo. As well as being one of the oldest halting-places of the slave-dealers of Dar Ferteet, and in number of huts quite equal to Dehm Nduggo, this town contained a Seriba of Agahd's company, and served as the headquarters of a division of Khartoom soldiers, who made annual expeditions to the territory of the Niam-niam king Mofio, in the west. Gudyoo himself, formerly a Kredy chief and a great patron of the slave-dealers, had now settled down to the east on the banks of the Beery as an ordinary sheikh of Agahd's possessions. Dehm Gudyoo formed the most westerly and, with the exception of Mount Baginze, the highest point that I visited in all my travels in Central Africa. The altitude of the Dehm was about 2775 feet, and not much less than 500 feet higher than Dehm Nduggo. From various indications in the character of the soil I seemed to have no alternative than to conclude that these elevations continue to rise still more decidedly beyond Dehm Gudyoo, and that most probably a considerable watershed would be found in the region in that direction.

The character of the vegetation reminded me in more than one respect of the flora of the Niam-niam lands. Dehm Gudyoo stretches itself out on the northern declivity of a



valley, and consists of huts and farmsteads, which, rising one above another in a kind of amphitheatre, gave an imposing aspect to the scene. Probably the number of huts exceeded 2000. From a spring close to the lowest tier of houses issued a considerable brook, named the Kobbokoio, which was shadowed over with tall trees and thick bushwood that gave the borders very much the appearance of the Niam-niam galleries. In the farther environs of this Dehm there were a good many instances of plants that were very nearly allied to those of the Niam-niam, and the dualism which characterised the vegetation was very marked, and ever and again recalled what I had observed before. On the higher parts of the hill-slopes I found the *Albizzia anthelmintica* in considerable quantities, the bark of which is the most effectual remedy that the Abyssinians are acquainted with for the tapeworm.

Although I had cause to congratulate myself upon the hospitable reception that I found at Agahd's Seriba, and appreciated the hospitality that was extended to me, my condition altogether was so wretched that I might almost as well have been left in the wilderness. A kind of scorbutic affection, that had for some little time been lurking in my system, probably in consequence of my having been deprived for so many months of proper vegetable diet, now broke out with some violence, my gums becoming so sore and the whole inside of my mouth so inflamed that I could not take anything but water without experiencing the greatest pain. The restricted supply of provisions in the place naturally aggravated my condition. As it happily fell out, Faki Ismael, the superintendent of the establishment, made me a present of some sweet potatoes, which he had just received from Dar Benda: at this season they were very scarce, but they were very acceptable, and were the only food of which I could venture to partake. In spite of my ailments, however, I did not suffer my three days' residence in Dehm Gudyoo

to pass away without employing them as profitably as I could: I made a collection of words in the Kredy dialect, and carefully inspected all the most interesting plants in the district.

Large quantities of the Ashantee pepper are found on the Kobbokoio, and just at this season the stems of the trees were so beautifully decorated with its red clusters that they gleamed from amongst the thickets almost as brightly as a flame of fire. The Kredy might in this place alone, without any difficulty, gather hundredweights of this pepper, which amongst them bears the name of Dehre. The Nubians who had taken up their quarters here had not the least idea of the useful properties of the plant, and it had never occurred to them that the red berries, after they were dried, would become black pepper-corns. My disclosure seemed to give them the greatest delight, and without delay they set to work to gather the pepper, which they designed to be sent off to Khartoom, a novelty in the way of their commerce. In the bank-woods I found some muscat-nuts which, in the previous year, I had not found on the Assika until the month of March. The straight growth of its stout stem never failed to attract attention.

At Dehm Gudyoo I learnt a great many details about the aspect of the land still farther west that had been traversed by the various companies of Agald, Bizelly, Idrees Wod Defter, and Seebehr Adlan. When we took our departure I found that our road had a decline. In order to reach the Bongo territory again I proposed to proceed in a kind of arc towards the south-east down to the Dehm Bekeer, where the extensive establishments of the Gellahbas, stretching away for miles, were collected, and where Kurshook Ali was in possession of one of the most important strongholds which he had inherited from his father-in-law. In a straight line the distance between Dehm Gudyoo and Dehm Bekeer would not exceed five-and-thirty miles, but our deviations were so

frequent and so long that it took us two days of exceedingly hard marching to reach our destination. The entire district, a thoroughly unbroken wilderness, was the true source-land of the Beery and the Kooroo, both of these rivers at the points where we crossed them being in the incipient condition of mere brooks; nor did they seem to surpass the other streamlets, thirteen in number, which we had to cross, in their supply of water.

The universal direction which the streams took was from south to north. Reckoning them in their order after leaving Dehm Gudyoo, the first was the Domwee, quite a little channel filled with a flowing current: after a considerable rise in the land, we came to the Ghessy Beery (*i.e.*, the Little or Upper Beery), with its broad water almost stagnant and shadowed over by an extensive gallery-wood; then came a dried-up channel at the bottom of a broad and outspread valley, of which the western slopes were marked by crests of hills some 400 or 500 feet in height; to this succeeded an uphill march, which led to a soil so elevated that it opened an ample prospect into the far distant east, embracing at least the chief landmarks for some eighty miles round; next succeeded a brook called the Yagpak, of which the waters, still deep, were hemmed in by thick shrubberies; next came a little watercourse with languid stream; and then a rivulet twenty feet wide, full of water, and named the Gulanda, where we spent the night, the direction of which was indicated by the bushes on the banks. The level of the soil was here about 400 feet lower than it had been at Dehm Gudyoo. Farther on, close following upon each other, came two dried-up khors; after which the land once more began to rise again in alternate flats of gneiss and lofty eminences of swamp-ore, hills named Bakeffa and Yaffa lifting themselves up conspicuously on the east; next we reached a small dried-up course that intersected a valley made up of gneiss flats, bounded on the west by the elevation of a hill, called the

Fee-ee; then, at about equal distances one from another, were crossed four khors, now dry, that gave an undulated character to the ground; proceeding onwards we came to the half-dry, half-swampy depression known as the Ohro; and last of all we arrived at an inconsiderable water-channel of which the stream was deep, but apparently stationary, and was described by the Kredy as being the upper course of the Kooroo, distinguished here by the name of the Mony.

The district over which we thus had travelled very much resembled the northern regions of the Kredy lands in its wooded character and in the absence of meadow-lands and steppes; only it was utterly wanting in that distinctive abundance of springs which is so marked in latitudes below lat. 8° N. The deficiency of water, in comparison to what we had before experienced, made itself very obvious. The flora offered some few novelties; in particular I was surprised at the cabbage-like Euphorbia (*Tithymalus*), which, though common in our zone, is quite a rarity in Tropical Africa.

In the dried-up watercourses I frequently saw one of the rodentia which had hitherto been little known to me: this was the reed-rat, called by the Foorians the "Far-el-boos." I had the good fortune to bring down three of them, and, after having been limited for three days to a diet of soaked sweet potatoes, I very much appreciated a meal from their delicate and tender flesh.

Never shall I forget the hospitable reception which Yumma, Kurshook Ali's Vokeel, showed me at this Seriba, nor the circumstances under which it transpired. My gratitude was all the more keen because the discourtesy and inhospitality which I had experienced from Mangoor were still fresh upon my memory. I was really worn-out by the fatigue of marching, and very much debilitated by my compulsory abstinence in consequence of my scorbutic attack, when in the early evening we reached the Dehm. We wandered about for a considerable time amongst the scattered homesteads, and had

some difficulty in discovering the palings of the Seriba. After we succeeded in getting inside, we found all the huts perfectly quiet, and it appeared almost as if invisible hands had prepared the coffee which was handed me as soon as I had taken my seat upon the "angareb" in the reception-hall. The ruler of the Seriba happened that evening to be absent somewhere in the environs, and it was not known for certain whether he would return that night. Feeling that it was quite a matter of speculation what kind of entertainment I should have on the following day, I threw myself down without taking any supper, and composed myself for my night's rest.

Whoever has wandered as a lonely traveller in the untrodden solitudes of a desert likes to tell his dreams: in them the true situation of a man often mirrors itself; for, unrestrained by any control of reason, images arise from the obscurity of the past, so that, at times, it seems as if a painful vividness was being stamped upon recollections, which, as reproduced, are really very contradictory to the actual facts. It happened to me very much in this way at Dehm Bekeer, only I had the compensation that the visions that I saw were not disproved, but confirmed, by my experience.

Weary and worn-out as I was, and no longer master of my faculties, I seem very soon to have fallen asleep. Memory, unshackled from the guardianship of reality, began to revel in the ideal delights of a material world. I fancied that I was in a spacious tent that was glittering with the radiancy of countless lamps, that the tables were groaning under the most tempting viands, and that troops of servants in gorgeous livery were in attendance upon the guests, to whom they brought the mellowest and rarest of wines. And then it was race-time at Cairo, and the entertainment was sumptuous with all the splendour of the fairest imagery of 'The Arabian Nights,' the host no less than the Governor of Egypt himself. And then I seemed all at once to wake, and was quite be-



wildered in trying to decide whether I was in the smoke-clouds that envelop the interior of an African grass-hut or whether in truth I was reclining under the shelter of a royal marquee. My frame of mind enhanced the force of my fancy: but soon the delusion took a more distinct phase, and I seemed to divine that there was really about me a group of well-dressed servants, and that whilst some were bringing in various dishes and sparkling goblets which they placed beside my lowly couch, others were running about with tapers and lamps, and others with embroidered napkins under their arms were conveying the choicest dainties in lordly dishes or offering lemonade and sherbet from the brightest crystal. I rubbed my eyes. I took a draught of what was offered me. I surveyed the scene deliberately, and came to the surprised conviction that what I had been dreaming was a reality!

Yumma, the controller of the Seriba, had returned home late in the evening. No sooner was he informed of my arrival than he had had all his retinue of cooks aroused from their night's rest to give me an entertainment worthy of his rank. He was more than half a Turk, and acquainted far beyond the other superintendents of the Seribas with the elegancies and comforts of a Khartoomer's household. Everything he possessed in the way of valuable vases or tasteful table ornaments was brought out and exhibited in my honour. He set before me bread of pure white flour, maccaroni, rice, chickens served with tomatoes, and innumerable other delicacies which I could hardly have supposed had ever found their way to this distant land. It was quite midnight before the preparations for the impromptu banquet were complete, and then, whether I wanted or not, I was bound to partake. My tortures were the tortures of Tantalus; however eagerly I might covet the food, the inflammation in my gums put an emphatic veto upon my enjoyment, and it was only with the acutest suffering that I could get a morsel of meat or a drop of fluid between my lips. As soon, however, as I was some-

what better, the improved diet told favourably upon my constitution, and after a few days I was ready to start afresh upon my travels with renovated energy and recruited strength.

The environs of the Dehm are inhabited partly by the Golo and partly by the Sehre. Amongst the natives the town itself is known by the name of Dehm Dooroo, called so after a deceased chieftain of the Golo. The present native overseer of the Golo population is called Mashi Doko. To the south and south-west of the town, the ground gradually rises, and in the main might be called hilly in all directions, as right away to the horizon there are continued series of hill-crests and ridges. Above the general undulation of the land these rise high enough to form conspicuous landmarks, and afford the wayfarer considerable assistance in the direction of his journey; many of them present an appearance that is quite analogous to that of the hill-caps which have been mentioned as characteristic of southern Bongoland; generally they consist of bright masses of gneiss. The shape of these hills is defined in the Arabic of the Soudan as "Gala;" the Bongo call it "Kilebee." They are quite isolated, and are always rounded elevations of grey gneiss projecting, sometimes like flat plateaux and sometimes like raised eminences, from the swamp-ore around, and they give the landscape the aspect so characteristic of Central Africa. They may readily be supposed to be associated in character with those gneiss flats which are scattered all over the land in every variety of shape and size, and any one must involuntarily become subject to the impression that they indicate a spot where in bygone ages there were the summits of mountains that have long since been worn down by the tooth of time, and that these elevations were the ridges that had separated the channels of the very rivers that I had discovered, which by various agencies, chemical and mechanical, were now conspiring to carry off the *débris* of the mountain mass and convey it to the distant ocean. All along the way there

were the most striking evidences of how, in the operations of nature, it had been brought about that every valley should be exalted and every mountain and hill made low. The problem over which antagonists may wrangle and refuse to be reconciled has been successfully solved by Nature, whose function has ever been to establish a balance between opposites ever since the days of her own early youth, before as yet a living creature existed to give animation to the scenes of earth. As instances to illustrate the certainty of these earlier chains of mountains, I may mention the following, which the reader will easily trace upon the map: The Taya, between the Beery and the Kooroo; the Bakeffa, the Kosanga, and the Ida, between the Kooroo and the Pongo; and the Kokkulo, the Yaffa, and the Atyumen, between the Pongo and the Wow.

On leaving Dehm Bekeer, a mile south from the Seriba, we reached a small stream called the Ngudduroo, and on the farther side of it, after traversing a hilly tract for about two miles, we came to another stream which in winter could only boast of a very weak current, although even then the breadth of its bed was fifteen feet, thoroughly covered with water. The banks were about eight or ten feet in height, and stood out dry above the stream. Yumma, who accompanied me, declared that it was the upper course of the river of Damoory and Dembo, consequently that it was the Pongo, and he affirmed that, in his frequent marches along its banks, he had distinctly followed it right into that district. Both the Golo and the Sehre throughout the environs called it the Djee, and as I proceeded along my way I derived fresh confirmation for Yumma's statement about the river from the circumstance that it is also called the Djee by those Sehre who reside on the farther side, at Dehm Adlan. All along my route back, moreover, towards the east, I did not come across any river large or small which could possibly be identified as the upper portion of what is the Pongo at Damoory.

Some four or five leagues to the north-west of Dehm Bekeer there is stationed one of Kurshook Ali's subsidiary Seribas. The natives of the district are Golo, and the Seriba has been established upon the banks of the Hahoo, a little stream that subsequently joins the Kooroo. Two leagues to the south-west of the Dehm rises a hill, steep in every aspect, it is designated the Kokkuloo, and commands a wide view of the country around. I found a number of intelligent people in this locality whose information about the neighbouring Niam-niam was of considerable service to me in ascertaining various facts, and by comparing and combining their separate accounts I was able to gain a fairly accurate idea of the country. The particulars that I gathered were for the most part appertaining to the territories of the two Niam-niam chieftains Mofio and Solongoh. Mofio's residence was described as being situated to the W.N.W. of our present position, and that, in consequence of the number of streams that had to be crossed and the deserts that had to be traversed, it could not be reached in less than twelve days, even if the march were urged on with all possible speed, whilst at an ordinary pace it would take fifteen days at least; there was, however, a way from Dehm Nduggo which was less circuitous, and did not offer the same difficulties in furnishing the bearers with supplies: this could be accomplished in about eight days. The home of Solongoh, who was a son of Bongohrongboh, was not distant more than a five days' march to the S.S.E., and only separated from the domain of Kurshook Ali in the lands of the Golo and Sehre by one of the desolate frontier wildernesses. There was a third independent Niam-niam chief, whose territory, however, was of insignificant extent. He was called indifferently Yapaty or Yaffaty, and was the son of Mofio's brother Zaboora: he had his mbanga three days' journey to the south-west of Dehm Bekeer.

At the period of my visit Yumma was on terms of open

enmity with Solongoh, his territory being constantly threatened by that powerful prince, whose sway extended as far as the Bellandah, who are bordering upon the land of Aboo Shatter. Just before this, in fact only a few days previously to my arrival, Solongoh had been repulsed in an attack which he had made, although he had summoned his full force and had advanced within a couple of days' march of Dehm Bekeer. As Yunma foresaw that another engagement was imminent, he would not permit me to remain any longer in his Seriba, because he saw he could not be responsible for the issue, and it was in vain that I begged him not to have any apprehension on my account. But the audacity of the Niam-niam was so gross that it was intolerable, and must be suppressed at all hazards. To such a pitch had this shameless daring grown that even the arms of the soldiers had been stolen by people sent by Solongoh into Dehm Bekeer for the purpose. Under cover of night they had contrived to get into the Seriba, and had managed to purloin several guns whilst the unsuspecting owners were sound asleep.

My researches in Dehm Gudyoo enabled me to gather certain information which is of some consequence as affecting the proper hydrographical delineation of the countries through which I was travelling. Six days' journey south-west by west from the spot at which we were sojourning stood a Seriba, which was Idrees Wod Defter's principal repository of arms and ammunition; it was situated, as I was informed, upon the banks of a river that flowed to the north-east, and afterwards joined another river that was so much larger that the passage over it could at all seasons only be effected in boats. To this river the Khartoomers give the name of Bahr Aboo Dinga; it is said to be about two and a half days' journey beyond Dar Benda, where Idrees maintains another Seriba. It is a river that is likewise well known to the company of Seebehr Rahama, which makes a yearly visit to the country that is inhabited by the Aboo Dinga, a distinct negro people,



quite different alike to the Kredy and to the Niam-niam. The direction of the stream Aboo Dinga was reported to be E.N.E. or due east, and all the statements concurred in making it identical with the Bahr-el-Arab, which intersects the country of the Baggara-el-Homr.

No one seemed able to decide the question where the Bahr Aboo Dinga came from. I suspect its source is somewhere amongst the mountains of Runga, to the south of Wadai, a spot of which various travellers have given such reports as they have been able to gather. Barth,\* in the itinerary which he gives of his eastward route from Massena in Baghirmy to Runga, makes an entry which may contribute something in the way of elucidating the question. He says that he came "on the forty-second day (*i.e.* one day's journey to the south of the residence of the prince of Runga) to Dar Sheela,† a mountainous district with a river flowing to the east, beyond which lies Dar Dinga." No one is more conscious than I am myself how little stress is to be laid upon a mere resemblance in the sound of names. Hundreds of times, and in every diversity of place, I have found that any conjecture based upon the apparent similarity is utterly worthless; but in this case the resemblance was not a chance coincidence, for the assigned bearings and distances (as reckoned from the two starting-points of Barth and myself) so thoroughly correspond as to suggest the sense of a mutual agreement between the scenes that we explored; it seems also very probable that Barth's river Kubanda is identical with my river Welle.

Various reasons, into which it is unnecessary to enter with more minuteness here, might be alleged to show that it is in the highest degree probable that the river in question is

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\* Barth, vol. iii., p. 578.

† Some geographers fall into error with respect to this place by making Dar Sheela identical with the well-known Dar Sileh or Dar Silah, which is a different negro Mohammedan country, many of the people of which I have seen.

likewise identical with a river which is affirmed by the two entirely independent witnesses, Teïma\* and Fresnel,† to exist in this district, and to which the name of Bahr-el-Ezuhm, or Azzoum, is assigned.

Although these statements are only given in their main and essential features, and not in detail, they will suffice to cast some degree of clearness upon the source of the Bahr-el-Arab, that river which appears hitherto to have been very much underrated in all the maps of the country. The evidence which demonstrates that the river is entitled to the rank of primogeniture amongst all the tributaries of the Gazelle system, has already been collected in a previous page. We have only to take account of the extraordinary length, as may be gathered from the foregoing data, to which the Bahr-el-Arab extends, and we shall be at once bound to concede that in all discussions connected with that endless question of the sources of the Nile, the Bahr-el-Arab takes at least an equal rank with the Bahr-el-Gebel.

Leaving the Djee at some little distance to our right, we continued our return journey to the Wow and the Dyoor, starting in a N.N.E. direction, and persevering for twenty-five miles until we reached Dehm Adlan, just as it had been described to me by the same reliable authorities to whom I was indebted for such detailed particulars about the districts of Mofio and Solongoh. Nearly throughout the march the country was quite destitute of inhabitants, and we crossed eleven little streams all running from west to east and flowing into the Djee. We had first to cross a half-dry khor, surrounded on all sides by open steppes, and then proceeded to the farms of the Sehre sheik, Bereeah, which were situated just

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\* *Vide* De Cadalvene et de Breuvery L'Egypte, vol. ii. p. 237, where the Orientalist König has given his interpretation of a map, which Teïma-Walad-el-Sultan-Messabani (Governor of Kordofan, subject to the control of Darfoor) had himself projected.

† Fresnel pursued his researches in Djidda in the years 1848 and 1849.

beyond a considerable brook, of which the water was nearly at a standstill, and which bore the name of Langeh.

Our pathway now led us through bushwoods and over soil that was generally rocky, till after accomplishing about two leagues we came in sight of Bakeffa, a hill of which I had previously taken the bearings; it reared itself so much above the flat table-land that it could be seen from afar. All round the west, far as the horizon embraced the view, the whole country was apparently one elevated plateau. For a long time we had a river named the Gumende on our left, and at intervals passed through the galleries of forest-wood that enclosed its banks; after a while we had to cross the stream at a spot where it was thirty feet wide and ten feet in depth. As surveyed from this place, the horizon upon the north-east was shut out by the rising of some steepish ground. The next brook that we reached was named the Nyusseta; its water was nearly stationary, and beyond it were still standing the dejected ruins of a previous Seriba of Bizelly's. Having traversed a rocky tract broken by repeated bushwoods, we next arrived at the large brook Gopwee, of which the channel was deep, but the waters nearly still, its banks being shrouded with very thick foliage. Then we reached the Dibanga, of which we found that the bed was of considerable depth; but at this season it was divided into a number of separate pools. Farther on we passed a gallery-brook, in which the water had no movement, and finally we came to a much larger stream, of which the surface of the water was ten feet in breadth, the height of the woody banks which shut in the channel varying from twenty-five feet in some places to forty in others. Its name was the Ndopah. The woods, which almost completely overshadowed it, were composed in a large measure of great *sterculiæ*, which the Niam-niam call *kokkorukkoo*, and to which I have already called attention as being so conspicuous in the gallery-forests of the south.

Upon the banks of a little stream, by the sides of which the trees were arranged as it were in avenues, and where a kind of glen was formed amongst them, we came to an establishment of slave-dealers, who, in company with some elephant-hunters from Darfoor, had taken up their quarters at the place which the Khartoomers simply designate by the name of Bet-el-Gellahba, or "the abode of the slave-dealers." As we were unable to reach the Dehm to which our steps were bent, we were compelled to take up our quarters here for the night.

On the following morning, which was the 5th of February, I was very much surprised at the singularly clouded aspect of the sky. After a long interval the night had been warm, the atmosphere being oppressively close, an indication that, just as might be anticipated at the beginning of February, a change of weather was impending, and there was about to ensue a transition from the coolness of winter to the heat of summer without any interruption in the dryness of the air.

Before we arrived at the Dehm of Seebehr Adlan, who was a Seriba owner associated with Agahd's company, we had to journey over lands that were under vigorous cultivation and to pass by numerous farmsteads of the Sehre. On our way it was necessary to cross two considerable brooks that flowed in the hollow of some deep depressions, and were closely shut in by lofty trees. Beyond the second of these, which was called Ngokkoo, on the steep side of a valley slope, lay the aforesaid Seriba, in the immediate environs of which were clustered many groups of Gellahbas' farmsteads, numerous enough to constitute a Dehm, which, however, was far smaller than any that we had previously visited. The resident dealers in slaves were partly Foorians and partly Baggara, and had an interest in the ivory traffic as well as in their living merchandise. They conducted their business in the regular Bedouin fashion, with sword and lance, disposing of their spoil at the nearest Seribas, where

their activity was much appreciated. The Baggara, who come into the country in the train of the slave-dealers (whether for the purpose of tending the oxen which are wanted as beasts of burden or of superintending the transport of the slaves), are all of the tribe of the Rizegat, the Homr being the most irreconcilable enemies of all the Gellahbas, no matter whether these come from Kordofan or Darfoor, or whether they be natives of Khartoom or other Nubians.

At the distance of a mile from the Seriba, towards the east, the Djee had already expanded into a river some forty feet broad; its bed was full of water, which, however, did not exceed two feet in depth; it flowed deliberately towards the north, between lofty walls of swamp-ore and over moss-grown clumps of gneiss that half obstructed its flow along its bed. The embankments on either side seemed to be equally inclined to the base of the valley, which they overtopped by an altitude of nearly 600 feet; so prolonged was the depression, spreading outwards for several miles, that the aspect of the locality was quite remarkable. The affluents of the river joined the main-stream by gorges in the soil, which sank perpendicularly to the bottom; and the land had the singular appearance of having been regularly parcelled out into distinct allotments.

The contented little community of the Sehre had established itself in well-packed quarters, which were ranged for some distance around the Seriba. The prospect all around was very diversified, the landscape presenting pleasing alternations of light and shade, the dense woods being relieved by the recurrence of the culture-lands and homesteads of the natives.

In general appearance the Sehre may be said to bear a striking resemblance to the Niam-niam, except that they are not tattooed. Originally they were a tribe of slaves subject to the Niam-niam chieftains, but recently they have migrated farther north, very probably encouraged to that movement by the depopulation of the land in consequence



of the large and perpetual capture of the people for slaves. However, many of the Sehre still remain subject to the dominion of the Niam-niam prince, Solongoh. The prolonged intercourse that has existed between the two people has done a great deal towards obliterating the nationality and peculiar customs of the Sehre and to assimilate them to the Niam-niam; but to a large extent they retain their own dialect, which, as might be expected, has many points of resemblance with the Zandey. Many of the Sehre are quite accustomed to the Zandey tongue and speak it fluently. The long hair is precisely like what is found among the Niam-niam, and the mode of arranging it in tufts and twists is identical. Their complexion is a dark chocolate colour.

The Sehre are a robust and well-built race, and in this respect they more resemble the Golo and the Bongo. Their ethnographical independence, however, does not admit of a question. Their huts attest the interest which their owners take in them, and the amount of care that is bestowed upon the management of their households is larger than what is anywhere to be observed amongst the Golo, not to mention those of the poor degenerate Kredy. The peculiar huts appropriated to boys, which I have mentioned as being adopted by the Niam-niam and called "bamogee," are found here, and are always built in a style that is most symmetrical. But their most remarkable structures are their corn-bins, which are of a shape that I never saw elsewhere. They are made in the form of a drinking goblet, and are nearly always artistically decorated with mouldings and with a series of rings almost as perfect as though they had been produced with the aid of a lathe. They are always built on a pedestal, which must be climbed in order to push aside the projecting lid.

Among the Sehre I never saw either goats or dogs, and, as far as I could judge, their residences had no other live-stock about them but a few cocks and hens.

There is nothing very remarkable about the arms of the Sehre; their lances resemble those of the Bongo, and are very rare and quaint-looking weapons. The bows and arrows are considerably smaller than those of the Bongo, the arrows in particular being of that short and stumpy make that I had noticed amongst the Bellanda.

The women's attire consists of bunches of grass or leaves, fastened to their girdle before and behind, and very like what is worn by the Bongo; it is also generally adopted by the women of the Golo and Kredy. There is the same partiality for inserting bits of straw in the sides of the nostrils that is so common amongst the Bongo women, but the example here is to a certain extent followed even by the men. Many of the women have the circular plate let into their upper lip like the Mittoo women. At the Dehm Adlan I observed several women who had an appendage hanging from the lower lip in the shape of a piece of lead several inches long. The teeth, both of men and women, are left unmutilated, the only disfigurement being that an artificial separation is made between the two central incisors. According to the ordinary fashion of Central Africa, infants at the breast are carried in a girth, similar to a saddle-girth, worn over the shoulders just in the same way as amongst the Monbuttoo women.

Hunting in the neighbouring wildernesses, which cannot extend much less than twenty miles in every direction, and which appear to be entirely void of inhabitants, must be a very productive pursuit. In all my travels I never came across such numerous and abundant hunting trophies as here amongst the homesteads of the Sehre; they were contrived out of branches of trees resting one against another and self-supported like the guns of soldiers in camp, and were crowded with the skulls and horns of animals that the natives had secured. Hundreds of buffalo-horns, including a surprising number of those of the females, were attached to the struc-

tures which stood in front of well-nigh every hut, and were as numerous as though hunter vied with hunter in his separate display. Every variety of horn was represented: intermingled with the buffalo-horns were those of the eland-antelope, the water-bock, the hartebeest, and the bastard-gemsbock, whilst skulls of wart-hogs, and occasionally even skulls of lions, were not wanting to help adorn the trophy.

The proprietor of the Seriba happened to be absent on an excursion to the western districts of the Niam-niam, but his Vokeel did his utmost to provide me with a hospitable reception; and taking into account the impoverishment of the land and the general deficiency of provisions that prevailed, I am bound to award him my best thanks for his courtesies and attention.

Beyond the Kooroo, and just half-way between Dehm Adlan and Dehm Gudyoo, there stands a hill of considerable altitude, named Taya. The whole distance required two days' hard marching to get over, the road being straight through uninterrupted wilderness until it reached the farmsteads of the Kredy sheikh, Gudyoo, on the banks of the Beery.

Shortly after midnight on the 8th of February there came on such a violent storm that I was aroused from my sleep, although I was sheltered by one of the best protected of the huts. A complete change of wind ensued, and for the first time this season the south-west wind set in afresh and for some time maintained its position for the greater part of the day. The nights in consequence became so much warmer that any covering for the bed could easily be dispensed with. We tarried here three days, and then started for another three days' march on our return to Bongoland, over a country all but destitute of water, for the Pongo may be described as a river that separates a district full of springs from one that is just as barren of them, although the change in the level of the country comes on so gradually that it can hardly be said to be observable.

In the course of our journey we had to cross the three running brooks known as the Ngokurah, the Simmere, and Ngonguli, and to pass by several villages of the Sehre, of which the sheikhs were respectively called Kombo, Villeke, Badja, and Barraga. The last huts and the last water were left behind about four miles after quitting the Pongo, and henceforth water for drinking had to be sought for with considerable trouble, as all the pools and marshes that supplied any were only to be found scattered at wide intervals one from another.

We spent our first night close to the farms of Barraga, a spot which seemed especially remarkable for the clusters of trophies, all covered with the skulls of baboons. Everywhere there seemed to be an extensive cultivation of cassava, a product of the soil that seems hardly known at all to the Bongo. Many things that I saw in their cultivation bore evidence to their comparatively recent migration from the country of the Niam-niam. Sweet-potatoes were as common as cassava, and in addition to this were the ricinus, the edible solanum of the Niam-niam, here called "dyooyo," and the horse-bean (*Canavalia*), which here bears the name of "nzerahno." I also found a very peculiar creeper, with a



"Karra," the magic tuber.

double horny or finger-shaped tuber attached to the axils of the leaves, like the edible *helmia*, to which genus of plants it doubtless belongs. It is transplanted by the natives from

the woods and trained in the neighbourhood of the huts, and is known under the name of "karra." I had already noticed this plant in the Kredy villages on the Beery, where I was told that the tubers were very much used as a purgative medicine ; but amongst the Niam-niam, who likewise occasionally cultivate it, I heard a different account. There it was said that the tubers are looked upon as a sort of charm, and it is believed that a good show of them upon the leaves is an infallible prediction of a prolific hunting season. It was, moreover, affirmed that if a huntsman wants to render his bow unerring in its capabilities, he has only to hold it in his hand while he "slaughters" one of the tubers over it, that is, takes a knife and cuts off the end and chops it in pieces.

The first tract that we passed in our still eastward return route was a uniformly thick wood, without any declivity at all in the ground, or anything to indicate that it was ever broken by a watercourse or standing pool of rain. About midday we made a halt at a marshy brook named Kanda now dry, and set to work to explore the neighbourhood in the hopes of discovering some water, for, after a march of eleven miles in the heat, we began to be suffering from thirst. After a long search my people succeeded in meeting with a puddly slough, from which the dirty superficies had to be carefully removed in order to get at a little clear water. It was a disgusting swamp, the haunt of buffaloes and wild boars, full of excrements and reeking with filth, a compound of mould and ammonia. It was not until it had been strained through handkerchiefs and well-boiled that the water was purified of its odious smell. Only three miles farther on we had the good luck to find the watercourse of the Telle, overshadowed by thick foliage and running in a tolerably bright stream : a sufficient inducement to make the spot our resting-place for the night.

On the third day of our march we again passed several



dry khors that had little pools of water in them, but very inadequate to our needs. In one of these there was lurking a herd of hartebeests, which by the greyish fawn-colour of their winter coats had quite an exceptional appearance. Hundreds of maraboo-storks were congregated around a marshy pond, where they were fishing for snails and worms.

At dinner we were again obliged to put up with the most abominable and revolting of water; our stock of provisions was miserably short, and although I had knocked over a few guinea-fowl, I had neither water in which to boil them, nor grease in which to fry them. In the afternoon we were startled by a storm, which, coming up from the north-east, rolled away towards the south. We endeavoured to get shelter in the wood beneath the thick foliage of the numerous great Lophira-trees, but it was all in vain; for, after having waited till daylight was waning, we were obliged to proceed in the darkness, and, thoroughly drenched to the skin, marched for a couple of hours till we came to the banks of a rivulet, where we were again overtaken by the rain.

A tedious, trying night, spent without a roof over my head, seemed to fill up the cup of bitterness which I was destined to drink upon this tour of privation. In the darkness no grass could be discovered, and on account of the dampness of the atmosphere no fire could be kindled, so that it was entirely without protection from the wet and cold that I had wearily to await the following morning, when, half-perished by exposure, in spite of the continued storm, I resumed my way, now become more arduous than ever, because, as a result of the rain, it had become exceedingly slippery. The rain of this night had been quite an exception, and was very transient; it passed away, and the prevalence of the north wind, during the last three days overpowered by a current from the south-west, was for a time restored.

Never do I recollect having seen a more cheerful little

people than the Sehre, if I may judge them by those who acted as my bearers. No mischance, no fatigue, no hunger nor thirst, seemed ever to take the smallest effect upon the happy temperament of these poor negroes. As soon as we halted they began their jokes and pranks. There was not a woe-begone countenance to be seen; groans and sighs were utterly alien to their disposition, and no sooner was their work over, toilsome as it was, than they began to play, like a lot of boys fresh out of school. Sometimes one would pretend to be a wild animal, and was chased by the others; or sometimes they would contrive and carry out some practical joke. Nothing seemed to entertain them more than to act the part of a great clumsy tortoise, and to waddle about on all-fours, accompanying their movements by all kinds of grunting and clacking noises. And all this jocoseness went on while their stomachs were empty. "If we are hungry," they would say, "we sing, and forget it."

We proceeded thirteen miles still eastward from the Telle and then the wooded country, which had continued in an unbroken succession of thick trees of every variety all the way from the Pongo, came to an end. It was succeeded by extensive steppes and marshy lowlands, which every here and there was relieved by clusters of *Terminaliæ*. The lowland was bounded towards the east by a range of hills, the base of which we reached about four miles farther on. The direction of the elevated land lay from the south-east to the north-west.

Deviating now from the east a little more to the north, our route conducted us towards Ngulfala, a Seriba in Bongoland, about fourteen miles away. We had to make our way through a complicated system of rounded caps of gneiss, and to wind round flat-topped hills that gave the district the aspect of being a miniature mountain-chain, the source-land probably of the Ghetty and the watershed between that stream and the Pongo. The rise in the ground was

very obvious. The highest of the rounded eminences, named Atyumm, was about 200 feet above our path, and at least 500 feet above the adjacent steppe below; it had a semi-spherical form, very like that of Gumango, near Bendo's village, in the Niam-niam country.

Before reaching Ngulfala we had to cross the Ghetty, here a meagre stream, corresponding to the absorbing nature of the soil through which it flows. The distance between the spot and where we had crossed it at Bizelly's Seriba is about forty miles, but the river presented just the same aspect—a broad, deep rift in the earth, with its water almost stationary in its pools. A considerable number of maraboo-storks were seen, either standing upon the banks or dipping into the water-holes for fish and mollusks (*Anodontæ*).

The altitude of the Seriba above the level of the sea was 1905 feet, about 500 lower than Dehm Adlan; but it should be observed that an accidental rise in the ground is made simply by the hill-system of Atyumm, itself nearly 500 feet, so that (without allowing anything for the cutting of the stream) the gradual descent of the land during the thirty or thirty-five miles that it extends eastwards from the Pongo must amount altogether to just about 1000 feet.

The lower level of the soil becomes more obvious still over the next stretch of country. The nearest Seriba in Bongoland, called Moody, belonged, like the one before it, to the possessions of Agahd; and the thirteen or fourteen miles that led us there brought us over a tract of perpetual marshes, the flat steppes that divided them being traversed by five khors that we found perfectly dry. The names of these khors were reported to me as the Mingangah, the Bolongoh, the Boddoo wee, the Doggolomah, and the Koddahirara, of which, if the testimony of my Bongo bearers is to be trusted, the two former take their course northwards to the Ghetty, and the three latter make their way southwards to the Wow.

In Moody I took a day's rest, as I had done in Ngulfala. I required it very much, as I had taken a violent cold, and felt altogether weak and out of sorts. Throughout the time we halted there was a strong north wind blowing, very keen and chilly.

Feeling somewhat better towards evening, I took a short ramble amongst the homesteads of the place. It was here that I came across the grave of the departed Bongo chief Yanga, with its monumental erection, of which I have



A Bongo concert.

already \* given an illustration. The Bongo here seemed to show a remarkable originality in their contrivances. In their huts I was continually finding some furniture or implements which in other parts of the country had long become obsolete. The variety of their musical instruments, as I have described them in the chapter devoted to their manners and

\* *Vide* vol. i., Chap. VII.

customs, is very great, and to exemplify the use of them, I may here introduce a sketch which represents four young men whom I saw in Moody, and who had met together to while away the evening by performing quartets.

The controller at Moody was in possession of a couple of caracal-lynxes, which he had caught when they were quite young, and which he was training, intending to send them when full-grown to Khartoom. One of the Bongo men was employed in attending to them, and in order to keep them supplied with food he was obliged to spend the greater portion of his time in catching rats. He used to bring them home, tied up in dozens, from the banks of the neighbouring river-course. These rats were of a reddish-brown colour, with white bellies, and were called "luny" by the Bongo, except that they are smaller in size, they are very like what we know as "Norway rats." They are never found except in the proximity of water, and appear to be indistinguishable from those which infest the huts and granaries in every respect but in colour. Whether the Norway rats in their dispersion have ever reached as far as these remote districts is a question that I cannot answer, as the investigation of the specimens I brought with me has not yet been completed.

Two leagues to the south-east of Moody lies a subsidiary Seriba of Kurshook Ali's, named Moddu-Mahah; and three leagues farther on in the same direction is the chief Seriba of Hassaballa, known amongst the Bongo as Gellow. This is situated on the hither side of the Wow, and at no great distance from it. The narrow strip of land between the Wow and the Dyoor contains at least half a dozen smaller Seribas, which lie along the route to the Bellanda, and which belong partly to Kurshook Ali and partly to Hassaballa.

The little Seriba Moody, together with all its huts, was overshadowed by a single fig-tree, of such enormous growth that it was quite a magnificent example of the development which that tree may attain. It belonged to the species



named the *Ficus lutea*, the mbehry of the Bongo. It was not that the height of the stem of this giant of Moody was very excessive; the remarkable growth displayed itself rather in the prodigious thickness and spreading habits of the powerful arms, every one of which was so massive that it might stand a comparison with the stoutest of our pines and firs. The peculiar bark only appears on parts of the stem; its colour is light grey, and, like that of the plane, it is scored with diagonal lines. All the boughs, right up to the highest, are furnished with external pendant roots, that hang in the air like a huge beard; they encompass the trunk of the tree with a regular network, like rope and string. But it should be observed of this species that its principal branches altogether fail in throwing out those perpendicular roots, which, falling straight downwards, find their way into the earth and give such a remarkable appearance to trees like those venerable sycamores of Egypt, which stand as though they made the pillared corridor of a stately coliseum.\*

A singular story was associated with this noble tree at Moody, and I found the entire population of the Seriba still under the influence of the astonishment and alarm that had only recently been excited. It appeared that one of the great branches, having become worm-eaten and decayed, had fallen to the ground, and as it fell would inevitably have utterly smashed in a contiguous hut if it had tumbled in any other direction than it did. This fall of the huge bough was attributed by the Nubians to the direct agency of an "evil eye," which it was alleged had been directed against the tree by a soldier who had happened to be passing through

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\* A sycamore of this description is to be seen on the island of Rodah in Cairo, in the garden of the Duke of Dumont, where the formation of pillars (promoted by hanging pitchers of water on the branches) consists of two perfectly concentric circles that girdle the whole stem. This sycamore is one of the most remarkable natural curiosities of Egypt, and is well worth a visit.

the place the day before my arrival. Just as usual the people had been collected in front of their huts under shade of the tree, when the man in question, pointing significantly to the bough, said, "That bough up there is quite rotten; it would be a bad business if it were to come tumbling down upon your heads." No sooner said than done. The words were hardly out of the fellow's mouth before there was a prodigious cracking and creaking, and down came the huge branch with a crash to the ground. There lay the fragments. I heard the testimony from the very lips of eye-witnesses, and what could I say?

It took us two days more to accomplish our return journey to Wow. The chief Seriba of Agahd's company lay to the north-east of Moody, and, allowing for a slight deviation from the direct route, was about thirty-five miles distant. The country was clothed with light bushwood, but in no part did it exhibit anything like the same richness of foliage as the western lands that we had left behind. We had to pass over two low-lying marsh-districts, Katyirr and Dumburre, where, hidden amongst the tall, half-withered grass, we found several cavities filled by springs of water. At Dumburre we came across traces of a deserted settlement, which, according to the statements of the Bongo of my party, were the remains of the very earliest Seriba that had been established in the land. Our night was spent upon the borders of a marshy stream called the Moll, and was very uncomfortable on account of a heavy north-east gale which blew from ten o'clock.

The dogs that were with me were kept in a constant state of excitement by the perpetual rushing that went on in the bushwood, and it was impossible to restrain them from rushing off into the darkness, and carrying on a hunting game on their own account. All through the night they kept running in and out of the camp, very often returning bespattered with blood. A farther indication of the abund-

ance of wild animals that existed in the neighbourhood was afforded by the continual howling of hyænas, which, in a manner that was quite unusual, kept us disturbed all through the night.

For our supper that evening we had had a couple of fine reed-rats measuring just twenty-one inches from their snouts to the root of the tail. Before leaving Dumburre I had had a small steppe-burning of my own. By the help of my bearers, who were set to the work of beating the bush, I had quite an interesting hunt, the produce of which had been two zebra-ichneumons and the two far-el-boos (reed-rats), which had been carried with us in triumph to the camp.

Beyond the Moll we entered upon a hilly region, the ground being much broken by scattered shrubs. On both sides of the pathway lines of red rocky hills emerged in the distance, varied occasionally by flats and rounded projections of the ever-abundant gneiss. The next watercourse to which we came was the Dabohlo, a marshy spot, but now nearly dry, upon which we could discern the traces of a large number of buffaloes. Here, also, we had a very prolific *battue* of guinea-fowl; for the early morning hours had tempted them to collect by hundreds around the little puddles which were left standing every here and there within the limits of the marsh.

Far as the eye could reach there was nothing to be seen but a gently-sloping steppe, entirely void of trees, which it took the bearers 3000 paces to get over; but this accomplished, we reached a depression in the same marsh-lands (now, however, perfectly dry) that were relieved in various places by groups of *Terminaliæ*. Beyond this the ground began to take a considerable ascent, the valley upon the far east being bounded by a range of hills that ran from south-east to north-west; and the rise continued through the four remaining miles that brought us to the Seriba.

Thus, after forty-nine days' absence, and numbering 876,000 paces in the interval, I again returned to the quarters of my good friend Khalil. While I had been away he had, for my special accommodation, most considerately erected some new and pretty huts, in which I was very pleased to spend the remainder of my sojourn.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

Katherine II's villages. Goods bartered by slave-traders. Agents of slave-traders. Baseness of Fakis. Horrible scene. Enthusiasm of slave-dealers. Hospitality shown to slave-dealers. Three classes of Gellahbas. Intercourse with Mofio. Price of slaves. Relative value of races. Private slaves of the Nubians. Voluntary slaves. Slave-women. The murhaga. Agricultural slave-labour. Population of the district. Five sources of the slave trade. Repressive measures of the Government. Slave-raids of Mehemet Ali. Slow progress of humanity. Accomplishment of half the work. Egypt's mission. No co-operation from Islamism. Regeneration of the East. Depopulation of Africa. Indignation of the traveller. Means for suppressing the slave trade. Commissioners of slaves. Chinese immigration. Foundation and protection of great States.

PROBABLY the overland slave-trade along the roads of Kordofan had never been so flourishing as in the winter of 1870-71, when I found myself at its very fountain-head. Already, in the previous summer, had Sir Samuel Baker, with praiseworthy energy, commenced scouring the waters of the Upper Nile, and by capturing all slave-vessels and abolishing a large "chasua" belonging to the Mudir of Fashoda, had left no doubt as to the earnestness of his purpose; but whether it was that his peremptory measures had driven the Gellahbas of Kordofan to a common centre, or whether the reported scarcity of cotton-stuffs in the Seribas had raised their hopes of doing some business, or whether, as perhaps was most likely, the introduction of Egyptian troops into the Bahr-el-Ghazal district opened a fresh and attractive avenue to their avarice—one thing is certain that neither Baker nor the Government (the Viceroy being free from blame in the matter) accomplished anything like a practical







supervision over the local authorities in Kordofan. Satisfied with having, to the eyes of the world at large, made a clean sweep of the waters of the Nile, Sir Samuel and his supporters did not perceive, or could not remedy, what was going on on either side of the great river-highway. To anyone who should now enter the country under the impression that the slave-trade on the Upper Nile was for ever abolished, and should subsequently learn by contrast the true condition of the lands, a scene would be presented that might well remind him of the painted villages that were exhibited to Katherine II. on her tour through Southern Russia.

The sheikh Seebehr complained bitterly of the great rush of Gellahbas to his establishment, and told me that his corn was so nearly exhausted that his land was threatened with famine. From his own mouth I learnt that during the winter two large caravans had come through Shekka, and had brought into the country the enormous quantity of 2000 of these petty adventurers; by the middle of January the number was still larger, and at the beginning of February was swollen again by 600 or 700 more.

All these traders break their journeys across the steppes of the Baggara by making a lengthened stay at Shekka, for the purpose of purchasing oxen both for riding and for carrying burdens; here also it is their practice to lay in a stock of butter\* for bartering in the Seribas, where it is in great demand. The goods that they bring into the Seriba districts are principally calico, "trumba," a coarse material woven in Sennaar, and English cotton of two sorts, "amerikani and damoor;" they also make a market of a number of firearms, mostly ordinary double-barrelled guns, of Belgian manufacture, worth from ten to twenty dollars apiece; in addition to these they frequently carry on a brisk trade in

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\* The Baggara butter is of an excellent quality. It is packed in wicker baskets, which are made impervious to damp by being smeared inside with the pulp of the balanites.

all kinds of knick-knacks—pipes, looking-glasses, Turkish slippers, red fezzes, and carpets.

Every Gellahba, according to his means, takes into his service a number of the Baggara, to whom he entrusts the training and management of his cattle. Camels invariably succumb to the climate in a very short time, and are consequently but rarely used as a means of transport. All the traders ride asses, and it may safely be asserted that they pass the greater part of their lives on the backs of these animals; in fact, a petty pedlar of the Soudan without his donkey would be a sight almost as remarkable as a Samoyede without his reindeer. Besides its rider the donkey will carry not much less than ten pieces of cotton; if it survives the journey it is exchanged in the Seribas for a slave, or perhaps for two; its load of goods will bring in three more, and thus, under favourable circumstances, a speculative vagrant, who has started with nothing beyond his donkey and five pounds' worth of goods, will find himself in possession of at least four slaves, which may be disposed of in Khartoom for 250 dollars (50*l.*) The return journey is always made on foot, and the unfortunate slaves have to carry all the articles necessary for travelling.

But quite apart from these pettifogging traders, whose innate propensity for trafficking in human beings can only be compared to the ineradicable love of usury that characterises the itinerant Polish Jews, there are numbers of more important investors, who, protected by a large retinue of armed slaves and accompanied by long trains of loaded oxen and asses, carry on a business which brings many hundreds of their fellow-creatures into the market. These more wholesale dealers have their partners or agents permanently settled in regular establishments in the large Seribas. More frequently than not these agents are priests, or Fakis as they are called, though strictly the term Faki belongs only to those whose profession it is to explain the Scriptures; it is,

however, an indisputable fact that the slave-trade is included amongst the secondary occupations of this class, and, as matter of fact, they are all more or less soiled with the defilements of this scandalous business. In the larger towns, and especially in Khartoom, there is every opportunity for observing their doings, and things often come to light which, except they were actually witnessed, would seem perfectly incredible. In finding scope for their commercial propensities they practice the most heterogeneous trades: the poorer Fakis act as brokers, retail-dealers, amulet-writers, quacks, schoolmasters, and match-makers; whilst the richer and more educated class are directors of schools and managers of inns, where they place paid subordinates to carry on their business. The doctrines of the Prophet are taught in their schools, whilst the merissa-shops are dedicated in a large degree to the worship of Venus. But, in spite of everything, these people are held in the greatest veneration, and their reputation for piety not unfrequently survives the generation in which they live; they are buried in the public places for prayer, the place of interment being marked by small white banners as hallowed ground. A few words will suffice to exhibit these holy men in their true colours.

With the Suras of the Koran in one hand and their operating-knife\* in the other, they rove from Seriba to Seriba all over the country, leading what might be termed in the most rigid sense a life of perpetual prayer; every other word that they utter is either an invocation of Allah or a direct appeal to Mohammed-el-Rasool. But the wide difference between faith and practice is exemplified in the unrighteous dealings of these Fakis; never did I see slaves so mercilessly treated as by these fanatics, and yet they would confer upon the poor souls, whom they had purchased

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\* The Fakis who come from Darfoor are probably the only people in the world who still practise the abominable business of emasculating boys, and eunuchs are rapidly becoming more rare.



like stolen goods, for a mere bagatelle, the most religious of names, such as "Allagabo" (*i. e.* given by God). The following incident will show that with their horrible blasphemy they do not hesitate to combine such cruelty as the commonest scavenger would shrink from using to a dying dog.

In one of their convoys were some poor, miserable Mittooslaves, almost too emaciated to bear the heavy yoke (the sheyba) that was fastened to their necks. Going, as I was wont, to my kitchen garden, I had constantly to pass the huts in which they were kept. One morning, hearing an unusual outcry, I paused to inquire what was the matter. A scene, such as my pen can only indignantly depict, met my gaze. A dying man had been dragged from the hut, and was being belaboured by the cruelest of lashes to prove whether life was yet extinct. The long white stripes on the withered skin testified to the agonies that the poor wretch was enduring, and the vociferations I had heard were the shouts of his persecutors, who were yelling out their oaths and imprecations. "The cursed dog, he is not dead yet! the heathen rascal won't die!" Then, as though resolved to accumulate cruelty upon cruelty, the Faki's slave-boys not only began to break out into revolting jeers, but actually played at football with the writhing body of the still gasping victim; truly it seemed to be with justice that La Fontaine had recorded: "*Cet âge est sans pitié.*" The horrible contortions of the sufferer's countenance, even if they failed to excite commiseration, were sufficient to melt the hardest of hearts; but so far from this, the unfeeling reprobates were loud in their asseverations that the poor wretch was only shamming, and intended to sneak off unobserved. His pitiable appearance, however, gainsaid their words, and he was finally dragged off into the woods, where a few weeks afterwards I found his skull, which I deposited with those of many others of his fellow-sufferers in the Museum in Berlin.

Such is the history of the skull marked No. 36 in my collection, and such are the deeds perpetrated in the very face of death by Mohammedan priests, who consider themselves the very pillars of their faith. And yet our missionaries, perhaps the most guileless men in the world, start by putting themselves on equal terms with these Mussulmen, and endeavour to make headway against their faith, when it is really a simple case of morality that is at issue. The history of Islamism has ever been a history of crime, and to Christian morality alone do we owe all the social good that we enjoy.

It must not, however, be supposed that the minor retail trade in slaves is uniformly lucrative. The smaller Gellahbas are exposed to numberless mischances; if their ox or ass should die upon the journey, they must at once dispose of their other property at any price; then, again, they are liable to suffer from a lack of corn during their journey across the wilderness; and, what is perhaps the sorest disaster that can befall them, their slaves so frequently run away, that their profits are dispersed before they are realised. Their powers of endurance are truly wonderful. I repeatedly asked them what induced them to leave their homes, to change their mode of living, and to suffer the greatest hardships in a strange land, all for the sake of pursuing an occupation that only in the rarest cases would keep them from absolute want. "We want 'groosh'" (piastres), they would reply; "so why should we live at home?" And when I further urged that they had far better lead respectable lives, and either grow corn or breed cattle, they answered, "No, that wouldn't answer our purpose; when we are at home, we are exhausted by the demands of the Government, and corn doesn't bring us in any money." Not that the Government is really so hard upon the people as they assert; the fact is that they are incorrigibly lazy, and have so great a dislike to work of any sort that they

do not care to be able to pay their taxes, which do not much exceed those that are usually demanded in Egypt proper. To expect that these slave-traders should renounce of their own accord the business which suits them so completely, and for which they will endure any amount of hardship, would be almost as unreasonable as to expect Esquimaux to grow melons.

All trade is undeniably in a very stagnant condition in the Egyptian Soudan; the rich man gives nothing away, but lives like a dog, and has no desire beyond that of privately amassing wealth; of domestic comfort, or luxury even on the limited Oriental scale, he has not the faintest conception. There is consequently no demand for labour, no circulation of money in wages, and it is manifestly impossible for trade to flourish as long as the rich man consumes nothing; and equally impossible for the poor man to thrive while the rich man keeps his retinue of slaves, who do all he wants without requiring payment. Thus slavery itself ever reproduces slavery.

One material alleviation to the position of the Gellahbas is the open hospitality they meet with in all the Seribas. Besides the mercenaries of the various ivory companies—the controllers, clerks, agents, storekeepers, and other officials—they find numbers of their compatriots and brethren in the faith who have taken up their abode in these lands, and who subsist free of expense on what is gained by the sweat of the negroes; mere idle drones, as it were, living on the produce of the workers. The rabble thus collected consists partly of escaped convicts and partly of refugees or outlaws who are evading their proper punishment, and if they could be swept from off the face of the land, there would then be food enough for half a score of regiments, should the Egyptian Government determine to station them in the country.

Just in the same way as in the Egyptian Soudan, the actual cost of travelling in these lands is next to nothing;

every new comer to a Seriba is treated to *kissere* and *melah*, and his slaves and donkey are provided with corn enough to keep them from starvation. Wherever they go the Gellahbas may stay as long as they please, and accordingly they wander all over the district from the west to the east, as far as the Rohl and the Dyemit, and only just before the commencement of the rainy season they re-assemble at their common place of rendezvous in Seebehr's Seriba, where they re-organise their caravans, and make their final preparations for starting for Kordofan.

The Gellahbas who, either on their own account or as representatives of others, carry on the slave-trade in this district may be divided into three classes:—

1. The petty dealers, who, with only a single ass or bullock, come in January and return in March or April.
2. The agents or partners of the great slave merchants in Darfoor and Kordofan, who have settled in the Seribas, nearly always in the capacity of *Fakis*.
3. The colonised slave-dealers, who live on their own property in the *Dehms* of the west.

The last of these form the only class who ever penetrate beyond the bounds of the Seriba district into the negro-countries. They nearly all direct their course from the *Dehms* in *Dar Ferteet* to the territories of *Mofio*, the great *Niam-niam* king of the west, and are accompanied by considerable bands of armed men, whom they recruit for this purpose from the best of their slaves. Contrary to the policy of the *Khartoom* ivory-merchants, the Gellahbas have by degrees supplied King *Mofio* with such a number of fire-arms that he is now said to have at his command a force of 300 fully-equipped warriors, a formidable fighting-force with which he seriously threatens any expedition of the *Khartoomers* that may enter his dominions. His store of slaves appears absolutely inexhaustible; year after year his territories go on yielding thousands upon thousands,

which he obtains either from the slave tribes\* that he has subjected or by raids organised against the surrounding nations.

As regards the price paid for slaves, I can only report what I personally witnessed in the Seribas. Copper and calico are used as the principal mediums of exchange. Calico is very fluctuating in its value, which is always first reduced to its equivalent in copper. In 1871 thirty rottoli of copper † in Dehm Nduggo and twenty-five rottoli in the Bongo and Dyoor districts were taken for young slaves of both sexes of the class called "sittahsi" (literally, six spans high), meaning children of eight or ten years of age; thus making the average price in this country, according to the value of copper in Khartoom, to be about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  Maria Theresa dollars (1*l.* 10*s.*); particularly pretty women-slaves, called "nadeef," *i. e.* clean or pure, fetch nearly double that price, and are very rarely procured for exportation, because they are in great demand amongst the numerous settlers in the country. Strong adult women, who are ugly, are rather cheaper than the young girls, whilst old women are worth next to nothing, and can be bought for a mere bagatelle. Full-grown men are rarely purchased as slaves, being troublesome to control and difficult of transport. Slaves in the East are usually in demand as *objets de luxe*, and consequently lead an idle life, and are not valued according to their capabilities for labour.

In consequence of the glut of wares in the market during the winter of 1871, the quoted value of slaves rose to almost double that of the previous year, and very high prices were paid in cotton stuffs. As much as four or six pieces of the

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\* These belong to the tribes of the Sehre, the Nduggoo, the Fakkerey, the Baddoh, and the Tabboh, &c.

† A rottoli is equal to 15 oz. 13 drs. avoirdupois. Thirty rottoli is here a somewhat imaginary weight, being not worth more than eighteen Egyptian rottoli.



ordinary sort (damoor) were paid for the "sittahsi," each piece measuring twenty-four yards in length, and worth two Maria Theresa dollars in Khartoom. Next to white cotton materials firearms are a very favourite means of payment, and bring in a far larger proportional profit. For an ordinary double-barrelled gun of French or Belgian manufacture, a slave-dealer can purchase two or three sittahsi, and if the weapon has gilt facings he can sometimes obtain as many as five for it.

The price of slaves in Khartoom at that time might be reckoned to be at least six times their original cost; of course it will be understood that the value would be regulated to a great extent by the more or less severe measures taken by the local government for the suppression of the trade; but at the time of my departure from Khartoom, at a period when the market was tolerably unrestrained, no slave could be obtained for less than forty Maria Theresa dollars, and that was the lowest price given for elderly women only fit for household service.

The slaves brought from the Bahr-el-Ghazal districts vary in value according to their nationality. The Bongo are the most prized, as they are easily taught and are docile and faithful, and are, besides, good-looking and industrious. True Niam-niam, especially young girls, are, however, much dearer than the best Bongo slaves, but they are so extremely rare as hardly to admit of having a price quoted. The Mittoo are of little value, being ugly, lean, and incapable of enduring fatigue or even of undertaking any regular work. No amount of good living or kind treatment can overcome the love of freedom of the Babuckur; they take every opportunity of effecting an escape, and can only be secured by fetters and by the yoke;\* the same may also be said of the Loobah and Abaka. The demand for slaves in the Seribas

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\* The portrait on the following page is that of a Babuckur slave bound by a leather rope. Her piteous expression of countenance shows her distress at her condition.

through which I travelled would alone suffice to support a very flourishing trade. Numerically the Mohammedan settlers bear a high ratio to the native population, and in some of the western territories, as amongst the Kredy, Golo and Sehre, they are actually considerably in excess of the total number of natives, who only consist of bearers and



Babuckur slave.

agricultural labourers. Taken one with another every Nubian possesses about three slaves, and thus it may easily be conceived that the computation is not too high that places the total number of private slaves in the country at between 50,000 and 60,000. These private slaves are quite distinct from those that are kept in store and used as merchandise; they may be divided into four categories:—

1. Boys from seven to ten years of age, who are employed to carry guns and ammunition: every Nubian soldier pos-

esses at least one of these juvenile armour-bearers. When they get older they are included in my next category.

2. The second class includes the greater part of the full-grown natives in the Seribas. They are termed "Farookh," "Narakeek," or "Bazingir," and, being provided with guns, form a kind of Nizzam, whose duty it is to accompany the natives in all their expeditions, whether for war or for trading purposes. These black soldiers constitute nearly half the fighting force in all the Seribas, and play a prominent part in time of war. It is the duty of the Farookh to scour the negro villages in search of corn, to assemble the bearers, and to keep under coercion any that are refractory in the wilderness. In every action the hardest work is put upon their shoulders, and they have not only to sustain the chief brunt of any actual conflict with the savages, but to provide for the safe custody of all prisoners. If the controllers of the Seribas had a sufficient number of these Farookh, they might well dispense altogether with their Nubian soldiers, except for one reason, to which I have already referred, viz. the constant danger of their running away, a risk that makes them practically less reliable than the Nubians, who never think of such a thing, and even if they did, would only join another company. The Farookh have wives, children, and land in the Seribas, and some of the elder amongst them have even slave boys of their own to carry their guns. Their ranks are largely increased after every Niam-niam expedition, as numbers of young natives will often voluntarily attach themselves to the Nubians, and, highly delighted at getting a cotton shirt and gun of their own, will gladly surrender themselves to slavery, attracted moreover by the hope of finding better food in the Seribas than their own native wildernesses can produce. The mere offer of these simple inducements in any part of the Niam-niam lands would be sufficient to gather a whole host of followers and vassals, and during our journey I myself

received proposals to join our band from young people in all parts of the country. I mention this circumstance just to illustrate my opinion of how easily the Egyptian Government might, without using any compulsion, enlist here as many soldiers as it required. I am persuaded that, without any difficulty, whole regiments of Nizzam troops might be raised from amongst the Niam-niam in the course of comparatively a very few days.

3. The third class of private slaves is formed of the women who are kept in the houses. Every soldier has one of these slaves, and sometimes more, in which case one is advanced to the position of favourite, whilst the rest are employed in the ordinary routine of preparing meal, or in the tedious process of baking kissere. These women are passed like dollars from hand to hand, a proceeding which is a prolific source of the rapid spread of those loathsome disorders by which the lands within the jurisdiction of the Seribas have been infested ever since their subjugation by the Khartoomers. In accordance with the universal rule in the Mohammedan Soudan, the children of a slave are reared as legitimate, and the mother receives the title of wife. The daily conversation of the Nubian mercenaries is a continual proof that their thoughts are always running on their slaves both male and female. If a quarrel arises amongst a group of people, one is certain to be correct in surmising that some slave or other is being reclaimed or the payment due for her is being demanded; or if there is a sudden uproar, the burden of the cry is sure to be, "A slave has run away!" "Kummarah olloroh," shout the Bongo, and "Ollomollo, ollomollo," resounds from every side. Many and many a time have I been roused from my slumbers in the early morning by such cries as these, and it is one of the occupations of the Seriba people and their negroes to hunt down and recapture these runaway women. Hunger often obliges the fugitives to take refuge in a strange Seriba; here they are looked upon

as lucky windfalls, and are either seized by force or are quietly disposed of to the itinerant Gellahbas; and if the rightful owner subsequently appears to claim his property, a violent squabble will inevitably be the result. These slaves are thus the subject of one incessant wrangling; and if a slave absent herself only temporarily without the consent of her master, she will at once excite his jealousy, displeasure, and mistrust.

The single slave of the poorer soldiers is a regular drudge, or maid-of-all work: she has to bring water from the well in great pitchers, which she carries on her head; she does all the washing, if there is anything to wash; she grinds the corn upon the murhaga, makes the dough, roasts the kissere on the doka, and finally prepares the melah, a horrible greasy concoction of water, sesame-oil or pounded sesame, bamia-pods, and corchorus leaves, beautifully seasoned with cayenne pepper and alkali. Not only has she to do the sweeping of the whole house, but she has to get wood from the wilderness, and, when on a journey, to supply the want of any other bearer by carrying all the lumber of her lord and master. In the larger households, however, of the more important people, such as controllers or agents, where slaves are numerous, each woman has her own allotted task, and a large number of boys are employed, who follow their master on his travels, each carrying a single weapon, either a gun, a pistol, or a sword. From all this some little idea may be gained of the unwieldy crowd that must necessarily be attached to every march undertaken by the Nubian mercenaries. To a force of 200 soldiers on our Niam-niam expedition there were as many as 300 women and boys; a party which, as well as immoderately increasing the length of the procession, by the clatter of their cooking utensils and their everlasting wrangling (scenes of which I have already given some illustration), kept up a perpetual turmoil which at times threatened a hopeless confusion.



The rude and primitive manner of grinding corn employed throughout the Mohammedan Soudan contributes more than may at first sight seem credible to perpetuate the immense demand for female slave labour. The very laborious process is performed by pounding the grain on a large stone, called murhaga, by means of a smaller stone held in the hand; it is the only method of grinding corn known to the majority of African nations, and is so slow that by the hardest day's work a woman is able to prepare only a sufficient quantity of



Slave at work.

meal for five or six men.\* A mill worked by oxen has been erected by the Government in Khartoom, not only for the use of the troops, but also to enable private individuals to have their corn ground at a moderate price; but in spite of this provision the durra-corn is still pounded on the murhaga

\* The accompanying illustration represents one of the daily scenes in my travelling life, and may serve to give an idea how slavery degrades a woman almost to a level with the brutes. A newly-captured slave, with the heavy yoke of the sheyba fastened to her neck, has been sentenced to work at the murhaga, whilst a boy, who has been placed as a spy to keep a constant watch upon her conduct, holds up the yoke in order that it should not interfere with the freedom of her movements.

in all the houses; not a single resident takes advantage of the improved facility that is offered. Until this lavish waste of human strength is suppressed, either by the introduction of mechanical handmills or by putting a tax upon the murhaga, no hope is to be entertained of any diminution in the demand for female slaves. This is but one instance, yet it may suffice to show how gradually and consistently one must set to work ultimately to gain the suppression of slavery in the Soudan: nowhere can old institutions be declared to be abolished, until new institutions have been provided to take their place.

4. In my fourth and last category I would include all slaves of both sexes who are employed exclusively in husbandry. Only the men in more important situations, such as the controllers of the Seribas, the clerks, the dragomen (generally natives who have been brought up like Arabs in Khartoom), the Fakis, and the colonised Gellahbas actually cultivate the soil and possess cattle; the poorer people being content with a little occasional gardening and the possession of a few goats and fowls. Old women, who are too weak for anything else, are employed to weed the fields, and at harvest time the Farookh are called to their assistance. Statute labour as applied to agriculture is nowhere demanded of the natives, although it would really act less disadvantageously on the condition of the population than the arbitrary system that allows any controller of a Seriba to seize the children from the native villages and dispose of them to the Gellahbas, a proceeding that is generally carried out as a punishment for offences like dishonesty, treachery, or attempts to abscond.

The remote position of the Seribas places the controllers far beyond any authority, and makes them quite independent of the jurisdiction of the chiefs of the trading-firms, who are most of them settled in Khartoom without much care for either their own advantage or for that of the coun-

try; it thus becomes necessary to appoint trustworthy people to the post, and consequently the head-controllers are in many cases slaves who have been reared in their master's house. A controller has every opportunity if he pleases of coming to an arrangement with the soldiers and other officials, and in concert with them of acting very much to his chief's disadvantage; or he might sell the negroes on his territories to the Gellahbas, turn the proceeds into copper, and retire as a rich man to Darfoor, already a place of refuge for many delinquents from the Egyptian Soudan.

The sub-controllers and agents in the subsidiary Seribas are, on the other hand, far less trustworthy; their position is often held only for a temporary period, and consequently their interests are not so firmly bound up with those of their chiefs as those of his former slaves. Then, too, the smaller Seribas are often so far apart that the Vokeel can transact all their business without any supervision from the head controller; all this is well known to the itinerant slave-dealers, who have a special preference for visiting these minor settlements, because they are aware that they can there buy up numbers of boys and girls, disregardful of the fact that, as future bearers and agricultural labourers, the children are vassals belonging to the soil, and form part and parcel of the property of the head of the firm.

After thus considering slave-labour in its separate branches, and gaining some idea of the immense and wasteful expenditure of human energy that goes on in the Seribas of the Khartoomers, we may turn our attention to the numerical proportion of the foreign settlers (with whom must be included their private slaves) to the actual aboriginal population. The following table is founded upon a careful calculation; the results are given in round numbers, as fuller details would demand more space than could be afforded here.

*Proportions of the POPULATION in the District of the KHARTOOMERS' SERIBAS on the Bahr-el-Ghazal.*

## CONSUMERS.

Nubian soldiers, recruited in Khartoom and consisting of natives of Dongola, Sheygieh, Sennaar, Kordofan, various Bedouins, &c. ..	5,000
Black slave troops (Farookh) * .. .. .	5,000
Fellow-boarders with the Nubian idlers from the Soudan, living here in order to procure corn cheaply and without any trouble ..	1,000
Gellahbas settled in Dar Fertet, and agents in the Seribas, Fakis, &c. .. .. .	2,000
Itinerant Gellahbas, who enter the country in the winter .. ..	2,000
Private slaves belonging to the colonised Mohammedan population ..	40,000
TOTAL ..	<u>55,000</u>

## PRODUCERS.

Bougo .. .. .	100,000
Mittoo (including Loobah, Madi, &c.) .. .. .	30,000
Dyoor .. .. .	10,000
Golo .. .. .	6,000
Sehre .. .. .	4,000
Kredy .. .. .	20,000
Small tribes of natives belonging to the immediate environs of the Seribas, such as the Dembo, Bimberry, Manga, &c. .. ..	20,000
TOTAL ..	<u>190,000</u>

In the next place let us turn our attention to those slaves who are regarded as actual merchandise, and who are dragged into bondage from the Upper Nile lands solely for purposes of profit. In order to demonstrate how important at the present time is the part taken by the district of the Gazelle in the entire African slave-trade, I will take a brief survey of the sources which all the year round supply the endless succession of the dealers with fresh stores of living wares,

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\* I should point out that the total number of the soldiers maintained in the Bahr-el-Ghazal district by the twelve great mercantile firms in Khartoom amounts to 11,000. I have here given the lowest computation.

and which, branching off into three great highways to the north, yield up their very life-blood to gratify the insatiable and luxurious demands of Egypt, Arabia, Persia, and Asiatic Turkey. Previous travellers have estimated the total of the annual traffic in this immense region to be 25,000, but I shall show by a very summary reckoning that this is far too low a computation. The three currents for the slave-trade in north-east Africa (a region corresponding to what may be geographically termed the "Nile district") are the natural highways of the Nile and the Red Sea, and the much frequented caravan roads that, traversing the deserts at no great distance to the west of the Nile, find their outlet either in Siout or near Cairo. As a proof of how little these roads even now are known, I may mention that when, in the summer of 1871, a caravan with 2000 slaves arrived direct from Wadai, it caused quite a sensation in the neighbourhood of the pyramids of Gizeh; it was supposed to have traversed a geographical *terra incognita*, and it divided and dispersed itself as mysteriously as it came. It is far more difficult to place the deserts under inspection than the ocean, and this is especially the case in the vicinity of a river, where a caravan can easily supply itself with water for many days. The borders of a desert are like the coasts of an unnavigable ocean. The plan, however, of establishing a system of control along the borders of the Nile Valley, corresponding to the coastguard cruisers on our seas, has never yet been tried.

The following are the territories that form the sources of the slave-trade in North-Eastern Africa (Nile district):—

1. The Galla countries to the south of Abyssinia, between latitude  $3^{\circ}$  and  $8^{\circ}$  N. The outlets from them are: (a) *viâ* Shoa to Zeyla; (b) *viâ* Godyam through Abyssinia to Matamma and Suakin, or to Massowa and smaller unguarded coast towns; (c) *viâ* Fazogl to Sennaar, where the largest market is not in, but above Khartoom, in a place called



Mussalemia; the merchandise brought by this route is abundant and valuable. According to the reports of the Abyssinian collectors of customs the number of slaves in Matamma (Gallabat) amounted in 1865 alone to 18,000.

2. The second source is found amongst the Berta negroes above Fazogl, and amongst the Dinka above Sennaar, between the White and Blue Niles. These are likewise carried to Mussalemia and Khartoom, but in no considerable numbers.

3. The Agow, in the heart of Abyssinia between Tigre and Amhara, together with the people on the north-west frontier of the Abyssinian highland, are also exposed to plunder of the persons of their sons, on account of their disorganised condition and their position on the wild border-land. The channel for their dispersion is across the Red Sea to Djidda.

4. The upper district of the White Nile, inclusive of the Albert and Victoria Lakes, though the slave-trade really begins at latitude  $5^{\circ}$  N. The expedition of Sir Samuel Baker has stopped this source. The annual produce in the most favourable years did not exceed 1000.

5. The supply of slaves in the upper district of the Bahr-el-Ghazal is chiefly derived from the Bongo, Mittoo, and Babuckur. For the last twelve years the Gazelle has never been navigated by more than twenty boats. On their return journeys the soldiers of the ivory merchants carry their own slaves with them as payment and perquisites; but it is very rare for a boat to carry more than twenty or thirty of these slaves, so that the annual transport of slaves to Khartoom by this route never exceeded from 400 to 600. This fact is perfectly authentic, and thus it may be seen that even before Sir Samuel Baker's expedition put a stop to it altogether, the slave-trade that was carried on down the river was quite insignificant compared to the overland traffic. For years there has been a public prohibition against bringing slaves down the White Nile into Khartoom, and ever and again stronger repressive measures have been introduced,

which, however, have only had the effect of raising the land traffic to a premium; but as a general rule the Egyptian officials connive at the use of this comparatively unimportant channel of the trade, and pocket a quiet little revenue for themselves by demanding a sum varying from two to five dollars a head as hush-money. This expense, together with the continual risk of the property being confiscated in Khartoom, has always prevented the river trade from reaching a very flourishing condition; at all events, the Egyptian Government has hitherto had the best of it. Consuls from England, France, Germany, and Austria have been, and are still in residence at Khartoom, and a Copt was also temporarily appointed as consular agent for America; it was therefore an easy matter for the Egyptian officials to feign in the eyes of the world at large a wonderful amount of zeal and energy in the suppression of the slave-trade, especially as every confiscation threw the whole cargo into their hands for the slaves were never sent back into their native lands, but the full-grown men were turned into soldiers, whilst the young girls and boys were divided at discretion amongst the troops of the garrison. In these transactions a formidable bond was always entered into by the receiver, from whom the former owner was at liberty at any time to re-purchase the slave.

6. As we have already seen, the great source of the slave-trade is to be found in the negro-countries to the south of Darfoor, which are included under the name of Dar Ferteet. The natives, who for the last forty years have been exposed to the rapacity of the slave-dealers, and have been annually exported to the number of from 12,000 to 15,000 souls, belong to the Kredy tribes; but the great bulk of the slaves come from the western Niam-niam territories, where the powerful King Mofio (whose residence is about under latitude  $7^{\circ}$  N. and longitude  $24^{\circ}$  E.) carries off on his own account, from the neighbouring nations who are not Niam-niam, large

numbers of slaves, and sells them to the Gellahbas, by whom they are conveyed by the overland routes already mentioned across Kordofan to Aboo Harras in the Egyptian dominions. There are other routes that lead direct to Darfoor, whence caravans start twice a year to Siout. Kordofan is in many ways in direct communication with the most important markets of the slave trade; the following being the most frequented caravan roads: (*a*) from Aboo Harras to Khartoom *viâ* El-Obeïd; (*b*) from Aboo Harras eastwards to Mussalemia through Sennaar; (*c*) from Aboo Harras across the Begudah steppes to Dongola *viâ* El-Safy; (*d*) from Aboo Harras to Berber along the Nile, for the purpose either of crossing the great Nubian Desert or of keeping farther to the east across the Red Sea. All these routes are associated to me by the many reminiscences of slave-transport which I recall as having myself witnessed there.

7. A final and by no means unimportant source of the slave-trade is found in the mountain lands south of Kordofan. The general term for the negroes of these parts is Nooba,\* a people that are much in demand on account of their beauty and intelligence. It was in these Nooba mountains that, after his bloody conquest of Kordofan, Mehemet Ali, the great reformer and usurper in Egypt, allowed kidnapping to be a legitimate source for the State revenue. From the slaves thus obtained he formed black regiments, by means of which he was to subdue the insalubrious Soudan, and paid his officers and subordinates with a portion of the plunder.†

As the Egyptian Government itself was the first to teach its subjects to kidnap slaves, it behoves it now in these more humane times to make amends for all its past delinquencies,

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\* This word must not be confounded with Nubian, a word which has come down from antiquity, and which, like the term Egypt, did not originally apply to the inhabitants of the Nile Valley.

† If this account of slave capture in the time of Mehemet Ali should appear incredible, I would refer the reader to a book that contains the narrative of an eye-witness: Pallme, 'Travels in Kordofan,' London, 1844.

and I most cordially acknowledge that the present ruler, with all the resources at his command, is striving most honourably to accomplish the task.

Slavery, with its inseparable adjunct the slave-trade, is almost as old as the world in which we dwell; there is not a page of history that does not bear its traces, and not a climate nor a people in which it has not made good its hold. An impartial survey of the past cannot but convince us that religious institutions have effected little or nothing in the cause of humanity, which has been left to take its own course of development. At the present day slavery is considered incompatible with Christian doctrine, but the history of ancient Christianity shows a different picture.\* The oldest Fathers of the Church seem to have had no conception of there being anything wrong in possessing or selling slaves; for although Christianity inculcated the precepts of brotherly love, it also set forth the duty of slaves as slaves, rendering obedience and submission to those who were their masters. But the light that rose over Galilee emanated from a spirit so sublime that it has taken eighteen centuries to accomplish its course of penetrating the world, and only now is beginning to reveal itself in its true purity.

But nowhere in the world has slavery been so thoroughly engrafted and so widely disseminated as in Africa; the earliest mariners who circumnavigated its coasts found a system of kidnapping everywhere established on a firm basis, and extending in its business relations far into the interior of the continent; the idea arose how advantageously the owners of land in the distant East might cull the costly products of their soil by the hands of slaves; and the kernel of a single plant, the coffee berry, became the means of uniting the remotest lands, and had the effect of throwing

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\* Under the most Christian-minded Popes of the eighth century, slave-markets and the slave-trade flourished unhindered, not only in Italy, but in Rome itself.

a large portion of the human race into subjection to their fellows, whilst Christian nations became the patrons and the propagators of the disgraceful traffic. It has therefore happened in the natural course of things that philanthropists have first applied their energies to the slave-trade in the West; the East has still to tarry for an enlightenment which is destined in the fulness of time to gladden a future chapter of history.

Half the task is now accomplished. Two great nations have speeded on the work: England in theory, North America in practice. For scores of years the ships of Great Britain cruised about the shores of Africa for the purpose of stopping the export of slaves; but although the outlay was great, the result was small; nevertheless a path was broken for the realisation of the ideas of Wilberforce, for whose noble endeavours the best sympathies of all nations had so long and ardently been enlisted. Finally the civil war broke out in North America, and great and glorious as had been the services rendered by England in the cause of humanity, honour greater and more glorious still was won in long and bloody strife by her brethren beyond the ocean. Now the black man has free footing in all parts of the Western Continent; and in the Eastern, the seed of liberty, sown scarcely ten years back, is already bearing its first fruit on African soil; the export of slaves from the coasts of Guinea, which in the middle of the last century amounted to 100,000 annually, exists no longer, and the shores are enlivened by populous towns, the inhabitants of which are engaged in peaceful traffic; all the work of a few years, and all owing to the happy termination of the American civil war.\*

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\* I would refer especially to the district of Lagos, where the advance has been rapid to a degree hitherto unheard of in the history of the continent. In 1871 the entire commerce of the British possessions on the West Coast amounted to 2,556,000*l.*, and may at the present time be estimated at 3,000,000*l.* sterling.



Our age is now anxiously awaiting the fulfilment of the great work, but the other half of the task has still to be accomplished; the dark cloud of barbarism still lowers over the innermost regions of Africa, and Egypt, the oldest and richest land of the historical world, has its mission to perform. A great revolution has already begun, and although at present it affects only the surface, there is scarcely any reason to doubt that progress, alike spiritual and humane, will ultimately claim the victory. But the task is gigantic, and no one can be more sensible of this than the traveller who has lingered at any of the sources of the slave-trade. One point there is in which all are unanimous—that from Islamism no help can be expected, and that with Islamism no compact can be made. The second Sura of the Koran begins with the prescription: “To open the way of God, slay all those who would slay you; but be not yourselves the first to commence hostilities, for God loves not sinners; slay them wherever you meet them; drive them away from the spot from which they would drive you, for temptation is worse than a death-blow.” Islamism, the child of the deserts, has everywhere spread desolation, and wherever it has penetrated, deserts have arisen bleak and bare as the rocks of Nubia and Arabia, and under its influence every nation from Morocco to the Isles of Sunda has congealed into a homogeneous mass; inexorably it brings all to one level, remorselessly obliterating all traces of nationality or race.

That Islamism is capable of progress is merely a supposition that has been hatched up from books, and has no foundation; there is likewise nothing to prove that it has fallen to decay; its condition appears to be that of one perpetual childhood. Its votaries are like the germs of vegetation that slumber in the sands of desert valleys; a drop of rain, a mere nothing, may call them to a transitory life; the plants bear their flowers, produce their fruit, then die away, and all becomes once more buried in a long deep sleep.

Another question then arises as to whether Mohammedans might be roused to civilisation by adopting Christianity. If a European residing in Egypt were asked whether it would be possible for the people to adopt European customs without forsaking Mohammedanism, he would at once answer in the negative ; and if he were further pressed with the inquiry whether there was any prospect of the religion ever changing, his reply would again be that there is not the remotest hope of such an issue. And this opinion would seem to be borne out by what has been experienced in Algiers, where the gentle administration of the French Government, with its "Bureaux Arabes," has always prevented the colony from becoming rich and populated by Europeans. The European costume is the only one of our civilised institutions that has hitherto been adopted in Egypt, but underneath this external garb there still lurks the old feeling of hatred for the Franks, a feeling which is perceptible only to those who penetrate into their domestic circles.

But whether Egyptian officials wear an Oriental dress or a European dress, their ideas about slavery and the slave-trade are stereotyped ; it is the fashion in good society to have a houseful of slaves, and their presence is considered indispensable. Now if a man were to keep two, or even three, properly paid servants, and see that they did their duty with order and punctuality, he would be making some advance in civilisation : but now, what is the impression on entering the homes of the rich Egyptians ? There, comfortably settled on the divan, sits the master of the house, silent and contemplative, a man of peace and quietness ; nothing seems to disturb his composure ; all the nobler passions are quite alien to his nature ; hunting and fishing, riding and boating, are quite unknown to him, and he never puts himself to the trouble of taking a walk. If he is thirsty, he has only to raise his hand and say, "Ya, wolloed" (here, fellow !), and in an instant his slave hands him a glass of water ; or

if he wants to smoke or to go to sleep, it is "Ya, wolloed," just the same: everything is done for him, and he does not stir an inch to help himself. Now supposing some fine day all these "wolloeds" were to take themselves off, what would befall these fine gentlemen on their divans, and where would they turn for all the trifling comforts of their daily life? Their sluggish nature would be invaded by a feeling of disquietude that they had never felt before; they must either die or become new creatures. This description, which applies to every rank of life, is only a reflection of the lethargic apathy that prevails in every Oriental State; an inference necessarily follows that *of equal importance with the abolition of slavery is the dawn of a new life in the East*. If this regeneration is impossible, then slavery is a permanent necessity.

The kind treatment of slaves, and the comfortable lot that they enjoy, in comparison to the hardships of their rude, rough homes, are pleas that have often been urged in extenuation of slavery in the East. It is certainly true that the contrast in slave-labour is very great, and whilst Europeans have looked upon their slaves as little better than useful domestic animals, the Oriental slave is a mere object of luxury. Only a small proportion of the slaves that are brought annually from the interior are employed in field-labour in Egypt, though rather more frequently in the Nubian provinces. The European, although he deprived the negro of his ordinary rights, still compelled him to become a useful member of society; the Oriental allows him a portion of his rights, but trains him up to general incapacity; the occupations of filling pipes, handing water, boiling coffee, and holding a salver, are not employments worthy of a man. Slavery in the East, in spite of its good living and fine clothes, is not at the best a very enviable position; but such as it is, it is purchased by these poor creatures at a heavy price; they have to submit to a long and painful

journey across the deserts; they have to suffer the extremest hunger and fatigue, and to be exposed to the contagion of disorders, such as their fresh blood, pure with the simplicity of a life of nature, is especially liable to imbibe, and altogether they are doomed to be subject to hardships so severe as to decimate their ranks.

But the worst feature in the case is the depopulation of Africa. I have myself seen whole tracts of country in Dar Ferteet turned into barren, uninhabited wildernesses, simply because all the young girls have been carried out of the country. Turks and Arabs will urge that they are only drawing off useless blood, that if these people are allowed to increase and multiply, they will only turn round and kill one another. But the truth is far otherwise. The time has come when the vast continent of Africa can no longer be dispensed with; it must take its share in the commerce of the world, and this cannot be effected until slavery is abolished. Sooner than the natives should be exterminated, I would see all Turks, Arabs, or whatever else these apathetic nations may be called, vanish from the face of the earth; they are only occupying the place of their betters; and negroes, if they only work, are their betters.

I travelled in the Nile countries from 1863 to 1866, and again from 1868 to 1871; on my first journey I visited all the great markets of the slave-trade, Cairo, Siout, Djiddah, Suakin, Matamma in Gallabat, Khartoom, and Berber; in my second I reached its sources in the lands to the south of Darfoor and Kordofan. Throughout my wanderings I was ever puzzling out schemes for setting bounds to this inhuman traffic. The traveller in these lands is kept in one perpetual state of irritation by what he sees; on every road he meets long troops of slaves; on the sea and round the coasts he comes in contact with Arab boats crammed full of the same miserable creatures.

Whilst exploring the coasts of Nubia and Egypt in 1864

and 1865, I spent eight months on the Red Sea. The slave-trade there was then in a flourishing condition, but the accounts \* of what I saw attracted no more attention than the complaints made by my predecessors. The consuls in Djiddah and other ports on the Red Sea were afraid to take any measures that were not sanctioned by European policy, and consequently Arabs were allowed to carry on that which amongst Spaniards and Portuguese would have been considered piracy. Not a man-of-war was to be seen cruising on the water, and yet one single gunboat would have sufficed to keep a check upon the intercourse between the opposite coasts, and to make the slave-trade an impossibility. A change has now been effected, and all the Powers that are interested in the matter have done their utmost to remedy the evil; but even on the Red Sea there still remains much to be done, and even now there are far too many secret landing-places and loopholes which escape the vigilance of the authorities.

Many a time, under the consciousness that alone I was utterly powerless as a vindicator of humanity, I have restrained myself from the temptation to rescue slaves with my own hands. Once, between Khartoom and Berber, a lot of slaves was being brought from Kordofan, and I cut in two the leather thongs that bound them to their sheyba; but an ugly squabble was all that resulted from my interference. At other times I have vehemently remonstrated with the slave-dealers, when I have been a witness of any cruelty in their treatment of their property; but all to no purpose. It may therefore be imagined that a traveller in his fury and disgust will be led to devise all manner of schemes for eradicating the system, and although, when weighed in a calmer frame of mind, many of his plans will seem chime-

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\* Detailed accounts appear in the 'Zeitschrift für Allgem. Erdkunde, vol. xviii. 1866.



rical and even impracticable, yet it may be that their very apparent impracticability at least proves the gravity of the situation, and shows the inadequacy of the present means of suppression. But such as my schemes were, I will venture to indicate them here. They contain no shifts, no compromise, no expectation of better times, no dependence on Egyptian officials, not even a hope of assistance from the Viceroy, who, however good his intentions may be, has not the power to do much. A talent for organisation is not sufficient to rouse whole nations from their apathy; no small hero can do the work, but it would require a powerful reformer like Peter the Great, and a people like the Russians, or the Japanese of the present day, who would easily imbibe the ideas of the West. I beg therefore to submit the following as *suggestions towards the suppression of the slave-trade*; they embody at least the ideas of one who has been a witness of what transpires at the sources of the slave-trade in Central Africa.

1. To place the country under an Administration formed on the European principle, and to appoint Europeans to fill the highest posts; the French have officials who understand the language, and the English have their experience to show them how Mohammedans may be pressed into the service of a well-regulated State. This plan would please the fellaheen of Egypt, whilst the rest of the people would be indifferent to it, as long as they were not severely taxed.\*

2. To appoint commissioners of slaves, who should travel about the provinces, and keep watch upon all the highways of the slave-trade; they should be invested with the fullest authority, and rank above the local officials. They should have the power of arresting and imprisoning every slave-

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\* The long possession of almost sovereign rights enjoyed by European Consuls in the East has given the people a confidence in their sense of justice, and would prevent them from fearing any encroachment on their religious opinions.

dealer, of sequestrating his property, and of equipping expeditions for the purpose of conveying the rescued slaves back to their own homes. As these expeditions would have to traverse hostile territory, they must necessarily be armed, and the commissioners of course should be perfectly incorruptible, inasmuch as they would be constantly exposed to the temptation of accepting bribes.

3. To place the negro-countries that suffer most from the slave-trade under the protection of European Governments, by founding States expressly for their defence. The splitting up of African nations into small States has ever been the main hindrance to the introduction of civilisation amongst them; it is only large Powers, and such as are competent to organise themselves, that offer a likely foundation for the establishment of any thriving commerce or traffic.

4. To introduce a Chinese immigration into the Mohammedan countries of Africa, of which the population gives little attention to agriculture. The four millions of Egyptians who are available for agricultural occupations are insufficient to do justice to the richness of the soil; but Chinese labourers would thrive well in Nubia, and would certainly, in the course of a few years, make the culture of the land highly remunerative.

Under existing circumstances there can be no amelioration in the condition of the Egyptian States until the slave-trade is not only held in check at its sources, but also stopped at its outlets. This can only be effected by the rich people resigning their slaves and replacing them by paid servants; the change would doubtless involve many in a large expense, for they would be still obliged to maintain their former slaves, the greater part of whom would refuse to leave their masters; still a great step would be gained if a law could be passed to give all slaves the right of demanding payment for their services; such a measure

would have the effect of putting a limit to the number of slaves that are kept, and by forcing the masters to demand more work from them, would have a tendency to rouse the Orientals from their humdrum ways. As long as a man retains his slaves as such, there is nothing to prevent him from making fresh purchases, so that any other measure than that which I have described would be so much trouble lost.

That there is any assistance to be expected, under the circumstances, from the Khedive is quite a delusion. It is commonly supposed that the ruler of Egypt is a despot of the purest water; this, however, is a great mistake. In many respects the Egyptian Government is extremely mild; criminals and officials who have been remiss in their duty are rarely severely punished, and the only delinquency that it will not overlook is the refusal to pay taxes; and even here matters would not be so bad, if it were not that the disorderly administration involves the officials in making encroaching demands. The Viceroy has little power over the higher authorities, who manage to sneak behind the Crescent of Stamboul; he is no more than a Viceroy; the high-sounding Persian title of Khedive which he assumes is in reality no more than a title. He can only issue his orders, and then all boats that come down the White Nile are confiscated; and in Khartoom especially, where it is good policy to make a stir in the eyes of the European residents, all kinds of repressive measures are proposed; in displaying their zeal in the cause, the authorities often commit acts of the greatest injustice, and Mohammedans sometimes find their wives and families sequestered as slaves, merely because they happen to be black. Such proceedings afford a fine opportunity for the subordinate officials to make a harvest out of the injured people by extorting ransom-money, and by making other extortionate demands. I can myself bear witness that several of my

servants were deprived of their wives and children and put into chains, and I had to write to the Minister, and accompany the people to Cairo myself, before I could get justice done to them and their rights restored; and all this was only for the purpose of throwing dust in my eyes and inducing me to report upon the wonderful energy displayed by the local government in Khartoom.

But, meantime, the caravans find their way just the same as ever through Darfoor and Kordofan to Dongola and Siout, and still they are brought from Abyssinia through Gallabat to the Red Sea, and no one sees them but the traveller. In Kordofan, where there is a resident Egyptian Governor, the trade is truly enormous, and there is now as well the slave-trade from Darfoor. Siout, the common termination of the roads, is the only place where this trade can be cut off, and that could only be effected by the heaviest sacrifices for the commerce of Egypt. The conquest of Darfoor by the Egyptians would consequently be a great step in advance; but I most emphatically protest against Ismail Pasha being allowed to send Turkish troops into the heathen negro-countries, for it may literally be said that "where they have been, no grass will grow." The kindest thing that the enlightened ruler of Egypt can do for these lands is to leave them alone; they are not productive, and if they were, they are too far from the navigable rivers to make any of their products that are in less demand than ivory of any mercantile value.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Tidings of war. Two months' hunting. Yolo antelopes. Reed-rats. Habits of the *Aulacodus*. River oysters. Soliman's arrival. Advancing season. Execution of a rebel. Return to Ghattas's Seriba. Disgusting population. Allagabo. Alarm of fire. Strange evolutions of hartebeests. Nubian cattle raids. Traitors among the natives. Remains of Shol's huts. Lepers and slaves. Ambiguous slave-trading. Down the Gazelle. The *Baleniceps* again. Dying hippopotamus. Invocation of saints. Disturbance at night. False alarm. Taken in tow. The Mudir's camp. Crowded boats. Confiscation of slaves. Surprise in Fashoda. Slave caravans on the bank. Arrival in Khartoom. Telegram to Berlin. Seizure of my servants. Remonstrance with the Pasha. Mortality in the fever season. Tikkitikki's death. *Θάλαττα, θάλαττα.*

THE first boats had reached the Meshera early in the year, and the number of soldiers in the Seriba kept continually increasing by the arrival of fresh contingents from Khartoom. The firms of Ghattas and Kurshook Ali seemed both to have a sharp look-out for business, for one of them had collected forty and the other seventy-eight fresh idlers as recruits. Their arrival gave new life to the Seribas; friends and relatives who had not met for years exchanged greetings and recounted mutual experiences, whilst news from Khartoom was eagerly circulated and as eagerly received.

For myself there was a collection of little notes sent by a friend at Khartoom that could not do otherwise than excite my keenest interest. They were six months old, but not the less on that account did they stimulate my curiosity: in them I read, in sentences that were almost as crisp and brief as telegrams, of the startling events of the previous autumn. Naturally I turned to my letters from home, hoping to gather



further particulars of the strange occurrences that had thus been partially unfolded, but I found that these letters had all been written a year ago, whilst peace still prevailed throughout Europe, and that they only referred to ordinary and commonplace topics. So incomplete, therefore, were the intimations that I received of all that had transpired since November 1869, that the events all remained an enigma to me which I could very imperfectly comprehend. It is true that I had come across slave-traders in the west who had recently arrived overland from Khartoom, and who had plenty to tell of what was going on in the Soudan, but not a syllable fell from their lips about the great war of the Franks, for who besides myself was interested in the least in the fall of the Emperor of the French, or who cared either to hear or to relate the victories of the Germans? Although when I visited Khartoom many months had elapsed since the fall of Magdala, yet near as it was to the seat of war, the intelligence of the Abyssinian campaign even then had scarcely reached the town.

Meagre as were the details of my latest intelligence, it may be imagined that they roused me to the greatest excitement, so that it was with the most feverish expectation that I awaited the arrival of a son of Kurshook Ali, who would bring definite tidings as to whether there was peace or war in Europe.

As it had been my intention to return home immediately after my Niam-niam tour, I had given no orders in the previous year for any quantity of fresh stores to be sent me from Khartoom; consequently the boats that now arrived had brought me nothing beyond the few articles that I knew would be necessary on my passage down the river; these inconsiderable things, meanwhile, had been left at the Meshera; but after the hardships of the last few months, I felt that the possession of the merest trifles would be an incalculable boon to me. Pending the arrival of this little

addition to my present means, I had still to endure some weeks of poverty ; then for a short period after receiving it I enjoyed a brief season of comparative comfort until once more, when the scanty stock was exhausted, I relapsed for the rest of my sojourn in the country into a state of destitution more distressing than ever.

The two months that I spent in Khalil's huts were passed almost entirely in hunting. Not only was the abundance of game about the valley of the Dyoor a great inducement to sport, but such was my nervous condition that continual exertion was the only thing that made my life endurable. I found walking to be the best antidote to depression and the most effectual remedy for headache and languor ; and it was only during the hours that I passed in the wilderness that any of my former energy returned. Whenever I found myself within the walls of my hut I was conscious of nothing but weariness and dejection and was only fit for lounging on my bed ; it was but rarely that my love of sketching from nature in any degree diverted me or gave me its wonted amusement.

Khalil had lent me a capital gun, a weapon specially suited for antelope-shooting, that did me good service. During the months of March and April I brought down as many as five-and-twenty head of the larger kinds of game, including amongst them specimens of nearly all the different species of antelopes that the fauna of the country could boast. The number of caama and leucotis antelopes appeared little short of inexhaustible. The flesh of the leucotis served as a substitute for beef and mutton, both of which at that time were exceedingly scarce in all the Seribas. I had no butter or lard of any description, but the meat was very palatable when simply boiled in water. The lean goats' meat, with its soapy flavour, was the only alternative, and that after awhile became utterly loathsome to me. For a long time I had had no vegetables at my meals, and indeed for months I had

lived without any vegetable diet at all with the exception of some sorghum cakes.

During this period I met with an antelope (*A. arundinacea*) of a species that I had never seen before. The Bongo called it "yolo," and although it appeared to me to differ from the leucotis merely by having horns of about one-third the length, the natives insisted that it was quite distinct; upon closer investigation I could not help acknowledging that the people were right, and that several marks of distinction did really exist; in the first place, the head of the "yolo" is all of one colour; in the next, it is deficient in the black stripe along the hind leg which is always seen in the leucotis; and the lower joints in the hind legs are never black, but of the same brown colour as the rest of the body. Again, the two animals are distinguished by their habit, for while the "yolos" are found only in pairs frequenting the bush forests in the vicinity of the rivers, the leucotis are observed in groups (sometimes even in large herds of several dozen), and haunt, not the forests, but the open valleys through which the rivers flow. It was highly interesting to notice the keen accuracy with which the instinct of the natives had taught them to discriminate between species of which the general resemblances were so predominating; the droppings of the animals as they move from place to place are quite sufficient to enable these observers of nature to distinguish one kind of antelope from another.

I was informed that the end of February was the best time of the year for hunting reed-rats (*Aulacodus Swinderianus*). Accordingly one day I arranged an excursion to the Dyoor, and engaging a number of natives who were used to the sport to bring their lances and to beat up the game, I set off under their guidance to the spot that they considered the most promising. At that season of the year, when all the grass was so thoroughly dry, it did not seem as though it could be a matter of much difficulty to kill almost unlimited

numbers of these reed-rats, if only they could be got at ; and so in fact it proved : in the course of the day we killed no less than ten, but nearly all of them were so damaged by the merciless use of the lances or by the teeth of the dogs that they were of no use at all for any scientific purpose. The method of hunting, it must be confessed, is somewhat rough. As soon as a spot is discovered frequented by the animals, a ring of the tall grass is set alight, so that escape



Hunting reed-rats.

is rendered impossible, and every one of the poor brutes within the circle of flame is compelled to show itself. The reed-rats invariably keep in concealment until the very last moment, and when finally they make an attempt to escape they get their feet so scorched and their coats so singed that it is very difficult to secure a perfect specimen ; they are in this respect like the wild hares of the deserts, which are subject to the delusion that however close at hand their

pursuers may be, they may still be safe by remaining quiet in their hiding-places; as soon as they are obliged to quit them they get killed by stones and clubs. In many parts where the grass that had survived the steppe-burning was unusually thick, the Dyoor had only to thrust in their spears at random and they had every chance of spearing one of the reed-rats. The case is pretty much the same in the various pools full of fish left by the subsidence of the river.

The *Aulacodus* finds a habitat in all the tropical regions of the continent; it is ordinarily found in the neighbourhood of brooks and rivers, burying itself in deep holes amidst the reeds; when, however, it is in search of its food it will wander away to a considerable distance from its place of concealment, and thus allow the hunters a chance of killing it. The larger rivers are the natural channels for the wanderings of the creature, its movements in the water being assisted by its hind feet being furnished with webs; but these webs, it is to be observed, are not perfectly developed; they do not stretch across from toe to toe in straight lines, but go in curves that vary considerably in their stretch. On account of this peculiarity, Th. von Heuglin has suggested that the reed-rat found on the Gazelle River should be classified as *A. semipalmatus*, to distinguish it from the species of the Zambesi and Gambia, which is entirely wanting in the webbed foot.

A full-grown reed-rat is never less than twenty inches in length, but a third of this must be assigned to the rat-like tail, which is coated over with thin hair, nearly black on the top and light grey underneath. The snout, throat, breast, and belly are covered with hair almost as prickly as the bristles of a young hedgehog, light grey in colour; on the back and sides the colour is shaded down to a brownish hue, that is to say, the grey hairs are tipped with a lightish tan-brown. In February the half-grown animals shed their bristles and acquire an entirely new coat. The skin is about an eighth of an inch thick, but is quite soft, and may



easily be torn ; it is lined with a uniform layer of fat. The meat is excellent when roasted ; it is rich, and without being sweet and insipid like that of the rock rabbit, it is free from any unpleasant flavour ; in quality it is about equal to poultry, whilst in taste it may be described as being intermediate between veal and pork. As a cloven-footed animal, without horns and non-ruminant, the Nubians of course consider it



Far-el-boos. (*Aulacodus Swinderianus*.)

to be unclean ; but the Mohammedans of the steppes and deserts are not so scrupulous ; to the Baggara and the Foorians a roast reed-rat is as great a delicacy as a hare is to the Bishareen and Hadendoa. Amongst the natives of the Nubian towns and Nile-valley the Far-el-boos (as the reed-rat is called in Arabic) gives rise to a good deal of mutual banter, and in times of dearth they jocosely charge one another with eating reed-rats on the sly.

The food of the *Aulacodus* consists, I believe, of the

aromatic rhizomes of certain kinds of grass that grow in the depressions of the rivers; but as I only judge from the green finely-minced particles that were contained in the stomach, I am unable to speak positively on this point. The natives esteem the contents of the stomach as a special delicacy; and my dogs, that were generally dainty enough to reject rats and mice, greedily devoured all the entrails.

Tikkitikki, armed with his bow and arrows, was an eager participator in our sport. He declared that reed-rats are never found in the land of the Monbuttoo, but are perfectly well known to all the Niam-niam, who call them "remooh," or "alimooh." In common with many other Africans, the Niam-niam often adopt the practice of burying their stores of ivory (either as a protection from the disasters of war or from the chance of fire) in the damp soil of the swamps, which are the haunts of the Aulacodus; the ivory forms just the substance that meets the requirements of the animal for sharpening and grinding down its front teeth, and consequently gets gnawed in every direction.

Khalil required 300 bearers to convey his stores from the Meshera, but as these could not be collected in a day, and as the prevailing scarcity made it impossible to maintain any others beyond the soldiers that were already in the Seribas, the new-comers were turned out to pick up what they could for themselves from amongst the neighbouring Dinka until the entire troop could be got together. A good many days elapsed before the great caravan was complete; and, in the meantime, the soldiers who had already started were having continual conflicts with the Dinka, who were resolved not to part with their corn without a struggle.

On the 4th of March 200 of Ghattas's Bongo bearers arrived at the Seriba on their way to carry corn to the Turkish camp. All their loads put together would hardly

have amounted to twenty ardebs. Hopelessly stupid are the people; it roused my indignation to think how, in spite of the hard and level roads that were established during the dry seasons, they had never introduced a single vehicle of any description into the country. Thirty hand-barrows or three bullock-waggons would have amply sufficed to convey the whole of the corn, and yet they employed these 200 bearers, who, during the twenty-four days that they would be on their journey to their destination and back, would, at the very lowest computation, consume as much as forty ardebs of durra, just double the quantity they had to deliver. The extortions of the Government are thus, in the course of the year, three or four times as great as they need be; the troops may require some 600 ardebs of corn, but in procuring this, at least another 600 ardebs would be wasted, to say nothing about the reckless and lavish expenditure of time and strength which is thrown away upon the proceedings. I cannot help repeating these details, in order to show to what a senseless system of robbery these negro-countries are exposed as soon as ever they come within the grasp of Mohammedan rule.

In March the natives employ themselves in fishing. Towards the middle of the month the numerous backwaters and swamp-channels that have been left by the Dyoor are separated into independent basins by means of dams, that may be seen thrown up in all directions across the intricate ramifications of the water; when these basins have been thoroughly drained, the fish are left lying above, or just embedded in the mud and slime, and may easily be taken with the hand. All the inhabitants of the district were in some measure concerned in the fishing of the Dyoor, and it afforded me a pleasant diversion, when I was out on my hunting-excursions, to stop awhile and watch the artifices by which they contrive to entrap the fish.

At the part of the river which, being deep, was frequented

by hippopotamuses, the right-hand bank was more than fifteen feet high, and rose perpendicularly from the water; the upper section of the soil of the bank was a ferruginous clay which went down to a depth of eight feet, below which was a broad white stripe some four feet thick, resting upon the gneiss that apparently was the substratum of the entire alluvium of the river-valley. The white stripe of the soil had a chalky look, and contained fragments of quartz; it consisted of a crumbling product of felspar, such as may frequently be seen, under similar circumstances, in the hollows of other river-courses and brooks throughout the country.

In all parts of the dry sandy bed may be found the shells of the river-oyster (*Etheria Cailliaudii*), which is wanting in none of the affluents of the Upper Nile, and is known to the Niam-niam as the "mohperre." In the deeper parts of the bed of the Dyoor these oysters exist in groups, adhering firmly to blocks of swamp-ore that, having become detached from the top of the banks, have fallen into the river, and so are permanently under water. While the *Etheria* is young, the shell is almost circular, but as it increases in age, it becomes elongated and irregular, and occasionally attains the extraordinary length of eighteen inches. The flavour of this mollusk is rather sweet and mawkish, and to me particularly unpleasant.

On the 20th, my temporary abode was very considerably enlivened by the arrival of Soliman, the owner of the Seriba, the eldest son of the late Kurshook Ali. He was quite a young man, and entirely inexperienced in the management of the extensive property that he had recently inherited from his father. It is matter of notoriety that whenever an Oriental proceeds on his travels he takes a large supply of his luxuries with him; thus it happens that his valuable baggage, consisting of clothes, weapons, and harness, as well as his horses, makes it especially worth

while to waylay him and plunder him of his wealth. From this disaster Kurshook Ali had been spared during his life, but no sooner was he dead than, as I have already had occasion to mention, his successor in office appropriated all his effects and proceeded to dispose of them in the open market to the best bidders. It was on this account that the son of the deceased Sandjak had been induced to undertake this laborious journey in person, and he arrived at the Seriba with the double purpose of saving whatever residue there might be of his father's property and of exacting an account from Ahmed Aga of what already had been sold.

With much pleasure I still remember my first meeting with Soliman, and can yet recall the eager curiosity with which I turned the conversation to the position of the European Powers. As he was the chief of a great mercantile firm, and consequently associated with the more educated class of Khartoomers, I quite hoped that he would be able to give me some decisive political intelligence; but all the information that I could obtain from him was that when he left Khartoom in January, no announcement of peace had reached that town.

Old Khalil, who had never been out of the negro-countries for fifteen years, was just as ignorant of political matters as the lowest of his countrymen; not only had he to ask what was the name of the Governor-General of Khartoom, but he seemed to be quite unconscious that Egypt was in any degree an independent country. Most of the people were quite unacquainted with the name of the Khedive in power, and I heard some of them ask what the Pasha was called in Cairo; of one thing, however, they said they were perfectly sure, namely, that Abdul Aziz was the sovereign who ruled over all the believers, and that all the kings of the Franks were his vassals; it was true, they confessed, that the Emperor of Moscow, some years ago, had the audacity to pretend that he was independent; but now, thanks to the



fidelity of the great Sultan's vassals, he was very glad to eat humble-pie, just as it had happened before with Buonaparte, the "Sultan-el-Kebir."

Such was the ignorance of the Soudanese; and the few sentences that I have recorded will serve for an epitome of their political knowledge. When they heard me talking to Soliman about peace and war in the land of the Franks, they wanted to learn what sort of people the Prussians (the "Borusli") were. Soliman answered them with the greatest *naïveté*. He described Prussia as a "country with very few people," meaning to imply that it was about the smallest of the great Powers. "And have these few people," they went on to inquire, "made the great Emperor of the Franks a prisoner? Do you mean that they have taken the Emperor, whose likeness is stamped on all the gold money?" "O yes," answered Soliman; "he was a big rascal; and heaven has rewarded him according to his deserts."

It was on the 30th of March that the people arrived from the Meshera, and no one can tell how delighted I was to get the few stores that had been sent me from Khartoom. Provided as I was with a new stock of paper, I again set about my botanical work, which had so long been suspended, and renewed my investigations with redoubled ardour; it was the opening of the third spring-tide in which it had been my singular happiness to gather the tribute of Central Africa to lay upon the altar of science. The period of my return to Europe was getting near, and I was eager to make a collection of all the bulbs and tubers that I could; I was very careful to dig them up before they had thrown out any of their fresh shoots, and was very successful in procuring a large number, which I deposited in Berlin in a state of perfect vitality; amongst them were many rare plants, and particularly some specimens of the *Cycadææ* from the country of the Niam-niam. In consequence, however,

either of the defective construction of the plant-houses, or of the inexperience of the gardeners, many of these subsequently died.

The meteorological events of 1871 deviated in some degree from their normal rule. The seasons were not at all sharply defined, as they had been in the two preceding years. Throughout March there was a perpetual struggle between directly contrary winds; first the north-east wind contended violently with the south-east wind, and only desisted to commence a conflict just as furious with the south-west. About the middle of the month the days were extremely hot, and the dominant north-east wind raged with almost the intensity of a simoom, that threatened to convert the land into a desert. On two separate days there were some slight showers, but the first heavy rain was that which fell on the 31st. In April there were six slight falls, and four very heavy falls, of rain, the south-west wind being generally prevalent, although there were several days when the rude, rough Boreas still struggled vehemently for the mastery. In May there were five showery days and three that were thoroughly wet.

The reappearance, for the first time, of various plants and animals marked, as it were, the separate stages of the advancing season, and prompted me to make a sort of farmer's calendar of the different events. It was on the 16th that the wind suddenly veered to the south-east and some drops of rain fell, the first that had occurred since the passing shower on the 11th of February. The direction of the wind seemed now to be settled, and in the course of the night I heard a cricket chirping on the grass. Before many days had past the cicadas put in an appearance, and in the middle of the day the air resounded with their shrill tones, clear almost as the ring of metal. At the beginning of April the humidity of the atmosphere rapidly increased, whilst the heat remained intense, the average temperature

being not less than 81° Fahr. This unhealthy concurrence of hot atmosphere with damp had the effect of bringing out an angry eruption all over my body, causing an irritation so violent that my rest at night was completely destroyed. Heat and moisture together are never beneficial to the health, except there is a complete protection from the chance of taking cold.

The 3rd of April, three days after the first decidedly heavy rain, is noted in my register as being the first day upon which the floor of my hut was covered with those uncomfortable visitors which never wait for a welcome; I mean particularly those strange *Arachnidæ*, the Galeodes (or scorpion-spiders), with their great venomous mandibles, and the whole family of scorpions proper. My poor negroes were terribly punished by them, and from head to foot there was not a portion of their body that enjoyed immunity from their attacks. It was after a very heavy rainfall that, on the evening of the 18th, I saw the first winged white ants (sexual males) issue from the clay pyramid of their "gontoor."

Towards the middle of the month the stores of corn were so nearly exhausted that Khalil was obliged to decline showing any hospitality to the Gellahbas that passed through the Seriba. Soliman himself was compelled to quit the place, and his old Vokeel took a trip to his Bongo Seribas to gather together what additional supplies he could. For myself, I was suffering privation almost as severe as I had endured in the previous May upon the shores of the Nabambisso, on some days being unable to obtain a single handful of durra-corn; still, distressing as my condition was, I could not at once make up my mind to retrace my steps to Ghattas's head Seriba. I was quite aware that I should be better off there for provisions than anywhere else, but the disaster of the 2nd of December had left such an impression upon my mind that the very name of the place was hateful to me; and I felt that I should for my own part much prefer

to drag out four months in a starving Seriba and a barren wilderness, rather than to enjoy meat and milk at the cost of residing amidst the scenes of my disappointment and misfortune.

One day, just about this time, a former Bongo chief, who had escaped to the mountains on the southern frontier, having been captured after a long pursuit, was brought back by Kurshook Ali's people to the Seriba. He had clandestinely murdered many of the Nubians, and had instigated the natives to revolt against their conquerors. His condemnation and execution now followed forthwith. I heard nothing of the matter until it was all over, but my negroes, who had been witnesses of the whole proceeding, gave it as their opinion that the punishment was well-deserved. They described to me the mode of carrying out the sentence. The delinquent, they said, had been taken out a considerable distance into the forest, dragging after him a long sheyba that was fastened to his neck; all at once he had been felled to the ground by a tremendous blow, directed just below the knees, from one of those huge swords four feet long that have been made for centuries at Solingen near Düsseldorf, and are still manufactured for the especial use of the African Bedouins and Arabs; two more heavy blows had then cut off his arms; and last of all, the attack had been levelled at his head, which was hacked, rather than cleanly severed, from his body.

There are always to be found in this country those who are singularly dexterous in the use of the swords that I have mentioned. They use them for performing amputations in their own barbarous way. If mortification from an ulcer or any other cause seems to be setting in, so that a hand or a foot is deemed incurable, the limb is fastened to a block of wood, and with one blow of the sword the part affected is severed almost within a hair's breadth of the part that is sound. Instances far from unfrequent have been known

where the sufferers have had the fortitude to perform the operation, hazardous as it is, upon themselves. The custom is of great antiquity amongst the Arabs, and probably is not to be disassociated from the ancient Gospel precept, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee."

Reluctant as I was, I found myself compelled at last to yield to the urgent solicitations of my hungry Bongo and to set off for Ghattas's Seriba. We started on the 21st. We found the Dyoor, which had risen during the last few days, somewhat subsiding again, but the whole breadth of the bed was still covered with water, although only two and a half feet deep; in the two previous years it had not begun to rise until a fortnight later. Aboo Guroon's Seriba was just in the same miserable condition of want as the district we had left, and we found the natives eagerly engaged in collecting the bitter berries of certain kinds of the Capparideæ, of which, after soaking them repeatedly in boiling water, they manage to make a sort of pap. The berry of the *Boxia octandra* is likewise used for a similar purpose, having been first dried in the sun to remove the astringent cotyledons and then pounded in a mortar.

As we continued our journey, we could not be otherwise than surprised at the large flocks of maraboo-storks that we saw congregated amidst the burnt grass in the low steppes adjacent to the bed of the Molmul: most probably they were searching for the bodies of the snakes, lizards, and mice that had been killed in the recent conflagration.

With the 4th of May came the commencement of the general sowing of the crops; men's hearts revived, and they began to anticipate happier times.

Ghattas's granaries still contained some corn; and a small number of cattle, the residue of his once enormous herds, was yet to be seen in his farmyard. But in spite of my sense of these material comforts, the crowded Seriba was most repulsive to me: changed indeed it was in a way; but



in its essential character it had remained true to its old composition. Certain it was that the swarms of rats that had infested the huts and undermined the soil had been all but exterminated by the fire; the crowds of red-headed lizards (*Agamas*) that used to frisk up and down the old rotten palisade were no longer to be seen; the horned beetles (*Scarabæus nasicornus*) and their grubs that had once covered every dung-heap were totally annihilated; it was man alone who was unchanged, and the same revolting forms, infected with syphilis, scabs, and boils were spreading their putrid miasma around. Tottering along betwixt the crooked, tumble-down straw hedges and amidst the heaps of garbage and of refuse might still be seen the wretched fever-stricken beings, with shorn heads covered with scabs and every limb a mass of festering matter; everywhere prevailed the moaning and groaning of a lingering death; the people were not so much what they were accustomed to call themselves and each other in their curses, "dogs and the sons of dogs," they were rather sons of *dirt*, born and bred in an atmosphere of abscess and corruption.

I found my former garden ragged and barren as a wilderness; the only surviving memorials of what it had been were the tomatoes flourishing persistently upon the fertile soil, and the sunflowers that gloried in the tropical sun. Some of the sunflowers rose in great pyramids of foliage to a height of over ten feet, and with their huge disks of blossoms ever turned towards the full glare of light, presented an appearance that was very striking. In this strange world their splendour could not but irresistibly attract me, and I often sat down on the ground before them, and while gazing on their brightness recalled the fading memories of the past and conjured up anew the recollections of my distant travels, looking back upon the scenes I had passed, as a traveller looking through the back window of his carriage might take a retrospect of the country he had left behind.

In order to obtain a short reprieve from my melancholy and unpleasant surroundings and to finish up with a few days' quiet enjoyment of nature, I resolved, towards the end of May, to take a farewell trip to Geer, and so to pay a parting visit to the Bongo. I had become quite attached to this people, and had determined to take a young Bongo boy back with me to Europe. My new *protégé* was named Allagabo.\* He seemed to me to be sharper and quicker in ability than many of his race, even of those who were considerably older than himself; and I intended him accordingly to be properly educated; his family lived in Geer, and whilst I was there I received various visits from his father, uncle, and aunt, to all of whom I made what presents I could, and immortalised them in my portfolio. They no longer exercised any right over Allagabo, as he had been stolen from his home a long time before by the Dinka, and disposed of by them to the controller of the Scriba in exchange for some cattle; the boy's good fortune was quite a matter of congratulation to his relatives, as they were fully convinced he would lead a much happier life with me than he could possibly expect in his savage home. His mother, some years previously, after one of the regular cattle-exchanges, had been carried off as a slave to Khartoom; she was the only one of his relations for whom Allagabo had any yearning, and later, when he had grown accustomed to his European life and begun to confide in me, he used to tell me that the image of his mother haunted him in his dreams and hovered over him with tears in her eyes. I made many inquiries for her in Khartoom, but never succeeded in learning anything about her. For his father, Allagabo had little affection or respect. When I was making presents I had noticed that he was always urging me to hand my gifts by preference to his uncle,

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\* Allagabo is the Arabic rendering of the Greek Theodore (gift of God); by the Dinka the lad was called "Teem," i.e. "a tree," because his native name was "Lebbe," which is the Bongo word for a species of mimosa.





saying that his father did not deserve them, and upon my asking him the reason, he told me that once during the time when he was suffering from one of the diseases of childhood, his father had been utterly indifferent to his condition, but that his uncle had helped to nurse him with the greatest tenderness.

In Geer I made numerous additions to my album. Here, too, I sketched the accompanying illustration of the village life of the Bongo. The huts and granaries are built round an immense butter-tree. On the left is one of the memorial graves which I have already described,\* and on the right, a woman pounding corn in one of the native portable mortars; in the foreground are three Bongo women in attitudes in which they may frequently be observed, the sitting figure having a child suspended from her back in a leather bag; all round the village are sireh-fields, with their crops standing some twelve feet high, whilst the harp-shaped frames for drying the sesame rise up conspicuously above them.

The appearance of the first new moon after my return from my pleasant little trip was saluted with the usual non-sensical firing of guns, which threatened to cause a disaster similar to that over which I have already poured out my Jeremiad. It was the same old story; bullets were whizzing and whirring in all directions, when one of the straw roofs took fire; the flames were extinguished with much difficulty, and before any very serious damage had been done, but my powers of endurance were exhausted; I would not abide the chance of further repetition of the peril, and insisted upon preparations being at once taken in hand for sending off the boats to Khartoom.

An accidental circumstance favoured my design. Intelligence had casually reached me that Abdel Mesih, a son of

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\* *Vide* vol. i, chap. vii.



Ghattas, was making a tour amongst the eastern Seribas of the Rohl, and intended very shortly to come on to us. To me the information was very opportune, as it gave me a handle, which I did not fail to use, to induce Idrees, our controller, to hurry on his movements in my behalf. I made him understand how much worse it would be for him if Abdel Mesih should arrive before I had taken my departure; for most certainly if I had the chance I should report upon the negligence that had caused the burning-down of the Seriba, and should demand compensation for all my losses. The consequences, I warned him, would be that his master would at once remove him from his post, and that he would have to go back to his place in Khartoom a poor beggarly slave. My threats answered their purpose admirably; they put Idrees into a frightful state of alarm; he lost no time in pushing matters forward, and on the 4th of June everything was ready for the march to the Meshera.

Our party consisted of fifty soldiers and rather more than 300 bearers. We started along our former road to the north-east, through the low-lying country of the Dinka, which I had previously traversed during the month of March; but so advanced was the season now that the whole region presented quite a new aspect. Bulbous plants of every variety shed their enlivening hues over the splendid plains, which were adorned by noble trees, park-like in their groupings. There was a descent in the land, but it was scarcely perceptible. We were only aware that we were approaching the limits of the rocky soil, when, on emerging from the bush, we saw stretching far before us the first great steppe that marked the commencement of the Dinka country. Scattered at intervals over the plain were some very remarkable groves. These were not only singularly compact, but their outline was as sharply defined as if it had been drawn by compasses, each cluster seeming to form itself around some unusually tall tree that was a common

centre for the rest. The fantastic forms of the wild Phoenix and the candelabra-Euphorbia were the most conspicuous amidst these striking groups.

Our first night-camp was pitched at a deserted murah belonging to the Ayarr tribe. The deep holes that remained where wells had formerly been sunk, allowed us to make a very interesting inspection of the character of the soil; we had advanced exactly 7000 paces from the extremity of the rock, and on looking into the holes I could see that the ferruginous swamp-ore was here covered by a homogeneous layer of grey sandy soil, ten feet in thickness. These steppes are scarcely at all above the level of the Gazelle,\* and, consequently, from July to the end of the rainy season they are constantly under water; traces of the inundation were apparent in the empty shells of the water-snail (*Ampullaria*) that were scattered about, and in the pools I found some of the little tortoises (*Pelomedusa gehafie*, Rüpp.) that have their home in the Gazelle itself.

On the following day we crossed the territory of the Dwuihr; the country retained the same character of level steppe broken by clumps of trees, but in consequence of the recent showers the roads in parts had become quite marshy. There were many detached huts scattered about.

As we advanced, our attention was attracted by a herd of hartebeests sporting together scarcely 500 paces from our path, and apparently quite unconscious of the proximity of a caravan nearly half a league in length. So regular were their evolutions as almost to suggest the idea that they were being guided by some invisible hand; they ran in couples like the horses in a circus, and kept going round and round a clump of trees, whilst the others stood in groups of three

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\* The barometer gave an altitude of 1396 feet here, and about the same at two other points on our route to the Meshera, but as these were only single readings I cannot vouch for their accuracy. Readings at the Meshera taken in 1869, and repeated in 1871, gave 1452 feet as the height there.

or four intently watching them; after a time these in turn took their place, and, two at a time, ran their own circuit in the same fashion. How long these movements might have continued, I cannot say; but my dogs soon afterwards made a dash in amongst the antelopes and sent them flying in all directions. The circumstance that I have now related may appear somewhat incredible; but I can only say that I had ample time to witness it, and that I was as much surprised at it as my readers can possibly be. I can only imagine, in explanation, that it was pairing-time, and that the animals were blind to all external danger.

I remembered that I had witnessed something similar, three months previously, upon the Dyoor. A party of three of us were rambling over a plain covered with short grass, when we saw two little Hegoleh-bocks (*A. Madoqua*) chasing each other upon one side of us; they kept up that peculiar grunting that belongs to their kind; a moment after, and they were on the other side of us; in another moment they were back again; and by watching them we found that they kept making a circle round the spot on which we were standing, and, although we shouted and tried to scare them, they persisted in twice more performing their circuit about us.

Our next task was to cross a swampy brook overgrown with the Habbas-mimosa, and the Bongo bearers made a diversion in the day's proceedings by instituting a *battue* in the long steppe-grass, in which they succeeded in killing four ichneumons.

The following section of our march was through bush-thickets abundant in pools; and, to judge by the numerous traces that we noticed, it must have been a district that was much frequented by elephants.

The ever-recurring swamps seriously impeded our third morning's march, which was across the forest of the Alwady. The first villages that we reached belonged to the district of

Teng Teng; here we deviated from the road that led directly towards the Meshera, and turned eastwards through more populous parts, hoping that provisions might be foraged up with less difficulty for the large troop of bearers. The natives, according to their wont, withdrew as we approached, so that, although the region was really well cultivated and thoroughly inhabited, it was now quite deserted; and the large murah belonging to a Dinka chief named Dal Kurdyook was reduced to a condition hardly better than a wilderness, except that the well-kept soil was covered with some hundreds of the great wooden pegs that are used for tethering the cattle.

Hardly was the baggage down from off the bearers' backs before the command was issued for a cattle-raid. Off and away was every one who had arms to carry. Unless meat could be had, the bearers must starve. There was no corn left; and as to grubbing in the earth for roots, the days' journeys were far too arduous to permit any extra fatigue for such a purpose. Meat must be got.

It was a strange sensation, and sufficiently unpleasant, to find myself left alone with my few helpless servants in the deserted murah; the Dinka might fall upon us at any moment; and against their thousands what chance had we? In the course, however, of little more than an hour my suspense was at an end. The marauders had made good use of their time, and now came back in triumph with fifteen cows and 200 sheep and goats. The leader of the band had the reputation of being one of the most adroit hands at cattle-stealing that the Khartoom companies had ever had in their service, seeming to put his party, almost by instinct, upon the right track for securing their prey. His experience made him quite aware that the bulk of the herds had all been cleared far away from the murahs and despatched to the most inaccessible of the swamps of the Tondy; they had had twenty-four hours' start, and it was

useless for a caravan, with its own baggage to look after, to think of going in pursuit of them. Still, one thing was certain; although all the large herds were gone, yet there must have been cows with their calves that were left behind for the support of the households that were in hiding close in the neighbourhood; against these the plot was laid, and succeeded by a very simple stratagem. The marauders marched out a little way to the south, turned short off into the forest, and then, having arranged themselves in a semi-circle embracing the murah, proceeded in unbroken line right through the bush, driving everything before them. The result was, that within half a league of the place of encampment the whole of the reserve of Dal Kurdyook's cows, as well as other animals, fell into the hands of Ghattas's people. A portion of the sheep and goats was spared to be driven onwards with us to the Meshera, but all the rest were slain and consumed off-hand the very night on which they were captured. Such a wholesale slaughter, or such a lavish feasting, as took place in Dal Kurdyook's murah I never witnessed before or since. When we took our departure on the following morning the layer of white ashes that covered the ground was literally dyed with the blood of the victims.

On the fourth day of our march, at a spot near the residence of Kudy, we re-entered our former road. The country was alternately wood and cultivated land. It was enlivened by numerous hamlets, and altogether, although it was neither rocky nor undulated, it had a general aspect, to which the detached clumps of trees contributed, not unlike Bongoland.

Kudy was a Dinka chief, a close ally of Ghattas's marauders, and one of those characters, not uncommon in Central Africa, who have gained an inglorious notoriety for their treachery and infidelity to their own countrymen. How he managed to maintain his position in the place after his confederates had taken their departure, I cannot imagine, as his authority did not in the least extend beyond the imme-



diate vicinity. The incidental meeting of our party with their ally of course put it into their heads to set out on another cattle-raid, and Kudy was appointed to the command. He had only to lead them out for a couple of leagues to the south-west of his residence to a region where Ghattas some years ago maintained a Seriba, and the object was effectually accomplished. Quite early in the day they came back with an immense number of sheep and goats, and nearly every bearer had a kid upon his shoulders. The quantity of corn, however, was very insignificant. Everything was done in the quietest way possible; there was not the least excitement. The people were so accustomed to these raids that the execution of them was quite a matter of routine.

On the following morning we reached the murah of Take, another Dinka chief, and while we made a halt our people effected yet another raid. Just as on the previous day, the produce in the way of corn was next to nothing, but large numbers both of goats and sheep were driven in, the whole of which were killed and cooked forthwith for the benefit of the soldiers and bearers.

In spite of the good understanding that existed between the Khartoomers and both these chieftains, every village throughout the district was utterly deserted, and with the exception of the families of Take and Kudy themselves we did not see a single human being.

The march of the sixth day led us through the territory of the Rek, a district remarkable for its wide sandflats. All along I had noticed that the pasture-lands were cropped so closely by the cattle that it might almost be fancied that they had been mown with a scythe; but although the grass was so short, it had, in consequence of the recent rains, a bright green look that was very refreshing.

Next day at noon we encamped beneath the sycamore by the wells of Lao. By some misunderstanding my people

had come to the conclusion that we were to halt here for the night. Accordingly they unpacked all my things, and I was about settling myself in an empty hut when the tidings were told that the caravan had already renewed its march. By the time that I was again prepared to proceed the whole train was out of sight, so that under the guidance of a man who knew the proper route we had to follow in the rear as rapidly as we could. While we were on our way a violent storm came up from the west, and, bursting over our heads, soon put the whole locality under water. To add to our discomfort, our road happened to be through a wood and it was growing dusk, so that we had to go on stumbling into the continuous puddles, that were often very deep. In getting through these places I was at a great disadvantage; my heavy boots prevented me from keeping up with the light ambling trot of the natives, as I had constantly to stop and pull on first one and then the other, as they were half-dragged off my feet by the tenacious clay. Except a genuine African traveller, no one could imagine what ponderous lumps of mud stuck to the soles.

As we toiled along through the miry forest in the thick of the drenching rain, we were startled by hearing a volley of firearms in the direction of the caravan. Pitiably as had been our plight before, we felt it was worse than ever now; we did not doubt but that the party in advance had been attacked in retribution by the ill-treated Dinka. With throbbing hearts we reached the outskirts of the wood, every moment expecting to catch sight of the enemy who would cut us off at once from the main procession; but seeing the fires burning hospitably in the neighbouring villages we were soon reassured, and on rejoining our people found that the sounds that had alarmed us had been caused simply by the soldiers discharging their guns so that they might not become foul through the charges getting damp.

Early next day, the eighth of our march, long before

reaching the spot, we saw the tall columns of smoke rising from the murah of our old friend Kurdyook, the husband of the murdered Shol, and on approaching had the satisfaction of surveying the scene, which had long been strange to us, of a well-filled cattle-park. The very lowing of the herds was a welcome sound. Kurdyook himself soon appeared, and expatiated in very bitter terms upon the lamentable fate of his wife. We passed close to the spot where her huts had stood, and where our caravan had been so hospitably entertained on taking leave of her. The great *Kigelia* alone remained undisturbed in its glory; the residence was a heap of ashes, and there was nothing else to tell of poor old Shol's former splendour than the strips and shreds of a great torn spirit-flask.

Very little rain had fallen here. The river had scarcely risen at all; we were able consequently to get down with dry feet to the edge of the Meshera, where, about noon, we were conveyed across to the little island upon which the Khartoomers pitched their camp. Between Ghattas's Seriba and this spot I had counted 216,000 paces, showing that the entire distance we had walked was about eighty miles.

Except that the island which served for the landing-place had been completely cleared of trees the general appearance of the Meshera during the last two and a half years had undergone little alteration; the growth of the papyrus had diminished rather than otherwise, and the ambatch was still altogether wanting.

Not only attacks from the neighbouring tribes of the Afok and Alwady, but continuous outbreaks of cattle-plague had decimated the herds left by Shol, and there had been a great scarcity of corn. Boats, however, laden with durra had arrived from Khartoom, and, as a considerable portion of it was consigned to me, I availed myself of the opportunity to start a flourishing business with the natives, who in exchange for the corn brought me milk

enough to make into butter. The milk was conveyed to me in separate bottle-gourds, and in order that I might get five pounds of butter I had to dole out in small quantities as much corn as would fill a wine-cask.

Before setting sail I had a good deal of squabbling with Ghattas's people. I did not want to be brought into the close quarters which the limits of a boat's deck necessitated with either lepers or slaves, and protested that if I did not shoot the first that came on board, I would at least take good care to report them to the Government. My endeavours in this way to secure my comfort were very far from being so successful as I wished. I had previously written to Kurshook Ali to engage the same boat which had brought him into the country to carry me back to Khartoom, making it an express stipulation that the boat should not convey any slaves. We had come to terms, and everything was apparently quite settled, when it turned out that the boat was not going to return until late in the year. To defer my departure so long was out of the question. Slaves or no slaves, it was all-important to me to be at Khartoom as soon as possible; and when I found that Ghattas's people were this year going to ship only a limited number, I came to the resolution that, under the circumstances, I would take my chance with them. I knew that Sir Samuel Baker was on the Upper Nile, and did not doubt that his presence would have the effect of making the Government take the most strenuous measures against any import of slaves. I represented as strongly as I could to the people the danger they were incurring by having such property on board, but I might just as well have remonstrated with the winds. In spite of all I could say twenty-seven slaves were shipped, not avowedly as slaves, but so nearly in that capacity as at once to bring them under suspicion of being destined for the market. Undesirable as their company was, still I was thankful to be free from contact with any lepers; making

the best, therefore, of an unpleasant business, I went on board on the afternoon of the 26th of June.

I confess that I felt a little tongue-tied, through not being myself entirely free from blame. I could not deny that I had three slaves of my own: these were Tikkitikki the Pygmy, Allagabo the Bongo, and Amber the Niam-niam. The other Niam-niam youth I left behind in the Seriba, after having gained him his freedom and seen him duly admitted into the Mohammedan sect by circumcision, the only means by which his social position could be secured. With regard to these lads I profess I had not the least squeamishness in carrying them away with me, and I felt none of that misgiving which other travellers have expressed when they have been tempted to a like proceeding. I felt that I could not leave them to a doubtful fate after they had been serving me faithfully for nothing, and attending me for two whole years in the desert; and I had no kind of idea that I was reducing myself to the level of a slave-dealer by determining to retain them and to introduce them to European civilisation, for if I left them behind I was quite aware that they would be immediately consigned to the ordinary lot of slavery. Rather was I disposed to compare myself with those noble-minded Orientals who, although they look upon the regular slave-dealer's calling as the vilest and most degrading of all professions, yet do not consider the possession of slaves to be in itself illegitimate or inconsistent with the purest morality.

It may be well to transcribe here my original diary of the passage down the Gazelle. It will not, I believe, be without interest, if it be only to show that the length of the river has hitherto been much exaggerated on all previous maps:—

“*June 26th.*—Sailed for about four hours, until evening, along the Kyt. A light breeze. The Kyt channel from eight to ten feet deep; its bottom one great mass of valisneria.



“27th.—Dull, cloudy day. A contrary N.N.E. wind has prevented us from getting beyond the mouth of the Dyoor.

“28th.—Slow progress, on account of the continued N.N.E. wind. In the afternoon a more favourable breeze. The boat's crew affirm that after passing the mouth of the Dyoor the water becomes whiter. I cannot say that I can perceive any difference; the water is clear and colourless, and free from any flavour of the swamps, as if it had been distilled. Elephants to be seen marching about the shore, considerably in front of the demarcation line made by the trees. To the west of the channel are columns of smoke from some adjacent *murah*. *Acacia*-forests (none of the trees more than forty feet high) line both sides of the land subject to inundation; nowhere do these exceed a width of two miles. We proceed through clumps of *ambatch*, and make a wide bend to the west round an island which the sailors call *Gyerdiga*. Continued sailing at night under a good west wind.

“29th.—Quite early at a place where the river is not 500 feet across; the contracted spot enclosed by bush-forest. Soon afterwards we pass the mouth of the *Bahr-el-Arab*. There is a favourable breeze from the south-east. In the afternoon we reach the first *Nueir* villages. Some of the great *Balaniceps rex* are standing on the white ant-hills; have they been there ever since I last saw them there, two years and more ago? At evening a negro is dying from dysentery; according to custom, the poor creature is thrown overboard before life is really extinct. I fear my own feelings of satisfaction at getting home again make me somewhat callous to this horrible proceeding.

“30th.—A clouded sky, and the wind contrary. We heave-to in a backwater that is overgrown with grass for seventy-five feet from either bank: a solitary doom-palm marks the spot. Again sail on throughout the night, the breeze having once more become favourable.

*July 1st.*—At 8 o'clock A.M. pass the Nueir villages, at which we stayed for a day on our passage out. It is unsafe to land now; a Vokeel of Kurshook Ali's was murdered not long since. The district is full of bushes; white ant-hills and low acacia-hedges are frequent. A hippopotamus is leaning against a great stem upon the bank; we approach within thirty paces of the flesh-coloured brute, but it makes no attempt to get into the water. A bullet is fired, but seems to take no effect; the great beast totters about as though it needed support. All the crew assert that it is hopelessly ill, and has gone, as usual, on the land to die; no one, however, explains why it still stands upright. Large herds of Dinka cattle graze on the northern bank. Towards evening we arrive at the lake-like opening by the mouth of the Gazelle, where the water is a mile across. A tremendous gale gets up from the N.N.E.; the boat is tossed about on the muddy bottom of the river and dashed against the floating islands of grass. The mast and sail-yards creak as though they must snap in two; the boatmen shout according to their habit, but the Reis cannot join them because he is hoarse with a cold. There is an incessant invocation of the saints of the Nile: a mingled outcry of 'ya Seyet, ya Sheikh Abd-el-kader, Aboo Seyet, ya Sheikh Ahmed-el-Nil.'

*2nd.*—A good west wind carries us betimes past the mouth of the Gazelle. I am surprised to find the floating grass in almost the same condition as in the winter of 1869; the water, however, is higher now, and consequently the entrance to the main stream is easier."

From these contemporary notes it will at once be inferred that the entire length of the Gazelle was navigated by us in four and a half days of very moderate sailing. If the stream is from 136 to 140 miles long, as nearly all the existing maps have represented it, we must have sailed at a rate of about thirty miles a day; but for my part I feel sure that

this estimate of our speed must be reduced by at least one-quarter.

All the comfort of our future progress was marred by the incessant plagues of flies, and all its regularity was interrupted by the same grass-obstructions that had impeded us on our former voyage. Before we could enter the side channel known as the *Maia Signora*, we had to make our way by a narrow cut of water that rushed along like a wild brook, and forced itself through the masses of vegetation on either side of the river, which here, I should suppose, was about half a mile wide. The depth of the fairway varied from six feet to eight feet, and the boat nowhere touched the bottom. The best plan that I can devise for rendering the stream permanently navigable would be to erect dams at certain intervals, and it appears to me that the small depth of water would render the project far from difficult of accomplishment.

We spent the 3rd in sailing along the channel of the *Maia Signora*, which was 300 feet in width. Towards evening we re-entered the main-stream. At night we continued to drift along, borne gradually onward by the slow current; but, in case of being surprised by sudden gusts of strong wind, we did not hoist a sail. The open channel was about 500 feet in width, but on the northern side it was divided from the actual shore by a growth of grass that was scarcely less than 3000 feet across. The morning brought us in sight of the huts in the *Shillook* district of *Tooma*.

A horrible association will be for ever linked to my memories of that night. Dysentery is a disorder to which the negroes, on changing their mode of living, are especially liable, and an old female slave, after long suffering, was now dying in the hold below. All at once, probably attacked by a fit of epilepsy, she began to utter the most frightful shrieks and to groan with the intensest of anguish. Such sounds I had never heard before from any human being, and

I hardly know to what I may compare them, except it be to the unearthly yells of the hyænas as they prowl by night amidst the offal of the market-towns of the Soudan. Beginning with a kind of long-drawn sigh, the cries ended with the shrillest of screams, and were truly heart-rending. From my recess in the bow of the boat, that was partitioned off by a screen of matting, I could not see what was going on, and conscious that I was quite powerless to accomplish any alleviation for the sufferer, I tried to shut out the melancholy noise by wrapping myself closely round in my bed-clothes. Presently I was conscious of the sound of angry voices; then came a sudden splash in the water amidst the muttered curses upon the "marafeel" (the hyæna), and all was still. The inhuman sailors had laid hold upon the miserable creature in her death-agonies, and, without waiting for her to expire, had thrown her overboard. In their own minds they were perfectly convinced that she was a witch or hyæna-woman, whose existence would inevitably involve the boat in some dire calamity.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when we passed the mouth of the Gazelle. Nearly all next day a contrary north wind prevailed, and was so strong that we were obliged to put in upon the right-hand bank. From the spot where we lay-to I counted as many as forty villages on the opposite shore. The district was called Nelwang, and the whole of the surrounding region belonged to the once powerful Shillook chieftain Kashgar, now no longer formidable, as he had lately been reduced to subjection and his entire dominion converted into a regular Egyptian province. Of this altered condition of things we had received no intelligence, and consequently we were in no little trepidation when we saw the natives crossing the river in large numbers just above the place where we were stopping. But we need not have been under any apprehensions. It was soon manifest that the Shillook party had no hostile intentions, and were

gathered together merely for a hunting-excursion in the forests beyond the right bank of the river.

On observing the crowd of Shillooks our first impulse had been to make our way into the middle of the stream. It was past noon, and we were intently watching the movements of the hunters, when our attention was suddenly attracted by four men, dressed in white, shouting and gesticulating to us from the opposite bank. We could not imagine what Mohammedans were doing in this part of the country, and without loss of time pushed across and took the men on board. They proved to be Khartoom boatmen sent by the Mudir of Fashoda to inform us that his camp was close at hand, and that it was requisite for all boats coming down the river to stop there and submit to a rigid investigation as to what freight and passengers they were carrying. Our long sail-yard had been observed from the camp, and active measures had been immediately taken to prevent us from continuing our voyage without undergoing the prescribed scrutiny.

We had not long to wait before an unaccustomed surging of the water made us aware that a steamer was quite close upon us; in a few moments more the "Remorquer," No. 8, was alongside, and a rope thrown out by which we had to be towed down to the camp.

However elated I might be at the prospect of being now so soon restored to intercourse with men of a higher grade than those with whom I had been long associated, I must confess that this our first greeting from the civilized world rather jarred upon my sensibilities, and in the sequel resulted in some bitter disappointment.

For nearly a couple of hours we were quietly towed down the river until, at a spot just above the mouth of the Sobat, we came to a side arm of the main stream, called the Lollo. Turning off abruptly into this we found ourselves proceeding in a direction that was quite retrograde as compared with



that in which we had just come, and in another couple of hours reached the Mudir's temporary camp in the district of Fanekama. His force consisted of 400 black soldiers, fifty mounted Baggara, and two field guns.

The Lollo flows almost parallel to the main stream at a distance varying from a quarter of a league to two leagues. It is said to be about eighteen leagues in length; its current is extremely weak, and its depth from ten to fifteen feet; in many places it was from 800 to 1000 feet in width, and consequently at this season as wide as the main-stream itself: during the winter, however, it dwindles down to a mere shallow khor.

The little steam-tug was an iron boat of 24 horse-power: its sides were so eaten up by rust that they were like a sieve, and the decrepit old captain, almost as worn-out as his vessel, was everlastingly patching them up with a compound of chalk and oil. Besides this, there were lying off Fanekama three Government boats and two large "negger" belonging to Agahd's company that had come from the Meshera Elliab on the Bahr-el-Ghazal; these had been conveying no less than 600 slaves, all of whom had been confiscated. Notwithstanding that Sir Samuel Baker was still on the upper waters of the river, the idea was quite prevalent in all the Seribas that as soon as "the English pasha" had turned his back upon Fashoda, the Mudir would relapse into his former habits, levy a good round sum on the head of every slave, and then let the contraband stock pass without more ado. But for once the Seriba people were reckoning without their host. The Mudir had been so severely reprimanded by Baker for his former delinquencies that he thought it was his best policy, for this year at least, to be as energetic as he could in his exertions against the forbidden trade; and his measures were so summary, and executed with such methodical strictness, that unless I had known him I could scarcely have believed him to be a Turk. He

was now especially anxious to show off his authority before me as the first witness who would have the power of reporting his activity and decision to the world at large.

The first thing was to get all slaves whatever carried on shore, that is to say all who were black and who were not Mohammedans; no distinction was made in favour of such as had come after having already been in Khartoom, although they might have been reported in the list of the crews that had worked the boats up the river.

Among the 600 slaves now brought in Agahd's boats there were representatives of no less than eighteen different tribes. The small-pox, however, had raged so frightfully among them that fear of contagion alike for myself and my people deterred me from taking advantage of the unusual opportunity offered for ethnographical investigation. It must not be supposed that these 600 slaves had been the only passengers on Agahd's boats; in addition to them there had been 200 Nubians, and thus it may be imagined that the most crowded cattle-pens could hardly have been more intolerable than the vessels throughout their voyage.

Many of the black soldiers under the Mudir's command, recruited as they had been at Khartoom from slaves previously confiscated, made very fair interpreters to assist in classifying the new arrivals according to their race and nationality. Everything about the slaves had to be registered. Their number, the number of tribes that they represented, their age, their sex, the way they had been purchased, the place where they had been captured, the circumstances under which they had fallen into the hands of the Khartoomers, and all particulars of this sort had to be entered in a book. Then each of the Nubians was separately questioned about his own home, his name, his rank, his trade or profession, the number of his slaves, and the price he had paid for them respectively; to each of the traders there was then

handed a copy of his own affidavit, to which he was obliged to affix his seal.

An inventory was next taken of all property, so that it might be retained at the pleasure of the Government, guns, ammunition, and ivory being expressly specified. The three Arab clerks entered into such minute details, and made their reports so prolix, that it was necessary for them to apply an amount of patient industry of which I could hardly have believed them capable.

Besides these notaries the Mudir kept a number of smiths and carpenters perpetually employed in the fabrication of the iron fetters and wooden sheybas to bind the Reis and all the men that were not absolutely indispensable for the navigation of the boat. Every possible precaution seemed to be taken, and even seals were made for the use of those who had none of their own with which to attest their affidavits. It took two days to complete our inspection; but when it came to an end, three soldiers were sent on board as a guard, and we were allowed to proceed. Free from the polluted air of Fanekama, I began to feel that I could breathe again.

A day and a half brought us to Fashoda, where I was equally surprised and gratified to hear of a kindness that had been intended to be shown me. Dyafer Pasha, the Governor-General, immediately on hearing of the destitute condition in which I had been left by the burning down of Ghattas's Seriba, had despatched to me such a munificent supply of provisions of every description as would have kept me well for months not only with the means of subsistence, but with many of the elegancies of a civilised life. Had this liberal contribution reached me before I left Bongoland, I think I should have been vastly tempted to defer my return to Europe for another year; but it was not to be; the supplies had been placed under the charge of a company of soldiers who were going up the Gazelle to reinforce the troops already stationed in Dar Ferteet; but the change of

wind and the condition of the water had delayed their progress till it was too late to proceed, and they had been obliged to stay at Fashoda until the commencement of the winter.

The condition of the unfortunate slaves had become far worse since their confiscation; the very measures that ought to have ameliorated their lot had been but an aggravation of their misery. The supply of corn was rapidly coming to an end; they had, in fact, hardly anything to eat, and the soldiers on guard never dreamed of making the least exertion to provide in any way for their needs, resorting to the use of the kurbbatch much more freely than their former masters, who had now lost whatever interest they might have had in their welfare.

My powers of endurance were sorely tried. Incessant on the one hand were the murmurs and complaints; incessant on the other were the scoldings and cursings. If some luckless negro happened to be blessed with a tolerably good and robust constitution so that he kept fat and healthy under all his hardships, he was continually being made a laughing-stock and jeered at for being "a tub;" if, on the contrary, a poor wretch got thin till he was the very picture of misery, he was designated a "hyæna," and perpetually bantered on account of his "hyæna-face." I used to have whole kettles full of rice and maccaroni boiled for the poor creatures, but it was, of course, utterly beyond the compass of my resources to do much towards supplying their wants.

On approaching the district of Wod Shellay, we perceived countless masses of black specks standing out against the bright coloured sand. They were all slaves! The route from Kordofan to the east lay right across the land, and was quite unguarded; the spot that we now saw was where the caravans are conveyed over the river on their way to the great *dépôt* at Mussalemieh. Once again did the sight remind me of Katherine II.'s painted villages in South Russia, although this time in a somewhat different sense.

At length towards sunset, on the 21st of July, we reached the Ras-el-Khartoom. Our entire journey from the Meshera had been accomplished in twenty-five days, six of which had been consumed in stoppages at Fanekama, Fashoda, and Kowa. Upon the whole I congratulated myself on getting so quickly to the end of the trouble. With a quickened pulse I set out alone on foot for the town. Evening was drawing on, and although I met numbers of people, there was no one to recognise me; in my meagre white calico costume I might easily have passed for one of those homeless Greeks, who, without a place to rest their heads, have been forced to seek their fortune in the remotest corners of the earth. I made my way at once to a German tailor named Klein, who had been living for some years in Khartoom, and by the vigorous prosecution of his trade had contributed in no small degree towards the promotion of external culture in the town. He soon provided me with some civilised garments, and I felt myself fit to make my appearance before my old friends, at least such as remained, for some I grieved to learn were dead, and others had left the place.

I found Khartoom itself much altered. A large number of new brick buildings, a spacious quay on the banks of the Blue Nile, and some still more imposing erections on the other side of the river, had given the place the more decided aspect of an established town. The extensive garlens and rows of date-palms planted out nearly half a century back, had now attained to such a development that they could not be altogether without influence on the climate; in spite of everything, however, the sanitary condition of Khartoom was still very unsatisfactory. This was entirely owing to the defective drainage of that portion of the town that had been built below the high-water level. In July, when I was there, I saw many pools almost large enough to be called ponds that could never possibly dry up without the application of proper means for draining them off; stagnant



under the tropical sun, they sent forth such an intolerable stench that it was an abomination to pass near them. When it is remembered that Khartoom is situated in the desert-zone (for the grassy region does not begin for at least 150 miles farther to the south), there can appear no necessary reason why it should be more unhealthy than either Shendy or Berber; all that is wanted is that the sanitary authorities should exercise a better management and see that stagnant puddles should be prevented.

As I have already intimated, I found that not a few of my former acquaintances during my absence had fallen victims to the fatal climate; but no loss did I personally deplore more than that of the missionary Blessing, who died just a fortnight before my arrival; Herr Duisberg had left Khartoom, and since his departure Blessing had managed all my affairs, and it was from him that I had received my last despatches in the negro-countries. I found his young widow perfectly inconsolable, and the sight of her grief made me feel doubly what a blank his death had left.

On the day after my arrival I telegraphed to Alexandria to announce my safe return. The message reached its destination in the course of two days; the charge for twenty words was four dollars. The telegram had to be written in Arabic, and in the compressed yet lucid form of that language ran as follows:—"German Consulate-General, Alexandria. Arrived July 21st. Telegraph to Braun at the Berlin Academy that he may inform my mother. Nothing else necessary." The telegraph had only been established during the last few months, and as yet was scarcely in full working order. The officials were young and inexperienced at their work, and the direct line of communication was broken in two places by the messages having to be conveyed across the river; as a further defect, the Morse system was partially in use, and it was only beyond Assouan that the needle-system had been adopted. Except for the conciseness

of its forms of expression, Arabic is extremely unsuitable for telegraphy; the deficiency of vowel symbols makes proper names all but undecipherable to any one who is previously unacquainted with them. But with all its temporary shortcomings, the establishment of the telegraph will ever rank as pre-eminent amongst the services rendered by the Government of Ismail Pasha.

Dyafer Pasha, to whom I was so much indebted for his liberal intentions on my behalf, received me with his unflinching cordiality, and gave me a lodging in one of the Government buildings that was at his disposal; but notwithstanding all his generosity to myself I could not feel otherwise than very much hurt at the unscrupulous manner in which he acted towards my servants. Their faithfulness to myself had made me much interested in them, and I now felt intensely annoyed when I found that, without any communication with me, they had been seized, thrust into irons, and set to work in the galleys, leaving me with no one but my three negro lads, and without the services of anybody who knew how to cook. The fact was that, although I had not been made acquainted with it, they had been in possession of some slaves on their own account, representing them as being consigned to their care by friends in the upper district, who wanted to forward them to their homes. It was, I found, quite out of my power to prevent the controllers of the different Seribas all along my route from making presents of slaves to my servants; any protest on my part was always practically useless, and only tended to produce an irritating disagreement between us. At the time of our embarkation at the Meshera I imagined that they were accompanied only by the wives of two of them, one of their children, and two young boys who had been so long with them that I quite regarded them as a recognised part of their belongings; but it turned out in reality that they had no less than fifteen slaves, which they were surreptitiously carrying with them. The whole lot

were now confiscated in one common batch ; no distinction was made—men, wives, and children were all included in the general fate. This was as illegal as it was unjust, for every slave who has borne any children is reckoned as a wife, although there may have been no regular marriage.

Four separate appeals did I take the trouble to make to the Pasha for the emancipation of my servants. Even at last my success was only partial, for I could not obtain the restitution of freedom either to the women or the children, although their confiscation had been specially illegal. The Pasha was on the point of starting for Egypt, but I could not permit any circumstance of the kind to prevent my doing everything in my power to assist my servants, who had shown such fidelity for a period of three years. I could not find it in my heart to leave them to fight out their cause for themselves with the arbitrary and disorderly administration that I knew well enough would follow the Pasha's departure. I resolved, therefore, to take the men on with me to Cairo. I incurred a considerable extra expense by travelling with so large a retinue ; but I would not be daunted, and after a world of trouble I succeeded ultimately in obtaining redress for their grievances.

I told the Pasha that, grateful as I was for all his hospitality and kindness to myself, I could not help being extremely annoyed at the trick that had been played me. Nothing, I assured him, could obliterate the impression that he had looked upon me as an easy dupe : his proceedings in this respect were quite an insult. I gave him my opinion that if he wanted to suppress the slave-trade he must see that the laws were carried out all over the country, and not merely along the river. Repressive measures, that were enforced at isolated and uncertain intervals, were of no use at all, and only served to inflame the population with increased hatred to the Franks. For what good, I asked him, was it to lay an embargo upon the boats when (to take only

one example) the Mudir of Kordofan quietly allowed the slave-trade to be carried on in his province to such an extent that in a single year no less than 2700 slave-dealers had made their way to Dar Ferteet; and whilst they were there not only had the Egyptian commander raised no objection to their proceedings, but had so far coalesced with his officers as practically to become a professional slave-dealer himself.

The ill-feeling and smothered rage against Sir Samuel Baker's interference, nurtured by the higher authorities, breaks out very strongly amongst the less reticent lower officials. In Fashoda, and even in Khartoom, I heard complaints that we (the Franks) were the prime cause of all the trouble, and if it had not been for our eternal agitation with the Viceroy such measures would never have been enforced. Yet they need to be instructed that it was never the intention either of Wilberforce or any of our modern philanthropists that men should, under any pretext, be robbed of their wives, or parents of their children, or even that slaves should be wrested from the hands of the traders merely to be distributed amongst the soldiers, or to be compelled to become soldiers themselves. And, as I pointed out to the officials, the very reproaches they made tended to lower the Viceroy, just because they implied that his commands were only influenced by external pressure from foreign Powers. I tried further to make them see that it was quite impossible for any ruler to maintain proper authority unless his subordinates, whose duty it was to support him, did their utmost to contribute to his dignity.

On the 9th of August I once again took my passage on board a Nile boat, this time under more comfortable and less ambiguous circumstances. With a favourable wind and high water our voyage was very rapid. On the fourth day we reached Berber. Here I found excellent quarters in the house of my friend Vasel, and for the first time, after many months, had the enjoyment of intercourse with a well-

educated fellow-countryman. Vassel had been a benefactor to the land by erecting a large portion of the telegraph lately opened between Assouan and Khartoom, and, in spite of his exertions in a climate that had been fatal to so many Europeans, had hitherto enjoyed unbroken health.

The deaths during the last fever-season had been more than usually numerous. In Khartoom, in 1870, almost all the resident Europeans had been fatally attacked, and amongst them Dr. Ori, the renowned Italian zoologist, after successfully withstanding the deleterious atmosphere for ten successive years. Soon afterwards Thibaud, the head of the French vice-consulate, was carried to the grave, followed in the course of a week by the whole of his family. He had spent forty-three years of his life at Khartoom; as an associate of Arnaud's, and in company with Werne and Sabatier, he had taken part in the memorable expedition that in 1841 was sent out by Mehemet Ali to discover the sources of the Nile, and in the prosecution of their task ascended as far as Gondokoro. To the melancholy death of Blessing I have already referred; and now, on reaching Berber, I learnt that my old friend Lavargue had succumbed to fever only a short time before my arrival. He, too, had been residing for many years in the Soudan.

And now the next to go was my little Tikkitikki. He had for some time been marked by the unsparing hand of death, and here it was during my stay at Berber that I had to mourn his loss. At Khartoom he had been taken ill with a severe attack of dysentery, probably induced by change of air and very likely aggravated by his too sumptuous diet. His disorder had day by day become more deeply seated; my care in nursing seemed to bring no alleviation, and every remedy failed to take effect; he became weaker and weaker, till his case was manifestly hopeless, and, after lingering three weeks, sunk at last from sheer exhaustion.

Never before, I think, had I ever felt a death so acutely;



my grief so weakened and unmanned me that my energies flagged entirely, so that I could scarcely walk for half an hour without extreme fatigue. Since that date two years have passed away, but still the recollection of that season of bitter disappointment is like a wound that opens afresh.

The other two negro-boys, according to my intention, were to be playmates and companions for my little Pygmy ; but now that he had been taken from me I took measures to provide for them in a different way. The elder one, Amber, a true Niam-niam, I left behind in Egypt, under the care of my old friend Dr. Sachs, the celebrated physician of Cairo ; my little Bongo, Allagabo Teem, was taken to Germany for the purpose of receiving a careful education.

I was delayed in Berber by the sad circumstances of my little *protégé's* death ; but independently of that, my stay was prolonged by waiting for a courier who, by the orders of his Highness the Khedive, was on his way to meet me. The German Consul-General Von Jasmund, with his accustomed solicitude for all who were in any way entrusted to his protection, had procured me this favour. Fearing that I should be in want, he had commissioned the courier to bring me money, medicines, arms, and clothing of all description. Meanwhile I had amply provided myself at Khartoom with everything of which I stood in need, and was consequently anxious, if I could, to stop the progress of the envoy. It was, however, several days, even with the help of the telegraph, before I could find out how far he had advanced, or could succeed in countermanding his orders.

On the 10th of September I was ready to start for Suakin. The route that I took was the same, through the valleys of Etbai, by which I had journeyed on starting three years previously. My little caravan consisted now but of thirteen people. By the help of fourteen camels we accomplished the journey in a fortnight, without any misadventure. Once again I was in sight of the sea. It was with the truest

interest that I regarded the faithful few that were round about me, and as I looked down from the summit of the Attaba, 3415 feet high, that enabled me to gaze beyond the intervening stretch of land to Suakin and to catch the extended deep-blue line of sea, my feelings could be understood by none except by a wanderer who, like myself, had been lingering in the depths of an untraversed country. On the 26th of September I embarked at Suakin, and after a pleasant voyage of four days landed at Suez; by the 2nd of November I had reached Messina.

Thus, after an absence of three years and four months, I was once again upon the soil of Europe.

## APPENDIX I.



### TABLE OF HEIGHTS OF VARIOUS POINTS VISITED DURING THE JOURNEY.

(COMPUTED BY DR. WILHELM SCHUR.)

DURING my journey I made use of three aneroids, all of which I brought back safe to Europe; they were subsequently most carefully tested under various conditions of temperature and pressure by Dr. Wilhelm Schur, who undertook to estimate and reduce to standard measure the various observations I had made. I here append only the final results of his investigations, but for more complete details I would refer to the Journal of the Geographical Society of Berlin (vol. viii., p. 228), where he has described at length his method for ascertaining the proper corrections of my registries, after allowing for the variations from the mean condition of the barometer.

I very rarely failed three times in the course of a day to note the readings of the aneroids, but these numerous observations were only entered in my diary, and consequently perished with the rest of my papers in the conflagration of the 2nd of December, 1870; only those observations, therefore, that were made subsequently to that ill-fated-day, and a few others that were sent home promiscuously in my correspondence, were available for Dr. Schur's deductions.

But altogether the following figures will suffice to give very approximately a true conception of the heights of the regions that I visited, and it may be of some interest to compare the results with those obtained during the geometrical survey that is requisite for the formation of the proposed railway between Suakin and Berber.\*

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\* The position of this district with regard to the points of the compass may be seen in the map of the road from Suakin to Berber, which I published in vol. xv. of Petermann's 'Geographical Communications,' Table 15. 1869.

In the approximate heights given below, Dr. Schur has reckoned 25 meters as being equivalent to about 82 English feet.

A.—POINTS BETWEEN THE RED SEA AND THE NILE ON THE ROAD  
FROM SUAKIN TO BERBER.

	Height above the sea.	
	Meters.	Eng. ft.
1 Three hours W. of Suakin.	212·1	695
2 Tamarisk wood, 7½ hours W. of Suakin.	544·2	1785
3 Wady Teekhe, 11½ hours W. of Suakin.	618·9	2030
4 First Attaba (pass), 13 hours W. of Suakin.	924·5	3033
5 At the pools in the valley between the two Attabas.	913·5	2996
6 Second Attaba, highest pass.	1041·7	3415
7 Upper Wady Gabet, below the Attaba.	925·8	3037
8 Singat, summer camp in the great Valley of Okwak.	941·3	3088
9 Wady Sarroweeb, 4 hours E.S.E. of Singat.	1037·7	3404
10 Wady Harrassa in Erkoweet, 8 hours E.S.E. of Singat, near the summer camp.	1137·8	3732
11 At the base of the high hill of Erkoweet, on the N. side.	1250·2	4101
12 Summit of the hill of Erkoweet.	1676·1	5499
13 2 hours W. of Singat, 1 hour from O-Mareg, E. of the small pass.	1007·3	3304
14 3½ hours W. of Singat, W. of the small pass.	1072·5	3518
15 O-Mareg, summer camp in the valley.	971·7	3188
16 Small Wady, 3 hours W. of the Mareg, in front of the pass.	949·5	3115
17 Near the wells in Wady Amet.	810·1	2658
18 On the S. slope of the W. end of the mountain O-Kurr, 5 hours W. of the wells of Amet.	803·3	2635
19 Small Wady, an hour W. of Wady Arab.	739·9	2427
20 Grassy Wady W. of Wady Arab, an hour from the great khor-bed.	762·5	2501
21 Near the wells in Wady Kamot-Atai.	735·3	2412
22 Wady 4 hours E. of Wady Habob.	705·6	2314
23 Wady Dimehadeet.	717·5	2354
24 Wady Habob, eastern arm.	741·0	2431
25 Wady Habob, western arm.	600·2	1969
26 Wady Kokreb, camping-place, 1871.	694·5	2278
27 Wady Kokreb, camping-place S. of last.	597·6	1960
28 Great Wady, an hour W. of Wady Kokreb.	657·0	2155

	Height above the sea.	
	Meters.	Eng. ft.
29 5½ hours W. of small isolated hill near Wady Derumkad (Upper Wady Yumga)	650·0	2132
30 Wady Yumga.	587·6	1927
31 Wady Derumkad.	581·4	1907
32 Small isolated hill, an hour W. of Wady Derumkad.	578·0	1896
33 Valley near the acacias S. of the wells of Roway.	590·2	1936
34 Below the small pass above the Wady Laemeb.	580·1	1903
35 End of rising ground in the upper Wady Laemeb.	532·8	1748
36 In the middle of Wady Laemeb.	574·6	1885
37 In the middle of Wady Laemeb.	513·9	1686
38 In the lower Wady Laemeb, 2 hours E. of O-Feek.	458·8	1505
39 Wady at the foot of the hill O-Feek, southern side.	498·6	1635
40 2 hours E. of the bush-forest at O-Baek.	508·2	1667
41 O-Baek, bush-forest near the wells.	476·3	1562
42 Rain-pool, 2 hours W. of O-Baek.	459·0	1506
43 5½ hours W. of O-Baek.	438·8	1439
44 Wady Eremit, camping place in 1871.	464·4	1523
45 Wady Eremit, camping place in 1868.	446·0	1463
46 Depression in Wady Aboo Kolod.	399·8	1311
47 Wady Darowreeb or Derreeb.	414·0	1359
48 Wady Aboo Zelem.	452·2	1483
49 Pools of Aboo Tagger, 2½ hours E. of Berber (el Mekherif).	403·6	1324
50 Town of Berber (el Mekherif) 30 feet above the highest level of the Nile.	417·0	1368

## B.—POINTS ON THE NILE BETWEEN LAT. 9° AND 18° N.

	Height above the sea..	
	Meters.	Eng. ft.
1 Above Wolled Bassal (from the boat).	399·7	1319
2 Town of Matamma (from the boat).	404·4	1326
3 Town of Shendy (from the boat).	408·8	1341
4 Town of Khartoom, 20 feet above the highest level of the Blue Nile.	407·2	1336
5 Meshera, on the island on the Kyt, the extremity of the Bahr-el-Ghazal.	442·7	1452



## C.—POINTS IN THE BAHR-EL-GHAZAL DISTRICT.

	Height above the sea.	
	Meters.	Eng. ft.
1 Ghattas's chief Seriba in Dyoor-land.	471·2	1545
2 Kurshook Ali's chief Seriba on the Dyoor.	542·1	1778
3 Agahd's small Seriba Dubor, in Bongo-land.	565·5	1854
4 Aboo Guroon's small Seriba Danga in Bongoland.	543·7	1783
5 Bizelly's small Seriba Doggaya-mor in Bongoland.	554·5	1818
6 Idrees Wod Defter's Seriba in the Golo district.	703·6	2306
7 Seebehr Rahama's chief Seriba in the Kredy district.	696·0	2282
8 Dehm Gudyoo, Agahd's Seriba.	846·3	2775
9 On the brook Gulanda between Dehm Gudyoo and Dehm Bekeer.	729·1	2391
10 Dehm Bekeer, Kurshook Ali's Seriba.	771·0	2528
11 Dehm Adlan, Seebehr Adlan's Seriba the Sehre district.	747·1	2450
12 Agahd's small Seriba Ngulfala, in Bongoland.	581·0	1905
13 Agahd's small Seriba Moody, in Bongo-land.	575·0	1886
14 Take's residence in the Dinka country.	426·5	1399

## D.—POINT BEYOND THE NILE DISTRICT.

	Height above the sea.	
	Meters.	Eng. ft.
1 Munza's residence in Monbuttoo-land, Aboo Sammat's Seriba.	825·4	2707

## APPENDIX II.

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### EIGHT ITINERARIES IN ILLUSTRATION OF THE DISTRICTS TO THE SOUTH AND WEST OF MY ROUTE.

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#### A.—IDREES WOD DEFTER'S ROUTE TO THE W.S.W, FROM DEHM GUDYOO.

*First day.*—Four hours to the village of the Kredy chief Mangirr, on Agahd's territory.

*Second day.*—Six or seven leagues to some Kredy hamlets still on Agahd's territory.

*Third day.*—Long day's march of seven or eight hours to the deserted villages of a former Kredy chief, named Koiye.

*Fourth day.*—Eight leagues across an uninhabited district; night in the wilderness.

*Fifth day.*—Seven leagues to a small Seriba belonging to Idrees Wod Defter on Mount Berangah.

*Sixth day.*—Seven or eight leagues across an inhabited district to the chief Seriba of Idrees Wod Defter, situated on a river flowing to the north-west. The Kredy tribes of the district are called Bia and Mehre; the local chief is named Gariaongoh.

*Seventh day.*—Five hours' march to the west to a subsidiary Seriba belonging to Idrees, called Adya, after the Kredy tribe of the district.

*Eighth day.*—Long day's march of eight or nine leagues across the wilderness.

*Ninth day.*—Half a day's march to Idrees's most westerly Seriba in Dar Benda, of which the chieftain is named Kobbo-kobbo. The Benda are an independent nation, with their own dialect.

*Tenth day.*—Seven or eight hours to the great river, said to flow here in an easterly direction, and requiring to be crossed in

boats at all seasons ; the population on the banks is composed of the ivory-trading Aboo Dinga, and the land is called Dar Dinga, or Dar Aboo Dinga. A king, known to the Nubians by the name of Ayah, to whom several chieftains are tributary, resides to the north-west of Idrees Wod Defter's chief Seriba. Dar Dinga is also the resort for many slave caravans under the management of the great dealers from Darfoor and Kordofan. The companies of Seebehr Rahama, Seebehr Adlan, and Agahd, likewise visit the country to purchase ivory from the chieftains.

#### B.—YUMMA'S ROUTE TO THE W.S.W. FROM DEHM BEKEER TO THE RESIDENCE OF MOFIO.

*First day.*—Six or eight leagues to the last villages of the Sehre : they belong to Kurshook Ali's territory, and the Sheikh is named Sahtsy. His residence is situated on a small river, named the Ville or Wille, that is said to flow in a north-western direction, and to belong to the system of the river of Dar Dinga : it is at no part of the year less than twenty feet deep.

*Second day to Eighth day (inclusive).*—Seven long days' marches over uninhabited wildernesses to the borders of Mofio's territory, where his behnky Boborongoo has his mbanga.

*Ninth day.*—A short march over cultivated land to the residence of the sub-chieftain Bakomoro.

*Tenth day.*—A long march mostly through wild forest to the residence of Kanso, a behnky of Mofio's.

*Eleventh day.*—The road turns to the north-west and leads by a long day's march to the behnky Abindee. A river flowing towards the north is crossed here ; it is named the Ngango, and after joining the Welle or river of Sahtsy, flows into the great river of Dar Dinga, farther to the north-west. In its lower course the stream is known as the Mboma.

*Twelfth day.*—Half a day's march to the mbanga of Gazima, the sub-chieftain in command of the district and a brother of Mofio's.

*Thirteenth and Fourteenth days.*—Two days' march to the residence of Mofio, only a good day's journey to the south-west of Idrees Wod Defter's chief Seriba. The river on which it is situated is said to be called the Mbette, and to flow into the Mboma.

C.—ROUTE TO THE S.S.E. FROM DEHM BEKEER TO  
SOLONGOH'S RESIDENCE.

*First day.*—An ordinary day's march across the Ngudduroo and the Djee (leaving the Kokkuloo hill on the left) to the brook Biserry, which has been followed by Nubians, and found to join the Wow. Unless the rainfall has been very excessive, the brook may be waded even during the Khareef. Mount Daragumba lies about two hours to the south of the passage over the Biserry.

*Second day.*—A good day's march to the south-west across the wilderness to a little brook, named the Kommoh, said to flow into the Biserry.

*Third day.*—The Dar (or inhabited land) of Solongoh's territory is reached towards evening. Night spent at the residence of Karya, the chieftain's behnky and brother.

*Fourth day.*—The road bends more to the south, and leads by a long day's march to the mbanga of another sub-chieftain, named Ndundo, also a brother of Solongoh.

*Fifth day.*—South-west to Yagganda, a third brother and behnky of the chieftain. Mount Yahre is passed on the east.

*Sixth day.*—Across the Nomatina or Nomatilla, a copious river, declared by the Niam-niam to be identical with the Wow, which in its lower course in Bongoland they call the Nomatilla. Half-a-day's journey to the mbanga of Solongoh.

Two days' march to the north-east from Solongoh lies Kurshook Ali's Seriba Aboo Shatter, in the land of the Bellanda, which for the most part belongs to Solongoh. About half-way there stands the residence of a behnky of the chieftain, named Ndimma; and a day's journey north of Kurshook Ali's settlement lives another sub-chieftain, named Mamah; consequently the Seriba forms an enclave in Solongoh's territory. Solongoh's father was named Borrongboh or Bongorboh, and was the brother of Mofio and Zaboora.

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YUMMA'S ROUTE TO THE SOUTH FROM DEHM  
BEKEER TO YAFFATY AND INGIMMA.

*First and Second day.*—Two days to the S.S.W., across uninhabited frontier wildernesses.

*Third day.*—Towards evening is reached the residence of the small chieftain Yaffaty or Yapaty, the son of Zaboora, who had shaken off his allegiance to his brother Mofio.

*Fourth day.*—A moderate day's march to the south to the residence of Bogwa Riffio, a belinky and brother of Yaffaty.

*Fifth day.*—Across the brook Mbomoo, flowing northwards, and said to empty itself into the Nomatilla, to Boggwa Yango, a sub-chieftain of Bombo.

*Sixth day.*—An ordinary day's march to the mbanga of the powerful chief Bombo. A day's journey to the north-west is the residence of Nembo, and about the same distance to the north-east that of Nzembe, both of these are brothers and sub-chieftains of Bombo.

*Seventh and Eighth days.*—Through uninhabited wildernesses.

*Ninth day.*—Across a great navigable river said to pass through the territory of a chieftain named Sena, whose residence lies to the east of the route; on this account the Nubians call the stream the river of Sena. By the Niam-Niam it is called the Ware.

*Tenth day.*—To the residence of a son of Ezo (not to be confounded with the chief of the same name, who was the father of Ndoruma and Ugetto) on the river of Sena, said to be identical with the river of Wando (the Mbrwole).

*Eleventh and Twelfth days.*—Through inhabited country, the territory of the old, decrepit chieftain Ezo. Two long marches to the south of the river is the residence of Ingimma, the most powerful of the sons of Ezo.

*Thirteenth and Fourteenth days.*—Half-a-day's march beyond Ingimma's territory is the great River of Kanna, known as the Welle. After crossing the river to the south of Ingimma's residence, that of Kanna is reached in two days' journey to the east.

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#### E.—ADERAHMAN ABOO GUROON'S ROUTE TO THE S. FROM HIS CHIEF SERIBA TO THE NIAM-NIAM AND MONBUTTOO.

*First day.*—Eight hours to the south-west to Kurshook Ali's Seriba Nguddo.

*Second day.*—Six hours to the south: night in the wilderness.



*Third day.*—Half-a-day's march to Aboo Guroon's Seriba Mahah, on the brook Lako.

*Fourth day.*—Seven hours' march to the S.S.W. to Gebel Reggeb, where Aboo Guroon has his small Seriba Hibboo.

*Fifth day.*—Half-a-day's march to the south-east to the little Seriba Mbellembey, the joint possession of Aboo Guroon and Ghattas. The local chief of the Bongo in Mbellembey is named Ghirrah.

*Sixth day.*—Half a day's march to the south-east to Ghattas's Seriba Gebel Higgoo, on the southern frontier of the Bongo country.

*Seventh day.*—To the south-west, leaving the territory of Mundo (Babukur) on the east. Eight hours across the wilderness to Aboo Guroon's Seriba on the northern frontier of the Niam-niam country. The Seriba was under the control of a Niam-niam slave, named Fomboa, and was destroyed in 1870 by Ndoruma. The name of the local chief was Ukweh.

*Eighth day.*—To the south, across the Sway (Dyoor). Night-camp in the wilderness on the Bikky.

*Ninth day.*—A long day's march of about nine hours across the wilderness to the south-west, to the residence of Dukkoo, a brother and sub-chieftain of Ndoruma.

*Tenth day.*—A long march to the south and west, the residence of Mbory, a behnky of Ndoruma. Half-way lies the spot where Ndoruma attacked and defeated the united companies in 1870.

*Eleventh day.*—A whole day's march to the residence of Ndoruma on the Barah, a brook that is said to empty itself into the Bikky. Ndoruma is the most powerful of the reigning sons of Ezo.

*Twelfth day.*—Half-a-day's march to the mbanga of Gettwa or Ngetto, a brother of Ndoruma and an independent chieftain; his lands lie to the south of Ndoruma's.

*Thirteenth day.*—An ordinary day's march to the south-east, to the village of Mashmany, a behnky of Ngetto.

*Fourteenth day.*—Long march to the south-east across uninhabited country.

*Fifteenth day.*—Half a day's march to the territory of Malingde. In the middle of the day is reached the village of Owra, a son of the wealthy chieftain.

*Sixteenth day.*—A whole day's march to the south-east, to the village of a local overseer under Owra, named Bazway.

*Seventeenth day.*—Half-a-day's march to the residence of Malingde or Mariudo, one of the numerous sons of Bazimbey.

*Eighteenth day.*—A whole day's march to the W.S.W., to the residence of Malingde's behnky Bahzia.

*Nineteenth day.*—A long day's march to the south-east, to the villages of Malingde's behnky Yaganda.

*Twentieth day.*—Across uninhabited country: night in the wilderness.

*Twenty-first day.*—Half a day's march to the residence of Wando's behnky Bagbatta.

*Twenty-second day.*—A long day's march to the river of Wando (Mbrwole): night on the banks. This stream is said to pass through the territories of Sena and Indimma; in its lower course it bears the name of the Ware.

*Twenty-third day.*—Through the remainder of the border wilderness on to the territory of Izingerria (in Munza's dominions), near the villages of his behnky Dedda.

*Twenty-fourth day.*—Southwards to the numerous villages of Izingerria's territory.

*Twenty-fifth day.*—In the same direction to the residence of one of Izingerria's behnkys.

*Twenty-sixth day.*—A short march to the residence of Izingerria himself.

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#### F.—AHMED AWAT'S ROUTE TO THE S.W. FROM NDORUMA TO EZO.

*First day.*—A good day's march to the west, to the residence of Ndoruma's behnky Komunda.

*Second day.*—In the same direction, to the residence of Tumafee, another behnky of Ndoruma.

*Third day.*—To the residence of Mbanzuro, a brother and subchieftain of Ndoruma.

*Fourth day.*—To the residence of Ndoruma's behnky Byazingee.

*Fifth and Sixth days.*—In a south-western direction across uninhabited regions.

*Seventh day.*—Half a day's march to Baria's territory: halt at the border villages.

*Eighth day.*—A day's march through populous districts to Baria's residence, near which Ahmed Awat, Hassaballa's head-

controller, has erected a Seriba. Baria is an old friend and ally of the company.

*Ninth day.*—A good day's march to the south, to the residence of Sango, a brother and sub-chieftain of Ndoruma.

*Tenth and Eleventh days.*—Across uninhabited country; two nights in the wilderness.

*Twelfth day.*—A day's march to the abode of Ndenny, a son and former behnky of the deceased Sena.

*Thirteenth day.*—To the residence of Baziboh, the son of Sena, now an independent chieftain.

*Fourteenth day.*—To the Gangara mountains, the home of the A-Madi and their kindred tribe the Imberry.

*Fifteenth and Sixteenth days.*—Through populated districts to the residence of the old chieftain Ezo.

#### G.—ROUTE FROM KURSHOOK ALI'S CHIEF SERIBA ON THE DYOR TO ABOO SHATTER, IN THE DISTRICT OF THE BELLANDA.

*First day.*—Eight hours' march to the south-west and south, through Hassaballa's small Seriba to Kurshook Ali's subsidiary Seriba Mittoo in Bongoland.

*Second day.*—Six hours' march to the south, to a second Seriba belonging to the same company, and called Longo. A small Seriba of Agahd's lies to the east of the route: it is called Mbor, and is not far from the left bank of the Dyoor.

*Third day.*—Seven or eight leagues to the site of a former Seriba of Kurshook Ali, named Murr.

*Fourth day.*—Across the frontier wilderness on the south of the Bongo territory: night in the wilderness.

*Fifth day.*—A short march to the border villages of the Bellanda, under the control of a behnky of the Niam-niam chieftain Solongoh.

*Sixth day.*—Half-a-day's march to Aboo Shatter, a lofty isolated mountain, from the summit of which all the detached hills of southern Bongoland and the mountains of Mundo (Babuckur) are said to be visible. The local chief of the Bellanda, under Kurshook Ali's jurisdiction, is named Akoo, whilst the chief of the Niam-niam, tributary to Solongoh, is said to be Bongurr. Six hours to the north-east of Aboo Shatter is a second Bellanda

Seriba, belonging to Kurshook Ali, called Dongoh : it is said to be near the left bank of the Dyoor. Six hours farther to the east, and beyond the river, is a third Seriba belonging to this company, named Asalla. A few hours to the north of Asalla are Aboo Guroon's Bongo Seribas, called Gebel Regheb and Abooleghee by the Nubians, after the Bongo Sheikh of the district. The native name for Abooleghee is Karey, that of Gebel Reggeb being Hibboo.

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## II.—ROUTE TO THE SOUTH FROM KULONGO TO GEBEL HIGGOO AND MUNDO.

*First day.*—Five hours to the S.S.W. to Kurshook Ali's small Seriba Kileby. Four hours to the west of Kileby lies the small Seriba Ngorr, belonging to the same company.

*Second day.*—Seven hours' march to Ghattas's subsidiary Seriba Mboh, of which the local chief of the Bongo is named Doliba. A deserted Seriba of Kurshook Ali's, of which the local chief was named Abrass, is passed on the road. Two considerable brooks (the Molmul and the Nyedokoo?) are crossed between Kileby and Mboh.

*Third day.*—Six or seven hours to Ghattas's Seriba Doggaia, of which the local chief is named Bonyira.

*Fourth day.*—Four hours' march to Ghattas's Seriba on Gebel Higgoo. The Bongo district is called Longo, the local chief Higgoo. Three hours to the east is a much frequented Seriba belonging to Ghattas; it is situated on the so-called Gebel Shiteta (cayenne-pepper hill), and called Roome by the Bongo. The local overseer of the district is named Bomadioh. Sabby lies two days' march east of Gebel Shiteta; after crossing the Tondy the road leads on the first day through the village of the Bongo sheikh Guiya, who is in Aboo Sammat's territory. Mundo lies only two leagues to the south of Gebel Higgoo; the route to the Niam-niam lands across this mountainous region of the Babuckur leads through a dangerous defile, where travellers are often attacked by the natives. This is the Mundo visited by J. Petherick in February 1858, the name of the places which he passed are given by him in the Bongo dialect, and several of them, such as Yow, Dangah, Mahah, Murr, and Lungo, are retained to the present time.

## APPENDIX III



### LIST OF MAMMALIA OBSERVED DURING MY TRAVELS FROM THE GAZELLE.

(WITH THEIR NATIVE NAMES.\*)

1. *Troglodytes niger*. Geoff. (Variety: *Schweinfurthii*. Gigl.)  
Bongo: Dadda.  
Niam-niam: Irangba or Manjarooma.  
Monbuttoo: Nohzo.  
Schre: Sango.
2. *Colobus guereza*. Rüpp.  
Bongo: Ndollo.  
Niam-niam: Mbeggeh.
3. *Cercopithecus griseoviridis*. Desm.  
Dyoor: Ngero or Angehro.  
Bongo: Manga.  
Niam-niam: Ngalangala.  
Kredy: Ohlo.
4. *Cercopithecus pyrrhonotus*. Ehrb.  
Dinka: Agohk.  
Dyoor: Abworro.  
Bongo: Gumbi.  
Niam-niam: Gungbeh.  
Golo: Toggwa.  
Kredy: Nyagga.

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\* The native names will also show the geographical distribution of the various animals. I am indebted to Professor R. Hartmann for the names of all but the doubtful species.



5. *Cercopithecus pygerythrus*. F. Cuv.  
Niam-niam : Ndumm.
6. *Cynocephalus Babuin*. Desm.  
Dyoor : Bimm.  
Bongo : Kungah.  
Niam-niam : Bokkoo.
7. *Cynocephalus sp.*  
Sehre : Mbeeri.  
Golo : Filli.  
Kredy : Booroo.
8. *Otolienus Teng.* Geoffr. (*Galago senegalensis*. F. Cuvier.)  
Dinka : Londorr or Nehngby.  
Dyoor : Anyoi or Anynai.  
Bongo : Ndohr.  
Niam niam : Bakumbosso.
9. *Otolienus Pelei*. Temm. (*Galago Demidoffii*. Fisch.)  
Niam-niam : Mbottoo.
10. *Megaderma frous*. Geoffr.
11. *Vesperugo sp.*  
Bongo : Beeroo.  
Niam-niam : 'Tooreh.
12. *Scotophilus leucogaster*. Geoffr.
13. *Nycteris hispida* Geoffr.
14. *Phyllorrhina caffra*. Lund.
15. *Erinaceus sp.*  
Dyoor : Ohkoddoo.  
Bongo : Ndudoopirakpeh.  
Niam-niam : Dunduleh.  
Golo : Iddoo.  
Kredy : Ohko.  
Sehre : Mbarra.
16. *Sorex sp.*  
Dyoor : Ushull.  
Bongo : Tondo, or Shondo.  
Niam-niam : Ndelly.  
Golo : Diffee.  
Kredy : Djanje-kreie.

17. *Ratelus capensis*. G. Cuv.  
 Dyoor : Ogang.  
 Bongo : Nyirr.  
 Niam-niam : Torubale.
18. *Lutra inunguis*. F. Cuv.?  
 Niam-niam : Limmu.
19. *Canis familiaris*. L.  
 Dinka : Dyong.  
 Dyoor : Grook.  
 Bongo : Bihee.  
 Niam-niam : Ango.  
 Mittoo : Weehy.  
 Golo : Ovio.  
 Kredy : Kohno.  
 Sehre : Borro.  
 Monbuttoo : Nussy.
20. *Canis variegatus*. Cretschm. (*C. aureus auctorum*.)  
 Dinka : Awaun.  
 Dyoor : Toh.  
 Bongo : Galah.  
 Niam-niam : Hoah.  
 Kredy : Glommu.  
 Golo : Ndaggeh.  
 Sehre : Ndeh.
21. *Canis pictus*. Desm.  
 Dinka : Kwaty.  
 Bongo : Well.  
 Niam-niam : Tiah.  
 Sehre : Sahr.
22. *Octocyon Lalandii*. H. Smi.?  
 Dinka : Paudey.
23. *Hycena crocata*. Zimm.  
 Dinka : Angwee.  
 Dyoor : Utwomm.  
 Bongo : Heeloo.  
 Niam-niam : Wegge.  
 Mittoo : Moddaoo.  
 Golo : Mboo.  
 Sehre : Mboh.

24. *Viverra civetta*. Schreb.  
 Dyoor : Yuoll.  
 Bongo : Kurrukkoo.  
 Niam-niam : Teeya.
25. *Viverra genetta*. L.  
 Dinka : Angom.  
 Dyoor : Anyara.  
 Bongo : Dongoh.  
 Niam-niam : Mbelleo.  
 Golo : Nifah.  
 Kredy : Ndilly.  
 Sehre : Mehre.
26. *Herpestes fasciatus*. Desm.  
 Dinka : Agorr.  
 Dyoor : Gorr.  
 Bongo : Ngorr, or Dai.  
 Niam-niam : Nduttwah.
27. *Felis leo*. L.  
 Dinka : Kohr.  
 Dyoor : Moo.  
 Bongo : Pull.  
 Niam-niam : Mbongonoo.  
 Golo : Singilee.  
 Kredy : Ganye-kaza.  
 Sehre : Siringinny.
28. *Felis leopardus*. Schreb.  
 Dyoor : Kwaty.  
 Bongo : Koggo.  
 Niam-niam : Mamah.  
 Kredy : Sellembey.
29. *Felis caracal*. L.  
 Dyoor : Nwoi.  
 Bongo : Mudyokpollah.  
 Niam-niam : Mobboroo.
30. *Felis serval*. Schreb.  
 Dinka : Dohk.  
 Bongo : Gregge.  
 Niam-niam : Ngaffoo.

31. *Felis maniculata*. Temm : Rüpp.  
 Dinka : Angow.  
 Dyoor : Bang, or Gwang.  
 Bongo : Mbira-oo.  
 Niam-niam : Dandalah.  
 Golo : Dahve.  
 Kiedy : Lehje.  
 Sehre : Sahte.  
 Mittoo : Ngorroh.
32. *Sciurus leucumbrinus*. Rüpp.  
 Dyoor : Aiyeda.  
 Bongo : Remme.  
 Niam-niam : Bederry.
33. *Sciurus superciliaris*. A. Wagn.  
 Dinka : Allohl.  
 Dyoor : Anynai.  
 Bongo : Urenge.  
 Niam-niam : Bamumba, or Bakumbah.  
 Golo : Angah.  
 Sehre : Serenna.
34. *Mus decumanus*. Pall.  
 Bongo : Luny.  
 Niam-niam : Gwah.
35. *Mus alexandrinus*. Geoffr.  
 Dinka : Lohk.  
 Bongo : Higgeh-roo, or Rohpattah.  
 Niam-niam : Babilly.  
 Kiedy : Ohtoh.  
 Sehre : Dyoo.
36. *Golunda pulchella*. Gray.  
 Dinka : Manyang.  
 Dyoor : Weeo.  
 Bongo : Yangah.  
 Niam-niam : Sikka.  
 Golo : Ngadze.  
 Mittoo : Gaggah.

37. *Meriones Burtonii*. A. Wagn.  
 Dinka: Maval kondo.  
 Dyoor: Omadda.  
 Bongo: Mokokoh, or Higgehnyakkah  
 Niam-niam: Zakadda.  
 Golo: Fyako.  
 Kredy: Iltee.  
 Sehre: Dyoo.
38. *Mus gentilis*. Brants.  
 Bongo: Mangbelle.  
 Niam-niam: Ndekkitelly.
39. *Aulacodus Swinderianus*. Temm.  
 Bongo: Bohko.  
 Dinka: Lony.  
 Dyoor: Nyanyahr.  
 Niam-niam: Remvo or Alimvoh.  
 Golo: Elle.  
 Sehre: Abattara.  
 Kredy: Mbadja.  
 Mittoo: Wohko.
40. *Lepus aethiopicus*. Ehrbg.  
 Dinka: Anyorr.  
 Dyoor: Ap-woio.  
 Bongo: Battah.  
 Niam-niam: Ndekutteh.  
 Kredy: Ohzo.
41. *Hystrix cristata*. L.  
 Dyoor: Shyow.  
 Bongo: Kehoa.  
 Niam-niam: Nzingeneh.
42. *Orycteropus aethiopicus*. Sundev.  
 Dyoor: Mohk.  
 Niam-niam: Kahre.
43. *Manis Temminckii*. Sund.  
 Dyoor: Kong.  
 Bongo: Konn.  
 Niam-niam: Bashishee.



44. *Elephas africanus*. Blum.  
 Dinka : Akoln.  
 Dyoor : Lyady.  
 Bongo : Kiddy.  
 Niam-niam : Mbarah.  
 Mittoo : Kiddy.  
 Golo : Offo.  
 Kredy : Morrongoh.  
 Sehre : Shah.
45. *Rhinoceros bicornis*. L.  
 Dyoor : Umwoh.  
 Bongo : Basha.  
 Niam-niam : Kangah.  
 Kredy : Gruruppo.
46. *Hippopotamus amphibius*. L.  
 Dinka : Nyang.  
 Dyoor : Fahr.  
 Bongo : Habba.  
 Niam-niam : Dupphoh.  
 Golo : Fyongoo.  
 Kredy : Mrungoo.  
 Sehre : Diffoh.
47. *Hyrax sp.*  
 Bongo : Mberedoo.  
 Niam-niam : Attaboo.  
 Lehsy : Keltoh.  
 Golo : Ngaffe.  
 Kredy : Ozo.  
 Sehre : Nogoun.
48. *Phacocharus Aeliani*. Rüpp.  
 Dinka : Dyehr.  
 Dyoor : Kull.  
 Bongo : Bohdoo.  
 Niam-niam : Tibba.  
 Mittoo : Wadoh.  
 Kredy : Bonghoh, or Boddoh.  
 Golo : Vungbah.  
 Sehre : Badzo.

49. *Potamocheerus penicillatus*. Gray.  
 Niam-niam : Mekkuroo, or Djomborr.  
 Monbuttoo : Napazo.
50. *Camelopardalis giraffa*. L.  
 Dinka : Mehr.  
 Dyoor : Wehr.  
 Bongo : Killiroo.  
 Niam-niam : Basumbarrighy.  
 Golo : Ndakkala.  
 Kredy : Govisisee.  
 Sehre : Bagga.
51. *Sus sennaariensis*. Fitz.  
 Dinka : Angow.  
 Dyoor : Amayok.  
 Bongo : Mondoh.  
 Niam-niam : Gurrwa.  
 Mittoo Madi : Legyeh.
52. *Antilope Oreas*. Pall.  
 Dinka : Golgwall.  
 Dyoor : Odyerr.  
 Bongo : Mburreh.  
 Niam-niam : Mburreh.  
 Mittoo : Kehr, or Mburreh.  
 Bellanda : Odehr.  
 Kredy : Kobbo.  
 Sehre : Kovo.  
 Golo : Kobbo.
53. *Antilope leucophæa*. Pall. (*Ægoceros*. Ham. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Amommi.  
 Dyoor : Ommar.  
 Bongo : Manya.  
 Niam-niam : Bisso.  
 Golo : Vunnungoo.  
 Bellanda : Omahr.  
 Sehre : Delngah.
54. *Antilope nigra*. Harris. (*Ægoceros*. Ham. Sm.)

55. *Antilope caama*. Gray. (*Aceronotus*. II. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Alalwehl.  
 Dyoor : Purroh.  
 Bongo : Karia.  
 Niam-niam : Songoroh, or Soggumoo.  
 Mittoo : Borro.  
 Golo : Kotzo.  
 Kredy : Kreia.  
 Sehre : Dangah.  
 Babuckur : Borro.  
 Monbuttoo : Nakkibbee.
56. *Antilope leucotis*. Licht. Peters. (*Kobus*. A. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Teel.  
 Dyoor : Teel.  
 Bongo : Kalah.  
 Niam-niam : Tagba.  
 Mittoo : Kalla.  
 Sehre : Boddy.  
 Kredy : Ngaio.  
 Golo : Ngallah.  
 Monbuttoo : Nehpedde.
57. *Antilope defassa*. Rüpp. (*Kobus*. A. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Pohr or Fohr.  
 Dyoor : Umooowoh.  
 Bongo : Booboo.  
 Niam-Niam : Mbagga.  
 Mittoo : Lehby.  
 Kredy : Adyee.  
 Golo : Boggo, or Weendy.
58. *Antilope megaloceros*. Heugl. (*Kobus*. A. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Abohk.
59. *Antilope arundinacea*. Gray. (*Eleotragus*.)  
 Dinka : Kao.  
 Dyoor : Rohr.  
 Bongo : Yolo.  
 Niam-niam : Yoro.  
 Golo : Ngallah.  
 Sehre : Dyiång.

60. *Antilope scripta*. Pall. (*Tragelaphus*. Blainv.)  
 Dinka : Pehr, or Fehr.  
 Dyoor : Rohro.  
 Bongo : Tobbo.  
 Niam-Niam : Boddy.  
 Golo : Kuffoo.  
 Mittoo : Ehboo.  
 Kredy : Leuje.  
 Sehre : Ya-oo, or Yavoh.  
 Bellanda : Rodda.
61. *Antilope Addax*. Licht.  
 Dinka : Anyidohl.  
 Bongo : Owel.
62. *Antilope senegalensis*. H. Lin. (*Dumalis*. Gray.)  
 Dinka : Tyang.  
 Dyoor : Tahng.  
 Bongo : Tanghe.
63. *Antilope madoqua*. Rüpp. (*Cephalolophus*. H. Sm. Hens.)  
 Dinka : Lohdy.  
 Dyoor : Nettyade.  
 Bongo : Heggoleh.  
 Mittoo : Kulleh.  
 Niam-niam : Bongbalyah.  
 Golo : Leffa.  
 Kredy : Kehdo.  
 Sehre : Ngogoh.  
 Shillook : Akony.
64. *Antilope grimmia*. Licht. (*Cephalolophus*. H. Sm.)  
 Dinka : Amook.  
 Dyoor : Nyepael.  
 Bongo : Deelg.  
 Niam-niam : Bafoo.  
 Mittoo : Lehloo.  
 Mittoo-Madi : Heeboo.  
 Sehre : Dec.
65. *Antilope pygmaea*. Licht. (*Cephalolophus*. H. Sm.)  
 Bongo : Mburrumoo.  
 Niam-niam : Mourrah.  
 Sehre : Nzerre.  
 Monbuttoo : Nelumbokoh.

66. *Antilope sp. minor rufescens.* (*Cephalolophus.* H. Sm.)  
 Bongo : Dongboh.  
 Niam-niam : Kohtumoh.
67. *Capra hircus.* L.  
 Dinka : Tomm (male); Tohk (female).  
 Dyoor : Byell.  
 Bongo : Binya.  
 Niam-niam : Wu-sindeh.  
 Mittoo : Oanya.  
 Golo : Orego.  
 Kredy : Ehne.  
 Sehre : Mvirry.  
 Monbuttoo : Memmeh.
68. *Ovis aries.* L.  
 Dinka : Amahl.  
 Dyoor : Rohmo.  
 Bongo : Romboh.  
 Kredy : Nhillimee.  
 Mittoo : Kameleh.  
 Sehre : Dzagga.
69. *Bos taurus.* L. (*B. Zebu, var. Africana.*)  
 Dinka : Welng (common); Tonu (male); Ngoot  
 (female).  
 Bongo : Shah.  
 Niam-niam : Hilty.  
 Mittoo : Ehshah.  
 Golo : Moddoh.  
 Kredy : Modoh.  
 Dyoor : Dyang.
70. *Bubalis Caffer.* Gray.  
 Dinka : Anyarr.  
 Dyoor : Dyoooy.  
 Bongo : Kobby.  
 Niam-niam : Mbah.  
 Golo : Meende.  
 Kredy : Sobbo, or Mbah.  
 Sehre : Mbah.



71. *Manatus senegalensis*. Desm. *M. Vogelii*?  
Nubians: Kharoof-el-Bahr.
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DOUBTFUL SPECIES, KNOWN ONLY FROM INFORMATION DERIVED FROM NATIVES.

72. *Sorex* sp.?  
Bongo: Higgeh Karia.
73. *Mus* sp.?  
Bongo: Mobiddy.
74. *Mus* sp.?  
Bongo: Highee Deeloo.
75. *Chrysochloris* sp.? (*Talpa*?)  
Bongo: Brumur.  
Niam-niam: Tundoah.

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
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