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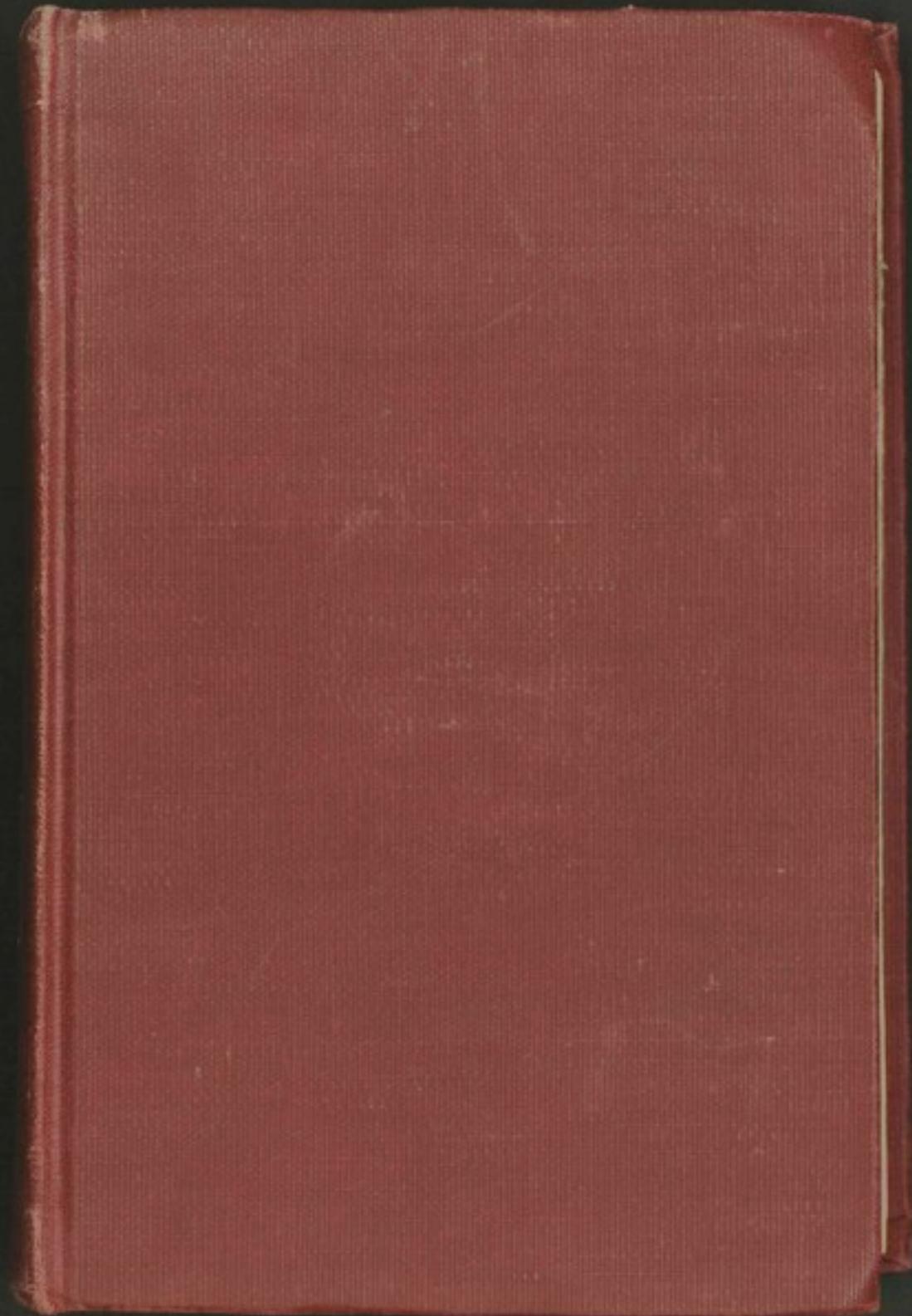
TANGANYIKA
TERRITORY

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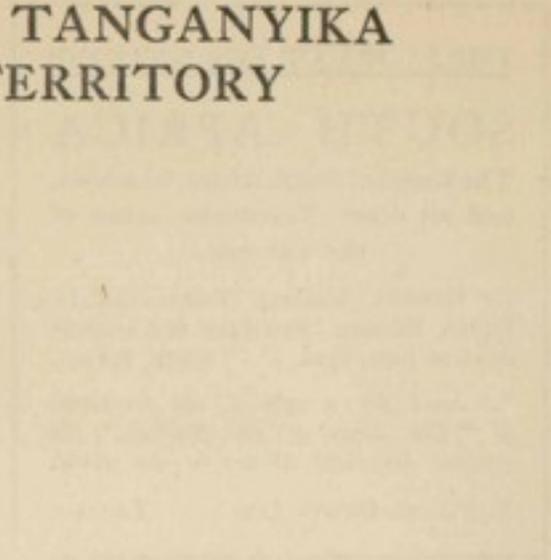
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THE TANGANYIKA TERRITORY



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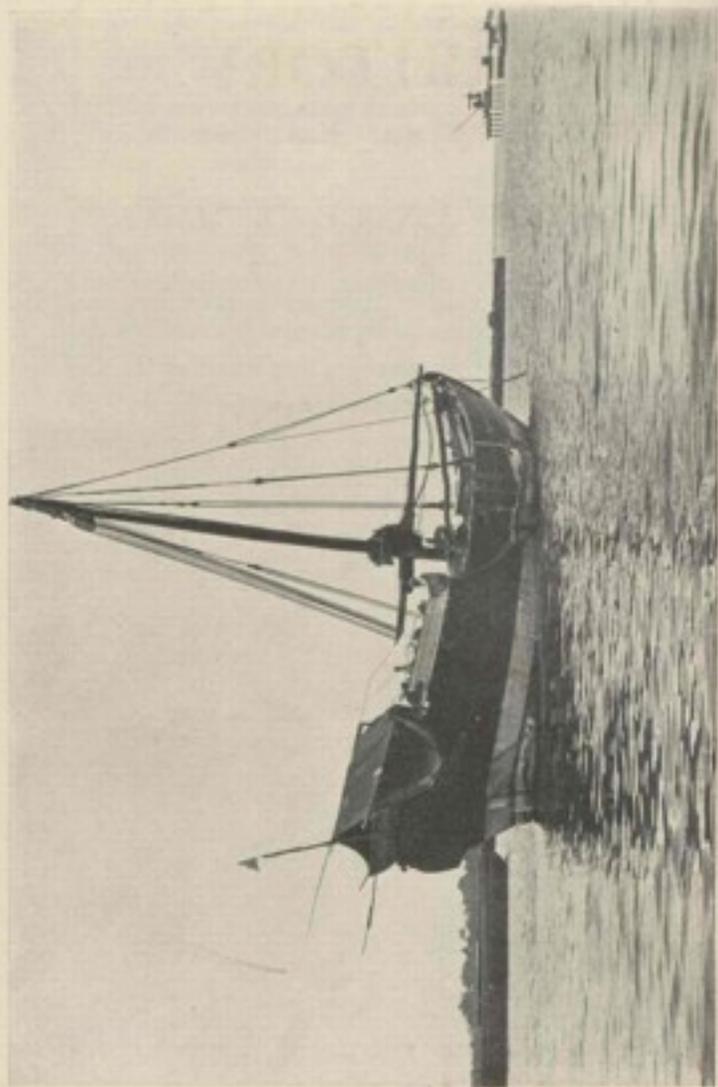
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THE TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

(FORMERLY GERMAN EAST AFRICA)

CHARACTERISTICS AND POTENTIALITIES

BY

F. S. JOELSON

WITH 17 ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD
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THE

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TO
MY MOTHER

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For permission to reproduce a number of the photographs in this volume I am indebted to several friends, especially to Messrs. J. Mitchell, A. Ross, and A. Pezzini.

I must also express my thanks to the Editors of the *African World* and of the *East African Standard*, in whose respective journals Chapters XIV and XIX appeared in a somewhat different form.

F. S. J.

FOREWORD

SINCE the days when Bismarck was forced by circumstances to cast aside his personal inclinations and to commit Germany to participation in the scramble for a "place in the sun" in Africa, the German East African Protectorate has been regarded by the sons of the Fatherland as their most valuable overseas possession. And without a doubt its potentialities are marvellous.

As a result of the World War this huge undeveloped land has come under our administration, and has been given the title of the Tanganyika Territory.

Yet to-day, despite the many volumes—most of them in German—which have been written by scientists, travellers, and settlers, the country of which Dar-es-Salaam is the capital remains largely a *terra incognita* to English readers. It has therefore been my endeavour in the succeeding pages to throw some light on the manner and problems of life in this tropical African mandatory, rather than merely to catalogue the physical and economic features of what will, I firmly believe, prove in future years to be a most important asset to the Empire and to civilization.

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THE TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

CHAPTER I

DAR-ES-SALAAM

SLOWLY the ship swings towards the coast. The fringe of land takes shape, and the white lighthouse, the dotted coral islands, and swaying palm-groves attract the traveller's eye. Before he has had time to feast his gaze on the green landscape that contrasts so strikingly with the burnt-up, khaki waste of Aden, and the sandy shores of Somaliland, the steamer is gliding at half-speed through the narrow buoyed channel, to the right of which lies the wreck of the German East African liner *Koenig*.

Once again German calculations were at fault, for this half-submerged iron skeleton was meant to obstruct the fairway, not to lie on one side as a monument to inefficiency. She was towed carefully to the middle of the channel, which should have been her bed ; but with so little skill was the explosive stored that when it was fired it drove her ashore at the harbour mouth, instead of rending her bottom and welcoming the inrush of the waters.

The short, dangerous passage safely traversed, we enter a broad, expansive harbour lined with feathery palms, flowering acacias, and glittering white buildings and godowns, of which the unpainted corrugated iron roofs catch and reflect the cruel glare of the pitiless sun.

There before the Customs House lies the sunken *Tabora*, the brand new liner that the enemy adorned with the Geneva flag and pretended to use as a hospital ship, what time he fixed gun-mountings for use on a less peaceful vocation. To the left stretches the palm-fringed creek that sheltered the *Feldmarschall* and other Teuton craft. Along the beach are moored dozens of high-pooped dhows, their creaking masts rolling drunkenly in the breeze. Smart sailing yachts, once the possessions of corpulent, beer-swilling German merchants, flit smoothly over the rippling waters, and from their spotless decks are wafted to us the happy laughter of English girls and the deeper but no less joyous chatter of English men.

It is a fit symbol of the passing of German domination, which is recalled vividly by the twisted, rusty iron of the wrecks. Once for all that era of iron has yielded to a kindly British administration, which, whatever its faults, raises a native population not a whit less contented than the happy yachters who are enjoying relaxation after the day's toil.

Tired eyes, strained with unceasing gazing from the shaded decks at the molten sea, rest gladly on the grateful green. Ears, used only to the monotonous lapping of the wavelets against the good ship's sides and to the thud-thud of the tireless engines, hail thank-

fully the rattle of the anchor-chains as the huge iron hook plunges through the placid blue to its abode.

The launch of the Port Officer fusses to the gangway. Other motor-boats follow, for the Britons exiled here lose no time in boarding the mail-boat, where news, gossip, a goodly dinner, and perchance a friend await them. There approaches a smart boat rowed in measured sweeps by six stalwart blacks, clad in white cotton jumpers and white shorts edged with broad blue braid, and bare as to the legs. At its stern flutters gaily the British ensign ; under its awning reclines at his ease on comfortable cushions a white-clad figure, the Medical Officer.

Behind struggles a group of native craft propelled by almost naked and vociferous negroes, their paddles flashing in the sunlight and then descending forcefully and rhythmically into the sea. Banter, shouts, and laughter are exchanged as one dug-out canoe draws ahead of its rivals, and its salesmen raise their chorus : " Bananas, sir. Very good. Very cheap. Mangoes. Very good."

Across the waters come strange monotonous chantings to the dull accompaniment of beaten drums and the staccato notes of hammered petroleum tins.

Tugs struggle painfully forward, dragging in their wake large steel lighters, on the gunwales of which squat or stand brawny native labourers. Soon the barges are alongside, and into their depths are lowered cases of whisky—pride of place must be given to this, to many a white man in the Tropics the most important " foodstuff " sent from home !—bales of cotton goods, bundles of corrugated iron sheets, and a hundred and

one of the other products which the undeveloped East must needs import from more advanced lands.

As to the hoarse cries of negro stevedores the loads descend, they are seized and stowed by sweating workmen, naked save for a dirty strip of cloth wound round the loins. Here and there a more pretentious fellow, probably of a villainous cast of countenance and of a plausible tongue, sports a torn khaki jacket, a battered sun-helmet, and an odd tennis shoe three sizes too large. Beside him stands a friend fashionably attired in an old check cap and a red cotton blanket wrapped toga-like round his dusky body. The headman, conscious to the full of his dignified office and of the inferiority of those under his commands, will probably be clothed in a white or khaki drill suit, though there is no saying whether his shaven head will be covered by a fez, a neatly embroidered skull-cap of fine linen, or a dented bowler lately discarded by a voyager for whom the unornamental headpiece was now useless.

While on the one side crates are lowered with screeching, shouting, and much waving of arms, on the other side like efforts are needed to effect the hauling inboard of bales of sisal fibre, cases of Ceara rubber rudely cured, sacks of ground nuts, and baskets of luscious fruits.

Up and down the creaking, dancing accommodation ladders pass and repass muscular natives bearing on their skulls or on their shoulders luggage of all shapes and sizes. Past these sweating humans, whose strong odour rises offensively to our delicate Western nostrils, we squeeze our way to the bottom platform, step smartly aboard a boat, lurch over the pile of boxes, portman-

teaux, and tropical cases that crowd the centre of the bobbing craft, and creep warily aft to the becushioned stern seats. Well for us if our curiosity does not force us to examine the settee that lies under the smart white cover on which we sit, for it is as costly silk garments encompassing and hiding from the eye of man a body diseased and unsightly.

When not another passenger and not another box can be crowded into the boat, or—if we are not new to the coast—if our promises and show of money convince the scantily-clad rowers that the trip ashore will satisfy their avaricious souls, they push their way from amongst the mass of boats and dug-outs in which we are entangled, half-swamping their neighbours in their vigorous and loud-voiced efforts. Idly we float round the stern of the ship through lovely blue water in which swim banana peelings and mangoes over-ripe.

Soon we set foot on the strange land to which our thoughts have turned so constantly. To the newcomer everything is bizarre and romantic, while even the old-timer returning after an absence cannot but feel a strange gladness to be back in the land of which the charm is so intangible but so real. To-day he could almost greet with effusion the white-robed Swahilis who pass ; to-morrow he will view them as his henchmen. Now he can scarcely forbear a friendly smile at the sight of the spotlessly arrayed native belles, who saunter nonchalantly and so gracefully among the chattering crowd ; within a day or two he will again regard them indifferently, probably noticing nothing about them but their splendid carriage, for that is indeed the

greatest charm of the dark-skinned ladies, a charm which never seems to grow less potent.

From the slipway our baggage is carried into a cool and lofty building, where a pale European in starched white linen sits mopping his moist brow. Round about him and in and out of high stacks of cases and bales flit half-a-dozen Goanese clerks in similar suits, in stiff white collars, and most of them bespectacled. But they have no monopoly of the clerical duties, for we notice a couple of patient *babus*, whose grave countenances are in sharp contrast with those of the nervous sons of Portuguese fathers and coloured women. We are in the Customs House.

As we emerge into the sunlight a cohort of slenderly-built but big-footed blacks in immaculate white or saffron robes, and wearing delicate crotchet-work skull-caps, make a rush at us. In irreproachable English they offer their services as guides. At least, the few words they shout seem proof that their knowledge of the language is limitless. If we have occasion to question them on the most simple matter, we shall find that most have no idea of our meaning. Those who do understand will proudly attribute their superior intelligence to their mission training, which, however, has not weaned them from the laziness, lying and petty theft in which almost all natives will indulge at the slightest opportunity. To regard them as the finished product of the missionary's endeavours is not fair, since in most cases they are boys who attended the school only, while some are probably reprobates whose evil conduct earned censure and expulsion from the station on which they had battered, in the pretence of learning about the

white man's God. But let the newcomer be warned of such rascals, who will not hesitate to make capital of their mission training.

However, it is immaterial whether we choose as guides natives who speak English or those who do not. If we are old East Africans returning, we shall pick one who does not—not that we want a guide, but that we need some one to see that our loads are brought to the hotel. If we are newcomers to Africa, we shall certainly engage one whose education—and, consequently, whose roguery—is more liberal; but had we selected one wholly ignorant of our tongue we need have had no fear, for his wonderful powers of divination would have proved equal to our needs.

Having amongst our number an old settler, we do not worry our heads about anything. Swiftly he picks out one of the fellows, and in a few sonorous Swahili words instructs him to see that our baggage, over which half a hundred would-be carriers are wrangling, is brought to the hotel. How they will settle their claims to the various loads we do not wait to see, secure in the knowledge that no thought of theft need alarm us, that the luggage will find its way in our wake, and that we shall be asked to pay four times the legal tariff for its transport. Thus soon shall we learn that the subtle art of over-charging is not confined to civilized lands.

Ignoring the invitations of the rickshaw boys to make the short journey in their light conveyances, we stroll in leisurely manner towards our goal. Before a week has passed we shall have fallen into the universal habit of taking a rickshaw whenever we wish to go a hundred yards or more, but now we are straight from

the liner and welcome the chance of stretching our cramped limbs on *terra firma*.

Within a few moments the guide has caught us up. Jauntily swinging his thin, crook-handled cane rhythmically with the flap-flop of his stout-soled Arab sandals, and now and then clearing for us a way through the throng by the utterance of the words "*Simillah, simillah!*"—a corruption of the injunction "In the name of Allah!"—he saunters majestically ahead.

The Kaiserhof, the splendid hotel of which the Germans were justifiably proud, for it is without doubt the best *caravanserai* between Port Said and Durban, is still a hospital; so we cannot lodge in the cool and lofty rooms that made the midday siesta a pleasure rather than an obligation carried out as a stern duty. But the Burger—why do the alien names remain to call to mind the recent dispossession of the Hun from the "Protectorate" which he treated as a land whose wealth must be exploited by the black for the sole benefit of the lordly Teuton?—will provide us with comfortable accommodation.

It is a two-storey stucco building with deep verandas and an open dining-room. Though the bedrooms are protected by wire gauze from the swarms of mosquitoes, lucky is the sojourner who does not find that a few of the ubiquitous insects have penetrated into his chamber. He may even find that the inconsequent boy who made the bed allowed one to remain inside the mosquito curtain. Almost all the walls are decorated with roughly-mounted antelope horns, while here and there hang fan-shaped a collection of fine Masai spears flanked by a pair of ornate ox-hide battle shields.



THE OFFICIAL QUARTER, DAR-ES-SALAAM.



IN THE NATIVE VILLAGE, DAR-ES-SALAAM.

To face p. 10.

CHAPTER II

ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

BEFORE the hotel stands a row of rickshaws, partly shaded by the glorious acacia trees now in full bloom. The moment that a white man walks towards the entrance, half-a-dozen of the vehicles dash across the road, swaying perilously, and are grounded with a jerk at the kerb, all the boys appealing clamorously for the fare. Selecting a smartly painted equipage drawn by a brawny savage, two of us step in. Off we dart. A second black disentangles himself from the jostling throng, falls in behind us and pushes. The jingling of a harsh-toned bell gives warning of our approach, which soon drops from a sprint to a jog-trot. So we take our first view of the capital of what was German East Africa.

It is a lovely town on a lovely land-locked harbour. The well-kept roads and streets are flanked by splendid avenues of acacias, mangoes, and palms, while even the native quarter is surprisingly orderly and neat.

Here are none of the quaint, narrow, tortuous lanes that make Zanzibar so bewildering, albeit cool and shady when the noonday sun blazes unpityingly out of a white-hot heaven; here are reproduced but few of the myriad noxious stinks that make Mombasa dwell

long in the memory ; and here are absent such numberless water-carriers as trot untiringly through the Mombasa streets, the petrol tins containing the precious fluid suspended from a bent and swaying pole that appears incapable of bearing its burden. Modern conceptions of hygiene and sanitation have not been outraged by old Arab-built edifices, which it has been impossible to destroy and replace by up-to-date houses erected under more healthy conditions. In old-fashioned Zanzibar and Mombasa, with their large and ignorant populations, a change so unpopular was not to be thought of seriously by the white man ; but the Germans on their arrival at Dar-es-Salaam were not so severely handicapped.

It was only during the sixties of the last century that the small village of Dar-es-Salaam was raised from the obscurity of an almost unknown settlement to the dignity of a capital by the decision of Seyid Majid, the then Sultan of Zanzibar and nominal suzerain of the mainland, to build a palace and to establish his court there during certain months of the year. This departure of the potentate naturally led a number of his entourage and those who sought the protection or custom of the mighty ruler to provide themselves with residences near at hand ; and for a while the sleepy outskirts of the peaceful settlement resounded to the cries and blows of domineering Arab slave-drivers who wished their new abodes to rise speedily to completion. While it lasted the Seyid's enthusiasm was deep, and even went so far as to employ Mackinnon, an Englishman, to build a broad road ten feet wide through the heavy jungle that encircled the town. For some

twelve miles the well-made track stretched itself to Pugu in the Uzaramo Mountains.

In a short time, however, the Sultan tired of his novel plan, and re-established his court permanently on the clove-garden island which had been the seat of government of so many of his forbears. Dar-es-Salaam reverted to its erstwhile quiet and uneventful mode of life, and it was thus that it was found in 1887 by the twenty Europeans who formed the first German expedition to the mainland. The town numbered but a score or two of Arabs and some three thousand natives.

Thus, when German domination was firmly established—not without a deal of bloodshed that might have been avoided by less ill-advised conduct on the part of the new colonial officials—and when the chartered company, to which concessions had been granted, wished to build stores and houses for its servants, it had the choice of many useful sites. Profiting by the experience of Zanzibar, where the natural site for the town was entirely in Arab hands, the Germans set apart special areas for the construction solely of European business and dwelling houses; and as the years passed and the need for more space became insistent, a Government that regarded the blacks as destined by a kindly Providence to act as handservants to the lordly whites did not scruple to expropriate them from the coveted spots that they had occupied for years, and to restrict them to a well-defined location. By this means it was possible to evolve out of the capital of their new colony a model town of which they might well be proud. Without doubt it was the cleanest,

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most progressive, and best built settlement on the East African coast.

The two main streets could show fine stone business premises that were a credit to their owners and an inducement to the shopper to visit. He might rest assured that his wants would not remain unsatisfied. Bush knives or bath towels, copper wire or Cape wines, gaudy cottons or golden champagne, castor oil or caviare, camp tables or coloured glasses, curry or curry combs—all were to be found. If he wanted curios, he had but to enter one of the many Indian, Goanese, or Cingalese shops, and pick according to his fancy and his pocket from among the wonderful ivory carvings, ebony models, silver figures, or brass images. Curios truly East African, except native weapons and horns and skins, were not easily come by, so travellers had perforce to choose from importations from the other shore of the Indian Ocean.

Let us turn our backs on the prosaic, if palatial, business quarter, and see what lies along the coast. We pass the arresting statue of Major von Wissmann, the explorer and first Imperial German Commissioner for East Africa. With set features he looks toward the interior in which he loved to wander. Couchant at his feet is a lion, over which an *askari*, a native soldier, is spreading the German flag, that infamous tricolour that, wherever it was hoisted in Africa, meant for the simple savage a thralldom more cruel than slavery.

This work of sculpture serves as a useful reminder that the British Lion lay motionless while Germany, personified by the unscrupulous Karl Peters and his associates, was allowed to annex a huge domain against

the repeatedly expressed wishes of the Sultan of Zanzibar, the ruler of the coast and its indefinite hinterland. At long last, a quarter of a century later, that British Lion was forced to abandon its lethargy and fight to the death for its life. Now it stands triumphant over the mangled remains of a vanquished foe. But such is the way of the Briton that the German statue, erected as a tribute to the soldier-administrator, and now reminiscent of a colonial empire's decline, is permitted to remain almost in the heart of the town.

The lion of the monument recalls an incident related to me by a missionary friend, who had worked in German East Africa for some ten years prior to the outbreak of the war, and who was imprisoned by the enemy authorities after hostilities had commenced. One day he was asked by an intelligent native why the German flag bore the figure of an eagle—or vulture, as he termed it. It having been explained that the bird was the national emblem of the Teutons, the boy, who had never left the German colony, in which he had been born, inquired what symbol the English had. On being told that it was the lion, he remained silent for several moments. Then he said thoughtfully :

“ Yes, the eagle picks up the scraps that the lion leaves ! ”

Such were the relative attributes which the British and the Germans seemed to this black German subject to possess.

To return to the subject in hand.

We move swiftly and silently but for the clang of the rickshaw bell though a long boulevard, crossed regularly at right angles by other shady roads. Standing

back a little way in neat gardens of graceful palms, dainty casuarina, sweet-smelling franzipani, and purple bougainvillea, rise splendid bungalows of one or two storeys, each with its broad verandas enclosed in mosquito proof wire gauze and with its separate kitchen and servants' quarters.

An extensive botanical garden lures one towards the coast, overlooking which stand the massive dome-capped hospital and the ruins of the Governor's palace. It is verily but a ruin, for grass grows in the courtyard and bats have their home in the roofless structure that is still a monument to broken faith. Towards the end of 1914 several boatloads of British naval men, who had entered the harbour of Dar-es-Salaam under the white flag, were treacherously attacked and a number of them taken prisoners. Retribution followed hard on the responsible evildoer, in that at dawn next day our cruisers subjected his residence to a little fire from six and twelve-inch guns. Mayhap a future British Governor will have a dwelling on this ideal spot open to the zephyrs of the Indian Ocean, but no more will an arrogant Teuton pace the terraces and ponder on the millions of blacks subject to his merest whim; for the German Governor was an autocrat bound by but few and indefinite enactments. In practice he was almost beyond the law.

Within a stone's throw are the principal offices of the central administration, solid, ample, yet beautiful buildings that strike the keynote of the late owners, for whom expense was not curtailed by thoughts of revenue or economy. Everywhere throughout the land are to be seen pretentious edifices unwarranted by the

state of development of the young country, where in a British colony of similar age humble huts of sun-dried brick or sheds of corrugated iron would be made to serve the purpose. Certainly the officials quartered in the excellent dwelling houses and forts did not complain of too great a measure of comfort ; but, had less attention been paid to the erection of such stately, costly, and unnecessary piles, and the same amount of energy directed into other channels, the colony would have been much more advanced and less in need of annual subsidies from the homeland. Now, however, many a British District Commissioner in this newly acquired territory compares with glee the quarters that he has inherited from the late but not lamented Herr Hun to the much less commodious dwelling that houses a brother official in the neighbouring Kenya Colony.

CHAPTER III

THE NATIVE TOWN

AT right angles to Acacia Avenue, the main business thoroughfare, run a number of streets lined with shops, that are perhaps more accurately described as booths. Each is kept by a Banyan, for the native retail trade of East Africa is almost exclusively in the hands of these grasping, unscrupulous Indians, who shun no methods of self-advancement once they have enmeshed the unsuspecting, trusting native in their toils.

Living in squalor at the rear of the shop or in the very store itself, feeding on rice and curry, hoarding every cent gained, with the exception of what he spends on finery for his wife and children, it is but a short while before the hitherto penniless trader finds himself in comfortable circumstances. Even then he does not put into circulation a large portion of his profits, and thus benefit in turn the country that has enriched him, but ships his hoarded wealth to the land of his birth, whither he means to follow it as soon as he has accumulated what he considers a sufficiency.

Such being the almost invariable practice of these merchants, it explains why they are regarded by the white community as an unhealthy, dangerous growth, tending to check or choke the young tree of commerce

in these undeveloped lands, which so sorely need the faith and capital of the pioneers to bring them to their rightful place. He who has reaped a rich reward from the new country should be prepared to use at least a fair portion of his wealth in its exploitation, rather than to send all his earnings back to his native land to be buried like the unused talents of the parable.

Indeed, so suspicious are the Banyans that it is but seldom they remit money by the banks. More frequently it is conveyed by relatives or friends who are returning to India, though I have known several instances of large sums of silver rupees being concealed in consignments of *ghee*, or clarified butter, packed in petroleum tins! With the miser's care and subtlety they hide the fact of their well-being from the eyes of their fellow-man.

Let us stroll down the street towards the market-place.

Before the Indian shops stand veiled women gorgeously arrayed in wondrously bright silks and boasting massive gold necklaces, bangles and anklets. Round them play their dark-eyed youngsters in gaudy dress, and wearing on their sleek-haired head the inevitable pill-box-like hat. In the shop lounges on an upturned oil case the indolent and dirty husband, whose appearance seems more in keeping with his dingy *duka* and its grubby assortment of spices and cottons, umbrellas and cigarettes, pickles and coloured baubles, rice and snuff, smelly, sun-dried shark, and cheap enamel basins, than with the fine raiment of his spouse and offspring.

Each of the smaller stores is almost an exact replica

of its neighbours, both as to contents and as to dustiness. Though stocked principally, of course, with the native trade goods most in demand, it is astonishing to find what unexpected articles sometimes line the shelves, especially of the larger shops. Well-known home brands of tea, biscuits, jams, pickles, and chocolates are sure to be found without much difficulty, and even such odds and ends as a lone packet of photographic printing paper, a tablet of arsenical soap, a fountain pen filler, or a bottle of an obscure patent medicine may sometimes be discovered. How they got there or why they were purchased is more than can be elicited from the apologetic shopkeeper, who, moreover, readily admits that he does not know what they are or what they ought to cost. If the *bwana* needs them, let him pay what he thinks fit. This much the sallow trader recognizes readily enough, that the white man will pay a fair price if he decides to take any of the unknown articles; but it does not prevent him from attempting to extort an absurd figure for the biscuits, chocolates, or such other goods of which he knows the value. In the end, of course, he is brought to reason, though he swears that he is selling under cost. Nevertheless he presses one to take more tins than one requires, so parting with stock at a loss is evidently profitable!

While we have rummaged with curiosity through his dirty shelves, he has attended to a number of negro customers, whose wants are much less easy to satisfy than may be supposed. Furaisha buys two cents' worth of cigarettes (six cents equal a penny) with no more fuss than you, reader, would make over buying a daily paper, yet when it comes to a fancy waistcoat

to wear over his white *kanzu*, a garment like a night-shirt, the matter needs due consideration on his part and a deal of discussion with his friends. Having examined every waistcoat in the place and bargained keenly as to prices, he has appeared at times to be almost persuaded on a certain tastefully worked creation, but at last he leaves without having made the purchase. Though they cannot agree on the price, neither the merchant nor the prospective buyer is at all upset; well they know that Furaisha will probably return later and that the haggling will recommence with unabated vigour.

To him the bargaining is half the pleasure of shopping, a fact of which the Banyan is well aware. His Oriental patience allows him to take full advantage of it, for by showing a disposition to discuss terms he is pleasing the black, to whose nature it is foreign to set a fixed price on an article. Barter is in his very blood. For long centuries it has been the method by which the surplus products of one tribe have been exchanged for those of another, an exchange that can be effected only after interminable talk.

This readiness to haggle for hours, sometimes for days, on end is one of the characteristics which render it impossible for the European to compete with the Indian as a retailer of native truck, for the former is by nature unable to indulge in such endless seances. His patience under the most favourable conditions was never equal to that of the half-civilized coolie; now it has been badly frayed by residence in the Tropics, where molehills of annoyances at once assume the bulk of mountains. Two other reasons are partly respon-

sible for there being no white retailers in this part of Africa: firstly, the European's cost of living is high, while his coloured competitor lives "on the smell of an oil rag"; secondly, he will not as a rule stoop to the low practices by which quick profits are made.

As we approach the market we see crowds of careless folk strolling sedately towards this gathering-place, for now, between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, business is at its height. From before dawn women, laden with the produce that their steady labours have brought forth for the enrichment of their idle husbands, have been wending their way from the plantations with baskets of oranges, mangoes, pawpaws, and pine-apples, bunches of bananas, and bundles of sweet potatoes, and such other vegetables and fruits as flourish in this tropical land. With them they have brought a few odd eggs and a couple of lean, lanky native fowls, which, their legs tied together, have been thrown unconcernedly on one side, there to flutter unhappily until a purchaser takes them home and releases them from their torment.

Fish, firewood, empty bottles, gourds, cooking pots, snuff, cigarettes, spices, sweet-smelling oils, henna, betel-nut, coconuts, mats, baskets, and scores of other things are all eagerly sought, but perhaps with rather less eagerness and clamour than the *pombe*, or native beer, beloved of the black. Here on the coast the strong, almost colourless wine that is drawn by tapping from the crown of the beautiful coconut palm is drunk by many, but up-country the more wholesome, less fiery *pombe* is the universal beverage in times of plenty and on festive occasions.

In and out amongst the stalls saunter attractive women attired in rich flaming silks, black cottons or blue prints of strange designs, designs which change as rapidly and as unaccountably as do ladies' fashions in more advanced lands. Neither are the dusky belles behind their fairer sisters in the obstinacy with which they turn from last season's creations. If we doubt the matter, we have merely to question the manager of a firm of wholesale importers, who will reveal to us some of the astounding secrets of Dame Fashion.

This cloth was *de rigueur* for a few weeks ; that held sway for as many moons ; while that other proved unsaleable almost from the start, though why it is impossible to say. Fantastic are the patterns, some of which seem to be the creation of a disordered brain. Here on the pretty light blue background are four bicycles, one in each corner ; there is a dead lion as the central figure, with a porcupine on either side ; another features a row of gaudy bottles ; a fourth might be a cunning advertisement for a well-known watch ; the fifth depicts a negro gentleman beneath a wide-spreading umbrella ; the next declares in gay letters that the wearer is a *bibi mzuri*, a piece of flattery dear to the lady's heart ; and so on *ad infinitum*. There appear to be no rules as to designs. Everything conceivable is reproduced for the approval or otherwise of the fastidious negresses, whose taste it is out of the question to anticipate. Time alone will show the value and suitability of any given pattern. Some have even been known to fail entirely when first introduced to the market, though a year or two later for no apparent reason they may cause a boomlet. Those who have the

cloth in stock will sell it at top prices, but by the time a fresh supply can be expected from home the demand will probably have exhausted itself as quickly as it started.

These cloths are worn by the women in the usual Swahili style, one wrapped tightly round the breast and hanging half-way between the knees and the ankles, and the other flung loosely over the shoulders or head as a shawl. Often the second is wound round the hips, leaving the shoulders as bare as the arms or feet, all of which glisten in the sunlight ; and the shiny skin, whether of ebony or copper hue, is almost as attractive as the proud, graceful carriage which so well becomes these African maidens.

The toilet has been no hurried affair, for aromatic oils have had to be employed to freshen the black skin ; the short hair has had to be plaited in eight or ten neat ribs running from the forehead to the back of the neck ; the bored lobes of the ears have been stretched to accommodate discs of multi-coloured, shimmering paper ; the nose has been ornamented with silver or gilded buttons, not unlike a fancy brass-headed nail ; and gaudy bracelets, armlets, necklets and anklets have had to be put on. Only then are Hadidja, Zabibu, Fatuma, Zaafarani and their friends ready for the morning promenade.

As the women make their purchases banter passes lightly from mouth to mouth, not infrequently seizing as its butt some peculiarity of a male acquaintance or of a stranger who happens along. Remarks which to the European ear seem senseless or inane draw forth shrieks of shrill and long-sustained laughter, while

equal amusement is caused by indelicate expressions, which would shock a civilized person, but the obscenity of which is entirely lost on these children of Nature. To them the allusion is merely a joke, for the coy, blushing damsel of the West has no counterpart amongst the swarthy females of the African bush.

In the question of outspokenness on topics usually avoided, or at least approached with care by the white man, we recognize perhaps more forcibly than at any other time how great a gulf divides us psychologically from these natives whom we would study. The spoken word reveals their characteristic ideas better than anything else, and in order properly to appreciate them we must regard matters from the native standpoint, seeking strenuously to banish from the mind our ingrained prejudices and preconceptions. Without a good knowledge of the language, mind, life and passions of the native, it is impossible to judge if these lightly bandied phrases are indecent, for mere superficial estimation is useless to us and unjust to our subjects. When we have lived long enough amongst East African tribes, we shall not class them as immoral—of course, still looking at the question from the point of view of the black. Perchance we may be inclined to call them non-moral, but that is rather their misfortune than their fault. For the moment, however, we will acquit the ladies just introduced into the picture of any unmannerly, unworthy conduct.

Their shopping done, they stroll laughingly and unhurriedly from the busy, bustling, buzzing throng of the market-place to the more peaceful native quarter. Before the mud-walled, palm-thatched huts that they

pass squat cross-legged pleasant Swahili women, patiently plaiting neat straw mats of various colours, rolling discs of coloured tissue paper with which to ornament their ears, submitting to the painful and protracted process of having their short, frizzy hair combed and plaited in the fashion they fancy, or engaged in some other occupation that shall enrich their lordly husbands or beautify themselves.

Here we see a group of men idly chatting, what time a companion climbs swiftly to the tufted top of a coconut palm to draw off the bluish-white fluid that gives the intoxicating palm wine. Across the palm-flanked road—for in this pleasant town of avenues even the streets of the native location are boulevards—half-a-dozen youths are gambling with pebbles at a game much like our "pitch and toss," while to their left a pair of friends are deeply absorbed in an intricate ball game. There sits a grey-beard, mumbling dutifully to himself the well-remembered words of the Koran, apparently forgetful that only last night he half-killed one of his wives, partly as a punishment for her laziness and partly as a reminder of his authority. On the next veranda stands a schoolboy, engaged in the task of perusing the primer that he has just learnt to read.

From the rear of many of the houses comes the regular dull thud-thud, thud-thud, thud-thud, caused by women stamping grain in large wooden mortars. The long pestle poles rise and fall with monotonous regularity as the perspiring housewives bend to their work. See, a scraggy chicken that has been pecking fearlessly around the foot of the mortar flutters on to its rim in search of more plentiful and nourishing food. Kwa



INDIAN BAZAAR, DAR-ES-SALAAM.



A MOSQUE, DAR-ES-SALAAM.

Usiku misses her stroke and swings her pole towards the intruder, which promptly drops again to the husk-flecked earth and resumes its feeding, secure in the knowledge that the wrath of the mistress will not pursue it.

Across the back of one of the three women pounders is slung a cloth with a sleeping babe not more than a few months old. So from its earliest days it learns its mother's work, remaining with her when she stamps the grain, hoes the plantation, hews firewood, draws water and cooks her master's food.

Such in brief is the picture presented to the eye of the traveller as he walks through the native town.

CHAPTER IV

TO THE INTERIOR BY THE CENTRAL RAILWAY

FROM the steaming coast belt with its dense tropical vegetation and its trackless mangrove swamps, its fairy palms and its welcome sea breezes, the Central Railway climbs gradually to Morogoro, in the higher, richer bush country in which plantations of Ceara rubber, sisal, cotton and kapok have proved successful.

Nowadays, with the rubber market so depressed, it is impossible for the crude Ceara to compete with the more valuable Para, which can be produced in Ceylon and the Malay States more economically than can the inferior species here ; consequently, many a plantation that was the source of a fair income a year or two before the war is to-day a white elephant. Indeed, on the journey up-country we shall pass through a number of derelict estates, whose German owners fell in action, succumbed to the unkindly climate, or were unable to continue financing a venture that gave little promise of an adequate return.

In these can be seen at a glance the need of a thorough-going weeding, for young saplings are everywhere thrusting their lank lengths towards the light

and cumbering and weakening the earth that should feed their parents. In the younger clearings the seedlings jostle each other so thickly as to stunt the growth of the planted trees, but in the older areas the thick leafy crowns of the sightly rubber trees have met to prevent the penetration of the sun's rays to the earth. As a result the undergrowth is much less luxurious, though it is still heavy enough to astonish the eye of one accustomed only to the tangled thickets of an English wood.

The sisal planters—mostly Greeks—have, on the other hand, reaped a golden harvest during the past few years, for their fibre, which in 1914 was considered to fetch a goodly figure at about twenty-six pounds per ton, was selling on the London market four years later at almost four times as much. Cotton, except at Kilossa, has scarcely justified the optimistic predictions that induced the German Government to foster its cultivation by the natives, to whom suitable seed was distributed free, and whose gardens were regularly inspected by travelling overseers and advisers. Kapok has been grown only as a side-line, and, though much of the silky flock could be disposed of locally at a good price for the manufacture of bedding and saddles, this tree cotton cannot be said to have been grown on a commercial scale. I know of only one fair-sized estate devoted principally to kapok—at Nyakisiku on the Rufiji River—and there the owner had to eke out a commensurate return by crops of maize, millet, *mhogo*, and beans.

At the first few stations after leaving Dar-es-Salaam we find many fruit-sellers, who offer pineapples, mangoes,

bananas, pawpaws, and oranges to the travellers, who, be it noted, usually descend at each stop to stretch their limbs. Unconcernedly marching up and down the platform, which is just a clearing at the side of the track, they perform their peregrinations, barter with eager and voluble natives, or exchange a word with their personal servants, who are travelling third-class; then a blast on a whistle tells them it is time to return to their coupés. With a scurry and much shouting and pushing the natives clamber aboard their coaches; more sedately the leisurely Europeans swing themselves up the short ladders, and away goes the iron horse with its weighty freight.

A run of between three and four hours brings us to Ruvu, where we still see signs of the massive iron bridge that was destroyed in the autumn of 1916 by the retiring German forces. Pressed back from the sea at Bagamoyo, harassed on the flank by patrols operating from the coast road, and cut off from communication with the main body in the Uluguru Mountains, all that remained for them was a retirement to the south. First they blew the middle span out of the bridge; then they coupled up engines, passenger and goods coaches, and Red Cross carriages, and sent them careering from the opposite sides of the track into the watery chasm that yawned far below. All the rolling stock being thus disposed of, the remaining parts of the structure were destroyed, but, curiously enough, the solid stone piles on which it rested stand intact.

Here and at many another point the Germans did their work of demolition with thoroughness and ingenuity. It is therefore all the stranger that they

should in Morogoro and Tabora have been content to remove and bury certain indispensable parts of the machinery, the resting-places of which were speedily betrayed by the natives to the Allies on their arrival. Thus the paralysing effect on our transport was not quite as severe as the enemy had expected, though it must be admitted that he carried out the work of destruction very efficiently. Indeed, every culvert and bridge between Dar-es-Salaam and Morogoro, nearly a hundred and twenty miles inland, was rendered unserviceable.

The splendid stations are very striking to one who has seen the utilitarian but unornamental buildings that serve on a young British-built colonial railway. Here even the smallest wayside halt is marked by a two-storey house, though the reason for such extravagance is far to seek. Suffice it to say that the first stage of this railway made the fortunes of many unscrupulous German and Greek contractors, who took full advantage of the laxity with which the inexperienced Government officials had drawn up the contracts.

A man who had engaged to build the track from A to B, finding that his tender was showing him a handsome profit per kilometre, and anxious to make as much as possible without undue trouble to himself, would introduce unnecessary curves in order to lengthen his mileage and increase his gains. So prevalent was this in some places, particularly within the first hundred miles of the coast, that what should have been a straight embankment became a series of S's and double S's. The contracts having stipulated merely that So-and-so was to build the track between A and B at such-and-

such a price per kilometre, the defrauded Government had no remedy.

Determined to be done with such robbery, the next series of contracts provided that stations should be paid for at cost price plus a certain percentage to the contractor. Again such a stipulation did not deter the avaricious, who, instead of waiting till railhead reached the place where the building was to be erected and then despatching the necessary materials to the very spot by train, started to send forward the stuff while railhead was still ten, twenty, aye, and even thirty miles from the site. Then the huge baulks of timber, heavy barrels of cement, cumbersome bales of corrugated iron, and the scores of things that were necessary were transported through the bush by native carriers, who often had the utmost difficulty in moving the ponderous, unwieldy loads. Head carriage, always the most expensive form of transport, thus absorbed huge sums which might have been eliminated entirely from the cost. In short, everything was done to increase as much as possible the outlay incurred in erection, and thus to swell the contractor's commission.

Had it not been so serious, the situation would have been Gilbertian. Doubtless one of the reasons that prevented the Government from disclosing the causes of the excessive cost of the line was the fact that they would have been holding up to public ridicule their own ineptitude. However, the costly lesson was learnt, and before further stretches of track were built the ground was surveyed, re-surveyed, and sometimes examined a third or fourth time, so that there might be ample guarantees that the State would

not be defrauded barefacedly, as it had been in the past.

In a few of the larger stations white railway officials were employed, but in the wayside ones, which are frequently nothing more than the station building and a cluster of perhaps a dozen native huts in a clearing in the impenetrable thorn bush, a Hindu or Goanese clerk does duty as station and postmaster combined.

There once came into my hands an I.O.U. written by one of these Goanese station-masters—who usually proudly proclaim themselves as Portuguese. The remarkable document, embellished by numerous flourishes, read thus :

"This note is to reform you that i owe and expect to pay forty rupees for a lion hide and that no further shall be say untill paid."

Certainly it did not give the creditor much cause to anticipate a speedy liquidation of the debt, though it illustrated well enough the measure of intelligence and education possessed by the average coloured clerk.

At frequent intervals along the track there are to be seen cement-covered mounds or rude wooden crosses that mark the last resting-place of some blighted life. In particularly deadly spots one will see a row of graves, which are still kept free of weeds and undergrowth, for the white man in tropical Africa is jealous of his dead. Of those Europeans whose decaying bones mark the railroad route—and it is said that each of the twelve hundred kilometres claimed at least one white sacrifice—many a one was struck down in his vaunted health by the dreaded blackwater fever, a malady that often

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carried off the unhappy sufferer within twenty-four hours of the manifestation of the disease, which, as the name implies, is distinguished by discolouration of the urine.

With the rapid advancement of tropical medical knowledge, this scourge is much less to be feared to-day than it was ten years ago, when it was regarded as almost certain death. That so few recovered in the old days was probably due in great measure to the then usual methods of treatment, which have since been demonstrated to have been not only inefficacious but more dangerous than even the disease itself. It was in those days considered necessary to transport the patient to the nearest doctor, who fed him, if he were still alive, with champagne and frequent doses of quinine. To-day it is recognized that movement of any sort is to be avoided and that the sufferer must not even sit up in bed; a journey to a doctor is discountenanced except over a very short distance, and only then if great care is taken that the stretcher or hammock is carried with the minimum of swaying. Alcohol is taboo except under certain conditions, and quinine is given only when the water is clear, and then in infinitesimal quantities. In the light of present-day experience one wonders that any survived; certainly it must have been in spite of, not because of, the old methods of treatment. Nowadays complete rest, no quinine, constant sipping of weak tea or any other non-alcoholic beverage, and good nursing are admitted to be the milestones on the road to recovery.

Blackwater, though doubtless the worst ailment to which the European in East Africa is subject, was by no

means the only one. Death's angels were ever busy along the railway track, and each in his turn and season claimed his company of victims. Malaria, Dysentery, Tick Fever, Typhoid, were the names of those most diligent in search of prey; more seldom Sleeping Sickness and Elephantiasis laid their cold clammy hands on the white workers, bidding them cease their labours and follow them hence.

Many an old stager, inured to hardships and impatient of precautions that savoured of coddling, has at last had to pay the full penalty; the same exacted of the careful white whose careless cook disregarded his oft-repeated and strict injunctions always to boil and filter the drinking water, with the result that the master's vitality and life was sapped by dysentery. Many an ambitious youth just out from home, the fresh healthy bloom not yet faded from his cheeks, has yielded up the ghost in the restless delirium of high fever, at once his first and last attack.

Such deaths were frequent occurrences, but a more fruitful and a sadder cause was without doubt too great indulgence in strong liquors. Naturally, it was very rarely, if ever, that death was attributed thereto, but there can be little question in the mind of the unbiassed observer that many parts of equatorial Africa regarded as death-traps are much less dangerous to the moderate drinker than to the inveterate imbibor. In this trying climate temperance in all things is essential if one is to retain a fair measure of health. In fairness it must be admitted that in the solitude of the wilds, where other diversions—even that of conversation with a fellow European—are often unattainable, there

is an added temptation to partake too freely of something that will for the moment dispel that heavy feeling of gloominess and loneliness. So let us not be too hard on the poor fellow who seeks forgetfulness in whisky. Well he knows that, just as a peg or two at sundown act as a welcome pick-me-up after the day's toil, so do innumerable tots weaken the body, as they have already undermined the will. In spite of himself he turns to the bottle that is his worst enemy.

One railway construction engineer I knew who had lived in East Africa for seventeen years without a break, and who was never ill, except for a passing touch of malaria. Yet his diet was practically restricted to bananas, biscuits, black coffee, strong cigars, and Scotch whisky, of which he drank from two to three bottles a day; on days that he thought worthy of celebration he would himself dispose of nearly four! This extraordinary individual used jovially to recommend his acquaintances to "Take a couple like I do; then the mosquitoes won't sting you. They gave up worrying me when they found that I'd got whisky instead of blood in my veins!"

Such a notable exception does not alter the fact that excessive drinking in the Tropics is worse than folly, and is often the cause of illness for which the climate is blamed.

But to return to the railway.

After reaching Morogoro, a pretty but pestilential township nestling at the foot of the tall and rugged Uluguru Mountains, we pass into grassy plains, where waving dom palms flourish as far as the eye can reach. Then this gives place to open park-land, dotted here and

there with a cattle kraal. In the umbrella-shaped, spiky trees hang hundreds of the neat nests of weaver birds, while ever and anon we come to a swampy, water-lily-covered and narcissus-scented stretch of land more sparsely treed and apparently untrod by man or beast.

By the time one approaches Kilossa the stifling heat of the day has turned to cold so intense that those new to the cruel contrasts of Africa are exceedingly surprised. Now heavy overcoats and thick woollen blankets are unrolled by those who have had the foresight to bring them, for without such covering sleep will be out of the question. By raising the back of each seat, the compartment is turned into four bunks on which the tired travellers try to woo the goddess Sleep. Lucky the man who is not spurned! If one is of the number of those happy beings who can sleep anywhere, if one has sufficient blankets, and if one has not forgotten a mosquito-net, perchance slumber may come. Otherwise all one's efforts will be in vain. True, the coaches are fitted with small mesh wire gauze to keep out mosquitoes and tsetse flies. This evening will afford proof that the ubiquitous blood-suckers are not so easily excluded; to-morrow will show that the mottled grey flies that wreak such havoc in the herds manage to force their way into the carriages, where they amuse themselves by sticking into the passenger something that feels like a red-hot needle.

When the black night fades into the half-light of dawn, that so quickly turns to the brightness of the full day, we find ourselves steaming noisily through

grass lands. Perhaps we may catch a glimpse of herds of game brousing unconcernedly within rifle shot of the railway, to which they have grown accustomed. If luck is kindly, a pretty red impala or an inquisitive giraffe may reward our eager gaze ; more probably the ungainly wart-hog and a troop of tawny baboons, easily mistaken for lions, will be the first wild animals we spot. Only rarely can a lion be seen from the train, though he is no rare dweller in this country.

Indeed, some time ago a troop of twelve of them marched on to Ruvu Station in broad daylight and entertained themselves for a while by pacing slowly backwards and forwards. The station staff had taken refuge in the top storey of the stone building, where they remained without firing a shot until the majestic beasts grew weary of their sport and retired as silently and as unexpectedly as they had come. Not infrequently rhinoceroses have strayed on to the line, and, annoyed by the strange, rumbling mass that moved towards them, have charged the train—with results unpleasant to the valorous but indiscreet pachyderms. Giraffes, timid and inoffensive by nature, are often a source of worry to the railway telegraphists, for with their long, unwieldy necks they brush against the wires and destroy them. To make it impossible for them to do such damage, the wires are now affixed, in some places where giraffes are particularly numerous, to extraordinarily high poles, but hitherto it has not been practicable to take these measures except in isolated districts.

As the rising sun drives the prowling lions back to their lairs, and dries the early dew on the grass, the

cattle may be seen issuing from the kraals and feeding slowly over the pasturage. On guard stand a couple of lithe striplings, resting on one foot, like storks. In their hands they hold long, keen-bladed spears and bows, with which they make surprisingly good shooting, and with which weapons they will not fear to defend their herds from the attack of a predatory beast.

When the flat-roofed, thick mud huts of the Wagogo are seen, we are in the land of the baobab, the portly patriarch of African trees. Impenetrable thorn bush stretches for miles in all directions, and the parched earth does not appear to be the home of a pastoral people. Yet such it is, for the lanky Wagogo—many of whom are scarcely to be distinguished in features or in dress from the Masai, the proudest cattle rearers of Eastern Africa—manage in some miraculous way to raise large and goodly herds, though they have sometimes in the dry season to drive them so far to the poor drinking-place that they can be watered only on alternate days. As the sun sets bright fires are lighted round all the kraals, for this is especially bad lion country, and only so can the beasts be secured from attack during the night watches.

And so the train shrieks its way towards the Great Lakes, and brings the benefits—and, unfortunately but inevitably, the curses—of civilization to the raw savage. Without inquiry and with little curiosity he regards the white man's machines as evidence of the white man's magic, which he accepts as a fact, but which he is too indolent and ignorant to seek to probe.

The tropical jungle of the coast belt turns to thick scrub, which in its place yields to grassy plains, pretty

park-land, dense elephant grass, impenetrable thorn-bush, woodland, and waving fields of maize, millet, cassava, or tree-beans; yet there is one feature of the landscape which is never missing whatever the nature of the vegetation. Every here and there can be seen alongside the track a large clearing, in which are stacked long parallel rows of firewood sawn into lengths suitable for feeding the hungry engine, for its fuel is wood.

The fuel contractors are veritable birds of passage, who move with their gangs of labourers whither they are required and who tarry no longer than necessary in one spot. Immediately on arrival at a new spot in the silent waste they set the boys to build a wattle and daub hut for themselves, storehouses and workmen's lines, and then the gangs start to fell branches and trees suitable for fuel. If the life be lonely and without the creature comforts dear to the heart of a pampered humanity, it holds out the possibility of gain and the certainty of good shooting, two inducements of prime importance to the average Englishman in the Tropics.

Of course, there are towns on the line, though the only ones of any size according to European standards are Tabora and Kigoma, the latter being the terminus of the line and but a short distance from the populous town of Ujiji, the famous place of the dramatic meeting between Livingstone and Stanley. Morogoro, Kilossa, Mpwapwa, Dodoma and Kilimatinde are all names frequently mentioned by writers as those of towns on the route, though they are merely small villages, yet of no little importance in a land where a cluster of a dozen huts forms a village and one of a hundred a town.

Perhaps the reader may wonder why the line was



LOPPING A BUSH GIANT.

To face p. 98.

built. Almost entirely from strategical reasons, and well it justified its existence during the years of war. It was the main lateral means of communication of the Germans, and without its invaluable help they would have been unable to put up so stiff a fight. By it troops could be transported from end to end of the Protectorate according to what dispositions seemed most favourable at the moment; without it Von Lettow-Vorbeck would have found the forces at his command inadequate for the protection of frontiers so distant and so long.

In counting the gains of our colonial campaigns, let us not forget this railway, which is bound to increase greatly in value as Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo are opened up and developed. Moreover, it will prove an important artery of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway, when that dream of a great man shall have become a fact.

CHAPTER V

A SAFARI

NEW countries must necessarily adopt new terms to describe the conditions peculiar to themselves, and very frequently it happens that the native word best expresses the matter. As often as not the nearest English rendering does not correctly or adequately convey the idea intended.

The English reader has for more than a generation been familiar with the *trek* of South Africa, and at once conjures up visions of ponderous Boer wagons drawn painfully and creakingly over the parched *veld* by a yoke of well-trained oxen, that answer to their names as readily as a dog, and that respond quickly to the urging curses of their Dutch drivers and to the loud cracking of the mighty whips.

Further north other words have been incorporated in the settler's vocabulary. The *ulendo* of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia and the *safari* of East and Central Africa mean one and the same thing, and denote what is often somewhat loosely and ineptly called a caravan. The white man who travels in those countries must be accompanied by a number of porters to carry his tent, bedding, camp equipment, food, clothing and other necessaries, so that in his trail march as a

rule not less than a dozen natives. Under normal conditions it is considered absolutely necessary to engage a personal servant, a cook, a headman, three carriers for the tent and other equipment, one for the kitchen box, two for foodstuffs, and three for clothing and books. Usually the party will number more, but seldom less. Of course, much depends on the character of the individual, the duration of the journey, the nature of the bush through which one is travelling, the season of the year, the scarcity or otherwise of the water-supply, the tribe from which the porters are recruited, and the mode of progression.

The average Englishman is content to march from camp to camp, though now and then one meets a fellow-countryman who has adopted the lazier habit of almost all other Europeans in the Tropics—that is, to be borne by carriers in a swinging hammock or *machila*. Sometimes two, sometimes four men carry the hammock. In the former case at least six, and in the latter at least eight bearers should be told off solely for this duty, in order that they may have a fair chance of resting between their spells of labour. Only in short journeys over level country, and when stalwart men are available, should the smaller team be employed; where the distances to be covered are long, the going bad, and the carriers of a weakly tribe unused to such work, twelve *machila* men may not be too many. Ladies invariably travel in this manner, and strong men in the grip of sickness who are anxious to push on to their goal are often forced to resort to such a means of transport, though they abhor it and regard it as effeminate and fit only for foreigners.

Often the *bwana* marches in the early morning, completing the long journey in the hammock if he is unable to foot it all the way. Occasionally one meets a man who uses a bush-chair, a one-wheeled arm-chair that can be dragged or pushed along the narrow native paths by one black in front and one behind. In some parts of the land it is quite possible to use a bicycle or a motor-cycle, but in many districts they are worse than useless. Here and there one finds a stretch of country free from the deadly tsetse fly and consequently not fatal to horses or mules, but the only riding animal able for any time to withstand the manifold diseases generally prevalent is the native donkey. Some tribes breed large herds, and if a good beast be procured he will develop into a useful mount. In the main, however, the white man must make up his mind to do his journeys either on foot or in the hammock.

Let us suppose that we are in Tabora, the largest native town on the mainland of East Africa, and that we wish to *safari* to the north or south of the railway. We have brought with us from the coast our staff of personal boys and cooks and all the outfit necessary for men who have to spend a month or two in the bush. Now we have to arrange for the transport of the loads.

The first thing to do is to send Saidi, the boy who appears to possess the largest fund of common sense, and who has travelled from end to end of the colony with various masters—most of them German officials, whose vices he delights to relate to his fellows when story-telling is the business on hand—to find a headman. His experience stands him in good stead, and in a few hours he returns with three or four men, all of whom

profess to be paragons and to know every inch of the road. Probably the latter qualification is true in fact ; pretensions to the former must be received with doubt. In the meantime, the news having been noised abroad by gossiping servants that the white men are seeking an *mnyampara*, half-a-dozen plausible rascals have offered their services, but a look and a short chat convince us that most are undesirables. Perhaps one has written recommendations and other attributes that lead us to tell him to wait until Saidi returns, when we shall give our decision. Certain it is that his written character alone will not secure him an engagement, for there is every possibility that he has borrowed the chit from a friend who is resting in his village and has no temporary need of it ! Such trickery is not unknown even in the bush.

None of Saidi's candidates can be rejected at first glance, for he has not brought any obviously unsuitable men. So the choice must be made with due care and after exhaustive inquiries. Too much trouble cannot be expended in securing the best headman, for a really good one will relieve us of much worry and will make the *safari* a pleasure, while a weak, vacillating creature, who shuns hard work and has no authority over the porters, will cause us endless anxiety and many moments of wrath—to which the insidious climate renders one unusually liable.

The headman is the sergeant-major, the connecting link between us and the men, and just as the discipline and *moral* of a military unit depend in no small degree on the efficiency and bearing of the senior N.C.O.'s, so will the success of the trip rest largely with the head-

man. He must not be afraid of work and must be able to use his authority, two attributes by no means easily found in the negro. If he is to command respect and obedience, he must not be too familiar with those under his charge; neither must he be given too much power, lest he abuse it. The native who can execute well these duties is a rare treasure, whose worth can be realized only by one who has made journeys with indifferent or poor overseers. Needless to say, the *mnyampara* should have a thorough knowledge of *safari* life. Probably he will have spent years in travelling here, there and everywhere with different masters, some tourists who have sought big game, others officials who moved at a leisurely pace, others traders who were always in a hurry to push on. It is not unlikely that he served as a porter in the days when regular caravans left the coast with cloths, beads, wire and other merchandise and returned laden with ivory. Possibly he spent some years as an *askari*. If so, the discipline inculcated will stand him in good stead, though extra care must be taken that he is not overbearing or brutal to the carriers under him.

At last a headman is chosen, and is sent into the bazaar to round up porters, from whose ranks the required number may be picked. In a short while he returns with a gang of natives clothed in ragged khaki or white garments and wearing an air of superiority and satisfaction. Good nature beams from their black faces and they clamour to be signed on—not that they will be the least bit worried if they are not engaged, but because the competition appeals to their simple souls. They are like a crowd of children begging to

be allowed to do something, with the difference that the white child feels acute disappointment if the hope has been high and is frustrated, while the negro endures resignedly and unprotestingly.

If we are going far afield we shall be well advised to choose men of different tribes, for then there is less likelihood of collusion and trouble; but we must bear in mind the fact that the Wanyamwezi, the natives of the province of which Tabora is the centre, are the best porters in the whole of East and Central Africa, and that they work cheerfully and faithfully for Europeans. The carriers having been told off, their names are noted, they are given an advance of wages, and, with reiterated instructions to parade the next morning ready for departure, they are dismissed. Off they rush to greet their families and friends with news of the imminent journey, and, what is more acceptable to both parties, to squander their last coins as the whim of the moment suggests. Without thought for the morrow, they spend what they have and what they can borrow, putting aside only a few cents for snuff or tobacco to take with them into the bush.

Next morning the headman is on the scene in good time, but there is no sign of the porters. We are not surprised, though we should have been had they turned up. In our hearts we know that we do not expect to get off until the afternoon, but we pretend that we are anxious to leave before the sun is high in the heavens. Presently a few of the men stroll along, each carrying a length of rope, a tightly-rolled straw sleeping mat, a cooking-pot, a gourd for use as a water-bottle, and a stout stick. Patiently they squat down, waiting for

the loads to be brought out, and then, unless each is given a definite one, there will be a frantic, noisy struggle for the smallest and lightest.

A burly savage will swoop down on a bundle of camp tables, chairs, and buckets and gleefully promise himself an easy time, till his illusion is rudely shattered by his being told to change burdens with a smaller man who is straining to get the heavy kitchen box on to his woolly poll. Of course, he tries to shirk, asserting that he has a pain in his stomach and is weak to-day, that the other load is too weighty for him, and that the other carrier prefers his own bundle; but when he is forced to change, he does so without resentment. Big, awkward packages are abhorred, and, even though they be light, none will take them if another load is within reach; that being so, it is amusing to watch a tall, muscular fellow pass by a bulky but easy load and grab a small, compact one that promises a lazy time. When he discovers that it is really full weight—for it contains books—the surprised look that flits across his countenance is worth seeing.

Still one or two porters are missing, and by the time they appear on the scene we find that a couple of those who have received their loads have managed to slip away for a last farewell with their friends. Then the cook remembers that the supply of salt is running low; one of the boys recollects that he had a very urgent message entrusted to him in Dar-es-Salaam by a friend to give to the friend's friend's sister; several men find that they have forgotten to fill their gourds; and all sorts of dodges are tried to procure another spell of freedom before the start is made.

Hours after we had planned to set forth we manage to collect everybody. The order is given to march. Each porter takes his thin cotton blanket, winds it round his head into a kind of turban, hoists the load on to it, and shuffles off, chaffing his friends and acquaintances as he goes. If he meets someone he knows very well, down comes the box in the middle of the road, while they gossip volubly, gesticulating wildly to emphasize their points. Finally every one is moving, so we can follow, knowing that our difficulties are over for the time, since once they have started good porters cause little trouble. The main thing is to get started and to camp out of the town, even though it be only a few miles on this first day. To-morrow we shall have no difficulty in taking the road at daybreak, for the men have now their own particular loads and will be ready as soon as we are, if not before.

In the afternoon the camp is pitched in a clearing beneath the wide-spreading branches of a stately mango tree, through the thick leafy crown of which no ray of sunshine will pierce. We recline comfortably in the grateful shade while all preparations are made. When the tents have been erected, the porters are sent off in separate parties to draw water and cut firewood, two lowly duties which the lordly personal servants invariably delegate to those to whom they consider themselves immeasurably superior.

Meanwhile the headman of the near-by village has come to pay his respects, or, in other words, to accept what trifles we may be disposed to bestow upon him. Should he think it likely to be productive, he will not regard open begging as incompatible with his dignity.

Behind him walks a lean youth, clutching a scraggy fowl in one hand, and carrying in the other three eggs (of very uncertain age) no larger than those of an English pigeon ; these, we learn, are the presents which the *jumbe* will be honoured if we will accept. Equally well understood, of course, is it that we must repay his hospitality by gifts exceeding in value those that he has brought to the white men. For a consideration we obtain fresh vegetables, fruit, and more eggs—this time carefully tested in a bowl of water—and then the cook sets about preparing the evening meal.

Seated at a table before the tent we partake of the well-cooked dinner, which is not the haphazard repast sometimes imagined by those who have no knowledge of the Tropics. Neither do we don dress clothes, as certain lady novelists seem to think ; possibly we change after a bath into a white drill suit, or we get thus early into pyjamas.

Here the European recognizes that he can maintain good health only by a liberal diet, coupled with a rational mode of life. Olives, occasionally varied by sardines, form our simple *hors d'œuvres*, which are followed by an excellent soup of fresh tomatoes, and with which the knowing cook serves dainty squares of well-browned toast ; the breast of a hardy chicken has been cut off and fried to make what the boy announces as "beef steak of fowl," to which succeeds a piece of roast buck, accompanied by sweet potatoes or cassava, peas or beans, young mealies in the cob, pumpkins, cucumbers, lady's fingers, egg fruit, or what other vegetables are available. If fresh ones are not to be bought, then a tin of the precious imported green

peas, asparagus or French beans must be opened, though the scanty store of such luxuries must be used with due economy now that we are so far from the coast and the possibility of replenishing the chop-box. After tasty banana fritters, comes a dish of luscious tropical fruits—mangoes, pawpaws, pineapples, oranges and bananas. With a cup of coffee, grown in the Kilimanjaro district of the country, we conclude the principal meal of the day.

Then, lolling comfortably in our deck-chairs, we drink in the magic of the soft, warm, moonlight night. The fragrant air, laden with the sensuous perfumes of mango and pawpaw blossoms, is stirred now and then by a gentle zephyr that wafts more clearly to our ears the subdued murmurs of a thousand night insects. Above beams a cold white moon, that bathes in lovely silvery sheen the phantom landscape. The witchery of the night is complete.

Soon after nine o'clock we shall, if the attraction of the moon be not too strong, retire to rest, for before daybreak we must be stirring. At five o'clock we shall be called and shall dress hurriedly in our usual marching kit of khaki shirt, khaki shorts, boots and putties. By the time we are ready to eat the plate of maize meal porridge and to drink the cup of coffee that the cook has prepared, the Eastern sky is growing lighter. Down come the tents, the loads are speedily packed and roped, and with none of the fuss and worry of the first day we set out in the cool morning air.

When the sun thrusts his fiery head over the horizon we have already been on the road for half an hour, for the clear, cool morning freshness is far too precious

to waste. Then it is good to be alive ; an hour or two later the joy will have become appreciably less ; by midday it will have disappeared completely in the dancing, quivering, dazzling brightness of the sun. But with the sinking to rest of the fiery red orb relief will come again.

So—

Hey for weeks of camping
Full of magic zest,
Days of honest tramping
Nights of honest rest !

CHAPTER VI

ALONG THE RUFJI

THE *safari* across country from the railway had been uneventful, but for the fact that five elephants had one night walked almost on top of our camping-place. At the last moment they had turned aside and contented themselves with laying waste the banana plantations and cassava gardens of the hapless but stolid natives, for whom the experience was unfortunately no rare one. Here, just north of the Rufiji, the massive brutes roam in herds, marking their tracks by trees playfully broken and left lying athwart the path.

At last we had reached the river, which is here about as broad as the Thames at Westminster; had crossed the swift-flowing stream in a dug-out canoe fifty feet long and propelled by four sweating oarsmen; and had entered the large, magnificently-built *boma* of Utete, approached from the ferry by a short avenue of the dainty casuarina trees that harbour no mosquitoes.

Utete was one of the last Government stations erected by the Germans prior to the war, and lacks nothing that could be provided by money and thought, for their colonial officials, if not too lavishly paid, were made as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Before the administrative headquarters of the district

were transferred to this new civil post, the spot was of no importance whatever. Merely a poor village of tumble-down huts gave the place a name. Now there had arisen in the shadow of the solid, dominating fortress a little township with a dozen retail stores, where native truck of any kind was to be had.

Hitherto Mohoro, thirty miles nearer the sea and not on the river, had served as the residence of the District Commissioner, but a redistribution of posts led to the creation of a new province, of which Utete was to be the centre.

During the Maji-Maji Rebellion of 1905 hordes of armed natives scoured this part of the country, and one party was put to flight on this very spot by a patrol of Germans and *askari* operating from Mohoro. In the Matumbi Mountains to the south-east fierce struggles took place for many months, the strong natural positions at and around Kibata being resolutely disputed by whites and blacks, the latter of whom sustained severe losses, not only in action, but through starvation and privation; since, as is essential in warfare with primitive folk, their crops and habitations had on every possible occasion to be destroyed by fire. It was eventually on account of heavy mortality, especially amongst the women and children, from this cause that the fanatical local chiefs were persuaded to submit to the Germans, who showed little magnanimity in their victory.

So numerous were the deaths amongst children and youths that even to-day labour is particularly scarce in the Kilwa area. Later on the ruthless Teutons were to learn that the economic stability of their colony

was seriously threatened as a result of the unnecessarily heavy slaughter to which they had resorted in subduing the rising of the *Affenrasse*, as they contemptuously designated the natives whom they claimed to "protect"; only when serious labour shortage made itself felt did there arise a conviction that the aborigines were an asset to the land. Heretofore they had been regarded as an encumbrance to be swept away whenever opportunity presented itself, just as the Hereros of South-West Africa were practically exterminated in order that more land for white settlement might be obtained. Mere considerations of humanity or morality were not allowed to affect a policy thought to be of exceptional promise.

But we are being led away from the river.

In the early morning a thick mist lies on the river, so dense that for fully half an hour after the sun has risen the far bank is shrouded as by a curtain of cotton-wool. Suddenly it is rolled up, to disclose the high steep bank lined by dry, brown, grassy tufts, with here and there a scraggy acacia relieving the sameness of the near view. In the background looms the thick green wall of mango trees, planted before the white man's advent by some slave-trading Arabs, who have left dotted throughout the bush this pleasant living monument to their unpleasant, life-destroying activities.

On a low sandbank in mid-stream are two dark streaks that look for all the world like tree trunks; but that they cannot be, for the rainy season is past, and with it the time when great logs are torn from their earthly anchorage and whisked seawards by the roaring torrent. They are a pair of crocodiles that

lie as still as the lifeless lengths for which it is so easy to mistake them. Sunning their scaly, repulsive bodies in the burning rays, they remain motionless until a canoe approaches the sandy outcrop. Then with a sharp flip of the tail they tumble noisily, but so speedily as to be almost unseen, into the brown waters that are their home but not their sole feeding-ground. Cannibals though they be, eating wounded or sickly members of their own family, and devouring with relish the fish that swim in fair numbers in the river, they seek their favourite meal on dry land, yet at the water's edge. Only very occasionally does the treat they covet fall to their lot. It is man. For him they lie in wait at the ferry, near the bathing-place, or at odd places along the banks; for the female of the species they go to the spot to which the women repair to wash their pretty cotton cloths. Should the human approach near enough, one sweep of the mighty tail sends him into the water, where he is gripped in the cruel jaws and carried down to the reeking lair, there to be stored until his flesh is high enough to appeal to the depraved taste of the subaqueous reptile. So powerful is the tail that it can with one blow knock into the river not merely a human being, but a donkey, a bullock, or even a camel.

While I was in this part of the country my unfortunate cook boy fell a victim to a crocodile. Himself an Mrufiji, born and bred on the banks of the waterway, he had grown familiarly contemptuous of the dangers that lurk in the way of the unwary. Even though a crocodile had been seen at the boat halt, he would not listen to the warnings of his friends. Dinner was over,

and I was reclining in a chair in the darkness—a smoky fire burnt low at hand, ridding me of the unwelcome attentions of mosquitoes—when Saidi came to pronounce his customary "*Kwa heri*," his wishes that peace might be with me, and to receive his dismissal until the next morning. Three minutes later there was a shouting and a shrieking from the river. Then all was quiet, deathly quiet. In a moment I had heard his fate.

He had walked straight into the water, jeeringly disregarding the statements of the onlookers that a *mamba* had just thrust his ugly snout out of the liquid waste. While he was yet speaking, he stumbled; in a flash he was gripped round the middle by the awful jaws and dragged under, having had time only to cry out in agonized accents, "*Mama, mama wee!*"

Such are the words that ring piteously in the air whenever and wherever in East or Central Africa the negro is in sore distress. In dire danger, as in the case above quoted, his involuntary cry for aid is to his mother, not to one of his gods; and as he lies writhing on the ground, what time he endures the stripes that are a punishment for misdeeds, his lips are either tightly sealed or they part to send up the oft-repeated wail "*Mama, mama wee-e-e!*" Yet towards this mother his feelings are not nearly as tender as are those of a European towards the author of his being.

But the dangers of the river do not bulk largely in the fickle minds of the natives. See, there is a hippopotamus sporting in his natural element, opening his huge jaws almost at right angles, blowing out a broad jet of water, and raising and sinking himself lazily in

the stream. Now he is on his best behaviour, but when night falls and hostile man is safely housed he will not disdain a run ashore, during which excursion he will trample down a mealie patch that was to provide food and drink—for from the meal the negro's beloved *pombe* is brewed—for a family for a year.

If a European happens along to hear the tale of woe and can be shown the usual playground of the ungainly river-horse, he will probably pay for his deprivations with his life. Then, as soon as the carcass is raised by the gases in its stomach to the surface of the water, ropes will be attached to the short, stout legs, and it will be hauled inshore by scores of jubilant blacks, for whom the dead beast will provide a memorable feast. All but the "unco guid" forget for the nonce that they are professing Islamites, for whom the hippo ranks as pig and so as a delicacy forbidden.

First, the thick layer of fat under the hide has to be cut away for the white man, since by boiling down and salting it can be made to yield an excellent edible and cooking fat. Then the natives hack at the meat with knives and axes, some of them creeping inside the opened body in their eagerness to assure themselves of a sufficient supply. There in the cavity of the stomach stand naked negroes bathed in blood, slashing off chunks of flesh and passing them to friends outside, who wrangle and quarrel like wolves over the distribution of the spoil. It is a revolting scene of passionate greed from which the civilized spectator will soon turn in disgust.

Down at the lagoons are numerous ibices, herons, cranes, pelicans, divers, egrets, geese, ducks, and dozens

of other land and waterfowl, which, unfortunately, are strange to me. The place teems with bird life.

Such is the fauna that makes the river so fascinating in the early hours of the day ; once the sun has climbed well on his course there will be no rest for the tired, dazzled eye. Beneath the quivering noonday air the stream lies like a river of molten metal, flowing evenly, without semblance of a wavelet. On it beats the burning sun, sending forth a shimmering reflection that stabs the sight. There is no retreat from the flood of glaring, glowing light, no welcome harbour whither one may retire to freshen the aching optic members with a glimpse of cool greenery ; not until the sun is sinking to rest can one find relief from his violence. As he lowers himself in the western sky, casting a sheen of shot silver and orange along the face of the smooth, yet swift-flowing stream, it is pleasant to stroll idly along the bank, the nose perhaps assailed by the fragrant, honeysuckle-like scent of the white pawpaw blossoms, the eye attracted by the fairy, feathery maize fields, the ear catching the rhythmic echo of phrases shouted across the broad watery expanse by natives clearly outlined against the roseate horizon. In this last half-hour of daylight and in the quiet Tropic night that follows we must seek compensation for the harshness of the powerful sunlight.

Then the open scene is screened by fairy darkness. The white-hot sky has turned to deepest blue ; the sickening, sluggish swiftness of the river has changed to phantom beauty 'neath the kindly smile of a softly shining moon ; in the hushed night air there is wafted across the waters the stirring strain of a native boat

song, the subtle, haunting lilt of which fires our passions and imagination. Oh! those primitive melodies that have floated, together with the creaking of the sweeping oars, to our lonely camp! Never will the memory fade!

Fireflies flit prettily before our gaze, their shining flares dying out and then being relit with doubled brilliancy; cicades, crickets, bull-frogs, and hundreds of night insects join in a musical melody that harmonizes with our mood.

By night the African river is not without its poetry; by day its crude cruelty weighs oppressively on the mind. But seldom does one come upon a scene of beauty that can compare with the charming sites to be found so easily on the banks of the streams of Europe; here the picturesque is supplanted by the grotesque, for wild Nature dominates. She is not softened by any exterior influence. Here, where the sun blazes overhead like a ball of fire, where the rains descend in vertical torrents, where prowling beasts lie in wait for unwary man, where even the bush bursts into flame and devours the animals that have their habitation therein, Nature is unsmiling, unable to devote her labours to the creation of prettiness. Life is a stern struggle, not a pleasant plodding onwards and upwards.

And so the watercourse is stern. When the rains pour forth as though the flood gates of the heavens had been opened, the river forsakes her quiet, passive gait, and hurls her new-found strength in maddened outburst against the banks that imprison her. Swirling, sweeping, swinging forward, the swollen torrent snatches in its frantic race whatever skirts its path: forest

giants, lowly scrub, humble grass tufts, graceful floating plants, down towards the Indian Ocean they are carried. Then as suddenly as destruction burst forth will it creep ashamedly back and leave the troubled channel to resume its normal passage to the sea.

Along the banks high elephant grass thrusts its way towards the sky, hiding in its depths a wealth of animal life, of which the fresh spoor can be seen everywhere. The country is flat as a pancake ; only by pretty clusters of mango trees, on which one comes unexpectedly and delightedly, is the monotony of the landscape broken. On the southern bank are a few plantations that once grew hundreds of hectares of sisal and cotton, and that exported sufficient produce to warrant the maintenance on the river highway of the stern-wheel steamer *Tomondo*, a shapely little craft drawing only three feet and carrying ten tons of cargo ; by towing two barges the freight could be nearly trebled. During the summer and autumn of 1916, when a large body of troops was operating in this neighbourhood, the small steamer was for ever fussing backwards and forwards, transporting military stores ; but when her day of usefulness was past, and when the British advance made the line of the river untenable, she was sunk in deep water by her German owners.

Not far away lay the submerged wreck of the *Koenigsberg*, the enemy cruiser that shelled and sank the antiquated *Pegasus* off Zanzibar early in the war, and then ran for safety to this reach of the Rufiji, which we did not at that time believe to be navigable for so large a vessel. At each spring tide she edged further up-stream, until she had put twelve good miles between

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herself and our ships off the coast. Her mastheads decorated with palm-tops, so that they could not be distinguished from the surrounding vegetation, she lay at anchor in presumed security. Then a hydroplane paid her an unexpected visit, the precursor of many another, and shattered the illusion. Eighteen months after she had chosen a river lair, rather than the chance of an action with the inferior British ships then off the East African coast, she was startled to find that two monitors, the *Mersey* and the *Severn*, had arrived from England expressly to put an end to her career. With the assistance of several whalers, they steamed up the channel and opened so heavy and so accurate an indirect fire on the hidden Hun that the crew had to abandon ship after all her guns had been put out of action. With one of her own torpedoes she was blown up, sinking at sunset in the deep stream. So ended in an obscure bend of an African waterway one of the Teuton commerce raiders.

Thereabouts flourished coconut plantations; further to the west rubber was tried. At one spot I came upon a patchwork estate that was a model of how not to plant. There were clearings of Ceara rubber without a leaf, young coconut palms choked with bush, cotton, mealies, cassava and sugar-cane all jumbled up in minute plots, and sisal beds as thick as the bristles of a porcupine. Had ordinary care been exercised, good crops might have been reaped, for the alluvial soil was rich, as it always is where a receding river leaves a deposit of earth on the banks which it has overflowed. The sugar-cane and cotton particularly gave promise of successful cultivation, but all that grew in

normal profusion were the pawpaws that sprang up in rows near the bungalow.

In a lagoon behind the settler's outhouses lived a big hippopotamus, who appeared every evening at sunset, started his grunting and blowing, and set out on a tour through the young mealie fields as soon as night made the venture safe. In the hours of darkness one was treated to a hippo-cum-lion concert, in which yelping jackals or crying hyenas would occasionally mingle their voices. Then a screeching and a frantic hammering of petrol cans away to the east conveyed the news that elephants were entering the rice fields or the native gardens, from which it was sought to scare them by these unmelodious sounds.

The place was the limit for insect life. At night one was eaten alive by thousands of mosquitoes, who regarded the show so much as their own that as they entered by the door or window they sent forth a not-at-all-bashful buzz that reached yards. Luckily most of them were not *Anopheles*, so malaria was not unusually prevalent, although, the plantation buildings being within a hundred yards or so of the bank, it was, of course, no rare visitant. If one wished to sit out in the moonlight after dinner, it could be borne only after a fire of green wood had been kindled, the smoke of which the blood-suckers abhor. During the day singing mud-wasps—or horse bees, as they are called in South Africa—ruled the roost, and, not content with decorating walls, boxes and seats, must needs build their clever little tubular mud nests on one's pyjama coat, inside one's helmet, or in places still less discreet.

Jiggers, too, claimed more than their share of atten-

tion, for it seemed impossible to prevent them burrowing into the skin of the feet, there to hatch myriads of eggs, if one did not discover and extract them without loss of time. Many a native did I notice thereabouts with the half-eaten toe stump that testified to the injury that these minute black-headed borers can cause, if they are not dug whole from their subcutaneous caves as soon as the irritation, which their presence sets up, makes itself felt. So serious a pest are they in the country that during the recent East African campaign five per cent. of our troops, white and black, were constantly incapacitated by their unwelcome inroads.

Ants of every size and colour were in a Paradise, whence it had been found useless to try and dislodge them. One had merely to grin and bear these trivial annoyances. White ants swarmed in the houses, descending in hordes on wood or leather wherever it was exposed, and devouring it with a rapidity as marvellous as it was disconcerting; within a night they would have eaten the sole out of a boot, had one unwisely left it within their reach. *Siafu*, the black, stinging ants, that can turn one out of house and home if it lies in the track to their destination, were unpleasantly numerous, as were various other members of the busy tribe. Microscopic brownish fellows that seemed all legs—frail, flimsy supports—contrived to drown themselves in dozens in every cup of tea one drank; while the wash-basin was a much favoured resort for suicides *en masse*. Nothing was sacred to them, no place secure from invasion.

Some fifty miles further up-stream, not far from Kibambawe—where our Nigerian Brigade forced the

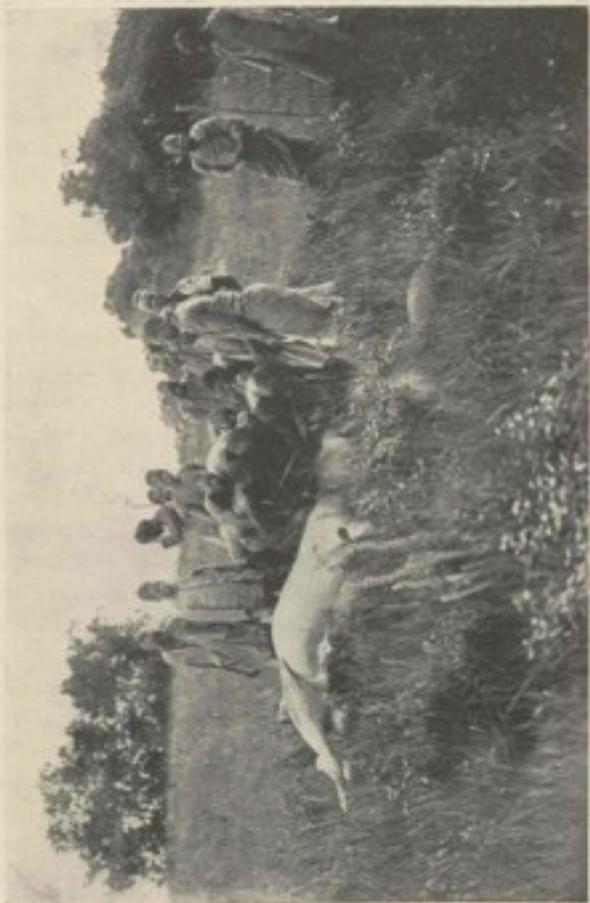
passage of the broad river under cover of dark and so carried the campaign to its penultimate stage—one passes a tumble-down stone house that once boasted a flat roof, of which the battlements alone now stand. High, narrow, mullioned windows, behind which still are seen rusty iron bars, emphasize the incongruity of the building in such a place. The plantation is to-day a tangled waste, producing nothing but hundreds of castor-oil plants that grow to an unusual height ; many I saw that exceeded fifteen feet. Years ago, one gathers from the natives, the fortress (for such it must have seemed to ill-armed, ill-housed savages) was built by a famous English elephant hunter, who, they aver, on more than one occasion bagged ten tuskers in a day. Here he stored his ivory until the house was full almost to the roof. Then he journeyed with a large caravan to the coast, disposed of his valuable cargo, and sold the dwelling and the surrounding estate to a German ; who, one learns, was not popular with the negroes, but to whom the English sportsman remains a very pleasant memory, a man whose praises are still sung.

Thus is Britain's name upheld in the Dark Continent, even in the protectorates of foreign European Powers that are less impartial, less scrupulous in their dealings with those over whom they rule. The few Englishmen that stray to these territories, though they be occasionally a source of annoyance to the officials who have to prohibit elephant poaching or prospecting in forbidden areas or attend to the administration of other troublesome laws, are practically invariably just in their dealings with the blacks. As a consequence, the *Mwingererza* is trusted in all things. Be he trader,

sportsman, farmer, planter, traveller, or official, he is felt to be worthy of confidence. Even the "stiff," the "hobo," the beachcomber, who will sponge unblushingly and perhaps pilfer brazenly from a brother white man, will, as a rule, be punctiliously fair in his relationships with his native servants. Long may our proud record prevail, for it is of immense material value throughout our African Empire.

This English elephant hunter had naturally settled down in a locality that sheltered game of every species, and that consequently swarmed with the deadly tsetse, the *Glossina morsitans*, that makes it impossible for cattle, horses, mules, or even dogs to live long. To north, south, east and west, according to the seasons, herds of elephants roamed at will; in the river that flowed but a short distance away sported hundreds of hippos, ready to yield their quota of second-grade ivory; while rhinos charged blindly through the broad expanse of bush to the south. To shoot any and all of these big brutes was a matter merely of nerve and skill, attributes in which he was not defective. For meat he had the choice of an epicure—the tasty dik-dik, the larger impala, one of the gazelles, haartebeeste, wildebeeste, giraffe, bush pig, bush buck, kudu, and any of the other animals that find their home in the East African wilds. Here were all to be discovered without undue trouble. It was a hunter's Eden.

Down in the river one could swim where it was shallow and where a barrier of rocks fenced off a natural bathing pool. Higher up, lower down, and directly opposite crocodiles lived and moved and had their being; here their unwelcome presence was not to be



A. KILL.

The last p. 26.

feared. The simple, credulous natives believed firmly that "medicine" kept the loathsome reptiles away; in reality it must have been the swiftness, shallowness, and noise of the stream rushing over the many rocks, for it is in deep, quiet pools that the evil monsters love to lurk. What a relief to strip off at the end of a burning, oppressive day and to plunge in perfect confidence into the limpid waters!

It is noticeable that natives of tribes that do not dwell alongside a river are not keen to avail themselves of opportunities of swimming, though they will profit by the occasion to wash themselves from head to foot. Slowly they move forward into the stream, until it reaches half-way to their knees. Having laved their hands and wrists with meticulous care, they scoop up and drink several handfuls of water before proceeding with their ablutions, over which they are not long detained. Curiously enough, they never fail to drink before bathing in running water, even though they may have slaked their thirst not long previously.

The European's exaggerated love of water is evidently attributed by the bushman to madness, with which he believes all whites to be afflicted in a greater or lesser degree. If it is not so, why do they hurry through life instead of taking things easily, as any sane mortal does in the Tropics. Is there not a morrow in which to do what is left undone to-day?

One day a party of us were bathing in a lake formed by mountain streams in the rainy season; so excellent was the pool that we had gone to the trouble of rigging up a rickety bamboo diving-stage. When the natives saw the first man take a header into the deep, cool

waters, they held their breath half in fear, half in wonder; then as they watched us climb in turn to dive, they shook their heads in helplessness. / Only one old man could at last give tongue to the general sentiment: "Verily the white men are mad, for, not content with swimming in the water, they must needs fall into it!" And the woe-begone sadness of the faces betokened sympathy for the madmen, coupled with a feeling of sorrow that they should have been called on to build the platform for no better reason. Clearly the ways of the *Wazungu* were beyond seeking. But the amusement was not entirely one-sided.

CHAPTER VII

THE BENEFITS OF CIVILIZATION

THE native may be pardoned if he is somewhat sceptical as to the benefits he has yet reaped from the intrusion of the white man into his country. True, gone are the days when a sudden raid on the village meant the death of most of the able-bodied men and the carrying into slavery of every useful woman and child ; past for ever are the exciting, soul-stirring times when haughty warriors in their proud battle dress and in the boastfulness of their ignorance went forth to combat a neighbouring tribe, who would neither expect nor give quarter, the women of the vanquished being the spoils of the conqueror ; for ever dead is the fear that the chief's look of displeasure will bring in its train speedy death.

Of the ever-present dreads of those not distant days there remains but one—that of being mysteriously poisoned by an unknown enemy. So common, indeed, is this practice that the native is never free from the fear that a swift but agonized death may lurk at hand, waiting to claim him when a fitting opportunity occurs. If the office of food-taster were necessary in the households of some mighty civilized monarchs, whose despotism had raised up for them cunning foes that would neglect no chance to avenge themselves by poisoning

the royal food, it is still to-day the custom in the bush for a guest to eat only after the host has dipped his hand into the platter. Similarly before a stranger will quench his burning thirst, he waits for the donor to drink from the gourd as a sign of good faith. To such an extent is his outlook on life tinged with the fear of poison.

The major benefits, then, that civilization has conferred on Africa's black millions are release from tyrannical rulers, the suppression of the slave trade, and the cessation of inter-tribal warfare. Even these are not entirely to the advantage of all classes of the community, for the abolition of slavery, for instance, has had a direct result in making less enviable the lot of the women, who have now to perform tasks that were previously allotted to slaves. Most of the minor blessings are not unmixed with considerable drawbacks, that bulk more largely in the view than the improvements of which they are the outcome.

With the advent of the European, there followed a weakening of the boundaries that had separated nation from nation and tribe from tribe. Heretofore it had been unsafe, or at any rate unwise, for the negro to venture outside the confines of his tribe or of those friendly ones in the immediate vicinity. Indiscriminate wandering about the country was discouraged by unpleasant practical means calculated to nip in the bud any tendency thereto that an odd man here and there may have possessed. The aversion to strangers, fostered by the fear lest they be spies, naturally made for a better condition of health, since each tribe was perpetually in a state of more or less rigorous quarantine. In this manner widespread epidemics were effectively

combated, and healthy tribes were protected from contamination by those in which disease was common.

Travel became necessary to the white man, who, whether official, missionary, trader or planter, had usually to journey away from the coast. In his suite were personal servants and porters, all engaged at the coast, to which many of them belonged. With him they traversed the country, forming friendships and relationships in regions into which they would not have dared to venture a short while previously.

In the coastal belt there already flourished misfortunes attributable to the European and unknown in spots to which "civilization" had not penetrated; chief amongst them were venereal diseases and a liking for spirits. Any one who knows the native's character and his inability to practice continence in sexual matters, will readily grasp the fact that the caravan carriers began to convey infection to bush tribes that had hitherto been quite free from the plague; likewise they were introduced to the use of gin, for which they soon conceived a fatal fondness.¹

As time went on railways were built, until to-day savage Africa can boast a network of good lines that serve even the remotest provinces. The journey that took two or three months when Livingstone, Stanley, and their fellow explorers were telling the world of the wonderful new continent, is to-day done in as many days. Consequently, travel has become universal.

¹ Fortunately this latter evil was not very widespread in East Africa, though it attained grave dimensions on the West coast. It is only in the very recent past that concerted action has been taken by the Powers interested in West Africa to restrict the importation and sale to natives of alcoholic liquors.

Every native feels the desire to see more than the immediate vicinity of his home, which he leaves with little regret. The family bonds have been weakened, and restlessness sometimes shows itself. This constantly moving mass of humanity naturally increases sickness, for the old-fashioned segregation occasioned by tribal jealousies and fears has completely vanished. As an unhappy sequence venereal disease and small-pox are common throughout the whole of East and Central Africa, while leprosy is by no means unknown.

Quiet little villages remote from the railways and the main lines of communication are to-day ravaged with syphilis, of which they knew nothing but a few short years ago. Within the last half decade this evil has spread with alarming rapidity, for during the progress of the East African campaign every out-of-the-way corner became a transient camping-place for some unit of one or other of the belligerent forces. Settlements that had never been disturbed in their uneventful life by the advent of more than a passing stranger now found dozens of Europeans, companies of *askari*, and hundreds of porters on their outskirts.

Particularly in the German Protectorate the actions of these men were governed by no law stronger than caprice. The enemy military commanders usually sent for the trembling headman, whom they ordered to provide women for the amusement of the white men; compliance was a foregone conclusion, since neither the men nor the women dared refuse. Meanwhile the *askari*, to whom extreme licence was allowed in order to keep them contented, had simply appropriated for their use any women, young or old, married or single,

whom they could discover. Did it happen that the settlement was large and that women were still left over, then the spoilt personal servants of the German officers were considered to have next call on the surplus. Morality and common decency had given place to expediency, for in this manner was it sought to retain the loyalty (*sic*) and *moral* of the troops and camp followers. Small wonder that in time the tribesmen grew wise enough to conceal their womenfolk from the covetous "protectors" of the land in hill fastnesses or bush thickets, of which they alone knew the existence.

The Allied native troops were, of course, not permitted this criminal latitude, though their passage was not always uneventful. The Congolese warriors, fine, sturdy fighters, never neglected a chance to take temporary possession of any woman on whom they could lay their hands, though their outrages were much less numerous than those of the Germans because their opportunities were fewer. In their defence it may be urged that they were recruited from the wild tribes of the Congo forests, and that their behaviour was therefore much less blameworthy than that of the partially enlightened blacks who composed the German force. Furthermore, the Belgian officers did their utmost to prevent these forcible abductions, whereas the Teuton commanders did nothing to obstruct, even when they did not actually encourage such conduct.

It can be said with perfect truth that the conduct of the British coloured units was an example to all others, partly because the British officer compelled more respect, confidence and liking from his men than did other white leaders, and partly because our disci-

pline was so much more rigid that the natives overcame their natural inclinations. They were natural, for the native conception of warfare has always included the taking of the women of the invaded territory, a standpoint beyond which he has not yet advanced. In this connection it is noticeable that the Hun's own laxity encouraged his negro soldiers to treat as vanquished the women of their own country, an action for which there is no excuse, though one may be found from the savage standpoint for the Allied invader.

Just as the scourge of syphilis invaded in the rear of the armies districts in which it was before unknown, so small-pox spread its taint in every direction. So serious did the position become that a certain number of Europeans had to be detailed for continuous medical duty on lines of communication, where they vaccinated thousands of carriers. Fortunately, the latter did not object to the process, which is similar to the common operation of their witch-doctors of making an incision in the flesh and rubbing into it certain mysterious medicines. Had the men endeavoured to evade inoculation, mortality from small-pox would have been much heavier than it was.

During the same campaign we were furnished with proof that to supply native troops with boots was not altogether a blessing to them. For rapid movement through thick thorn scrub they were advantageous, but where noiselessness was essential they had to be discarded. Often on the line of march one would see *askari* with their footwear slung over their shoulders, eloquent testimony to the truth of the statement that the black usually adopts boots not for comfort, but for

effect. Another drawback is that the negro loses in a surprisingly short space of time the inherited ability to walk unhurt for hours on end over burning sand, jagged rocks, or through prickly bush. Similarly the African who constantly affects a helmet speedily forfeits the faculty, bequeathed by the centuries, of bearing without any headgear the scorching rays of the overhead sun.

European garments, too, are eminently unfitted to the native. The regulation *askari* clothing leaves little to be desired, but when one sees an African apeing the European in his dress one cannot forbear a reflection on the stupidity of the thing. The natural national costume is a loin-cloth or a cloth worn as a Roman toga, garments peculiarly suited to the climate. This attire is cool, it leaves the limbs free, and it is easily washed—though in many tribes it would be considered pedantic to do anything so unreasonable! When he is wearing it a shower of rain is of no consequence, for he merely gets soaked, lets the water run off his oily skin, and waits for the sun to dry his one and only covering. In a short while the tropical heat has done its duty, and the wearer is none the worse for the bath.

When he is garbed in European clothes, however, the case is very different. Still he will keep on the sodden suit, which is as likely as not all that he possesses. If a thin cotton print gets wet and dries on the thick skin no harm is done, but he cannot continue to wear with impunity a saturated mass of heavy clothing. He gets a chill, to which he is in any case prone, and pneumonia, rheumatism, or catarrh result.

Apart from the question of rain, our clothing is not well adapted to the negro. Unless he is continually

kept up to the mark by his white master, he will never wash or change his dress, in which he works, sweats and sleeps. Whereas this habit is not seriously detrimental when he is attired only in a loin-cloth, it is not only unhealthy but offensive where thicker clothing is concerned. Possibly he has on two shirts and two coats—for he believes in wearing all, or at any rate a good portion, of his wardrobe at once—trousers may mask his nether limbs or mayhap a native cloth supplies their place. In either event the sweat cannot evaporate as when he has only a loose cotton cloth about his body, and vermin is more liable to be present. This unhygienic style of attire is followed by various skin diseases, as well as the chest complaints that are the negro's greatest enemy.

It were much better for the native if he were less eager to copy us in outward appearances, which he mistakes for something essential. Watch that boy in starched white suit, starched collar and cuffs, ochre boots exaggeratedly pointed, purple socks, blue glasses, a felt hat, and twirling a cheap crooked cane. Possibly spats and suede gloves have not been forgotten. On his wrist, thrown ludicrously forward and upward so that no one may miss the sight, reposes a silver watch, the luminous dial of which is a never-ending source of wonderment to his cronies ; on his fingers flash rings, one of which is of gold ; when he opens his mouth one sees that his perfect teeth have been disfigured by gold stoppings and crowns, for he considers them to be an embellishment. Yet he has not advanced a stage in anything useful. He is still the savage, but in civilized garb.

So it is, one fears, with almost all the so-called educated natives. They learn to read and write with an ease due to their whole-hearted application, for these are two tasks that appeal strongly to their unbalanced brain. When they have imitated the white man in this respect, they feel they have progressed far towards an equality with him ; but the imitation does not even cover the whole surface. Often enough the first thought of the educated boy is to turn to his own ends the accomplishment of which he is so proud. So, carefully concealing the fact of his scholastic abilities, he engages himself as a personal servant to a European, whose signature he possibly forges later on for a case of whisky.

As tradesmen they are quick and efficient, but the constant supervision of a European is indispensable. Once they are left to themselves, nothing will go right, however skilful they may be as carpenters, joiners or masons. Tailoring, too, is a trade to which they take kindly and in which they soon attain a considerable degree of ability. Sewing machines are, indeed, seen everywhere, even in villages lost in the bush, where the owner reaps a harvest from work performed for his neighbours.

But even trained workmen cannot be compared with our labourers. They may have mastered various arts and crafts or be possessed of certain qualifications, but they do not apply themselves regularly to the work for which they are fitted. Steady work is almost unknown to the negro, who has not yet learnt that labour is one of the laws of life.

His simple needs are supplied with the minimum of

work by the fruitful soil, so why should he toil unnecessarily? Only when he wants money to buy food or a wife or some other article does he contemplate labour. Then he performs just enough of the distasteful work to bring in the sum required; that done he turns again to his usual contemplative idleness.

Even if he works steadily for a few months—in rare cases he may keep at it even for two or three years—there will inevitably come the day when he will ask for leave to return to his village to rest or “sleep.” If it be refused, the near future will overwhelm him with the sad intelligence of the demise of his nearest and dearest relations, for whom he wishes to mourn or for whose property he wants to wrangle. First, his mother will die; then a brother, “a child of the same belly” as himself, will succumb; if for some reason you have still not granted the furlough, you may reckon that within a week or two he will learn that his old father is sick unto death and implores his presence—in evidence of which the rascal will proffer a letter that was in all probability written to his dictation by an obliging friend. The bereavements suffered by the average office boy in civilized lands are as nothing compared with the losses sustained by a black servant who has tired of his continued employment.

Until the native can be brought to see that steady labour is an integral part of life, and that work is uplifting and not degrading, as he now conceives it to be, the first real step in his advancement will not have been taken.

In brief, then, the white man's advent has not been without its very serious drawbacks.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION, MISSIONS AND WORK

It is a strange fact that the average European in the African Tropics would never employ, unless perhaps as a bookkeeper, carpenter, or in some such office where he would be continually under supervision, one of those natives sweepingly referred to as "mission boys." In this category are included, somewhat unjustly perhaps, but inevitably, all those who have attended any mission, either as scholars, inquirers, or believers, and who have assimilated at least a superficial knowledge of elementary education. Of their training they are inordinately proud and their general bearing tends towards superciliousness.

Why is the aversion to the mission boy so general?

Firstly, because he is so often untrustworthy in action and in speech; secondly, because he is lazy; thirdly, because he gives himself airs of superiority; and, fourthly, because he is inclined to curry favour.

Now the savage is by nature untruthful and lazy, and will not neglect an opportunity of pilfering sugar, salt, soap, or some such substance. These are faults taken for granted by the European, who, however, finds them accentuated in natives who have become sophisticated by contact with the white man's learning; but it is the two

latter characteristics that most annoy the European and that sometimes make him over-strict in dealing with a smug-faced fellow who falsely calls himself a Christian.

Without inquiring into the *bona fides* of the native, he takes him at his word, and it is probably not long before he has cause to repent his rashness. Had he made inquiries, he might have found that the boy had merely attended the mission school and had made no profession of faith ; possibly even he was dismissed for continuous misconduct, for such a trifle would not prevent him from posing as a shining light, a credit to the establishment for which he affects such regard. It is only fair to the missionaries to give due prominence to this aspect of the question when considering how far their efforts are justifying themselves.

To approach this subject requires not a little temerity, as the views of one who has lived for some years in Savage Africa are necessarily different from those of the folk at home, who know only what they have heard at missionary meetings or have read in missionary magazines. Should any such read these pages, they will, I trust, acquit me of the desire to belittle in any way the work done in the mission field or to paint anything but a faithful, unbiassed picture. I can assure them that I endeavour to approach the matter with scrupulous fairness.

When the missionary first goes to Africa, he is, I am convinced, perfectly sincere in his determination to do all in his power to uplift the heathen, and is not deterred by thoughts of the hardships which he expects to undergo. Rather does he look forward to them as an earnest of his readiness to sacrifice himself in his new sphere.

Within a very short space of time he will have found that there are fewer material discomforts than he had imagined; the quarters are good, the food leaves little to be desired, and he has always the companionship of his fellow-workers, whether priests or laymen. Probably the station is in a comparatively healthy locality, a sensible precaution with which missionaries are often taxed by less fortunate settlers, who have to build their bungalows where they can make a living. "Wherever there is a mission, it's healthy enough," they say accusingly. True, the statement has ample foundation, but it is surely eminently reasonable to choose the best site for the station, from which outlying districts can be visited periodically. Purposely to found a station in low-lying, fever-stricken country, when it could as easily be started on a well-drained, breezy hillside, would be the height of folly. By all means let missionaries exercise every care in the choice of healthy sites for their bungalows. In that matter they are much more fortunately placed than laymen, who are consequently occasionally prone to sneer unfoundedly.

The newcomer to the mission will be surprised that he has usually not to rough it in the least, in which respect he is again better off than the ordinary colonist. On the station he will probably find ladies, whose womanly eyes and hands attend to the household duties and who superintend the diet. Gradually the consciousness that he has been misinformed by exaggerated accounts of the privations awaiting him forces itself to the fore. He can no longer disguise from himself that fact—one which a number of missionaries have confessed to the writer.

As the weeks and months fly by he studies the language of the people amongst whom he is to work. In this connection one may record that there is now an attempt amongst Protestant missions in East Africa to restrict instruction as much as possible to the tribal tongue, it being recognized that the universal teaching of Swahili, the *lingua franca* of East and Central Africa, opens the way for the apostles of Islam, which religion is competing strongly with Christianity for the adherence of the millions of ignorant savages who are little by little being given ideas beyond those of superstitious heathendom.

Meanwhile the young missionary is learning to know his fellows, amongst some of whom he will notice, probably with a shock, characteristics of which he would have thought them free. Bigotry distinguishes one, selfishness another, a decided tendency to laziness a third, a hasty temper a fourth, and so on. Whether these failings existed in the same men in the homeland I will not presume to ask, but Africa's trying climate has certainly unmasked them. Much excuse we must in charity allow, for the most complacent, forbearing person soon finds that the insidious Tropics are making him impatient; only by exercising constant self-control can he prevent himself from doing or saying things which would never before have entered his head. Still, it is not pleasant for him, in the full mental and bodily vigour of the new arrival, to realize the human weaknesses of his colleagues, who have borne the burden and heat of the day for years.

At the same time the frank admission helps him to understand why many of his cloth are unpopular with

their lay neighbours. That it is so it is idle to dispute. Why, even on the liner he noticed it, and since his arrival he has had further proof. They do not object to missionaries *qua* missionaries—indeed, a number of the latter are on extremely good terms with officials and settlers ; they disapprove not of their work, but of the way in which it is carried out. Many of the priests are, it must be admitted, strongly disliked by the bluff, easy-going, tolerant settlers, who, however, hate hypocrisy as they do the plague.

If the colonist views the padre with suspicion, it is almost invariably because he has known several instances of the life being inconsistent with the profession. He has met the clerics whose sublimest thoughts centre round a well-spread dinner table ; he has sat with those who are for ever libelling their rivals of another denomination—for all too frequently they regard one another as competitors, rather than as colleagues working for one high purpose ; he has talked with those to whom ritual was more than faith ; he has even known more than one whose moral life could not bear investigation. This latter charge, serious as it is, cannot be refuted : there are throughout Africa missionaries of various Christian denominations who desecrate their holy calling by indulging in sexual intercourse with native women. Ask any layman who has experience of Savage Africa, and he will tell you reluctantly that he knows of such cases.

With his knowledge of the frailty of the instruments, unquestionably sincere at the outset, the lay settler can scarcely be expected to be a lenient critic of the work of the missions. He is not unreasonable enough

to say that the natives should not be educated, but he maintains that the process should be graduated in such a way as not to make the pupils unbalanced. To-day one has not far to look in Africa to see the unfortunate results of an unwise and over-swift inculcation of learning. Coercive measures must defeat their own end, for to be lasting and beneficial evolution must be natural and progressive.

So he disagrees with the methods, rather than with the aims, of the missions. He believes that the native with schooling, even one who has received a European education, remains at heart unchanged, and that he retains only the veneer of civilization, which does not yet eradicate the instincts bequeathed by savage ancestors. As our development has been slow and steady, so must his be, if it is to be sound; a transition from heathen ignorance to civilized culture within a space of five or ten years can of necessity be but superficial.

This standpoint is directly opposed to that of almost all missions, which, naturally anxious to show results, are over-eager to give the native a mechanical and parrot-like knowledge of elementary education, instead of raising him gradually to a higher plane. Reading, writing, and the rest of it he speedily acquires, but he remains in all essentials the savage, as is shown by his boundless scorn of those who have not these accomplishments, often by perverse use of the newly-instilled conceptions, and not infrequently by a line of conduct of which the raw black would never be guilty.

Again, this injudiciously hurried metamorphosis may have unfortunate moral results, for by continual assertion of the falseness of his national beliefs he has been

shamed into renouncing them in favour of something which he does not understand. Consequently the boundaries of fear or custom, which restrained him in some measure at least, are torn down, while nothing is put up in their place. His material outlook cannot grasp as yet the essence of the new belief, of which he really knows nothing, and so he becomes sadly unbalanced, assimilating Western vices with a startling facility. Thus it happens that the native who has been too quickly made acquainted with civilization often sinks to a level of degradation far below that of the ignorant bush dweller. Of his teaching he preserves but the useless exterior forms, thinking that by imitating our manners, dress and speech he is evincing his equality. Even the stay-at-home Englishman can have evident proof of this if he will but take a walk through the seafaring quarters of one of our principal ports, where he will be struck by the look of super-satisfaction that radiates from the ebony faces of such negroes as have been able in all respects to attire themselves in the manner of the white man.

No, the process cannot logically be hurried. Only by recognizing that the evolution must be gradual can we march in the desired direction. An essential preliminary that must find acceptance by the negro is the fact that work is necessary to development, a doctrine which he at present rejects. From time immemorial he has avoided to the uttermost the necessity when it presented itself ; if it had to be faced, then he postponed it to the last possible moment ; if it was so pressing as to demand attention, he delegated it to a slave, a child or a wife. Work he regarded as something fit only for

the lower orders, not for a being so lordly as a man. That he should labour as a condition of receiving his daily bread would strike him as a ludicrous suggestion, yet it is one that must be brought home if he is to be lifted out of his heathendom.

Unfortunately it is an aspect of the question that has not yet sufficiently engaged the attention of missionary societies, though some of them—notably the Roman Catholic bodies—are making efforts to the desired end. They are at last beginning to impress upon their charges that *ora* alone will not suffice; *labora* must accompany it. It is a stage to which Protestant societies, with rare exceptions, have not advanced, some of them excusing themselves on the grounds that they are not “industrial missions.” True, but if the native is to be taught the dignity of labour, who is so fitted to emphasize it as the man who has undertaken his moral and mental welfare? Without committing themselves to industrial activities, the workers in the mission field could certainly do more to inculcate in the young African an appreciation of the necessity and honour of work. Too much emphasis cannot be laid on this need, which is, indeed, one of the principal objects of all Colonial Powers.

Though a few missionaries go to the extreme of saying that white and black are in all things equal, the reasonable man recognizes the falsity of such an unnatural idea; nor will he deliberately preach it. For all that, many coloured converts have undoubtedly an absurd idea of their own importance, and maintain their equality with the white man. It arises in the majority of cases not so much from false notions conveyed by the padre

as from his failure adequately to censure presumptions and shortcomings on the part of his flock, which takes the omission as evidence of its own worth. Were religious workers stricter in this matter—for it must be remembered that the native mistakes undue leniency for fear—there would be less cause for the oft-repeated assertion that they are weakening the white man's prestige by unconsciously, but nevertheless certainly, encouraging this doctrine of the equality of the races.

Prestige is in Savage Africa the force by which we rule, the only power that keeps millions of natives in subjugation to a few thousand Europeans. It is a strange mixture of respect and fear, a feeling of devotion to the ruling race evoked by superior moral force. If it were to fail, the foundation on which we have built our Colonial Empire would be gone, for we, unlike the Germans, have never administered our African territories by force of arms. We have trusted to a benignant course of government, rather than to a large armed band, and the late war vindicated completely the wisdom of the choice; but the very fact of the smallness of our military establishments in the African colonies and protectorates makes it more than ever necessary for us to beware lest our moral hold over the subject peoples be diminished. Prestige being vital to our tropical colonies, anything calculated to undermine it naturally arouses the ire of the settlers, who therefore look with an unfriendly eye on any one who spreads the doctrine of equality between white and black, ruler and ruled.

Missionaries are sometimes accused of a readiness to encourage marriages between whites and blacks. Were

there much justification for the allegation, the matter would indeed be serious, but happily the vast majority do not look favourably on such unnatural unions. Most would, I suppose, celebrate such a marriage, even though they would do nothing or little to encourage it; some very devout priests I know who would refuse to consecrate a union so injudicious, so contrary to sentiment. For, veil the instinct as he will, the padre must feel that intermarriage of the races is undesirable in every way. It shows, not the high moral and mental standing of the black party concerned, but the dulled and debased consciousness of the white.

There is another charge often levelled against missionaries that, although they claim to know the native, they fail to act in a manner that can be understood by him. That there is some foundation for the complaint seems true. Equally certain is it that the missionaries, taken as a whole, have a deeper academic knowledge of the native character and language than any other class of settlers, not excepting the officials; but, while their reading of the untutored mind must tell them that retribution should swiftly follow misconduct, their training is all in favour of forgiveness and kind-heartedness, neither of which qualities is comprehensible to the people with whom they are dealing. The latter, therefore, not restrained by fear of punishment, permit themselves liberties which they would not dare to take with the lay European.

Only very seldom does the missionary resort to corporal chastisement, the sole punishment which corresponds with native ideas. Even when a particularly gross act on the part of a negro calls for instant

use of the cane or *kiboko*, the missionary who is far-sighted and courageous enough to do what the moment demands is almost certain to find his action condemned by his fellow-workers as an outburst of passion, which he should have curbed. On a few occasions I have known ministers of religion proceed in this way, but each time the attitude of his colleagues was openly condemnatory. Harshness I would not defend, leave alone advocate, but any one with African experience knows that there are times when nothing but corporal punishment administered without loss of time will serve the ends of discipline and justice.

The missionary's whole trend of thought and life being opposed to such measures, he does not readily grasp the essential fact that what is unnecessary in Europe is of prime importance in a savage land. So he confines his reprimands to verbal persuasions, and finds that his repeated warnings fall on deaf ears or on the ears of those who will obey only while supervision forces them to do so. In short, he gets less ready obedience than the planter or trader, and, curiously enough, is often less respected by the blacks, who understand and appreciate rough and ready punishment. Muscular Christianity may make a strong appeal where ill-considered leniency defeats its own ends.

So the common grounds for objection to missionary work are the wrong methods employed, the tactlessness of many of the Europeans engaged, the irregular life of others, and the bitter quarrels that arise between the various sects. This latter part is regrettable enough in Europe, but in Africa the disagreements do infinitely more harm, as they are inevitably construed by the

negro to mean that the white men are not all believers in the same God. One classic example of this was afforded by the quarrel at divine worship in Uganda of the White Fathers and members of the Church Missionary Society, when King Mtesa interrupted the acrid discussion with the words: "Go! And when you white men have decided on the true religion, it will be time enough to come and preach it to us." More recent and perhaps even more harmful was the well-known Kikuyu controversy, which, the merits of the question apart, might surely have been amicably settled in such a place and way as not to weaken or destroy the faith of native Africans who were just forsaking heathendom for a religion of purity and mercy.

Without a doubt educational efforts in Africa have been made chiefly by missions, to whom we are indebted for the very valuable work they have performed in compiling dictionaries, grammars and handbooks of the many native tongues. Their readiness to undertake the schooling of those in their sphere of labour has unfortunately made the various Governments too prone to neglect their duties and to leave it all in the hands of the different societies. Were the administrations ready to bear their fair share of responsibility, it would be more satisfactory to all concerned. First of all, however, a carefully conceived scheme of instruction must be drawn up, one that will slowly but surely raise the subject peoples to a higher level. All students of native affairs realize that, by drifting on in the same old way, we are merely shirking the difficult question of discovering a system more adapted to the peculiar needs.

As great an authority as Sir F. Lugard, the late Governor-General of Amalgamated Nigeria, said but recently: "I do not think that any one can contend that the results of education in the African Colonies, any more than in India, have been such as to produce a generation happier or better adapted to their conditions of life and a betterment and progress in those conditions." He, in common with many another administrator of exceptional experience, advocates the establishment of rural schools under native masters, where the education provided would be very elementary indeed, the main purpose being to train boys in industrial crafts and agriculture and *so to raise the standard of life in the villages*. That basic fact demands recognition—that education is useless unless it is racial, and that such an evolution can take place only very slowly and by natural means. Furthermore, it cannot by too often reiterated that the inborn aversion to work must be uprooted if progress is to be real and lasting.

There is a Swahili proverb always in the mind and often on the mouth of the East African black: "*Haraka, haraka, haina baraka*," which means that in haste there is no blessing. Very true is it in this matter of the education of the heathen, who must be handled with forethought and with circumspection. We must be particularly careful not to deprive him of the fear of his native gods without offering him something tangible in its place, for even his savage superstitions impose certain rules of conduct. He must not be ushered with unbecoming haste from the darkness of ignorance to the full brightness of knowledge, lest the blinding

light seer the unaccustomed eyes. Rather should he be led step by step along the lightening passage.

Authorities are all agreed that religious observances are valuable aids in the formation of character, but they hold different opinions as to the teaching most suited to the needs of savage Africans. Whether Christianity is destined to compete strongly with Mohammedanism for the adherence of the black millions, who must soon discard their faith in witchcraft, fetishism and similar superstitions, remains to be seen. At the present moment the struggle is but beginning.

A man calls himself a Moslem because he and his acquaintances feel that such a profession is indicative of worldly worth, is a sign that he is superior to the ordinary heathen; similarly, it is to be feared, many unbelievers lay claim to being Christians. Possibly they may have been influenced some time beforehand by the eloquence of a missionary—for eloquence, of which they are themselves past masters, carries them away—but the little flame has died almost at birth.

Such is the case over and over again. Fickleness is the hall-mark of the negro. Nothing makes a lasting impression on him; fatalism is so strong that he sees no object in struggling against a force that must overpower him; of the past he remembers nothing, of the future he is careless. All his thoughts are centred in the present. With such a being it is impossible to expect results comparable with those of Europe; not until the primitive instincts give place to feelings more nearly resembling those of civilized man will a great awakening come.

CHAPTER IX

ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

WHEN the wonderful little clove island of Zanzibar passed into the hands of the powerful Arabs of Mascat, they brought with them to their new home a staunch belief in the greatness of Allah and of his prophet Mohammed. As their numbers increased and their wealth grew, mosques were built, whither the *muezzin* summoned the true believers to prayer.

Gradually the keen traders were lured to the mainland by the promise of slaves and ivory. As became good Moslems, each was a missionary of his religion, and soon it found a firm foothold on the coast ; of course it did, for the natives found it judicious to profess the faith of their fanatical masters, who would if necessary not neglect persuasion of an ungentle type. So it happened that Islam was dominant in the coastal region when England and Germany proclaimed protectorates over their respective spheres in East Africa.

With the establishment of European influence Mohammedanism suffered a natural set-back, that, however, did not last long. Paradoxical as it may seem, civilized rule has proved more favourable to its extension than did the old conditions. With the disappearance of the

time-honoured tribal barriers that had prevented inter-communication, travel became widespread. White men were continually setting out for the interior; Arabs and Indians were doing the same, and each had in his train a large number of carriers and *askari*. Soon thousands of natives were each month arriving at and leaving the coastal terminals, such as Mombasa, Bagamoyo, Pangani, and Kilwa, until the native prejudice to long journeys gave way to curiosity, to the outer world, coupled with a desire to earn the wherewithal to purchase the gaudy beads or coloured cloths that came from lands beyond the sea. Traffic between the Indian Ocean and the interior of the country became constant, and all the time more or less devout Mohammedans were making journeys, during which they sought opportunities to proselytize.

Perhaps the factors that militated most seriously against sweeping successes were the Koran's injunctions that true believers should eat only meat that had been killed by a Moslem in the prescribed style, and that forbade the consumption of beasts that had died. Now the native is a keen anti-vegetarian: to him nothing is more acceptable than the opportunity to gorge himself to satiety on flesh of any sort. Even such a slight detail as its being fly-blown and in an advanced stage of putrefaction does not detract from the enjoyment; on the contrary, it seems to heighten it. That being so, he was hardly predisposed to adopt a religion that robbed him of chances to partake of his favourite food. Apart from the commandment to eat only beasts slaughtered in the orthodox manner, he was debarred absolutely from bush pig, hippopotami, elephants, and



MWANZA, VICTORIA NYANZA.

20 Jan. 1904.

other tasty animals. Clearly he had small inducement to embrace a faith that restricted his carnal appetite in this incomprehensible fashion, without offering some compensation in the way of latitudes permitted in excess of those sanctioned by heathen custom.

But as time went on there came a change. Civilization was pressing gradually forward, and with it the black man's narrow horizon was being unconsciously but constantly broadened. For the more enlightened the blind superstition of savagery was already losing a little of its potency. The supercilious attitude, the impressive swagger of Arabs, half-Arabs and Swahilis and other followers of Mohammed could not fail to attract the fickle negro, whose greatest pleasure it is to pose for a brief while as the superior of those with whom he comes in contact. Here, apparently, was a means of asserting that superiority not for a day or a month but for all time. So he got a teacher to instruct him in the rudiments of the new religion and proudly labelled himself a Mohammedan.

Exactly what it meant he did not know. Probably he could mouth a few mumbled prayers ; he could recite in stereotyped phrases that Allah was great and that Mohammed was his prophet ; and he had learnt that Mohammed had written " the book." Beyond that he knew only that in the month of Ramadhan it was his duty to abstain from food, drink, or the use of tobacco from sunrise to sunset. However, though his knowledge was entirely superficial, it gave him the required excuse for an assumption of dignity.

As his adoption of Islam was purely outward, so outward show played an important part in his pro-

fession. He provided himself with a turban or fez, with the long night-dress-like *kanzu* of the Arab, and perhaps with leather sandals; only then did he feel a good Moslem.

To lay claim to being such was not difficult, for the slipshod Mohammedanism of the East Coast bears little resemblance to the rigid, exacting observances performed with fanatical scrupulosity by the devotees of North Africa. Here the professing Islamite is accepted if he pretends to obey the Koran's restrictions as to certain foods and if he mumbles his prayers at sunrise and sunset. Brotherhood with those of the faith being so easily obtained, it is only natural that many of its self-styled followers should be of poor moral character. The laxity permitted by local custom, though distinctly in contradiction to the behests of the Koran, is to the native who feels himself too enlightened longer to acknowledge the gods of his fathers one of the inducements to embrace this convenient substitute. With little alteration in his mode of life he can pass for one of the Faithful: his polygamous soul is not asked to deny itself the felicity of the harem, and, with the exception of certain meat dishes, his diet is not subject to interference.

What could be more comfortable and comforting? And so he adopts the faith which, he considers, entitles him to make a parade of his worth. Indeed, so pronounced are the pride, hypocrisy and laziness of many bush Mohammedans that the "conversion" is a change for the worse, since in them these and other failings are more noticeable than in the unspoilt heathen. In this connection it must be kept continually in mind

that the Arab, half-Arab, and Swahili populations of the seaboard are more or less devout in their protestations, whereas the bush natives are usually mere lip servants.

So it was that precocious natives first proclaimed themselves converts. Meanwhile the *askari*, many of whom were Sudanese, were being marched about the country quelling disturbances, opening up new districts, building administrative stations and generally policing the interior. Wherever they went they acted as missionaries, and, as their uniform was looked upon by the blacks as a badge of signal honour, it followed that their conduct must also be worthy of imitation. Consequently the village headmen, councillors, and those others who felt themselves of more importance than their brethren began to model their lives on those of the native soldiery. The latter, and Mohammedan traders of all classes, were indeed the pioneer missionaries of Mohammedanism in East Central Africa ; now their work is being furthered in large measure by sultans, chieftains, headmen and native schoolmasters.

It has been mentioned that the rapid spread of the Swahili tongue has been an important factor in the extension of Mohammedanism, and it is to be supposed that it will become more noticeable as time passes. In this respect the Government of the British East African Protectorate has throughout acted in a more far-sighted manner than did the administration of the neighbouring German colony. In our territory, though Swahili is more or less understood practically everywhere, the important tribal languages remain the official medium of communication in the various provinces ; the Germans,

on the contrary, with true Teutonic dullness but with commendable success, made Swahili the official language from end to end of the land. At present it is too early to say whether we mean to continue their policy in the Tanganyika Territory, or whether we shall revert to the less convenient but more sensible system of using different languages in different provinces.

It is interesting, by the way, to note that the German authorities, who throughout the war posed as the champions of Islam, were immediately prior to the outbreak of hostilities much concerned with the consideration of means to combat wholesale conversions from heathendom to Mohammedanism. Though all administrative and military servants were officially instructed by the Governor to do all that lay in their power to discountenance the adoption of this faith by the natives within their jurisdiction, it does not seem to have occurred to those responsible for Government policy that the general use of Swahili was a most important point. One of the futile suggestions thrown out was that the natives be "induced" to keep pigs; one much more likely to be efficacious was that village headmen and schoolmasters with strong leanings towards Mohammedanism were not to be appointed if suitable Christians or heathens were at hand. Needless to say, the question was viewed entirely from the material standpoint, the moral welfare of the inhabitants not being in any way considered. German officialdom had been led to believe that a strong Mohammedan party might in time easily constitute a danger to their supremacy, therefore it was necessary to hinder by all means the possibility of such a development.

Without doubt there is that element of danger to be faced. The one common language forms a common bond for all tribes, which are otherwise inclined to mistrust one another. Islam strengthens that bond in such a way that it may some day prove beyond our power to break it. From that point of view it is not desirable that Mohammedanism should obtain too strong a hold on the tribes of savage Africa, lest, led by fanatics steeped in ignorance, they be tempted to unite in an ill-considered effort to rid themselves of the white man's rule. That, however, is not to be feared in the present, for heathendom is only just being disturbed by the presence of Christian and Mohammedan missionaries. For instance, of the ten million inhabitants of German East Africa in the year prior to the outbreak of war the Government returns showed only three per cent. to be professing Moslems, and many of these were, as has been shown, true believers in name only.

Nevertheless, a few years have made a tremendous difference in several districts, notably along the Rufiji, which in 1913 was reported to be almost entirely Mohammedan, though barely one-third of its one hundred thousand natives had forsaken their primitive gods only four years previously. Of course, such a rapid change is exceptional, but, although there exists no cause for a scare, it must be remembered that the results obtained by the labours of the numerous Christian missionary societies are small in comparison with those of Islam's teachers.

During the years of war, when self-proud soldiery and the supercilious servants of white officers found their way into every quiet village of the land, much was

done to induce the heathen to profess agreement with the tenets of Mohammedanism. Wherever they went these superior persons were an advertisement for the Prophet whose name was so frequently on their lips—and not always reverently. Their very superiority towards the "savages," as they scornfully termed the bush natives, was to these latter a strong argument in favour of the fashionable belief.

To the lasting discredit of the German Colonial Government, let it be added, unceasing efforts were officially made to make the struggle one of religious feeling, and for this reason Governor Schnee proclaimed broadcast the Holy War, in which Germany ranged herself on the side of Islam. Despicable lies and exaggerations were employed with all the skill possible, with the inevitable consequence that many of the ignorant blacks grew to imagine that England's armies were conducting a war of repression, torture and pillage. And so the number of professing believers grew tremendously from 1914 onwards.

Here follows a literal translation of one of the Governor's declarations :

NOTICE.

On the 14th November 1914 the Sultan in Constantinople declared the Holy War against the enemies of the Moslems, namely the British, French, Russians, Belgians and Serbs. The great Fetwa declaring the Holy War was brought by servants of the Sheik of Islam and on the 14th November he read it out to the people in the Mosque of Fatimo, and now it is being noised abroad throughout the whole world. Until the 14th November the great Fetwa was kept in that room of the palace of the Sultan of Constantinople in which since long ago the garment of the Prophet has been kept.

The following is the wording of the Fetwa :

If many enemies combine against Islam, if they destroy the lands of Islam, if they kill or take prisoners the Moslems, and the Sultan of Constantinople, who is the Khalif of the Prophet, declares the Holy War in the words of the Koran, is this war the duty of all Moslems, great and small, foot-soldiers and horse-soldiers? Must all Moslems throughout the world engage in the Holy War with their property and their lives? Answer: "Yes!"

The Mohammedan subjects of England, France, Russia and their Allies, nations which make war on the Khalif of the Prophet with battleships and armies and which wish to root out the religion of Islam, must they also take part in the Holy War against their own Governments? Answer: "Yes!"

At a time when all Mohammedans are called upon to take part in the Holy War, if there are any who refuse, are they doing grave hurt to themselves, will they be visited with the anger, scourge and punishment of God? Answer: "Yes!"

Do those subjects of the enemies of Islam who are at war with Islam commit a great sin if they, even under the threat to kill them and their family, consent to take part in the war? Answer: "Yes!"

Mohammedan subjects of Great Britain, France, Russia and their Allies, if they take part in war against Germany and Austria, the allies of the Sultan and of all Islam, will they be scourged by God because they are doing harm to the Khalif of Islam? Answer: "Yes!"

MOROGORO, *the 25th February, 1915.*

The Imperial Governor.

(Signed) SCHNEE.

J. Nr. K. I. 3245.

It is worthy of particular note that in the last paragraph the Imperial Governor explicitly states that Germany is the "ally of all Islam." Yet, be it remembered, less than six months previously he and his advisers were engaged in devising means to thwart the missionary efforts of the devotees of this faith.

To sum up, it is not wonderful that the African turns easily to the religion of the Prophet, for it is a faith

that appeals to his wild, unrestrained nature much more than does Christianity. The Koran sanctions plurality, enjoins circumcision, and recognizes slavery, all institutions in full force in the bush. The only practical sacrifice demanded is abstention from unclean foods—and of these the "believer" will often eat if he feels secure from observation.

Christianity, on the other hand, allows him to indulge his appetite for bush pig and other members of the species, but requires him to limit himself to one wife, to avoid participation in the lascivious native dances, and even to discontinue the enjoyable practice of swilling amazing quantities of beer.

On balance, it is clearly preferable to profess Allah, and so the native who cuts himself free from the slavery of witchcraft usually announces himself as a convert to Islam. To be a good Moslem is fairly easy for him; to be a good Christian infinitely harder.

CHAPTER X

THE NEGRO FAMILY

FOR want of a better word I must needs refer to the negro "family," but my readers will realize that the term in this connection is used to convey an idea essentially different from the construction put upon it in modern society, just as our notion of marriage is fundamentally opposed to that of the East African black. To us the matrimonial bond is generally supposed to be the uniting of two persons who have a deep affection the one for the other; in the African bush no such conception is harboured by anybody. The union is regarded entirely as a prosaic and material step in which sentiment can be allowed no part. The dusky youth who has acquired the wherewithal to purchase a wife, or who can prevail on his parents to give him the necessary bride-price, is keen to resign his bachelorhood, for the simple reason that marriage is for him the foundation of economic prosperity, not because the comely Hadidja or the buxom Fatuma has aroused in his breast passions which no other maiden has been able to call forth. The negro character is altogether too fickle in affection for it to provide the deep and lasting love that is so often found among both men and women of the white races.

But if a consuming passion is seldom a reason for marriage, the black youth has other important inducements. First of all, he knows that he is investing his funds in the best possible fashion, since his wife will cook his food, regulate the household affairs, hoe and tend the plantations, and devote any spare time to plaiting mats, making baskets, or doing such other work as will show a return for her labour. Idleness, which is the natural portion of the male, is not tolerated in the case of the female, who occupies a position in every way inferior to that of her lord and master. His ease and comfort must be her chief care.

Here, where savage Nature is still so potent, the chivalrous distinctions and pretty courtesies of advanced development are entirely lacking. The struggle for existence is brought home more forcibly to the tribes than it is to our pampered town-dwellers, and, as the burden of defensive measures falls on the men they assume a pose of unchallenged superiority. With them the Teuton doctrine holds sway: Might is Right. That being so, how can weak woman command respect? No, her physical power being of little account, her moral influence in the life of the village is very small.

Though a few tribes recognize a certain limited range of choice on the part of the bride-to-be, it may be taken to be the general rule that a woman is not consulted as to the man with whom her father or guardian thinks of mating her. Their advantage, not hers, is to be the decisive factor. How much the suitor will pay down, and what chances will there be in the future of extracting further sums on all sorts of pretexts; to what extent will the son-in-law increase the



WOMEN WATER CARRIERS.



NATIVE BELLES IN GALA ATTIRE.

father's prestige, influence and worldly position ; from what tribe and district does he spring—such are the considerations which will occupy the mind of the parents.

Why should they waste time and thought in weighing up the prospects of the maiden's future happiness ? As a woman, has she not been brought up to realize that her purpose in life is to be the mate of a dusky swain, whose word will be law, and that her prime duty is to bear him children, in order that honour and profit may crown the union ? The emancipation of woman is as yet unthought of in the bush ; her destiny is to carry on the work of procreation, and with that belief firmly established in her poor dark mind she does not question her guardian's choice of a husband. Obedience is her only duty in such matters.

Nevertheless, my lady readers need not lavish undue sympathy on the African wife, for she is blissfully unconscious of the fact that her lot is unenviable. From her point of view she has usually small cause for complaint, though now and again serious and well-founded differences estrange her from the man to whom she stands in a position of quasi-slavery. Through long generations her forbears have passively submitted to their fate, and she is as resigned as they were. To attempt to point out to her the indignity or the injustice of her status would be to court blank astonishment, so firmly is she convinced that woman's mission is to minister to man's physical needs and to bring progeny into the village. Crude as are her primitive notions, they have the merit of keeping her reasonably contented.

Where, on the other hand, native women have undergone the too speedy transformation from ignorant savagery to the spurious imitation that passes for civilization and advancement in the negro quarters of African townships, one cannot help being struck by the appalling vice that prevails and by the restlessness and discontent which invariably follow. In the remote bush village the life is not characterized by what we would consider morality, but it is safe to say that the negroes can more fairly be charged with non-morality than with immorality: to them our definitions and distinctions are largely incomprehensible. In the neighbourhood of white settlements, however, it will usually be found that the moral tone is far below that common in savage society, and that all manner of unnatural abuses have sprung up. So let us not be anxious to hasten unduly the emancipation of the African woman. Far better will it be for the metamorphosis to come about by gradual evolution.

It has been truly said that the positions of the married pair are perfectly symbolized by their attitude when on the march from one village to another. The wife will carry on her well-poised head a load of cassava, a bunch of bananas, a gourd of beer, or perhaps a bundle of household effects, while slung across her back in a knotted rag or astride one hip is to be seen a child, his big head nodding sleepily with every step of the mother. Her bare breasts swing with every movement. Over her legs and most of the upper part of her body lies a thin film of dust, through which are streaks due to the oozing sweat. Her condition pictures admirably her daily work and the exertion it demands. Either

ahead of her or a few paces in the rear stalks her better half, his sole impedimenta being a spear or knobkerry and possibly a tightly-rolled sleeping mat. On *his* shapely body are no marks of strain, no signs of labour. Furthermore, one is much struck by the dignified and pleasing bearing of the man, as opposed to the unattractive and down-trodden pose of the woman. It is one of the contrasts of Africa : the fair sex—fair in form—is certainly the male.

Everywhere in negro Africa the woman is doomed to a life of steady toil, whereas the man makes his own comfort the regulator of his actions. Now and then, of course, he fells large trees for the building of canoes or in order that plantations may be extended ; he fishes and hunts ; but his exertions are always spasmodic. Usually his occupations are endless talk, the imbibing of surprising quantities of native beer, and no inconsiderable amount of love-making ; even though he be married, and the object of his fleeting infatuation be in like case, he sees no obstacle to the pleasures of love. His one concern is to go discreetly to work, so that discovery may not interrupt the clandestine association and bring in its trail consequences both unpleasant and economically serious. Always there looms in his consciousness the thought of material loss.

Even where Islam has gained a hold over the native population the picture remains practically unaltered, for Mohammedanism is a lustful religion that not only permits plurality but tolerates uncontrolled sexual promiscuity. As a natural consequence, woman is looked upon as little more than a chattel, whose body is extremely useful in all manner of ways, but for whom a higher

significance is unthinkable. Authorities tell us, indeed, that the Prophet appears not to have believed that women were possessed of souls such as had been granted to men! If that be so, is it to be marvelled at that the followers of the Koran relegate their womenkind to a position immeasurably inferior to their own?

In black society the superiority of the man is demonstrated not solely in the division of labour, but by many little customs that serve to emphasize and keep ever before the eyes the wide divergence. When the husband eats, it is either alone or in the company of male friends, or perhaps one or two of the male children; never do the wives or concubines join in the repast, though they may serve it. Only when the hunger of the man has been satisfied is the platter passed out to the female members of the household. Similarly, it is customary for the wives to occupy their own separate huts or their own rooms in the big family dwelling, while the master has his own particular hut or room.

Where the husband has attained a degree of prosperity that will have enabled him to practice the polygamy natural to his ideas, the several wives will each have a separate hut, though often the various dwellings that go to make up the family domicile will be enclosed in a quadrangular or circular fence built of reeds or elephant grass. The European wife, jealous of her prestige, would be surprised to find how well the ladies get along together, though occasionally a petty squabble disturbs the equanimity of their relations. Jealousy is to these primitive folk not by any means an unknown feeling, but their unrefined nature cannot be supposed to experience the sharp, agonizing pangs that sometimes rend the heart

of civilized people. To minimize the chances and cause of offence, the husband takes care that his favours are equitably distributed to the different wives, who are sometimes visited in their own quarters, whereas in other tribes it is usual for the woman to come to the man's own hut. In any case, he will try to keep the peace, for unpleasantness in the harem has economic as well as sentimental results.

Dissension will inevitably entail for him a loss of comfort and of the easy-going contentment of which he is so fond. Nagging and back-biting he will endeavour to cure by the prompt application of a measure of corporal punishment, but, if the trouble is deep-seated and not confined merely to one recalcitrant member of his female possessions, the normal tenor of life may not be easily re-established. His child-like happiness in the things of the present will be seriously disturbed, his favourite dishes will not appear to tempt his palate, and it may even happen that his aggrieved spouses will resort to physical persuasions in order to achieve their point.

Marriage being entirely an economic affair in which the preference of the woman is allowed no part, it is natural that marital fidelity should not be regarded by either sex as a sentimental obligation. To talk of a moral constraint is a contradiction in terms, for the savage soul is little concerned with abstruse considerations; it follows its animal instincts, indulging itself recklessly and incontinently. But though the wife knows that her husband—even though he possess "a wife for every day in the week and two for Sundays"—will seek amorous adventure outside the family circle,

and though the man knows that the virtue of his women-folk is open to so many strong temptations that she will certainly not reserve her attentions for him alone, each partner must exercise sufficient care to prevent a discovery of his or her wrong-doing. Detection will entail strife and perhaps material compensation for injured parties.

In sexual matters the negro outlook differs essentially from that of civilized man, for the passions are indulged almost after the fashion of animals. It is true that there are tribes which expect chastity in a bride, but the vast majority see no objection to the single woman bestowing her favours upon any one who takes her fancy. In many a community the girl who has given birth to a child out of wedlock is eagerly sought after, and her price is enhanced, for she has already given tangible proof of her fitness for marriage. Similarly one might name African tribes that punish adultery with death, though it is exceptional for a serious view to be taken of such a failing ; as a general rule the husband whose wife has been proved guilty of intercourse with another man is willing to condone the offence, provided he be reasonably compensated. His view of the matter is that the interloper has poached on a preserve restricted by purchase to the husband ; therefore it is but equitable that he should pay the defrauded party such a fine as will atone for the trespass.

That the sentimental desire to have exclusive possession of the woman is not pronounced, as it is in the civilized male, is proved conclusively by the custom of offering to a guest not only the hospitality of board, but also of bed. That a man should offer

the loan of a wife to a friend strikes the European mind as very strange, yet it is a common occurrence in negro-land. So it is not adultery *per se* that is objected to.

Although sexual matters are ever prominent in the mind of the African, or perhaps because of that, the man's chief thought in entering on marriage is not that he will be securing a sexual mate, since during his bachelorhood he has never lacked such temporary partnership. Apart from a housekeeper, he wants a woman to bear him children, for children will enrich him and extend his influence. Therefore it is fitness to discharge this important duty, rather than mere comeliness of physiognomy, that is considered by the groom, who probably picks a buxom, well-set woman with prominent buttocks and broad thighs; for such characteristics, coupled with certain others, are held to be good indications of fruitfulness.

Motherhood, being the accepted business of the woman, is regarded with high esteem, and unhappy is the matron who must confess that she has never brought a child into the world. Such a charge is everywhere sufficient to justify divorce, since the husband is deemed to be entitled to offspring. Though the native races are now increasing quickly under the ordered and beneficent government of the different colonial powers, infant mortality is still regrettably and remarkably high, for the ignorant mothers have no idea of the elementary rules of hygiene. But with the spread of knowledge and the decrease of superstitious rites it is to be expected that the death-rate amongst babes will gradually but surely improve.

The little one's garments will not need a deal of

preparation and forethought. For him the swaddling clothes will be replaced by a string of beads round the abdomen, stockings and shoes by one or two bead anklets, and mayhap in place of ribbons and other adornments he may have attached to his neck and wrists amulets and charms warranted to guard him from evil. In this nude state he will sit or toddle about, his big head and swollen stomach giving him an appearance of odd solemnity.

Wherever the mother goes she will take the child, who is carried across the back in a piece of cotton or bark cloth, or who sits astride the mother's hip, one little leg on either side of the parent. Despite the fact that she never leaves her offspring, however, it must not be imagined that she devotes much time or thought to its care. Whatever she would have done without the babe to watch over she continues to do: when she draws water from a near-by stream, the little one is slung across the back and is perhaps splashed by the few drops of liquid that are spilled from the bucket or earthenware pot balanced on the woman's head; when she hoes the garden the child is placed on the ground near at hand; and even when she spends long hours in the frenzied contortions of the dance it is not unusual for the suckling to be still carried on the back. Soon it grows used to the incessant movement, and is found quietly asleep while shrill chants and the beating of drums and empty petrol tins fill the air with discord.

This constant association of mother and child has one obvious advantage—that almost as soon as it begins to toddle it learns to imitate the movements of the

parent. It is given a tiny hoe, with which it scratches the surface of the ground when it sees the mother toiling vigorously under the blazing sun; it strolls proudly back from the water-hole balancing precariously on its head a miniature pitcher of the same pattern as the mother's; it watches the preparation of the meals, the stamping of the grain into flour, the drying of the manioc, and all the other common household duties. In this manner is it initiated from its earliest infancy into the work that lies before it. Should the child be a boy, he will soon break away from this routine, but if it be a girl she will little by little prove her usefulness in the domestic circle, and gain a thorough grounding in the arts that are woman's lot.

Negro children of either sex are pleasing and precocious, and in some ways they seem able to grasp things more easily than white youngsters. They are remarkable, too, for their eager activity, which is in such contrast to the staid and lazy demeanour of their elders, at least those of the male persuasion. Clad in birthday dress, they roll unrestrained in the dust, but, however grimy their general appearance, they seldom lose a certain attractive and sympathetic air. Once they have overcome their terror of the white man, they readily make friends, and will come and stand by him, gazing anxiously and expectantly up into his face. They are playful and careless as a child should be and are affectionate and friendly.

Though their early years reveal quickly extending intellectual powers, it is unfortunately the fact that the encouraging promises are rarely fulfilled. Until puberty is reached the rate of development is extra-

ordinary, but at that period of life a sudden blight seems to descend with speedily evidenced results. The full awakening of sexual desires, which in the negro are not infrequently active even several years earlier, brings in its train a deadened and dull consciousness which reveals itself in a variety of ways. His understanding seems gradually to lose that easy grasp of things, the light-hearted playfulness passes into a more serious detachment, love of action gives place to spasmodic exertion followed by long idleness, a tendency to pilfer and to lie is often noticeable, and the taint of sexuality tinges the whole of the outlook. Of course, the change is gradual, but it can be followed step by step from about the twelfth to fourteenth year. Any one who has had a young boy in his employment cannot have helped remarking what a change has occurred in his whole character at about that age: Mohammadi, though he may have rendered quite satisfactory service for a couple of years, will begin little by little to demonstrate the failings that so often make older boys a nuisance. The attainment of manhood, for as such is puberty regarded, means the high-water mark of the average native's intelligence; after that he will slowly but certainly fall away.

Fickleness is the outstanding characteristic of the black, who lives ever in the present. If it bring him good fortune in the shape of meat, an abundance of food and plenty of native beer, he revels in his luck and enjoys himself to the fullest degree; if it bring unpleasantness in the form of an unwieldy load to be carried for hours under the burning heat and along a difficult path, he will plod unhappily but doggedly

on. But let a buck be shot an hour from the camp to which he is struggling. Then the whole scene is changed as if by magic. He sends out ululations of triumph, capers like a child, and willingly loads himself with another ten or twenty pounds of meat, though a moment before he had professed to be scarcely able to drag himself forward. It is always the present that counts; in it the thoughts of the past are lost, and speculations as to the future have little, if any, part.

Recently the writer attended the trial in England of a Swahili native charged with murder, and was a little surprised to notice that twice during the closing stages of the hearing, at the moment when his life hung in the balance, the accused turned nonchalantly round in the dock to look at the clock that hung behind him. Even at so serious a time he was wondering how much longer he had to wait for lunch! Yet he was closely concerned with the progress of the case, and had shown no signs of callousness. It was merely an illustration of the fatalism that permeated his whole outlook on life, that made the present more important to him than the future, even though that future might be soon terminated by the noose.

This fickleness necessarily betrays itself in the feelings of love and friendship, and even in the family ties, which are much less binding than are those of advanced peoples. Naturally enough, the deepest attachment is that of the mother for her offspring, for such is strongly pronounced even in the animal creation, and may but reasonably be supposed to be more developed in the savage breast. The father, too, is proud of his children, though not in the same way as the mother. The children

are fond of their parents, but dutiful obedience must not be lost sight of. When the boy reaches puberty, he is considered to have entered the state of manhood, and thenceforth he leads an existence that is more or less independent of parental control. Possibly he still remains in the village and beneath the old roof, but his attitude of self-reliance is pronounced. On the other hand, he may elect to go out into the world for a while in order to see life, and then his parting will cause him little real grief, even though loud protestations are not absent.

Even death is marked by lamentations far more noisy than genuine. A woman whose husband has just passed away signifies her bereavement by rushing out shrieking into the village, tearing at her garments, and interspersing her wails with praises of the virtues of the deceased spouse. Her friends at once know their part in the ceremony, and two of them lay hold of her, one on either side, and support her in her hysterical demonstrations of grief. In like manner the women who gather for the burial raise loud cries of sorrow, weep copiously, and would appear to the newly-arrived European to be heart-broken at the loss of their friend. Yet so fickle are their innermost feelings that the funeral is scarcely over before quips and laughs find their way round the assembly.

In weighing up the native character this remarkable fickleness must be kept always prominently in view.

CHAPTER XI

SOME NATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

IN endeavouring to convey some idea of the characteristics of a race in so elementary a stage of development as are the blacks of East Africa, it is necessary to draw distinctions between the various types that are most frequently met with, and that can be differentiated almost at sight. To state that the tribes vary considerably in physique, in facial form, in their attitude towards the white man and to work, in their readiness or otherwise to welcome the benefits of civilization, and in their moral life and outlook is to record what does not seem in any way strange even to the reader who has never set foot in a tropical land ; but he will perchance be surprised to find to what a remarkable degree natives of the same tribe, but of different habits of life, differ one from the other. Yet there is always not far beneath the surface that ineradicable trend of thought that even very advanced Africans appear never to be able to lose. So that of the evidences of progress, which I shall seek briefly to trace, the external signs cannot fairly be taken as a criterion. Nevertheless they are, I believe, interesting, and not without value as demonstrating the quick transformation from unabashed savagery to a state of complacent

satisfaction within the fringe of twentieth century civilization.

Without a doubt the hall-mark of the African is his fickleness, coupled with a remarkable insensibility, that is, however, not to be confused with callousness. There springs to mind the story of one of the early Central African explorers, who, to strike added terror to the heart of a treacherous carrier whom he had sentenced to death, ordered his headman to sharpen a knife in the presence of the prisoner. To his extreme surprise the condemned man evinced not the slightest sign of concern, and before the preparations were complete he had fallen sound asleep.

It is the impulse of the moment that is decisive, and that explains the inconstancy that so frequently puzzles and annoys the methodical European. The black lives ever in the present, content to take the good things that offer, or, if circumstances be unfavourable, bearing with resignation and with little complaint the burden that oppresses him. All is ordained by the Supreme Power, and speculations as to the future are set aside in the firm conviction that everything is "the will of God." With fatalistic calm the negro lives from hour to hour, giving practical application to the maxim "Sufficient unto the day is the evil" (or the joy) "thereof."

To live thus without thought of the future and with studied indifference to the experience of the past is possible only to a race not far removed from its primitive beginnings. It gives to the native, however, a contented, if not a merry, mind, for he is saved all worry as to the days to come, and knows not the anguish that the

knowledge of guilt brings to the civilized man. Conscience troubles him not at all; only the possibility of material punishment has power to imbue him with fear.

A striking example of this trait in the negro character can be culled from the German official reports of the administration of the Tanganyika Territory. The story was told to me by a German civil servant of long service, who claimed to have arrived on the scene immediately after the incident happened and who vouched for its truth. Four or five years after the Maji-Maji Rebellion of 1905-1906 a native appeared at the Government post of Liwale and complained to the Assistant District Commissioner that he had been robbed by a comrade, for whose arrest he prayed. When he was interrogated by the official, he explained naïvely that during the above-mentioned rising a friend and he had killed an Indian storekeeper and had taken possession of his belongings, most of which consisted of the usual trade goods. Ever since the time when the property had passed into their hands, his partner in the crime had been appropriating more than his fair share. Would the white man arrest the offender, and force him to deal squarely with his accomplice? Needless to say, both of the murderers were apprehended, tried, and in due course hanged, though even up to the last they could not understand why such a fate was being meted out to them—at least they professed not to be able to do so. The artless confession seems absurd to our ideas, but no more than did the death sentence to the two unhappy savages. It is safe to say that they had in the meantime known no pangs of conscience, such

as sometimes lead a white murderer to confess his crime. Expiation and atonement had no part in their logic; it was merely an accidental and unimportant detail connected with the point at issue!

This chief characteristic of fickleness tinges the whole outlook, and is the underlying cause of many an action that would be incomprehensible in a higher being.

It has been suggested that there is considerable superficial difference between natives of various classes, and for the purposes of comparison it is well to examine three stages through which many a native passes. First, there is the *mshenzi*, the savage, as he exists in the bush; secondly, there is the man who has been brought into contact with the European, for whom he has worked either as a porter or as a labourer; and, thirdly, there is the more sophisticated individual with a deeper acquaintance with the white man's ways. Into this category fall personal servants, *askari*, or native soldiery, clerks, and—somewhat higher in the scale—mission teachers.

Naturally it is the savage who best reveals the true negro character in its various aspects, yet in many matters even natives who have lived for years in close contact with Europeans advance but little beyond the standpoint of the conservative tribal elders. Particularly is this true with reference to the many superstitions that play so important a part in African life. The servant of many years' standing or the mission teacher will state with disdainful superiority that such and such is merely the custom of the ignorant *washenzi*, but despite his pretended emancipation from such childish beliefs he will take care that he does nothing

to offend the deities or evil spirits that have it in their power to visit punishments upon evil-doers. With scorn he points to the practices of his heathen brethren ; yet for safety sake he leaves himself a loophole for use in case of need.

Without so far digressing from the subject as to attempt to enumerate or examine some of the commonest forms of witchcraft, be it said that there are evidences which puzzle the keenest and most learned observers, and that missionaries who have spent twenty, thirty and even forty years amongst these primitive peoples have confessed to the writer that there are certain remarkable powers undoubtedly possessed by some of the medicine-men, powers the origin of which has hitherto baffled research. In trying to fathom the native this intense superstition must be borne constantly in mind, even though the subject under observation profess lofty disdain for such an attribute. It is highly probable that his protestations are merely a pose designed to raise him in the white man's estimation.

Possibly this ever-present dread of the power of the witch-doctor exerts a powerful influence on the complex nature of the black man, who cannot truly be held, as many writers have averred, to be a merry, child-like person. In many ways he is a child, but is he merry ? It has been suggested that he is the slave of the impulse of the moment, and when the circumstances are entirely to his liking, especially when big pots of beer and huge quantities of meat await his attention, he shows himself to be an easily contented animal. That he is not really merry is evidenced when things go slightly

wrong. He does not grumble, it is true, but his attitude is one of bearing stoically the misfortune rather than of putting the best possible construction on matters. He is a careless child, but scarcely merry.

His carelessness translates itself amongst other things into indolent improvidence. If a fierce thunder-storm breaks upon the banana groves, flinging to the ground a number of the fruit-laden plants, will he take warning and prop up the other trees, so that the next gale will not leave behind it a similar trail of havoc? Not he! Instead of taking so obvious a measure of precaution he sits in idleness until further loss befalls him. Then he bewails his misfortune, but if after this renewed experience he be again told to support the stems with pronged poles he will still ignore the advice, listlessly ascribing any further damage to the will of God.

It is the same with questions of food. After a record harvest the village will gorge itself for a lengthy period, and will make strenuous efforts to dissipate the surplus by brewing large quantities of beer. To put aside for a possible future shortage some of the lavish crop would be a measure of prudence that would not commend itself to native opinion. "Eat, drink and be merry" and "Take no thought for the morrow" are mottoes that appeal to the African mind.

While touching this question of famine, it is interesting to notice that at such times many tribes burn with fire-brands the beaks and claws of fowls, in order to deprive them of the desire to peck the grains of maize or millet that fall from the wooden mortar in which the grain is stamped. That the birds should be treated

The first characteristic of the born nation is its unity. It is a people who are united by a common language, a common religion, and a common history. This unity is the foundation of their strength and their ability to resist foreign domination.

The second characteristic of the born nation is its independence. It is a people who are not dependent on any other nation for their survival. They have their own government, their own laws, and their own customs. This independence is the result of their long struggle for freedom and their determination to remain free.

The third characteristic of the born nation is its courage. It is a people who are willing to sacrifice their lives for their freedom and their independence. They have a strong sense of duty and a deep sense of responsibility. This courage is the result of their long struggle for freedom and their determination to remain free.

The fourth characteristic of the born nation is its resilience. It is a people who are able to withstand the most difficult of circumstances. They have a strong sense of purpose and a deep sense of faith. This resilience is the result of their long struggle for freedom and their determination to remain free.



AN UNHAPPY PET.

in this cruel fashion is not as strange as the fact that even in times of real hunger natives refuse to kill their poultry. Indeed, the traveller often asks himself the question why the black man keeps fowls, for never is one seen to figure on the menu of the family.

In many cases, too, they forbear to slaughter their oxen, though there be no food in the kraal. At the time of the rinderpest epidemic throughout Central and South Africa many instances came to light of native headmen steadfastly refusing to kill their few remaining cattle for food, even though their villagers were starving to death. The loss of an ox was of much more importance than the demise of a neighbour. Likewise it is no uncommon occurrence for an African to be much more anxious about the recovery of a sick cow than about the outcome of an illness which has prostrated one of his wives.

Such indifference to the sufferings of others is closely bound up with carelessness as to his own lot. Of course, he prefers well-being and safety, but he is often too lazy to take elementary precautions to ensure these desirable things. Frequent examples of this truth are provided for the European who travels with a caravan through a bad lion country. In order to safeguard his carriers, he will have large camp fires lit at sundown, and will give explicit instructions for them to be tended throughout the night, for the Fire God is the worst enemy of the beast of prey. But orders and the consideration of his own safety will not be sufficient to induce the native to keep the fires burning brightly : only if the white man turns out once or twice in the night can he be satisfied that all is secure. Despite

the danger which they know to be lurking at hand, the carriers will fall sound asleep, and it may require the boot of the master to rouse the watchman to a sense of his duty.

Though they be careless and highly emotional, African natives are usually pleasant people of a trusting and hospitable disposition. A stranger who strolls into a village knows full well that he is welcome to food and a bed, or at least a sleeping-place in a hut, while in many parts of East Africa the fruit of the paw-paw trees planted in and round a settlement is reckoned to be at the disposal of any wayfarer. Why this particular luscious fruit should be set aside for the wanderer I do not know, but the peculiar idea is a pretty illustration of native generosity.

Friends are almost always willing to help one another in any little way they can. Very frequently it happens on a plantation or farm or at a railway construction camp that a number of men from the same village come together and ask for work. They are engaged for, say, two months, and each is given a work card on which is marked each day done. When the majority of the members of the party have completed their contract and desire to return to their kraal to "sleep," as they so picturesquely express it, it is found that two, owing either to illness or laziness, have still several days to put in to finish their cards. To attempt to persuade them to remain longer than their kinsmen is futile. They will ask the *bwana* to deduct from the wages owing a sum to represent the time still to be worked, or will even offer to accept only half the second month's pay, though perhaps two

more days will entitle them to the whole of it; I have even known a case where twenty men volunteered to do an extra day's work for nothing in order that a friend who had still five days outstanding might accompany them on the morrow.

Wherever the negro goes he will find ready acceptance of his company, and within an hour or two of the arrival at a camping-place of a gang of porters one would imagine from the friendly intercourse with the villagers that the two parties had known each other for years. They gather round the same fires, share their food, crack jokes, tell tales, and play pranks. Even the personal servants of the master put aside for a while their assumption of authority and condescend to mingle with, and eat of the food of, lesser mortals.

Nowhere can one see to better advantage the differences between the *washenzi*, carriers and personal boys than at a camp far away in the bush. The savage, naked save for a loin-cloth, or perhaps wearing only a scarlet blanket knotted or thrown toga-fashion over the one shoulder, owns a dignity of carriage and a beauty of limb that one does not recognize in the porter, who affects cast-off European clothes of any and every sort. Of sturdy build and strong of muscle he may be, but in his tattered shirt, hanging like that of the Russian peasant outside his trousers, he loses the attraction of the raw bush-dweller. Nor has he the grandeur of mien and cleanliness of garment of the white man's servant.

Whatever impression he may have on the Westerner, the carrier is convinced of his own superiority to the *mshenzi*, and both he and others of his race who have

annexed a little more of the external evidences of civilization often disdainfully address other natives with whom they are annoyed by that opprobrious word. Seldom does it fail to rouse anger even in the breast of a man who is verily a savage, a heathen. Just as the self-satisfied Englishman objects to being labelled a country bumpkin, a clod-hopper, so does the East African resent being termed an *mshenzi*.

Having this pleasant estimate of his own worth, the carrier is inclined to adopt an attitude of overbearing and harsh scorn towards the villagers, and he in his turn is treated in much the same way by those with a sense of their own importance. So it is always in the Dark Continent: the man with power becomes haughty and cruel. Of the native potentates who attained great power none ruled by kindness; it was by the aid of the assegai, the knife, the poison cup, and the medicine-man that they kept their subjects in order. The life even of a headman hung merely on the mood of the chief, whose pleasure it was to order cold-blooded murder now and then, purely to demonstrate his authority and to assuage his thirst for diversion.

To show his advancement the porter apes the European by decking himself out in tattered trousers, drill coat, or perhaps a flannel shirt with spine-pad. On arrival in camp he may lay aside this everyday garb and don a few articles of finery likely to engage the attention of the village women, for their favours are eagerly competed for by the amorously-inclined Don Juans. Easy acquaintanceship ripens fast into a flirtation, and if the inducement be sufficient the lady does not

hesitate to yield to the blandishments of the passing stranger.

Naturally the boys are powerful rivals in such affairs of the heart, for their higher wages and their exalted status are not lost sight of by the women. Not seldom they will array themselves for an hour or two in the afternoon in the glory of a snow-white linen gown, or of a transparent silky robe, above which is worn a dress waistcoat—the most prized piece of apparel in the wardrobe of the affluent native—and with self-satisfied confidence they will stroll into the village to ogle the belles, and to show off their worldly knowledge to the admiring elders. The black is quite happy if he can thus parade for a brief while his own worth. When surfeited with self-glory he is in heaven. An hour later he is once more content to peel potatoes or to make the master's bed.

It is such ingrained resignation which frustrates much progress. The natural longings for improvement and advancement come occasionally to the surface, but they are simply fleeting emotions that exercise scarcely any effect on the average man. Perseverance and persistence are virtues in which the African is sadly lacking, though in purely physical toil he will, if sustained by the exhortations of a European, accomplish extraordinary feats; but, if left to his own devices, he shows the lackadaisical lifelessness of his race.

Even the greed of gain does not excite sufficient interest to induce persistent energy, though he is by nature a greedy individual, who covets almost everything he sees. But his love of repose is deeper than his desire to possess, and so he lives idly from day

to day. That his financial position improves steadily all the time is nevertheless true, for the wives make up in work what the males lose in vain chatter. Very seldom indeed does one come across an East African who is steadfastly and perseveringly devoting himself to any one piece of work.

CHAPTER XII

THE CARRIER

SOME of the characteristics of the native and an idea of the work of the caravan porter have been indicated in previous chapters ; in this one let us recall a few pleasant recollections of the carrier himself, as distinct from his work.

First of all, one's thoughts fly to the difficulty of procuring him, for it is most exceptional—unless one be a Government servant—to do so with ease. If one needs twenty to carry the loads, the only way to avoid a protracted delay is to tell the headman with whom one is negotiating that forty are required. Then the number actually desired may possibly assemble an hour or two after the time appointed, although it is by no means a certainty. It is quite on the cards that the headman will profess profound regret that he cannot supply the numbers, since nearly all his young men are away on a journey ; but, marvellous to relate, the mention of a little extra pay will often serve to produce them. Whether each village has a magic carpet on which its members are transported from a distance at just such a moment as this seems open to grave doubt, but by some mysterious agency those who were far away an hour ago are found

to have returned and to be ready to join the caravan.

Often not even the temptation of cash will suffice, but there is one lure which the native can seldom withstand. For meat he will do almost anything, and so the traveller who cannot continue his journey on account of lack of transport often solves the difficulty by pandering to the craving for flesh. If the chief will give him so many men, he will shoot game for the village. The answer is never long in doubt, and in a short space of time he is heading for the game resorts, to which a large number of eager trackers direct his steps. It is about the only kind of work for which the black is a willing helper, but when the European is going shooting he is pestered by dozens of volunteers who are anxious to accompany him. His task is one of elimination, not of encouraging bashful souls to offer themselves.

When the white man has dropped a couple of buck, he returns, though the guides, even if they have enough meat to last the village for days, will beg him to shoot a few more ; they will never admit that more can be shot than they can eat. Having fulfilled his part of the bargain, he knows that the next day there will be placed at his disposal all the men he wants, and often enough the thought of more meat en route persuades the strongest to compete for the privilege of going. Without such an inducement, the able-bodied men would have remained at their ease, leaving it to their more feeble fellows to come forward. Now men of all sizes line up, and the weaklings are picked out until the right number of the fittest remain.

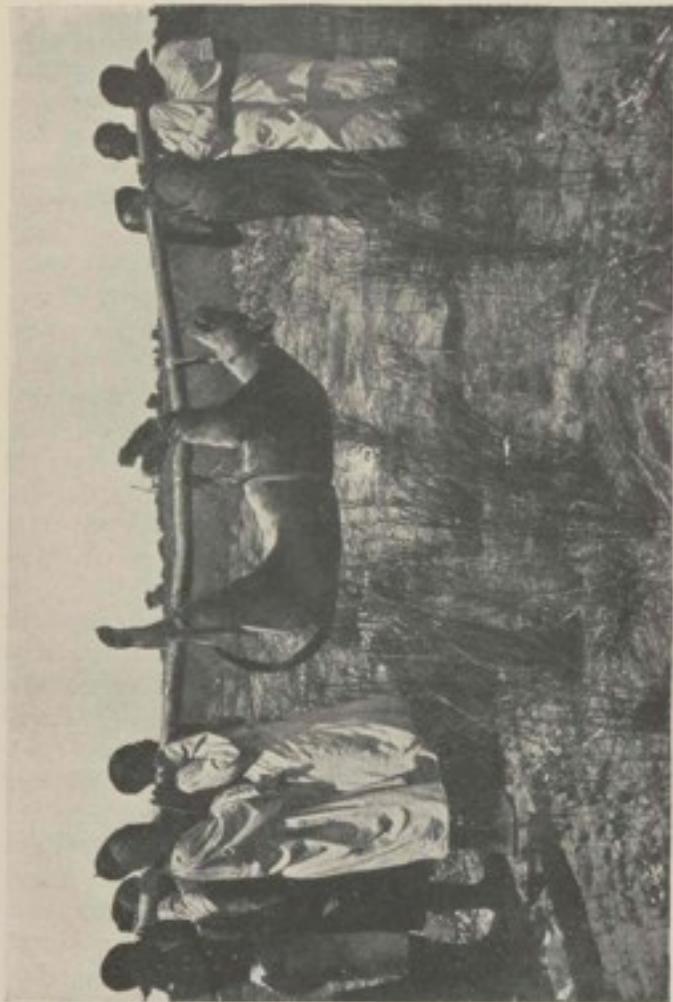
Having been numbered off, they are told to take hold of the loads lying ready packed in a row. With a shout they dash for the smallest and least awkward-looking, and wrangle and quarrel as to who has first claim to each package. There stands a muscular fellow over six foot high, happy in the possession of a deck-chair, a camp-table, and a couple of buckets; near him, looking thoroughly miserable, is a burly, broad-backed man who has secured the little box for which he made a dive—but it is twice as heavy as he had anticipated, for it contains books; there at the end of the row is a lugubrious old wreck who views in front of him the worst load of the whole lot. Being the weakest man, he has been pitilessly driven off the other burdens that he could have borne without undue strain. The traveller has always such inequalities to level up with a new set of carriers, but after the first day each knows his own load, and then there is no further trouble and delay.

The ambition of each of the men is to carry the lightest load, though shape also has some concern for the carriers, for a big, unwieldy bundle will be ever catching in the bush that flanks the narrow, winding native path. Having secured a satisfactory load, the porter's next idea is to dawdle along in as leisurely a manner as possible, since he is a firm believer in the ever-recurring maxim "*Haraka, haraka, haina baraka,*" which, being interpreted, expresses the African conviction that no good ever came out of haste. If he can stroll slowly along, he is content; but to get him to travel for any considerable distance at over two and a half miles an hour is next to impossible. To do

even that he must halt occasionally for a rest. The European, too, soon learns that his old pace of four miles an hour is unsuited to the Tropics, and is wise to accommodate himself to the custom of the country.

It is interesting to observe how the East African reckons the time taken to cover a certain distance. He says that it is a march of so-and-so many hours "with a load," or somewhat less "with empty hands"—despite the fact that, when he carries a load, it is usually his head and not his hands that are called on! Be it noted that his ideas of time are as hazy as it is possible to conceive, and that it is never safe to place any reliance on information of this kind that has not been checked over and over again. When half-a-dozen or ten persons have independently given the same reply, then one can feel moderately confident that the time taken will be within a couple of hours of what they say.

To overcome in some measure the dilatory methods of the black, many travellers prefer to march by moonlight when possible, for then the cool air induces the porters to set a quicker pace in order to keep themselves warm, and in the night air they do not suffer from thirst as they do when the sun scorches in the heavens. In bad lion country night treks are not possible, since, even with such danger at hand, the careless, hapless porters cannot be induced to take reasonable precautions. For a while they will march in close formation and chant the eerie songs that are so strangely fascinating, but soon their laggardly nature proves stronger than their fear. A gap will grow in the middle of the column



IN TRIUMPH BORNE.

The Times, 1904.

and those at the rear will drop back, until urged by the master to set a better pace in order to catch up with the long Indian file. Time and again they will allow a space to grow between themselves and the main body, and at last even the little rear-guard will dissolve into straggling twos and threes. Then one luckless youth will halt—and an agonized shriek gives notice of his fate.

But the porter, though lackadaisical and dilatory like all others of his race, is a contented being with whom the reasonable traveller gets on well enough, provided he will curb the impatience so liable to gain momentary sway in tropical Africa. Not least interesting of the characteristics of the bearers is the quaint chatter with which they while away the tedium of the journey. Much of their talk seems to us mere waste of breath, a deal of it strikes us as obscene, some phrases which to the Western mind convey no thought of humour are greeted with prolonged cachinnations, but now and then the *bwana* is rewarded by overhearing some word, expression or tale which compensates for the endless inanities that have been the burden of conversation.

As ever with the black man, the two foremost subjects of discussion are food and woman. Though the caravan move with the first streaks of dawn, many of the men will have gathered round their fires an hour earlier, in order to partake of the *chakula cha kwanza*, or first meal, at between four and four-thirty o'clock; and, despite the fact that they have eaten only a little thick mealie pap or thin millet porridge, they will spend a long while on the line of march telling each other of

the feed. Then, as the hours speed on, one sweating stalwart will confide to his neighbour that "his eyes are in his stomach because he is hungry," to which he will receive the comforting assurance that his friend too has "snakes in the belly." However, notwithstanding the strange objects which they state they have in the digestive cavity, they toil along, looking forward to a sound repast when the day's camping-place is reached.

Should the stage be short and the European popular, it will sometimes happen that the bearers will run most of the distance, singing lustily the familiar chants of their tribes, and joining vociferously but not unmusically in the chorus of an extempore monologue which a self-appointed soloist strikes up. Often it will deal with the virtues of the particular white man, his heavy loads and the lavish *bakshish* which he is expected to distribute as an extra solatium to the porters for their speedy travel. If there be two hammocks in the party, the bearers will of their own accord vie with each other in their light-hearted desire to arrive first at the destination, knowing full well that such a contest appeals especially to the Englishman, who will never neglect to give a few additional cents to the winning team.

Even when the majority of the men are morose and dejected, a cheery, comic comrade will often dispel in a few moments the gloom that has settled on the party. Particularly is this the case when one or two Wanyamwezi are included in a miscellaneous collection of men of all tribes. No tribe of East or Central Africa works so willingly or so steadily for the white man as

do these people from the Tabora district; wherever one goes, one or more of these restless travellers is to be found, and more often than not he has established himself as being a cut above those amongst whom he is living. Perhaps he peddles native trade goods, mayhap he owns a sewing-machine—so dear to the heart of the male native—or perchance he has by his own worldly wisdom wormed himself into the confidence of the local headman, who has learnt to rely on the judgments of the alien.

When the caravan is of mixed tribes—and such is by far the most satisfactory arrangement, as tending to lessen the risk of collusion or desertion—there is always good-natured banter as to the merits of the several divisions.

“Come,” will cry an Mnyamwezi, “let us hasten. The white man goes to the coast to eat salt. The great ship is waiting. Come, let us hasten that his heart may rejoice”; and a fellow-tribesman will reply from his place in the line, “Ha! the Wapogoro, how can they hasten? They have no strength, no, not a little.” To this an Mbunga, a man of a tribe contiguous to the maligned race, will add his provocative assertion, “No, the Wapogoro have no strength, for they lie too often with the women. Come friends, let us show the *bwana* that we are Wambunga, not Wapogoro.” Needless to say, the Wapogoro have a defence that is not altogether devoid of abuse of the accusers, and gradually the topic reverts to the constantly debated subject of the opposite sex.

There is always one good plea that can be advanced by the weaker tribesmen, who ask triumphantly, “Are

not the children of one belly different? Has not the one strength, while the other has none?" And so the argument continues, possibly until the camp be reached. Then there is sometimes a joyous shout of "*hayti*" or "*layti*"—in which unfamiliar form my reader will doubtless not readily recognize our own command "Halt!"

However acrid the discussion, real bad feeling seldom shows itself, though wrangling and uncomplimentary epithets are constantly to be heard. The easy-going negro is oblivious to the abuse of his fellows, provided it be hurled at him, but a wordy attack on his mother is liable to call forth his violent, if short-lived, wrath. To call him an animal, even a hyena, does not wound, though the declaration that he is a mere savage, an *mshenzi*, hurts his pride; to be designated a liar is hardly worth consideration, for the word is bandied incessantly from mouth to mouth and is objected to by nobody.

We have said that the carrier fairly represents the savage in the first stage of development under direct European influence. As he sees daily about him the supercilious boys who attend to the white man's needs, he experiences a desire to achieve at least a little of their skill, in order that he in his turn may boast an accomplishment which will bestow on him the right to assume a pose of superiority to his fellows. Those whom he would emulate, seeing a chance of getting their work done by somebody else, are not loath to disclose to him some of the secrets of their calling, but as a general rule it may be said that personal boys are less anxious than are cooks to make use of such

disciples. Cook boys take full advantage of the inquisitiveness of the porters, and it is quite a common sight to see the cook squatting comfortably at a little distance from the fire, while a learner is busily engaged in doing all the real work. The master-chef sits in happy idleness, merely supervising the volunteer's efforts. Day after day the aspirant, having carried his load into camp, gives an hour of his spare time to helping the cook, whose arts he soon acquires, for the black man readily becomes adept at preparing food. Thus does he frequently graduate into the personal service of a European.

Should there be in the caravan one or two men who can read and write, it is a certainty that they will, after reaching camp, be surrounded by several of their comrades who are eager to gain the coveted ability. Possibly these elementary arts appeal so strongly to the awakening savage because he is by nature a parrot-like fellow and an excellent mimic. If he cannot originate, he is a wonderful imitator, and, next to the matter of clothing, he is keenest on aping the European's faculty of reading and writing. Once he has progressed so far, he delights to pen notes to any and everybody. How ludicrous many of his letters are it is difficult to explain in so restricted a space, but in an earlier chapter some indication has been given. Suffice it to add one other example, that of a note received from a porter who had for a time attended a mission station and who was consequently rather more enlightened than his comrades. In consequence of his willingness, he was given the character which he begged, and in return came this :

RESPECTED MASTER,

I am highly obliged for the kindness you do have shown me in the granting me the certificate of my work.

Ever praying for your long live and your more prosperity.

I beg to remain, Sir,

Your more obedient servant,

With this effort he was perfectly satisfied and his broad beaming smile as he handed it to the white man was very pleasant to behold. It is a strange fact that the African, though he be not given to verbal expressions of thanks, gladly seizes on a pretext to write a letter to a benefactor.

Occasionally the European finds that there volunteers for work a white negro. He is a strange, pitiful object. With an unhealthy pinkish-white skin, yet quite distinct in tint from that of the European, light-coloured curly hair, a skull of perfectly negroid form, he is that strange being—a white negro, the human counterpart of the white blackbird. But his skin, unlike that of the white man in the Tropics, does not become sun-burnt. Of the albinos with whom I have come in contact every one has suffered from weak sight, as a result of which he has been constantly squinting and blinking his troubled eyes. This in its turn has distorted the face, until the expression is one of fixed pain. It has also struck me that they are more sensitive to the quips of their fellows than is the normal African. Frequently they are known by the name "*Mzungu*," which means primarily something wonderful and has come to be used for the white man.

At the latter end of the last century, when the Tanganyika Territory was not so well administered

as it is nowadays, and when the natives were not so used to the sight of the European, an enterprising Mgogo albino from the district of Mpapua arrayed himself in the uniform of a German Government servant, collected a number of his brethren as servants and carriers, and set off with his retinue for the splendid pasture lands inhabited by the proud Wahehe, who had only a few years previously submitted, after protracted warfare, to Teuton dominion. Posing as a European, he lived in luxury on the presents brought to him by the various headmen whom he visited, and at last returned to his native kraal with forty head of cattle for which he had not paid a cent. Then word of his imposture came to the ears of the nearest military official, who read the much frightened albino a lecture which he would not speedily forget, and returned to the donors the cows and oxen with which they had parted to the supposed Government servant, probably urged by unstinted threats from the bold adventurer. Seldom indeed does the negro betray such enterprise. His novel undertaking almost deserved success.

CHAPTER XIII

PERSONAL BOYS

SELDOM will the East African personal servant, whether boy or cook, admit that he is anything but a Swahili, for to be a Swahili, a professing Mohammedan, and boy to a white man give three strong claims to be considered to belong to the *élite* of native society. Hence boys usually make the lofty assertion that they are Swahilis and true believers, though as often as not a glance is sufficient to convince the European that the first statement is a lie, and within a day or two he is furnished with proof that the religion of his servant is a very convenient sort of creed, that has no relation to that of the devout Islamite.

The boy is certainly of the most dressed class and as a rule he is well dressed. Those in a state of evolution from porterhood not infrequently distinguish themselves in their off-duty hours by parading about in queer, incongruous costume, such as a battered sun helmet, a white or khaki jacket immaculately laundered, a long flowing white shirt, and a pair of tennis shoes far too large and not remarkable for their whiteness; but the boy who has realized the dignity of his position—and it does not take him long to do so—is really well-

groomed and even takes a pride in his personal cleanliness.

On his shaven cranium is set a dainty fez-shaped linen cap, neatly embroidered and well starched ; a long white nightdress-like *kanzu* reaches almost to his ankles, and on his feet are a pair of handsome Arab sandals—though these, of course, he removes before entering the presence of his master. A light cane is carried in the hand, more often swung gently to and fro than used as an aid in walking ; and as a rule a watch ranks as an indispensable article of adornment. Nowadays a silver wrist-watch with luminous dial is the hall-mark of the aristocrat, but until the last few years a huge pocket watch with massive silver chain was the envy of less fortunate mortals.

The boy's body, if not as spotless as his raiment, is at least usually moderately cleanly, and some of the best servants go to the length of bathing at least twice a day. Even those who are somewhat negligent in the matter of their ablutions may be trusted to be particular as to the condition of their feet, which are constantly washed and rubbed on stones. Possibly the reason for this extra attention to the feet is the need for continual care if jiggers are to be avoided ; and any one who has suffered badly from these pests, as did our troops in the recent East African campaign, will realize that to be a host for their remarkable breeding powers is not agreeable. The negro's hands and wrists are also kept free from dirt, but all too often what is hidden by his clothing is inclined to get infrequent treatment with water. Soap, though sometimes used, is looked upon as more necessary to clothes

than to human flesh, and, in order to procure the coveted *sabuni*† with which to keep his wardrobe unstained, the light-fingered native will often lay hands on what is not his.

As a rule, though, they do not steal from their master—at least, most of his possessions are quite safe in their keeping. Seldom will they meddle with his money, and it is quite a common occurrence for a boy to be sent a long distance with a sum of a thousand rupees or more. To the native, whose monthly wage is perhaps twenty or twenty-five rupees, this is wealth untold, and represents cattle and wives, but it is very rarely that he betrays his trust. It is the little things that are liable to be taken by boys who are otherwise trustworthy, for to appropriate a piece of soap, a measure of salt, a little sugar or tea, or—in the case of those who have been contaminated by long residence in a white township—a few tots of whisky does not strike the negro as theft. It partakes more of the nature of a loan—but one which will never be repaid.

Much the same may be said of the master's clothes. Not often will a good servant take for his own constant use or for sale to a friend a garment of the *bwana*, even though he might do so with little fear of the loss being noticed. On the other hand, one has come across fairly frequent instances of suits being "borrowed" by boys, naturally without the white man's leave.

A friend of mine once set off on a journey; expecting to be away merely the one night, he took with him only a junior house-boy and a few porters, leaving the bungalow in charge of the other servants. On the

† Compare Portuguese *sabão* and French *savon*.

road he heard that the neighbour on whom he had intended calling had that morning gone away in the opposite direction, so he gave up the journey and retraced his steps. An hour before sunset he reappeared quite unexpectedly on the plantation and was requited with a sight that astonished him almost as much as it frightened the prime actors. There on the verandah, seated round a table bearing a dainty afternoon tea, for which the cook had prepared an especially nice cake, were the head boy and cook and two of their lady friends attired with all the fastidiousness of the black belle. The cook had donned his finest and most transparent *kanzu*, but the boy had made himself resplendent in a neat tussore silk suit that should have been reposing in a steel trunk in the master's bedroom. Suffice it to say that the meal ended very suddenly and with considerably less joy than it had begun!

On another occasion a man I knew was encamped at Tabora, where the few so-called hotels then existing were not exactly models of cleanliness or comfort. Therefore he had elected to pitch his tent on a convenient plot of ground rather than put up at a caravan-serai. In the evening he went to one of the bars to meet a few acquaintances, and presently a stroll in the bright moonlight was suggested and voted to be an agreeable proposition. The two or three Europeans wandered quietly up and down the splendid mango avenues that are a striking feature of this populous Central African settlement, and at last came to a place where hundreds of interested people were watching the contortions of a score of dancers. Prominent amongst them was my friend's boy, who, thinking

that the coast was quite clear, had slipped his master's dinner jacket over his own snowy *kanzu*!

Such lapses must, of course, be visited with suitable punishment, but they do not strike the native as they do the civilized man. An Englishman would not dream of begging from a friend the loan of a suit that he thought rather nice; yet it is an everyday matter for a black to borrow from an acquaintance, often one whom he has not long known, an article of apparel that attracts him. Then in borrowed plumes he parades the streets or the village, quite happy in the knowledge that he is for a brief while the envy of all observers. Thus it is that the personal servant, if rarely dishonest where his master's possessions are concerned, will borrow a suit or a piece of soap; but such actions do not constitute dishonesty to his mind.

That there is in the African, as in the Oriental, a devotion to one of whose salt he has eaten seems often doubtful, but it remains a fact that a native who has scrupulously guarded his master's belongings will quite commonly thief from another white man.

There are many boys whose rascality is speedily discovered by the European who has unfortunately engaged them. Often they have produced excellent written references from previous employers, but as these testimonials can be hired for a small consideration or borrowed from a friend—under whose name the applicant will then pass throughout his period of service—too much credence must not be attached to them. If the written character leave nothing to be desired, yet the boy's face have a trace of roguery, it is always the wise thing to rely on one's instinctive judgment.

A really bad servant will prove as sore a worry as a poor caravan headman, and his peccadilloes will be without number.

Once I was on *safari* with a party of friends, one of whom had a villainous-looking varlet who rejoiced in the appellation of Mwenyi Raha, which, being interpreted, means the Possessor of Peace of Mind ; in other words, it was a name assumed after conversion and intended to make known to all and sundry his testimony that he had benefited to the full by his mission training. It was a public confession of conversion to Christianity. One day this fellow was surprised in the act of drinking from his master's water-bottle, which he was wont to carry, and before the angry rebuke of the eye-witness he assumed a pose of abashed sorrow. Then he said that he had a word to speak in his own defence. Thus ran his phrases :

" *Bwana*, I have done wrong. I know it. I am sorry. I ask forgiveness, and may God too forgive me. But I did not think at the moment that I was doing wrong, for does not the Bible tell us that the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table ? "

In such brazen fashion did he seek to justify himself.

Usually the thief betrays himself very easily, but even when caught beyond possibility of doubt he will proclaim his innocence. A friend of mine once found that his fruit cordial was disappearing with strange rapidity, but each of the servants naturally vowed that he had not drunk of the sugary syrup, of which the East African is very fond. In order to detect the culprit, R. smeared lightly on the dark surface of the bottle, which contained black currant or raspberry

juice, a little copying ink. On returning from a walk he saw from the pencil mark which he had made on the label that some one had again helped himself to a drink, so he summoned into his presence each of the servants, whom he questioned. Each protested his guiltlessness. Then they were ordered to show their hands, and there on the right palm of the boy most suspected were several purple stains, which he had evidently been unable to remove. Even then he denied stoutly that he had touched the bottle, affirming that the discolouration was due to the dye having run from a blue loin-cloth. Nothing would persuade him to admit his offence, not even though a fellow-servant at last confessed that he had seen him pouring out drinks at various times.

I have heard of hardened offenders who were so cute that when they stole the white man's whisky they took care to add enough water to bring the liquid up to the old mark, and provided this adulteration happened only rarely there was little chance of their being found out.

The worst case of theft of alcohol which came under my notice betrayed unusual ingenuity on the part of the perpetrator. A white man had purchased two cases of whisky, one of which he had had opened and the other placed under his bed. On finishing the first dozen bottles, he hauled out the second case, but to his amazement he found that a board had been prised *off the underside* and several bottles extracted. Of course, it was in this instance impossible to fix on the thief, since each of the servants maintained that it must have been one of the others.

Although the average boy is proud of his master and jealous of his goods, he must be kept well in hand ; otherwise he will tend to grow slack in his work and to allow himself little liberties which should be suppressed at the outset. If he finds that his first attempts pass unchecked, he will speedily arrogate to himself further licence ; so the negro must be controlled if he is to be of any service.

There are two favourite ways by which the East African servant tests the local lore and standing of a European whom he thinks it worth trying to fool. The first is to walk into the bungalow in boots, and the second is to hand something to the white man with the left hand. In that part of the world this latter action is most impolite, and if it is necessary for the left hand to be employed it should be supported by the right. The reason is that the native, like the Arab, draws a very distinct difference as to the use of the hands ; the right is spoken of as the one with which one eats ; the left is the one which comes into play when the offices of nature have to be performed. In this connection one recalls that on Burton's wonderful journey to Mekka a momentary forgetfulness of this important fact almost cost him his life. The settler who allows such affronts to pass unnoticed is storing up for himself a deal of trouble.

A noteworthy characteristic of the boy is his quickness in anticipating or interpreting the wants of the master. Even a newly-arrived white man, who can speak scarcely ten words understood by the black, finds to his astonishment that his wishes are forestalled or his halting, unintelligible commands correctly guessed.

Sometimes the examples are most uncanny. Yet when the African does not want to understand a question he can be wonderfully dull.

With very few exceptions the most advanced boys are like the rawest savages in the one respect that they are afraid to touch a chameleon, the weird, swivel-eyed, lizard-like animal that inspires almost everybody with dread. Indeed, in many parts of the country it seems a point of honour with the inhabitants to destroy any of the harmless creatures which they can find. The mouth is forced open by pressing on the stomach with a forked twig, and into the jaws are dropped a few grains of snuff, which speedily causes the poor beast to turn black and expire in apparent agony. The method is always the same. Time and again I made inquiries as to the reason of this custom, but the unilluminating answer universally received was, "It is merely custom." It is probable, however, that the usage is closely connected with the belief that death was first introduced into the world by the chameleon's dilatoriness. The tale runs thus :

"The earth, the moon, the stars and the sun have always been, but death was not always in the world.

"Long, long years ago there came to mankind two messengers sent by the Great Spirit, to whom heaven and earth belong. They were the chameleon and the salamander.

"The Great Spirit had said to the chameleon, 'Go hence and tell the dwellers on the earth that they shall be happy and live for ever'; but he had ordered the salamander, 'Hasten to the people and tell them that they must die.'

"Then these messengers of good and evil set out to obey the order of the Great Spirit.

"Without looking to right or left the salamander hurried on, and when he came to the people he said, 'Why are ye so careless? Know ye not that ye must die?'

"Then were the people greatly afraid. Only then did they grow to know trouble and death.

"Now the chameleon had turned aside from his path, had caught a fly here and an insect there, and when he remembered his duty it had grown late. At last he came to the huts of the people, but he found the salamander already there, and with him grief and death. So came death into the world."

CHAPTER XIV

THE *SHAURI*

Two words are for ever on the lips of the Swahili-speaking negro, and it may be taken for granted that equivalents are as generally used by natives who converse in other tribal languages. On the coast, in the interior, in the bustle of a crowded town, or in the quiet of a distant bush village these two words recur with startling frequency: they are *bado* and *shauri*. The first epitomizes the African's outlook on life—never do to-day what you can put off until to-morrow; the second is a very loose term more comprehensive even than our "affair," as which it may sometimes be translated.

Shauri means primarily a talk, discussion, deliberation, and is the East African equivalent of *palaver* from the West coast and *indaba* from the South. So useful and elastic is the term that it has been adopted into the vocabulary of the settler, who finds soon after his arrival in the country that he will have to devote no inconsiderable amount of time to hearing the complaints, trials, troubles, fears and hopes of those natives with whom he is brought into daily contact.

He will discover, often to his embarrassment, that a number of them do in reality regard him as "their

father and their mother," as their picturesque phrase expresses it—though this attitude will be apparent only when they are in need of some favour. While he is expected to accede to the various extravagant requests, they on their part feel no reciprocal duties to devolve upon them. It is, from the native point of view, an excellent arrangement, but methinks it is generally found efficacious only in the case of new arrivals, who have not yet had time to weigh up the primitive folk amongst whom they have come. The seasoned settler speedily sorts the chaff from the wheat, and, it must be confessed, the my-father-and-my-mother plea as a rule contains very little good corn. In extremes only is this formula favoured ; otherwise the black approaches with the bare intimation that he wants a *shauri*.

The subject may be anything, trivial or vital, humorous or serious, pressing or the reverse, probable or impossible. Nothing is outside the scope of matters which an African will bring to the employer, provided that he has inspired confidence and has a good knowledge of native customs and of the language. He may be asked to advance the rate of wages or to lend fifty or a hundred rupees for the purchase of another wife ; to decide as to the ownership of a disputed cooking-pot or as to the desirability of a young girl whom a wrinkled old ruffian wishes to add to his collection ; to forbid one man to trespass on a patch of half-cleared bush to which a neighbour lays claim or to take to task a boy who has been indiscreetly surprised with the wife of another villager ; to read a Swahili letter received by an illiterate servant or to listen to a tale of woe that is founded on the sickness of a cow—which illness

often elicits much more concern than would the prostration of a wife of the owner !

In short, the trusted European becomes judge, lawyer, guide, philosopher and friend to those in his service and to those who cross his path ; for frequently entire strangers come with their troubles, counting with confidence on the unbiassed help of the wise white man.

To introduce the subject the supplicant usually follows up his salutation with the request for a little *shauri*, though frequently he squats impassively awaiting the European's pleasure. Though the issue may be of far-reaching importance and the hearing calculated to last through lengthy hours, it seems to be a point of honour to term it " little." Always to the East African black it is merely " a little matter."

As has been mentioned, practically nothing is too trifling, too complicated, or too private to be laid before the *Mzungu* ; but, though the range of topics be boundless, it will in the large majority of cases be found that a lady is in some way involved. Perhaps a boy, tired of enjoying the favours of sundry women, married and single, has decided to lay the foundation of future economic prosperity by the purchase of a wife, and wishes to procure the marriage price that the parents demand. However high his wages have been in the past, it may be safely reckoned that he has put aside nothing or very little ; so he approaches the master in the hope that the necessary money will be forthcoming. Usually it is, if his work has been satisfactory, and the debt will be liquidated by regular monthly instalments of two, three, or perhaps as much as five rupees. Thus, whilst obliging the black by granting

the loan, the master is assuring himself of the boy's continued service, for only a native who has been contaminated by too sudden a change from savagery to what passes for civilization in an African coast-town would dream of deserting before working off the advance.

Or it may be that his wife has brought him a child, to celebrate which auspicious event he must needs give a beer-drink; and for the funds he will want to borrow.

Again, mayhap, it is a recalcitrant wife whose continual shortcomings or bickerings have so far defeated all attempts at correction. The lordly husband has applied the common remedies in the shape of cuffs and blows, but the termagant cannot be brought to reason. Will the *bwana* impress upon the woman that she is laying up for herself a store of trouble?

On one occasion I lay asleep in my bungalow on a rubber plantation. Suddenly a troubled voice came through the inky darkness and awakened me. In answer to my query as to the identity of the disturber of my rest, I learnt that it was Isa, one of our best overseers, and in all things a reliable servant—that is, provided he was under constant supervision, for without that no negro will long prove trustworthy. He had a little *shauri* he said. Having lit the lamp that stood on a table beside my bed, I bade the headman enter.

What a sight met my astonished gaze! Clotted on the woolly poll was a congealed mass of blood; a gash above one cheek-bone was already somewhat inflamed; and the hands, which the lugubrious Mgoni had been holding to his wounds, were red with gore. For a

moment I felt convinced that an attempt had been made to murder him.

But apparently he was not much troubled by the injuries he had received. Before I had secured bandages and disinfectant, he was deep in his story. He had gone home a little late and had been met by his loving spouse, who signified her disapproval of his lax conduct by belabouring him with a handy piece of firewood. He had either been unable to overcome her frenzied attack or had thought discretion the better part of valour ; at any rate, he had been driven from the hut, and had come with his scars and trouble to the master. Childishly helpless, he could but ask my aid. Would I go along to the lines and settle the question there and then ? Of course, I would not. Having washed and bound the wounds, I sent him to a vacant hut, promising to give the affair my attention in the morning. However, my help was not called upon, for by the time I was at liberty to try to straighten out the domestic tangle the couple had settled their differences. So it often happens—if the European postpones a decision or investigation, he frequently finds that the parties concerned have themselves come to terms and have almost forgotten that a dispute had occurred.

A missionary friend of mine was one day sitting at breakfast on the verandah of his station in Ugogo when a regular church attendant appeared, gave the usual greeting, and mentioned that he had a little matter on which he wished to speak to the padre. No, it was nothing urgent ; so the priest finished his meal, attended to a number of importunate natives who had various real and imaginary ailments, and then turned to the

lean, Masai-like savage. What was his trouble? Just a little *shauri*. The previous evening he had found that his wife had attempted to commit suicide by hanging (a most unusual occurrence in that part of the continent) and he had come for advice. Even such a matter was to him "little!"

Opposed to these informal talks are the deliberative assemblies that have become known to most of us as *palavers* or *indabas*. It is in these public discussions that the negro is so thoroughly at home, and an important case is sure to draw a large attendance of interested hearers. Many will be enticed by natural curiosity to learn all the facts of something which concerns them not at all or only very remotely, and others will gather in order to take advantage of any chance to speak. Seldom is the native happier than when engaged in loose discussion or in judgment on a matter public or private. Probably his joy is more intense only when he is strutting about in self-satisfied splendour before a group of envious friends.

From his earliest years he has attended countless *shauris* in the village open space and has listened to the eloquent oratory of the elders, intermingled with the buffoonery of light-hearted, light-headed youths. He is thoroughly familiar with the procedure at such functions, more so perhaps than the average Englishman with that of our courts, and has a nice appreciation of the merits of the pleading. But his impartiality cannot be relied upon, for his material interest or the whim of the moment sway him as the lightest breeze sways the aspen leaf. A clever impersonation, a witty saying, or a subtle gesture is rewarded by a burst of

applause or by a shriek of shrill laughter ; an impassioned recital of woe makes the audience quiver with anger, that is, however, probably as short lived as it is deep throated ; while a skilful piece of pleading is sure of recognition. Indeed, almost every native can, when necessary, act as his own defender and he puts his defence with considerable ability, though it is of course invariably verbose.

Eloquence is a notable characteristic of the negro and to this natural trait is to be attributed the fact that many have succeeded surprisingly as lawyers, preachers and missionaries. America's example in this respect is particularly illuminating, since it seems to show that the negro, though able to attain a high standard in such professions, is in hardly any other walk of life able to hold his own with the white man.

Just as the servant will approach his master on any trivial pretext, so the *palaver* may be summoned for any reason great or small. Here again it will usually be in some way connected with woman, though questions of public policy, the transference of the village to another site, the hoeing of new clearings for plantations, the collection of the poll or hut tax, the settlement of disputes between private persons, the investigation of thefts, witchcraft or murder, the receipt or dispatch of news, the presence in the neighbourhood of a man-eater, any or all of these will serve as an excuse for this favourite pastime. Women are naturally excluded by reason of their inferiority, but youths may attend for instruction or as fully-qualified debaters. Usually they are entitled to speak only after they have undergone the ceremonies performed on the attainment of puberty.

Strangely enough, there seems as a rule to be no chairman to keep order, and it is consequently not surprising that the audience becomes at times unruly and over-inclined to indulge in cross-talk and uncomplimentary reflections on each other and on the several parties primarily concerned in the business on hand.

Equally cherished are the frequent opportunities for *shauris* of a more friendly nature. When on a journey, the porters invariably foregather at night in one or more groups round the watch-fires, and begin the random gossip that will be silenced only by the white man's order to keep quiet and to retire to rest, which simple operation consists merely of wrapping oneself in a blanket and lying as near as possible to the blaze. No matter how trying the day has been, its unpleasant episodes are forgotten round the evening embers, and first one and then another carrier bursts into voluble narration. Sometimes it is in prose and sometimes in extempore verse, the hearers joining in a chant-like chorus at the end of every few phrases. The subject of discourse is quite immaterial, for nothing is too unimportant to have interest; similarly the audience is never wearied by constant repetition. Often enough, on the contrary, a favourite story will be called for night after night, until at last the listeners can follow almost word by word the tale as it falls from the lips of the teller.

When the post-prandial *shauri* takes the form of ballads, the self-appointed versifier will choose any theme that is uppermost in his thoughts. He may dilate on the difficulties of the road, the scarcity of meat, the buck which the master failed to shoot that

morning, the approach of the harvest, the abundance of fruit, the heathen savagery of the tribe amongst whom the camp is pitched, the rascality of a noted sultan, the rapacity of a guide, or his wordy theme may be the generosity of the master. This latter is a favourite subject when the European draws near and when it is sought to obtain from him a little *bakshish*, with which to purchase tobacco or beer or to secure the favours of the local ladies. By unabashed flattery is the request conveyed.

The matters that bulk most largely in the negro's view of life can easily be recognized from these daily chats, the vast majority of them veering round one of two subjects, namely, women and food. To our Western ears many of the discussions on the opposite sex sound obscene, though the frank, child-like way in which they are introduced and conducted must convince us that they are not always intended as such. Frequently, of course, indecent topics are mooted and obscene exclamations interrupt the story-teller, who is no more perturbed by them than he is by the repeated assertion that he is a liar. Not by levelling insults at him is he to be infuriated, yet much milder shortcomings attributed to his mother are sufficient to sting him to retaliation and momentary madness.

Though the European, especially if he be one who is popular with the natives, is likely to have many more matters brought to him than he cares about, he will be wise to extend his influence by making it a rule never to refuse to listen to a tale, however unimportant or wearying it may appear. Besides strengthening his own position, he will now and then be rewarded by a



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CELEBRATING THE KAISEN'S BIRTHDAY.

shauri, interesting, instructive, or amusing. Perhaps he will find that his Manyema confidant will recall the days when he ate human flesh in his village not far from the waters of Lake Tanganyika, explaining whimsically that the age-old custom fell into disuse "because his people began to be looked down upon on account of it by the neighbouring tribes"; perhaps the chief at whose village he is encamped is a white-haired, patriarchal dignitary, who, despite his quiet bearing, was in his younger days a trusted lieutenant of the notorious slave-dealer Tippu Tip, of whom he may be persuaded to talk; or a gaunt, wrinkled old counsellor may be induced to speak of the Maji-Maji rising that was so ruthlessly put down by the merciless German rulers. From one intimate talk with a bush-dweller the traveller and student may learn more of the savage mind than he would in a month of ordinary association with his black entourage.

While the Germans were in occupation of what is now the Tanganyika Territory, their officials delighted to hold *shauris* on the slightest pretext. For instance, on the birthdays of the Emperor and Empress the local headmen were called to the nearest Government station, and were given a brief address on the import to the ruling race of the festival; but it may safely be assumed that the only part of the custom that interested them in the slightest was the usual distribution of largesse either in silver or in kind. Far from knowing the anniversary of their own births, they had not the remotest idea of their ages. How then, should they be excited about the natal day of the Kaiser?

There is a story that the name Wilhelmshoehe was in

the earlier days conferred upon a certain spot, and that the local District Commissioner summoned the tribesmen to a *shauri*, at which he addressed the assembled multitude long, and, as he thought, lucidly on the significance of the word, which was naturally unintelligible to the concourse of uneducated savages. There in their midst was a place dignified by the name of their all-powerful monarch ; it was a fact of which they might be proud ; and so on. After he had done his pompous best and had strolled back to the fort, another official questioned several of the headmen as to whether they had understood the lecture.

" Oh, yes."

Could they remember the new name ?

" Yes ! *Whisky-soda* ! !"

Naturally a *shauri*, to be considered in any way satisfactory to the native, must drag on hour after hour, no matter how clear the question at issue. Unless one has had personal experience of the almost insuperable difficulty of getting the black to come to the point without loss of time, it is not easy to understand why discussions always take so long. The most straightforward piece of business with a village headman will necessitate hours, perhaps even days, of talking, while anything of importance cannot be settled without several sessions, at each of which scarcely any progress seems to be made.

Even when buying a loin-cloth the savage takes an endless time to clinch the bargain, for to him half the pleasure is to be found in haggling with the seller. To sell anything without argument or bargaining is almost impossible ; the African would believe that he

was being swindled if he did not receive some allowance. So ingrained is the spirit of barter that he would probably refuse at a fixed price of one rupee a cloth for which he would willingly give two, provided that the price originally asked were above that figure. To him, as to the Russian peasant, it is unnatural to pay what is asked, or to ask only what one expects to get.

Without a doubt it is the Indian's racial ability to pander to this weakness that makes him so dangerous a competitor to the white trader, who is rarely patient enough to spend hours over the sale of a single article of little value. Whether the article to be disposed of be a comely damsel, a well-bred heifer, a weighty elephant tusk or a scraggy native fowl, a long *shauri* will surely precede the buying and selling.

To ensure success in any venture the African takes *shauri* with the medicine-man, from whom he obtains by payment the love philtre that he craves, the amulets that shall guard him from evil spells, or the charm that shall prosper him in a particular direction; or, if sickness overtake him, his friends make *shauri* with the witch-doctor that he may be healed.

But the *mganga* is not only sorcerer and doctor; he is priest, wise man and dispenser of what passes for justice. That his judgments are impartial is seldom to be maintained, for he uses his powerful office to extort contributions from all and sundry. If a case of theft, murder or adultery is to be investigated by his magic faculties, he levies blackmail from the accused and suspected persons, and it is to be feared that the one least able or least willing to gratify the avarice of the fetish-doctor is the one likely to be pronounced guilty. Nor

has he the slightest objection to coupling with his sacred calling that of a seller of poisons, for which the inquirer has, of course, to pay heavily. Yet on this revered charlatan depend in a large measure decisions as to strife and peace, innocence and guilt.

With thoughts of God the East African troubles himself but little, though notable exceptions like the Masai may be quoted to disprove this generalization. Nevertheless, the common fatalism finds frequent expression in the phrase *shauri ya Muungu*, "it is the will of God." Dozens of times in the course of the day does the settler overhear this exclamation. Through every department of negro life the phlegmatic submissiveness to things as they are is evident; everything is in the hands of the Great Spirit, whose decrees it is useless to question. To what absurd lengths such resignation is often carried has been already indicated.

In short, then, a *shauri* may be so commonplace an occurrence as an ordinary chat or so festive an occasion as a ceremonial reception; it may denote a preliminary investigation or a full-dress murder trial; it may be a plan or an agreement; or it may be so modern a thing as a telephone call. "To be of one *shauri*" means to agree, while "it is not my *shauri*" is the common way of stating that the matter is no concern of mine.

CHAPTER XV

BADO

THERE has been mentioned the native's dislike of promptitude in settling any matter. It is part of his policy of *bado*, of "not yet." If we speak of certain Latin countries as the Lands of *Mañana*, East Africa may with equal truth be called the Land of *Bado*. It is the home of Procrastination, the domicile of To Be.

From early morning till late at night the settler is never long without hearing this overworked word. When the boy brings the master's coffee to the bedside at 5 a.m. or soon after, he will very likely follow up his morning greeting with the remark that he has not yet prepared water for the bath, but will do so at once. From the time of rising until the day's work is over there will be countless confessions that this, that or the next thing is not yet done.

When one shouts to know if breakfast is ready, "*bado*" is sure to be the answer, and even when the meal is served the boy will have to break the news that something is missing. Only if the cook is an unusually careful servant will there not be excuses of one sort or another.

It may be that the eggs promised two days previously

by a neighbouring headman have not yet arrived, or that the bunch of bananas bought a while ago is not yet ripe, and that therefore one must forgo fruit. To the surprised inquiry if some at least of the bananas are not fit for eating, the boy will hasten to qualify his negative with a *bado kidogo*—no, not just yet. Of course, it has not struck him to buy a few ripe ones in the market-place.

But it is not only fresh supplies that may be lacking, ostensibly because some one else is at fault. It goes without saying that it is never an omission on the part of the servants. Oh, no! The cook, unless under constant supervision, will never dream of keeping careful account of what is in stock or of what will soon be needed. He carries on from day to day, never concerned with thoughts of the morrow. Why should he worry? What is to come may be patiently, impassively awaited.

In theory such fatalism may have something to recommend it, but one's views are inclined to differ when one finds that it is construed to cover any silly neglect or piece of laziness. If left to himself, the black servant will very rarely point out to his master that certain stores are running low and require replenishing. The first intimation received will be the plaintive report: "The tea is finished"; "the milk is finished"; "the jam is finished"; and so on. When two or three such consoling messages are delivered together, as they occasionally are, it sometimes happens that the unmethodical negro steward hears words that would shock his feelings, were they less blunted to rebuke.

Strangely enough, I personally have never known

an instance of a native servant keeping silent until all the sugar or soap was consumed. Possibly the negro's particular liking for these articles may account for his unusual foresight in ensuring that stocks do not run out. And then, again, it is less risky to pilfer from a full tin or a full box than from a scanty remnant, the disappearance of which could hardly escape notice. Though a good cook or a good house boy will have no scruples about annexing anything that belongs to any other European but the master, he will respect his own *bwana's* property—with the exception of salt, sugar and soap. Therefore the wise master, recognizing this innate fault, forestalls his menials by occasionally giving them presents of small quantities of these particular things.

Such is the tenor of life in these tropical regions. "Man never is but always to be blest."

No matter what one's occupation, the same dispiriting answer will be common. The missionary will be told that the persistent inquirer has not yet decided to enter the church, and that the influential elder, who is half persuaded to forsake heathendom for Christianity, cannot yet steel himself to the task of putting away all but the principal wife. The planter's overseers will bewail the fact that the occasional labourers faithfully promised from a local village have not yet turned up, and that therefore they have been unable to carry out a piece of work to which they were ordered to attend. The traveller's stores will not yet have arrived, and some of his porters will still be carousing or love-making in the not far distant hamlet. To the merchant will be borne the news that the expected steamer is still

not in sight, that the unloading of the dhow proceeds in so leisurely a manner that half the cargo is still aboard, and that the native clerk is not yet restored to health—though probably his illness is nothing worse than a desire to rest. Whatever might have reasonably been expected to happen anywhere else is sure to be still in a state of *bado*.

This general indifference to promptitude has grown out of the black man's ignorance of time and its divisions, and out of his readiness to accept things as they are. For most negroes time has no meaning and experience teaches them nothing. They have no treasured memories of the past, no plans for the future. Even death itself does not bulk largely in their outlook.

Their ideas of time appear to be restricted to those divisions arranged by Nature, and the coming and going of which cannot be ignored by the most careless of mortals. In order that the sowing may be done at the right time and that the most propitious periods may be chosen for necessary journeys, the native must needs acquaint himself with the incidence of the dry and rainy seasons. Changes of the moon cannot escape his notice, and words for both month and year are found in most of the tribal languages. This notwithstanding, the native, even one who has been for some considerable time in European service, has no real idea of the length of a year. To get from him anything like an accurate date, one must inquire how many big rainy seasons, or, if he be a Mohammedan or live in a district where Islam holds sway, how many Ramadhans have passed since such-and-such an event took place.

He has not the slightest notion of his own age, and

a youth of twenty is quite likely to aver in all solemnity that he has passed two score years. What is more, an intelligent overseer of, say, thirty-five will stoutly maintain that he is junior to his European master, who is very possibly in the early twenties.

An elder, in reckoning up how long ago a certain occurrence took place, will say, "The children born in that time are just attaining puberty"; and similarly a woman, on being questioned as to her age, will reply simply and unblushingly to the surprised white man, "My first menstruation happened two Ramadhans ago." By such natural means are calculations made.

To a certain extent the black does count in days; for instance, he will tell you that a beer-drink is to take place in another four days. Likewise he will say that the journey from A. to B. takes two days, his interpretation of the term in this case being that the traveller has to sleep two nights on the road; so that what he calls a two-day *safari* is reckoned by us to last three. To him an extra day is of no consequence.

It is the little things that irritate one most, and perhaps nothing annoys the newcomer so much as the negro's reckoning of hours and minutes. The greenhorn, being told that the village of a sultan is near, sets out to visit him. When he has marched steadily for an hour, he inquires if they are nearly there. Yes, the spot is near. Another hour passes, and still there is no sign of smoke in the air or of a clearing in the bush, but he is assured that they are very near. With the speeding of another half-hour he learns that they are very, very near, and in fifteen minutes he rejoices to learn from the boys that "We have arrived." But let

not undue optimism possess him, for the process of arriving is fairly long; probably it will take at least ten more minutes to reach the site of the settlement. Even to such a statement *bado* will be attached.

Equally difficult to gauge is the African's sense of remoteness. The only measure of distance is by time, but as his conception of an hour is so vague as to be useless, one cannot easily calculate. Where one has to reckon in days no difficulty is experienced, but for lesser spans it is almost essential to check the words of the savage, and of even the fairly intelligent native, by practical demonstration. If he announces boldly that the caravan can complete the march in five hours, he is told that a start will be made at sunrise; where will the sun be when the destination is reached? And without hesitation or error he will point to a position that gives one a far better idea than his words of the stage to be covered.

Often inflection is the only possible guide to distance, for even so advanced a language as Swahili has but poor means of expressing comparisons. To say that "Mahenge is farther than Uleya" the native will state that Mahenge is distant in excess of Uleya, or will in some such fashion avoid what is to us an everyday phrase. When it comes to mere distance, inflection alone is the aid.

A normal tone is used to signify that Kifulu is far away—"mbali." If the same word be uttered in a higher key and with a slightly stronger accent, it may be translated as very far; whereas the word long drawn out with a musical intonation conveys the idea that the village in question is really a very, very long

way off. The reader will readily understand that nice distinctions cannot be expressed in defiance of the African's poor sense of time and distance, but it must be admitted that the sing-song tone in which it is sought to make comparisons has about it an inexplicable charm that in some measures compensates for its shortcomings.

The frequency with which it is necessary to confess procrastination is evidenced by the fact that many native languages have a special "not yet" tense; Swahili, for example, expresses much more pithily than English the fact that so-and-so has not yet come. The one word *hajaja* serves, while the addition of the word *bado* adds emphasis and indicates a belief that he will eventually appear.

From the significant existence of this peculiar tense the reader may gauge in some small degree how often the European in tropical Africa must exercise his patience. His temper, however level-headed he may be, has without doubt suffered somewhat from bouts of fever, isolation and the expectation of getting things done as quickly as he would in a civilized land; but the black sees no cause for hurry. That a European should be always working at high pressure is to him a source of wonder; and he has never understood why the ruling race speeds up all things in which it takes a hand. Therefore passive resistance due to lackadaisical unconcern with the future is a potent force which has always to be battled with by the white settler. Small wonder that he now and then gives way to wild outbursts of what has come to be called tropical irritability.

Several times there has been quoted a Swahili proverb that may be looked upon as complementary to *bado*;

it expresses so clearly the black man's attitude towards life: "*Haraka, haraka, haina baraka*"—"In haste there is no blessing."

In contradiction to this opinion, the European is always in a hurry to do something, to get something brought to him. Why does he shout at a boy in order to expedite matters? Once a white-haired, wrinkled old headman told me whimsically that the white man is like a child, in that he cries for an object in the hope of getting it more quickly.

But experience soon teaches the vigorous white man that in this land patience must be exercised if any good is to be done. The hustle and the bustle of present-day commercial life is out of place in this heathen territory.

With Cullen Gouldsbury he will say :

Men may strain and women may strive in busier lands to-day,
But the pace of the ox is the pace to thrive in the land of veld
and vlei.

CHAPTER XVI

SWAHILI

THOUGH justifiably proud of the glories of our far-flung Empire, the average Englishman is unfortunately singularly ill-informed as to our possessions overseas, and evinces little desire to supplement his knowledge, even when an opportunity presents itself. He will inquire eagerly about the shooting in a certain colony, a lady will wonder how her heathen sisters dress, both sexes take it for granted that the settler in the Tropics is a self-confessed hero-cum-lunatic who exchanges the comforts of England for the daily dangers of fever-ridden swamps, and both know that the African bush harbours millions of blacks who are still little removed from immemorial savagery; but all too often that is the sum total of their information and imagination, and the unwary traveller who unconsciously recalls experiences that might be considered of interest is likely to discover not infrequently that the subject is ill-suited to his hearers.

Speak of the Zulus, and interest is assured, partly, I suppose, because every one has heard of the Zulu wars, and partly because the widely-read books of Sir Rider Haggard have told of Umslopogaas and his tribesmen. Mention the Matabele, and people who have

reached two-score years await further word of the savages who are associated in the memory with Cecil Rhodes, the Chartered Company and Lobengula; but the younger generation has heard nothing of them. Talk of the Somali or the Sudanese, and everybody has a hazy notion that he ought to be familiar with the topic of the moment. But the word Swahili conveys nothing at all; the context apart, many a well-educated Englishman would not know whether it stood for an oriental perfume, a town on the River Amazon, or a troublesome tribe of the North-West frontier of India. Lest I be suspected of unfair castigation, let me hasten to add that the writer would have had to admit his complete ignorance until he was about to leave for East Africa. Yet it is not too much to say that Swahili is one of the great languages of the world.

As to the correct derivation of the word, authorities are not in agreement, but it means a person of mixed Arab and negro descent. When the Arabs of the Persian Gulf settled on the island of Zanzibar, they took into their harems women of the locality and of the mainland tribes, and it was from this stock that the Swahili originated. With the passage of time the Swahili themselves have again and again married women of pure negro stock, until to-day in many a so-called Swahili the traces of Arab blood are scarcely to be noted; as a rule he has none of the light-coloured skin of the Arab, yet his features differ from those of the pure negro, from whom he is easily distinguishable. Also he has a higher degree of intelligence than the bush native.

Just as a professing Mohammedan ensures for himself

a measure of respect, so is the Swahili considered to be superior to the ordinary mainland tribesman; and it is therefore no infrequent occurrence for a boy, especially one who is in domestic service, to claim descent from an Arab father or grandfather, though he knows perfectly well that in his veins runs only the blood of his up-country tribe.

Where to draw the line as to who is and who is not a Swahili is naturally a matter of difficulty, so the East coast native solves it to his own advantage by claiming that he is one. Generally speaking, the coast dwellers—in the towns and larger villages at any rate—are regarded as members of this indefinite group, and almost everywhere in the interior will be met persons who lay claim to such distinction. That such are usually in a position of comparative affluence and influence is not surprising, for, the Swahili being more civilized than those who live in the hinterland, they are on an advantageous footing compared to those amongst whom they have settled; conversely, the rich and prominent negro often seeks to increase his prestige by a pretension to mixed lineage.

The true Swahili is naturally a very different being from the uncivilized East African black, since in him the primitive instincts of the latter are modified to a varying degree by an inherited Arab outlook. To comprehend the thoughts and actions of the *mshenzi* is not usually as difficult for the sympathetic student as is an understanding of the Swahili nature; in the first case one is judging a being many of whose actions are not far raised above those of the animal, whereas in the second case one is confronted with a range of

subtlety bequeathed by an oriental father. Where the man is a half-breed, and where Arab influences have been constantly at work, he cannot be viewed as an unenlightened heathen; where the admixture of Arab blood is remote, its effect may be so slight that the subject is in all essentials an ordinary and ignorant negro. He will babble of his genealogy, confess his faith in the Prophet, intersperse his conversation with a few Arabic expressions, oaths and ejaculations, array himself in a clean white gown whenever he can, and show a marked liking for grated coconut in his rice. Thus will he seek outwardly to demonstrate his extravagant pretensions, an affectation which for the nonce brings him complete happiness.

But let us turn to the Swahili language rather than to the people themselves, since they are not as important as their tongue, which is truly the *lingua franca* of East and Central Africa. In Port Said the swarming touts who annoy the European traveller will often move silently away on hearing the curt Swahili command that proclaims the speaker as an old settler returning; at Aden it is more generally understood, though Arabic and Somali hold pride of place; as far south as Durban will be found natives who are acquainted with the language. From the river Juba in northern British East Africa to the Rovuma, the southern frontier of the Tanganyika Territory, it is the speech of the people of the coast, and still further south in the Portuguese possession of Mozambique its use is widespread, if no longer predominant. Wherever one wanders throughout East and Central Africa will be found men who understand it.

Where the influence of the Swahili has been great, as in some of the provinces near the coast, their tongue has almost supplanted the old tribal one, and practically everywhere it has established itself as the business medium. Particularly is this true of the Tanganyika Territory, for the Germans, both officials and missionaries, were at pains to aid its propagation. It was, indeed, made the official language for the whole of the Protectorate—except the Ruanda Residency—and in it were communications made to the sultans, chiefs and headmen. The conspicuous advantage was that the European who had gained a degree of proficiency could be moved at will from end to end of the colony; this general language once acquired, he did not need to learn the vernacular of the various principal tribes—though the wise and successful administrator did as a matter of course make it his business to gain fluency in the local tongue, for only so could he be brought into close touch with those over whom he had been set in authority. That was one of the dangers involved by the universal language: the average official contented himself with a mediocre acquaintance with it, never seriously attempting to supplement it with knowledge of any other.

Only too late did the German authorities, governmental and missionary, awaken to the fact that their policy had had the regrettable results of aiding the spread of Islam and of bringing the hitherto distrustful native races more into sympathy one with the other. The barrier of language having been partly removed, tribal isolation no longer remained the inevitable rule. Should the natives wish at any time to combine against

the white man, the latter may have unhappy cause to deplore the existence of a common tongue amongst his dusky opponents, and he will reflect with chagrin that it was his fellow Europeans who did so much to encourage its spread.

It is, however, not only in East Africa that Swahili is ordinarily understood. Throughout the Eastern Congo is spoken a language nearly akin thereto, and thus it was that the sturdy Congolese warriors, who fought as our Allies in the campaign against von Lettow and his forces, had little difficulty in conveying their meaning wherever they went. Those old Arab and half-Arab slave-raiders who settled in Northern Rhodesia, in the middle reaches of the Congo, and in other quiet parts of Central Africa have helped to extend the use of the common language of Zanzibar, their early home, and even in far away Northern Nigeria are to be found True Believers well versed in it. Thus one has every justification for calling it the *lingua franca* of East and Central Africa.

If the characteristics of the Swahili vary with the amount of Arab blood in his veins, and with the Arab influence to which he is subject, it is similarly to be expected that the same causes will have a bearing on the language he speaks. As he is the offspring of an Arab father and a negro woman, so his language is an admixture of Arabic and Bantu. In the higher circles of Zanzibar society the forms retain a considerable resemblance to Arabic, and many Arabic words are in daily use; those lower in the social scale ape their betters, naturally with errors, and with the frequent substitution of true Swahili terms for the Arabic ones;

while the general public speaks a language in which the Bantu element largely predominates. Curiously enough, different districts of the town are distinguished by certain peculiarities. Then again the Swahili of Lamu differs from that of Mombasa, and in Dar-es-Salaam the common speech has its own little vagaries ; but standardization is more apparent in the old German territory.

To acquire a smattering of the language is not a formidable task, and the earnest newcomer, who finds that at the end of a month he can make himself fairly well understood in the matter of common needs and commands, is liable to think that within half a year he will be quite a master of its difficulties. Never was he further from the truth. By the time that period of probation has expired he will have realized that there is nothing crude or over-easy about the language, that it is not a species of Pidgin talk, and that it, like French, Russian or Chinese, always holds out for the foreigner some new phrase, construction or viewpoint.

On my voyage out I was told in all sincerity by a rubber planter, who had already spent three years in the district of Tanga, that one of its peculiarities was that tenses did not exist. By some means—unexplained and unexplainable—the native knew intuitively whether the speaker was talking of the past, the present or the future. That settler had used the language daily for three years and prided himself on his fluency, yet scarcely any of the tips he was kind enough to give me proved to be correct.

All too frequently, unfortunately, the European contents himself with the merest smattering of the common tongue, and gradually persuades himself that

he is a master of it. The negro, by a queer conception of politeness, contributes directly to this deception, for, although he may speak perfect Swahili amongst his fellows, he will use in the master's presence only such phrases as he knows to be intelligible to the latter. Is it for him to expose the ignorance of the white man? Such is his attitude; and only when the European has obtained a good groundwork will he find that his servants and labourers speak to him in the way they speak among themselves.

Speedily I discovered that my well-meaning friend had made a grave mistake, and that the language, if quite unlike any European tongue, was still by no means haphazard. It has its grammatical rules, its tenses, cases, inflections, and idioms, and is not at all devoid of sonorousness, attractiveness, and flowers of speech. If the reader will remember that the vowels are pronounced as in Italian, the consonants uttered as in English, and that the accent is always on the penultimate syllable, he will have no difficulty whatever in reading the few sentences which I subjoin; and he will have practical proof of the rhythm of the language. Considering the state of civilization of its authors, it is surprisingly comprehensive and yet simple, well adapted for all needs which it may be required to fill.

To give a catalogue of its picturesque phrases, its expressiveness, its proverbs, and its poetry would be obviously beyond the scope of these "Sketches," and unhappily beyond the ability of the writer; but a short selection of some of each may serve the doubly useful purpose of illustrating what is meant, and of giving a cursory insight into the thoughts of the East African

black. Language, being the best interpreter of ideas, must of necessity be analysed in an attempt to understand those who use it.

In most countries throughout the world will be found certain common similarities. For instance, some of our nursery tales are told with trifling alterations in the plateaux of Central Asia and in the bush of savage Africa; likewise Swahili has a number of proverbs which differ but slightly from those current in these islands. Consider these:

If the cat's away, the mouse will reign.
A little and a little fill the measure.
Spilt water cannot be gathered up.

They are reproductions, almost to a word, of our own adages.

Many are the renderings that approach closely to our own, as will be seen by the following comparisons.

<i>English Proverb.</i>	<i>Translation of Swahili equivalent.</i>
Where there's a will there's a way.	The heart's wish is a charm.
One should not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.	The digger of the well is not refused water.
Forbidden fruit is sweet.	He who dips his finger in the honey does not dip once only.
Might is right.	The weak gets no justice; the strong man pleases himself.
To carry coals to Newcastle.	To send back dates to Arabia, or To take wails to the mourning ceremony.

How frequently animals figure in their maxims may be illustrated by just a few sayings:

He who has been bitten by a snake is frightened when he
sees a strip of palm leaf.
(Once bitten, twice shy).

Many cats have not caught the rat. (Too many cooks spoil
the broth).

The thanks of the bee is a sting.

The offspring of the fowl is not taught to scrape.

Two bulls do not remain in the herd.

And a wealth of knowledge is conveyed in translating our saw that "Too much praise is dangerous." Is a considerable insight into native life not gained when one learns that their rendering runs thus: "While the stranger is being praised his palm wine is being watered"?

For an idea of the native conception of a present, one can scarcely do better than recite the proverb, "He who eats a goat which has been given him pays for an ox." That is just their measure of value; always when a gift is made there is at the back of the mind of both doner and receiver the obligation to repay it with interest. The headman brings to the camp of the passing traveller a scraggy fowl and a few eggs; a greeting and an emblem of hospitality there may be in the time-honoured offering, but well the recipient knows that he is expected to respond with a liberal gift. Unless his largesse be patently more valuable than the tribute offered to him, he will be considered mean and discourteous, and sometimes he will even be told with engaging simplicity that additional *bakshish* will be most welcome.

Of the numerous Swahili proverbs some are of keen understanding, as, for instance :

Vita havina macho.

War has no eyes.

*Kheri huliwa na simba hama
huliwa na fisi.*

It is better to be eaten by a lion than by a hyena, or, in other words, An open enemy is better than a false friend.

While, as an example of the negro dislike of hurry, there may be cited

Haraka, haraka, haina baraka

In haste is no blessing,

and

Mwenda pole haumii miguu.

Slow going does not hurt the feet.

A favourite pastime with the people is to guess the answers to riddles, which, however, are not put in the form common in Europe. Seldom is the interrogative form employed, the usual practice being for the leader of the circle to make a statement, against which the audience must advance an apposite qualification.

"My house is large, its door is small," announces the speaker, and at once back comes the answer "A bottle"; "Never is a light lit in my house," he asserts, to be told in reply that it is of the "grave" that he is thinking; "My plantation has dried up and fruit will no longer grow," is the next metaphor, the figure in his mind being "A toothless man"; and when it is a well that he has in mind, he says "God's basin is open."

Without a deal of practice the white man cannot readily fathom these riddles, yet they are solved with amazing ease by the blacks. That they are not devoid

of discernment is evident from the few random specimens here quoted.

Although keenly interested in music, the African has no appreciation of the beauties of nature, and it is therefore not surprising to find that the poetic, when it reveals itself, is nearly always short-lived. How speedily it gives place to the humdrum is revealed by a three-lined verse quoted by Velten in his "Swahili Prose and Poetry":

*Zamani nihapendeza kama jani la mkunazi ;
Sasa nimechukizwa kama wali, usio nazi ;
Nikipata nitakula, nisipopata ni razi.*

It is the lament of a woman, who complains

Formerly I pleased (the men) like the leaf of the *mkunazi* ;
Now I am hated like rice on which grated coconut has not been
sprinkled ;¹

If I get (food) I shall eat, if I do not I am content.

How rapid a descent from the eloquent to the prosaic !

Yet the language is not without its poetic phraseology, its picturesqueness, and its vivid figures of speech. In referring to a famine, a wrinkled old headman once told me that "there was heard no more the thudding of the mortar," in which the grain is stamped by the women ; an angry woman will cry aloud to a man who has vexed her, "Leave me as you left your mother's breast" ; without any sense of self-consciousness a man or a woman, in speaking of an occurrence of some years ago, will fix its date by the comparison that "the children born at that time are just attaining puberty," for the

¹ A common custom at the coast.

term year conveys nothing to the negro mind ; " I hold thy feet " is a common greeting ; and so one might give numerous citations to exemplify its attractiveness.

Of course, the language has its limitations, which are most noticeable in connection with what is not natural to the life of the people ; and to make good these omissions foreign terms, mostly Hindustani, English or Portuguese, have been borrowed. To-day they have become part and parcel of the language, some being given a strangely changed meaning in the course of adoption and use. *Blanketi* evidently means blanket ; *hoteli* can mean nothing but hotel ; *chisi* is cheese ; *supu*, soup ; *sigari*, cigar ; *paketi*, a packet ; *skurui*, a screw. *Manowari* is our man-of-war, *meli*, a mail-boat, and *stima* or *sitima*, a steamer

Tarombeta has undergone a slight change from its original trumpet ; *hafisi* is not quite our office ; *sokisi* (with the accent on the first syllable) is in sound, if not in appearance, our word socks ; but for some strange reason *tanki* is the usual term for a bath. *Bulashi* is much more easily pronounced by the native than our hard sounding "brush" ; *fulana* is perhaps not immediately recognized as a new rendering of flannel or undervest ; and *fleipeni* does not forthwith conjure up visions of a frying-pan. Why *tikiti* should stand not only for a ticket but also for a postage-stamp I do not know, but it is so ; and thus one might continue to enumerate a few of the interesting English words that have found their way into Swahili.

The Portuguese having been the first European settlers on the East Coast of Africa, it was to be expected that words from their tongue would become incorporated in

that of the natives ; and so there are to-day many traces of early Portuguese influence.

Through the medium of French missionaries a certain number of French words have become current ; in the late German colony a few Teuton words (remarkably few, everything considered) were introduced ; and Indian shopkeepers have been responsible for the importation of Hindustani terms, most of which are primarily of commercial use.

Let me give an example of an oft-quoted sentence that may rank beside some of the tongue twisters of our own language :

Watu wale wale wali wa liwali.

People those let them eat the rice of the governor.

Such a succession of similar sounds is naturally exceptional, but, Swahili substantives being divided into various classes the singular and plural of which are denoted not by varying suffixes, as is the general rule in European languages, but by changing the prefixes, with which qualifying adjectives agree, there is noticeable a pleasing repetition of the introductory syllables. At the outset it will seem intricate to the newcomer, but with practice he will soon acquire reasonable accuracy in speech. For instance, " Those three savages brought three large poles, three large stools, three small cucumbers and one small knife," becomes

Washenzi wale watatu walileta miti mikubwa mitatu, viti vikubwa vitatu, matango madogo matatu, na kisu kidogo kimoja,

in which sentence are evident the varying inflections of

a single word, "three" being rendered in this one short statement in four different ways: *watatu*, *mitatu*, *vitatu* and *matatu*.

Evidently the stranger from other climes will not in the twinkling of an eye or in the course of a moon or two become conversant with these little peculiarities, but he may console himself with the knowledge that the native seems to possess the remarkably uncanny gift of divining the wishes of his master, even when they are so faultily expressed as to have absolutely no meaning. Furthermore, he does not betray the slightest surprise at the blunders of the learner. That one white man should again and again commit silly and avoidable mistakes is not regarded as worthy of remark; but the European who carries a notebook in which to jot down any new word or phrase is sure to arouse a certain amount of wonder. Until those about him have summed up his good and his bad points—at which they are wondrously adept—he will receive little encouragement, but if the opinion be favourable the more intelligent can be persuaded to draw attention to his inaccuracies and so to aid him in the endeavour to get a grasp of the language.

In this connection a good story was once told me by a padre of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa. A fellow priest, who had not yet attained a broad knowledge of Swahili, was transferred from Zanzibar to a station near the Rovuma River, and shortly after arrival in his new sphere of activity it became his duty to preach to a large native congregation. Choosing as his subject the parable of the foolish virgins, he discovered to his delight that he was acquitting himself much better than he had dared to hope; with gratifying fluency the words

of the address fell from his lips, but, for some reason which he could not fathom, he did not appear to be holding the attention of the audience as he would have liked. Patiently and quietly they sat, but intensive interest was obviously lacking. When the service was over it was whispered to him that the Swahili for virgin is *bikira*, not *birika*. He had delivered a most conscientious sermon on the ten foolish teapots!!

Thanks to the labours of Bishop Edward Steere, one of the pioneers of Christian work in Zanzibar and on the mainland, of Krapf and of a host of lesser philologists, there are to-day excellent Swahili dictionaries, grammars and text-books, that make clear the path of the student and save him from the many pitfalls to which the early investigators were exposed. For their painstaking researches and their enthusiasm we cannot be too grateful; it is one of the great debts we owe to missionary enterprise.

CHAPTER XVII

PUNISHING THE NATIVE

WHEN first the European goes to Savage Africa he is forcibly struck with the callousness which seems inherent in the people. They appear utterly indifferent to the sufferings of their nearest relatives and friends, leave the aged and sick much to their own devices, and in some cases turn them out in their helplessness to perish in the bush, and convey the impression that death itself is unable to excite genuine sorrow. For the moment bereavement calls forth a noisy demonstration of grief, and, if the deceased be a man, his wife or wives lose no time in running shrieking through the village, proclaiming aloud the fatal news (what time they seek to tear their scanty garments from off their bodies), and intermingling with their wails a narration of the virtues of the departed.

It has been suggested that the women put their hearts into their manifestations of woe in order that the whole village may know that they are really afflicted, and doubtless there is a certain degree of truth in this supposition, for it must not be forgotten that the wife always runs a grave risk of being accused of witchcraft. The ignorant tribesman regards natural death as non-existent; if he cannot *see* the cause of illness, he attributes it to sorcery, and it is remarkable that, on the passing away of a

husband, suspicion should be prone to fall first upon the wife. Native opinion considers that she would be most likely to wish for such an event, and, as she realizes that dangerous days lie ahead of her, she can be depended upon to do her utmost to mourn with such abandon as will tend to remove distrust. But when the white man sees how eagerly the other women of the kraal join in the lamentations, and has proof that their tears and wailings can be interrupted by laughter, he has good reason to doubt the genuineness of the dirge. In effect, native attachments seem as transient and fickle as is the whole outlook on life.

It is this amazing insensibility which explains the barbarity practised almost without exception by powerful African chiefs of the past. Though we shall never be able to compute the slaughter dictated merely by the whims of jaded tribal despots, we have records of wholesale butchery that seem almost incredible to our enlightened ideas ; and a strange fact is that many victims of the blood lust met their fate in the spirit of Imperial Rome's playthings, who raised their cry of "*Cæsar ! Morituri te salutant !*" Even life itself has no supreme value for these Sons of Ham.

A race so indifferent to its own anguish is naturally not much concerned with the sufferings of others, even though they be their friends ; and it is to such apathetic unconcern that must be attributed the traditional mercilessness of savage rule. Inured through long centuries to cold-blooded cruelty, the negro lost a realization of its horrors, even when he became always the prey of those stronger than himself. Raided by slave-dealers, and ever exposed to a predatory visit

from a neighbouring tribe whose warriors desired to bathe their spears in blood, and incidentally to enrich themselves with the comely maidens of the vanquished, the lot of the uncivilized African tribe was one of distress, until the advent of the white man put an end to forays and carnage and did much to mitigate the ruthless severity of the native administration of what passed for justice.

As in the old days mutilations were looked upon as the natural sequence to transgressions discovered, so to-day corporal punishment is regarded by the East African black as a sound method of correction. If awarded with scrupulous fairness and as soon as possible after the commission of the crime, it does not arouse in the heart of the offender any bitterness or desire for revenge. He knows that he is guilty of a misdeed, and it is entirely in conformity with his ideas that the man in authority should visit upon him the consequences of his sin. Bodily chastisement is the only corrective understood by the uncivilized native, and that he does not regard it as degrading is evident.

In the early days of the war in East Africa, when it seemed to the enemy that their protectorate must soon surrender to superior British forces, prisoners—and I happened to be one of the unfortunate number—were provided with a native servant each by the German Government. Lined up in the courtyard of the *boma* at Kilimatinde, they looked as queer an assortment of natives as one might expect to meet. When it came my turn to choose, it was a case of taking the best of a bad lot. Amongst them was a wrinkled, stooping, jet-black Mgogo with one whitish eyebrow and more

than a suspicion of grey in his tousled hair. So comical was his appearance and so evident his nervousness that my choice fell on him.

A natural willingness to obey soon enabled him to learn his easy duties satisfactorily, and I was beginning to congratulate myself on my pick. Then one day, much to my surprise, he ventured on impertinence. Explaining that it was simply because he was new to the job and had not previously worked with a European that I did not punish him, I warned him that any subsequent transgression would be visited with instant chastisement—this despite the fact that the boys had been told by the Camp Commandant in our presence that we had no right to touch them. He went away vowing exemplary behaviour.

Next day his offence was repeated and rather more rudely, so I promptly gave him the thrashing he merited. When he had had what I thought sufficient, I seized him by the scruff of the neck and started to haul him off to the orderly room. It was, of course, bluff pure and simple, for I dared not report the matter; had I done so it would have meant at least three days cells for me. It worked, and before we had covered half the distance he begged me to punish him myself, instead of informing the O.C. So on returning to the room I boxed his ears soundly and let him go to carry his tale to the kitchen.

I was convinced that the whole affair was nothing but a test. Had I passed over the slight in silence, he would have told it gleefully to his fellows, amongst whom were some seasoned rascals; as it was he became confident that I meant what I said and was determined on respect. So salutary was the lesson that I never

had further trouble with him. That he knew he had received no more than he deserved, and that he bore no malice, is amply proved by the fact that some months later, when he heard I was in Tabora, he deserted (at the risk of his life), leaving several months' pay behind him, and made his way to that populous settlement, on several occasions sending in word to me at the camp by boys whom we had bribed that he had come to be at hand for my release. Unhappily, I was moved to another district, and his extraordinary faithfulness had perforce to go unrewarded.

That instance—and I could advance many more—proves, I think, that corporal correction suitably employed is effective without being brutal. The unfortunate thing is that many a European is unduly prone to strike natives, though often they have committed no offence. Such was unquestionably the rule rather than the exception during the German occupation of the protectorate. Scores of times I have seen Germans box the ears, slap the face, punch the stomach, and kick boys whose sole crime was that they could not grasp the meaning of the unintelligible smatterings of pseudo-Swahili uttered by the enraged representatives of the ruling race.

Once I was present at a post on the German Lines of Communication when two carriers arrived, each bearing on his head a load of about seventy pounds of meal. One handed to the European in charge a letter in a forked stick; because he could not reply to the questions put to him in a disgracefully distorted semblance of Swahili both he and his companion were stretched out there and then and a grinning native N.C.O. proceeded to give each of them twenty-five stripes with the *kiboko*,

or hippopotamus hide whip. For rank injustice and brutal terrorism nothing could have surpassed it, yet it is a certainty that the white petty tyrant soon dismissed it from his thoughts; little did he think or care that his irritability, and the consequent administration of a flogging for which there was no justification, would rankle in the minds of the unhappy victims, who had every right to resent so outrageous a flagellation. Firmness with fairness they expect and understand; ferocity unfounded can have no excuse. To entrust such specimens of European manhood with authority is to do untold harm to the white man's prestige, and it was the cumulative effect of such incidents which made the Germans so generally hated and distrusted in their African territories.

But even officials who had lived for years in the colony, and who might have been expected to know the language, customs and character of the people, were oft-times similar offenders. They had been nurtured in the Prussian theory that the mailed fist is the best emblem of authority, and they proceeded to put into practice the policy of intimidation. Even a very junior official had practically unlimited power to work his will. True, there did exist certain regulations which he was supposed to observe, and a punishment book was religiously kept at each station; but any one with the slightest experience of German colonial rule will know that many floggings were not entered at all, that many others were falsely recorded, and that the regulations were a farce.

I have seen a District Political Officer order his personal boy twenty-five lashes twice within a week for a trivial offence—though the law expressly stipulated that at

least fourteen days must elapse between two such scourgings; I have been present when the house boy, cook boy and cook's assistant were all brought out at night and given twenty-five stripes apiece, merely because the dinner was not to the satisfaction of the lieutenant in charge; and I have been told independently by about a dozen white men of his command that a certain German senior officer actually hanged his cook for repeatedly failing in his culinary efforts. In Europe such an action may appear beyond the bounds of possibility; knowing the man and his record, I am quite prepared to believe in its truth. Is it to be wondered at that the late rulers of the Tanganyika Territory were known as *watu wa hamsasherini*, "the people of twenty-five"?

With women the Teuton was scarcely less harsh. I have known several women flogged; they were not infrequently to be seen in leg-irons; and three English friends who were detained as prisoners of war at Kondoa Irangi told me that at that centre, women, some of whom were carrying young babes, were put on the same chain-gangs as men, and, in order further to degrade them, the A.P.O. went so far as to have one side of their head shaved.

From two fellow-countrymen who have lived for over fifteen years in the north of the mandatory, I learnt particulars of a superlatively savage German Oberleutnant, who was stationed at Arusha for several years prior to 1903, when he was recalled. To the Masai this brute was known as *Bwana Kabruri* (The Terror), and to the Swahili-speaking natives as *Bwana Fisi* (The Hyena). Even to this day his name inspires fear in the district.

On one occasion he ordered a chief to provide porters, and as they were not immediately forthcoming he arrested the old man, placed a heavy stone on his head, and said that it was to remain there until the carriers arrived. Before they appeared the headman had fallen and broken his neck.

Once as a punishment he drove a whole tribe into a river and kept them there all night, his native soldiers patrolling the banks to make sure that none escaped. Scores were drowned and many more died soon after from pneumonia, to which the native is very susceptible.

On one journey one of my informants engaged a carrier who had practically no skin on the top of his skull, the man explaining that *Bwana Kabruri* had made him carry a large buffalo head from sunrise to sunset for seven days, and that if he put it down he was flogged until he picked it up again. To the end of his days he carried the marks of his savagery.

When the Oberleutnant ordered a native to be flogged, it was more likely to be one hundred lashes than fifteen, and he had the pleasant habit of beating over the head with a crop of rhinoceros hide any boy he met. One evening he struck at a native, who turned round, threw his assailant, knelt on his chest, and proceeded to choke him, the Hun being saved only by the timely arrival of a black non-commissioned officer, who marched the spirited savage off to the *boma*; where the lieutenant, much to every one's surprise, presented him with fifty rupees and released him with the words, "You are the only man in your tribe."

It is, of course, to be remembered that in those days the Germans had been fighting the *Waarusha*, and that



A CARRIER CAMP.



PORTERS RESTING.

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a firm hand was necessary to govern the treacherous, thieving tribesmen, but the callous methods of crushing them instanced above were, it is to be feared, not unique.

Where German rule had not been effectively established there was no such oppression. For instance, the Watusi, the dominant tribe in Ruanda and Urundi in the north-west, had never been conquered, and it was therefore considered expedient by the nominal rulers to regard lightly the crimes of the actual lords. Day after day there stood outside the Government station at Kigali a proud Mtusi. Though a murderer, he was not hanged; he was not chained. To avert possible trouble this influential black, who would have been hanged without a second thought in any other part of the country, was merely held a prisoner. Another Mtusi chief, whose genial habit of hanging his subjects wholesale had at last to be curbed, was merely detained at Bukoba as a government interpreter. For the weak, brutality; for the strong, clemency—until they should have been subjected: such was the creed.

To the fatalistic African a term of imprisonment is merely a definite period of resting, with the comforting reflection that during the weeks, months or years in question he need have no qualms as to an adequate diet. Let it not be inferred therefrom that he normally worries about the future. Not at all; he lives always from day to day; what happens is always as Allah shall will. Nor does social stigma attach itself to incarceration. Even hard labour or a term on the chain-gang arouses slight interest in the breast of the offender, who regards it stoically as temporary slavery to the Government, and who endures it as such with immutable resignation.

Indeed, the savage African is often enough not sorry to be a burden to the administration. Has he not exchanged a precarious mode of life for a good shelter, nourishing and regular food, not too much work, and even medical attention when necessary? Were but a wife included in the gifts of a solicitous judicature he would have few regrets at leaving his kraal for a while. See the convict greet his passing friends with smiles and quips and without a semblance of a sense of shame; and at last, his sentence served, he emerges fat and unruffled in dignity from his sojourn in durance vile.

So contented with his lot is the black prisoner that he is often let out without guards, for there is little likelihood of his attempting to escape. Even if he does, he is so simple that he probably returns forthwith to his own village, where rearrest awaits him. Sometimes he is sent alone to a distant piece of work and occasionally—whisper it softly—he is detailed to mark out a tennis court or even mow the greens of a golf course that awakens the unofficial interest of a District Commissioner. At midday he strolls home, in other words, back to the prison, for a meal, and after a rest returns placidly to his job.

Of one rather strange and amusing case I may be pardoned for speaking. With unconscious naïvety the prisoners in a biggish native town asked their European jailor if they might have the night out, in order to attend a much boomed dance that was to take place, and he, intrigued by their simplicity, consented. Thus it happened that towards sundown all had arrayed themselves in clean white garments and were ready to issue forth for their brief spell of amusement. Having been

reminded that they were to return not later than ten o'clock, off they toddled to the jollification.

As they were still absent at that hour, A., too tired to wait up for them, and knowing full well that they would not seek to break away, retired under his mosquito net, having first ordered the native sentries to refuse admission to the revellers. Angry altercations and heavy blows on the stout prison gates roused him from his slumber. The dancers, righteously indignant that they should be denied ingress to their quarters, demanded word with him.

Thundering forth maledictions for their breach of the promise to return to time, he decreed as punishment that they should remain away from the jail all that night! To all entreaties he was deaf, and not until daybreak next day were the crest-fallen offenders readmitted; yet not one was missing. Against such queer measures they had strong objections. Was the Government not their father and their mother? Then why should its children be locked out all night?

Incarceration is, then, not satisfactory as a punishment, though European Governments have been forced to resort to it. With the gradual spread of enlightenment it will presumably be regarded from a new point of view, until in time the native will come to recognize that it is by way of being a real penalty. To-day he is quite indifferent to it.

The subject not being allowed to take the law into his own hands, the European master throughout East African is forbidden to strike a boy in his employ, except in certain specified cases, where he is far removed from the nearest administrative station, and in which event

he may be given limited discretionary and disciplinary powers. In theory it is an excellent provision, for many a man who acts as judge to those in his service is unjustified in the punishments he metes out, not that he is deliberately vindictive or brutal—the Briton, at any rate, seldom is—but that it is his lack of fluency in the language which is the cause of the trouble ; in practice, however, the law does not work quite so satisfactorily.

Take the case of a white man living in a town. His boy suddenly develops an attitude of impertinence or truculence. Is the master going to march him straight off to court, or, if the court be not sitting, defer punishment until next day? No, though he knows perfectly well that it is illegal, he gives him a well-earned box on the ear, and the native, feeling that he has received no more than his due, says nothing. There are undoubtedly times when the best corrective is physical chastisement promptly and moderately applied. The European cannot be bothered to waste half a day in court over trivial misbehaviour, postponed punishment does not prove as efficacious as rough and ready justice on the spot, and the master who has to call in official aid for slight lapses has the feeling that his authority is undermined. For these reasons almost every settler does at one time or another find it necessary to commit a technical offence.

In the ordinary course of events ridicule is perhaps one of the most effective methods of punishing a delinquent, for it is an art that appeals to the native mind. Make merry with the culprit in the presence of his friends, and their enjoyment will increase in direct ratio with his discomfiture. Skilfully applied by one who under-

stands the language and the native outlook it can be as potent a penalty as any.

For firmness there is a real need, since unwise clemency is regarded as weakness and is trespassed upon; but meaningless threats ought to be most carefully eschewed. “ Always give an African what you promise him, and always promise him what he deserves. If he deserves a hiding, give it to him; if he deserves a small present, give it to him ” : such was the motto of a friend who had spent many long years in the bush and who had the happy knack of avoiding the slightest trouble with his servants. They knew exactly where they stood with him, and for such a master they would endure much.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE OLD AFRICAN

THE Old African need by no means be old ; indeed, men of many years are seldom to be found in the Dark Continent. This is as true of the native as it is of the white man, for the excesses in which the black is continually indulging more than counteract the benefits which he should derive from his close contact with Nature and her wonderful ways ; and, moreover, Mother Nature in Africa is not the kind, smiling, encouraging dame who lavishes her most beautiful gifts upon an unappreciative populace in less torrid zones. It is a stern, frowning, domineering sister whose ways are uncertain and who delights in an occasional famine, flood, hurricane or pest to reveal to timorous mortals her majestic sway ; she it is who gives with an unsparing hand and with as much unconcern snatches away.

No, age is always relative, and in this sense he is an Old African because he has been in the country years longer than some others. Yet many a man whose blood has been thinned by long years of residence under the burning tropical sun cannot rightly be so classed. He has not the argumentative, egotistical yet lovable, nature that characterizes such a group ;

he has no peculiarities of dress, of bearing, of speech or of belief that set him apart from his fellows. He is just an average old-timer; not so the Old African, whose outlook, though perhaps a little warped, is at least distorted by the heat of the day. Within half-a-dozen years of his arrival one man may be well on the road to becoming an Old African, another may dwell for nearly a score of years in the bush and still retain the essential outlook of the citizen of the busy town; but in general the contradictory but interesting people whom I have called Old Africans are such as have spent a decade or more in the Lands of the Heathen.,

The Old African can and usually does look down on the young generation of colonists with a certain air of pride, and not always without a suspicion of contempt and condescension. Was he not in the land twenty years ago, when the drinking of a Seidlitz powder led the savages to believe that his magic enabled him to swallow boiling water; when a lucky left and right from his shotgun, that brought down two guinea fowl on the wing, gained for him the reputation of killing each time he fired; when a dose of quinine opportunely given to a sultan's chief wife saved her life and caused his praises to be noised abroad until they rivalled those of the most famous local witch-doctor; when a bottle of fire-water bought several oxen, and a few old guns a stretch of land the size of an English county; when a chieftain fed the traveller with all that his villages could produce?

Yes, perhaps he was, but that in itself is no proof that he underwent any of these experiences. He

may have done so, but possibly he has never been more than a few miles from the coast. One man I knew who used on the slightest provocation to trot out words of wisdom for the guidance of any new chum, who doubtless imagined that the kind guide, philosopher and friend knew all the ropes. As a matter of fact, he had lived for fifteen years in different coast towns, and had never shot anything bigger than geese or ducks; but that little hindrance did not deter him from giving detailed instructions as to the best way to tackle a charging buffalo, or as to the most successful methods of administering a distant and turbulent province.

The Old African knows everything and he knows it much better than any one else. He forms the conservative element in the colony. His caustic criticism damns every innovation suggested. New-fangled ideas are his anathema and so he dwells lovingly and at length on their drawbacks, steadfastly refusing to acknowledge any merits they may possess. The good old times are ever on his lips and with them he witheringly contrasts the conditions of nowadays.

Is not everything double or treble or perhaps ten times as dear as it was when first he came out? Is not impudence frequently to be met with from the native, who in better days would never have contemplated anything but prompt and unquestioning obedience? Is the administration not a crying disgrace to any self-respecting community?

That is his chief complaint. Why are the officials such unmitigated fools? Why do they not use the

common sense God has given them, and deal with the burning matters of the day in the only reasonable fashion?—and he will proceed to settle all the perplexities in the space of half an hour.

By reason of his much-vaunted knowledge of the land and its people, he has, of course, a sure system of reforming the colony, of reorganizing it, and of opening up for it a golden future, in which native troubles shall cease, only the right type of European shall come out, exports shall increase exceedingly, and the many tropical maladies of man and beast shall be overcome. The inherent laziness of the negro shall be transformed into useful labour, and the tsetse-fly shall no more ravage the herds. Contradictory as it may seem to the uninitiated, this age of advancement is to benefit everybody. The native will revel in his joy, yet he will willingly toil in the service of the white man; the white man will amass wealth and comfort, yet the blacks in his employ will earn a foretaste of the heaven that awaits them after death; the prosperity of the land shall be the marvel of envious states, yet there shall not flock thither thousands of undesirable emigrants. It shall be a sunny Utopia, in which the docile Ethiop shall conceive it his greatest pleasure and honour to do the wise bidding of the amiable European.

Needless to say, our friend is an all-round man, who has his own projects for every need—although what he retails as his own programme may very possibly emanate from quite another source; but let it not be thought that he is wilfully appropriating what is not his—long association makes him think

that he did actually first propound the proposal of which he is so ardent an advocate. That is all.

He is *au courant* with every subject and is competent to express an opinion on any theme weighty or trivial. And yet he is essentially not vain. One of the best of his kind once said to me after a long harangue that brooked no argument, "When I was twenty, I knew that I was much cleverer than my old Dad; when I was thirty, I thought we were just about on a level; when I was forty, I knew that my father was a better man than I; and now I know that he was a far better man than I can ever hope to be."

Opposition and contradiction upset him, especially if the contrary opinion be expressed by a man who has been in the country a shorter while than he. That is a capital offence, and the wary man will not incur the penalty. To praise the Government before him—not that any single settler in any colony has ever been known to do such a thing!—would be like holding a red rag to a bull or leaving the donkey stable open for the lion to walk in; for one of the tenets of the belief of the Old African is that officialdom can do no right. Abuse of all red-tape measures is to him second nature, and he seems to derive unbounded satisfaction from this sense of superiority. When he has a fit of the blues, a long whisky-soda and a tirade with a sympathetic friend against the iniquities of Pooh Bah and his satellites work a wonder cure.

It must be recorded that it is a boast of his that he does not suffer from the common ailments, as do

other folk. For him malaria has no terrors—even though he has to spend a few days abed every now and then; for to confess to a bout of fever seems to him an avowal of some criminal action or of womanly weakness. If he does not recommend twenty grains of quinine and a stiff dose of hot whisky, he has his own infallible method of staving off the malady; at least he assures you that you will be immune if you will but follow his advice—which he himself never does!

Perhaps it is but natural that other folk should recognize his talents less than he does, and that alone can explain why he has never been called upon to settle some of the many difficulties that still baffle our authorities. Were they but to have the unlimited benefit of his wondrous knowledge, they would never again flounder hopelessly, conflicting schools of thought would be miraculously reconciled, and a new era would be dawning.

But, after all, he is a fine old fellow, the Old African. Touchy and dogmatic he may be, but he means no harm, and is ever ready to stretch forth a helping hand to a stumbling brother; of his theories and his dislikes he is never tired of speaking, of his many kindly deeds not a word will ever pass his lips. In conventional Europe his character might come in for many a malicious attack, but in the freedom of the bush he is regarded with affectionate esteem by many a man, to whom his idiosyncrasies are no more terrible than the little thorns that lie near the lovely rose.

His finest trait is his real love for Africa, and he

is never so thoroughly happy as when striving in and for her. Nearly always it is not a store of glittering sovereigns that are his dream; that aim has passed long since, and it is now goblin gold for which he seeks, a something that is ever just beyond his reach. A fortune he may have won and lost without regrets; in the bushland he breathes the solace that London could not give in his affluence. There he is at rest. His notions may often be misguided, but his critics know that he would not willingly do anything that would prove a drawback to the colony on whose prosperity his soul is set. His patriotism knows no limits, and he cannot long remain away from his adopted home.

Every few years he may go home to England, but his stay will be short and his happiest week is the last before he puts foot on the liner that shall bring him back. Though the land of his birth still holds joys for him, he is not so comfortable as he used to be, and the call of Africa is stronger than the alluring seduction of peaceful civilization. He is out of tune with European ideas and longs for the unconventional liberty of the bush; dearer to him than theatres is his trusty rifle. So acclimatized has he become that he returns again and again to the land which he abuses and extols in the same breath.

As has been suggested, it is not by any means every long resident who becomes an Old African. As a rule, the man himself is not conscious of his altered point of view, so gradual is the process. The cardinal symptom is a tendency to emphasize the *Ego*, and yet it is not nearly as unpleasant as is that failing

in the homeland. One cannot help loving the old fellows. They are the salt of African life.

How widely different is the M.P. or other tourist who visits the colony for a week or two in the healthiest season, and then spends the rest of the year telling his stay-at-home friends that he has had the boundless temerity to go to such a deadly spot! This type of person, who during his flitting pilgrimage has formed ideas quite as definite as any held by the Old African, *is* usually objectionable, for his suave, graceful, and self-satisfied manner in refuting an argument has that sting which the blunt, but not unkindly, rebuff of the more reasoned critic does not hold.

Thank God! We have plenty of Old Africans.

CHAPTER XIX

“GERMAN” EAST AFRICA

As its name implies, it was German. That is to say, it contained a score or two of large and small *bomas*¹—all flying the German flag; some hundreds of plantations—all flying the German flag; some hundreds of schools, the scholars of which paraded with a German flag and sang the German National Anthem on high-days and holidays. Every caravan had its German flag, which flew over the tent of almost every European on *safari*.

The Swahili text-books for natives contained pictures of the German flag, Kaiser Bill, Little Willie, and dates of the birthdays of all the Prussian princes—data which may to the uninitiated Britisher appear of no earthly use to the untutored native, but Hundom thought differently. So Selemani, Saidi, Ali & Co. were blessed with true and abundant official information regarding the family of the All-Highest. The news was amplified and kept up to date in the local vernacular newspapers.

But the protectorate was German in other respects. It boasted hundreds of coffee, rubber and sisal plantations, the owners of most of which were making little

¹ Forts (Swahili).

or no money just prior to the outbreak of war. During the rubber boom, many made money. During the same period, Customs returns showed an unprecedented increase in the imports of champagne and caviare.

Practically each plantation had at least one good stone bungalow, not built primarily for the comfort of, or out of the fulness of the pocket of, the owner, but in order to impress the neighbours with his importance and his evident desire to do things in correct style. For the same reason every second plantation assistant in receipt of a monthly stipend of Rs. 150— or thereabouts—had visiting cards printed somewhat in this style :

VON SCHNEIDER

Leutnant d. Res.

1 Kgl. Sachs. I.-R. Nr.
BERLIN.

Prinz Kriegsherr von Kriegshof,
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA.

By the way, the Hun—at least, the Hun one saw in Germany's colonies—was a most genuinely genteel person, despite all statements to the contrary. Whoever and whatever he was, whether butcher or bar-steward, mechanic or merchant, planter or plumber, he sported a visiting card with which he threatened one on the slightest provocation. Of course, the mere fact of his bearing the honourable, honoured, and euphonious name of Von Splosch did not entitle one to deduct that he is a man of independent means. It was about

even money that he was a clerk or a pastrycook's assistant.

Every third man one met in G.E.A. was von Somebody or von Other. I leave it to the reader to form his own opinion as to whether the Fatherland sent its best sons in the impartial desire of "Take up the White Man's burden," or its worst on the homely principle of "Good riddance to bad rubbish."

The junior assistants had an unwritten rule by which they used always to criticize adversely any of their number who happened to be absent. This practice was referred to by the manager in giving a testimonial in some such terms: "Mr. Schneider's conduct has always been exemplary. In out-of-business hours he has always behaved in a manner entirely to our satisfaction. He is much loved by his fellows, is very good company, and will be much missed."

The German plantations served several useful purposes. Firstly, they found work for a few European builders and a small army of native masons, whose pleasure it was to erect domiciliary edifices for white men who may, or may not, have wanted them, but who felt constrained by force of circumstances to pretend they did.

Secondly, they served as dumping-grounds for any quantities of beer, champagne, caviare or sausages the coast port firms might wish to dispose of on tick.

Thirdly, practically each plantation kept a mule or Maskat donkey. The mount proved most useful in several ways. It enabled the owner to talk superciliously of "my stock" with truth and to say: "I rode here, there, and to the other place." These well-

sounding extravagances were particularly important in writing letters home ; people on the spot somehow always seemed to know that the beast was tsetse-stricken or lame or too bad-tempered to trifle with.

However, the mule became particularly popular when a new assistant arrived. He was told lovingly of the animal's extraordinary good nature, and for the sake of politeness he naturally expressed his determination to test the excellent qualities of the paragon as soon as possible. On the plea that there is no time like the present, the unwary one was usually urged to demonstrate his prowess then and there. Stereotyped objections on the score of fatigue, fever in the bones, etcetera, were airily disposed of by the would-be spectators, and it nearly always happened that the newcomer, once hoisted safely up, went careering madly down the road until the mustang took it into his wilful head to chuck him into a ditch or bump him violently against trees. The sorry one having been duly convinced in the presence of the old-timers of his inability to ride, he was sympathized with and informed that it was all part of a plot, and that the mule was really kept only because no one would buy it ; nobody ever evidenced sufficient temerity to mount it.

Fourthly, where several plantations were near together, they gave an excuse for the formation of a tennis club. It didn't much matter whether any of the prospective members had ever played, or even ever wished to play, tennis. A court and the various impedimenta were not actually indispensable, for a German tennis club (in the Colony, at least) was

practically synonymous with a *Biergarten*. Whether it was called a tennis club, rifle club or sports club was immaterial. It was the word Club that mattered, not the avowed objects of the association.

Fifthly, the plantations were very convenient for other people to visit for indefinite periods.

I suppose that the original ideas of the planters had soared to hopes and beliefs of profit in the shape of filthy lucre, but being hard-headed, far-seeing Teutons, those at least who had sunk their capital in rubber properties must soon have given up any anticipations in those directions and have determined to compensate themselves by a gay life—gay only in so far as it banished dull care and worry.

Young Germans from about sixteen to sixty years of age were particularly sought after by the rubber plantations, and in competition salaries grew to dizzy heights. An assistant in charge of a division, and with only seventeen years' local experience, has been known to receive Rs. 225—(£15) per month. Sisal was less favoured, as the work entailed constant exposure to the sun, and thus robbed the life of half its charm. Consider how much nicer it is to watch weeders under seven years' rubber than among eighteen months' sisal!

The plantations usually supplied assistants with all requisites—for instance, furniture, cutlery, crockery, a filter and a meat-safe. It was twelve to one you got the latter. It is a very useful article on a plantation—or anywhere else for that matter. Apart from its avowed purpose of baffling the assiduous attentions of the fly family to human foodstuffs,

experience has proved it to be a most excellent temporary residence (supposing, of course, that a fair-sized one has been procured) for birds, a mongoose, a young civet cat or other animal which the green young assistant of profound sympathy for, and infinitesimal knowledge of, natural history, wishes to transform into an unusual and devoted domestic pet. Under such circumstances it could surely be held to be a meat-safe (even though the meat be alive) within the meaning of the act.

Should such a *rara avis* as a bookworm have ever by some freak of nature strayed on to a *shamba*,¹ it is probable that he turned his safe into a book-case, unless his literary soul contented itself with the usual rickety structure knocked up at top speed in some three working days (at a rupee and a quarter per diem) by the Estate *fundi*² out of packing cases.

The filter, at least on plantations within easy reach of Tanga and Dar-es-Salaam, was a much over-rated necessity. Of course, the reader will say: It is a necessity, it is indispensable. Yes, my dear reader, so it is to the average Englishman, but I'm writing of Germans. For them it was an imposing statue to solid respectability and virtue. It had a position of prominence in the household and seemed to say to the visitor: "Don't you worry, my friend. I see that no harm shall come near thee from drinking WATER in this house." And as a general rule the promise was kept—but not by the filter's agency—for water was a drink far more rarely indulged in than champagne. The filter's effect was moral for the

¹ Plantation.

² Skilled workman.

most part, as soda (not made on the spot in a sparklet bottle, but brought up from the coast) substituted water in all drinks.

The far-seeing, sympathetic colonial authorities appointed by the All-Highest to watch the progress or otherwise of the country had seen fit to propose and even undertake the construction of several railways. Unkind critics, who are manifestly biased against their German brothers, whom they should rather strive (it will take some striving!) to love with all their heart and soul, sometimes assert that these lines were laid merely for military purposes. Without in the slightest degree wishing to hurt the susceptibilities of these gentlemen, it is my public duty energetically to refute such unwarranted and pernicious statements.

I have it on very high authority that the Colonial Government undertook the construction of the railways with several objects in view. Firstly, that the officials stationed far in the Interior might be saved the strenuous exertion entailed in reaching their respective spheres of activity. Secondly, that the indolent natives might be given a higher conception of life by being taught to work on the embankments along which the Smoke Gari should run. Thirdly, that suitable work might be found for the numerous ex-plantation assistants whose devotion to the bottle was greater than that demonstrated to the arboriculture with which they had been entrusted. Fourthly, that Italians and Greeks, who always flock to a country in which railways are being built, might be enticed to the protectorate and thus by their own personal experience derive the untold benefits of German

Kultur. And, fifthly, that a certain export trade to Germany might be developed.

The object of encouraging as an experiment the export of certain products to the Fatherland was to prove to the fanatics at home, who were always demanding information as to the commercial value of the country, that it could produce worse raw material at a higher price than any of its competitors. Unfortunately, official hopes in this direction were scarcely justified. Had they been, the exports would soon have ceased altogether and the officials would have sunk gracefully back in their Bombay chairs with an "I told you so" smile on their shiny faces and a sigh of relief that that trial had passed from them, and that they would in future be left unworried to do, or not do, things in their own inimitable way. Contrary to expectation and calculation, the exports found a ready market and increased by leaps and bounds. The blow was so heavy as to cause the resignation of a Governor and the death through shock of several of his subordinates.

In a moment of mental aberration certain mineral deposits were allowed to be worked. This was afterwards recognized by the Government to have been a particularly bad stroke of policy; firstly, because it meant procuring labourers for the concessionaires, and, secondly, because it brought a most undesirable, uncultured class of man into the country—namely, the English prospector.

Now an Englishman was not exactly *persona grata* with Teuton administrators, but an English prospector was about the last word, the limit, the outside edge.

Besides being a bluff fellow who went about his job in a workman-like manner, he had other unpleasant characteristics. Not one of the fellows could speak a word of German, you know; and they very rarely turned up at a *boma* in anything but khaki shirt and shorts or breeches, whereas German etiquette (that's politer than "crass idiocy") required one to appear in clean white starched linen.

In fact, I should not be surprised to learn in fifty years' time, when the true fundamental causes of the war in East Africa are known, that some higher German official gave the word in righteous indignation engendered by the independent, inconsiderate attitude of an unthinking Englishman, who called on the *Bwana Mkubwa*¹ in his shirt sleeves, forgot to sweep the ground with his helmet and make a deeply reverential bow on advancing towards the Great One, asked him for a fill of tobacco, calmly settled down to stay, drank a bottle of his whisky (without even toasting the Kaiser), put his feet on the table in a homely fashion, and left the next morning without paying his salaams in the deferential manner due to his host. This explanation, however, although emanating from what is called "an inspired source," is by no means authentic, and I should therefore prefer it not to be noised too far abroad, in case it should reach the ears of William of Hohenzollern and cause him sleepless nights.

The country imported three important articles from America. Two of them were quite involuntarily admitted; in fact, they came in fair, or some people might say unfair, numbers in a determined U.S.A.

¹ Great Master.

manner, as much as to say, "Stop us if you can." They were, in order of number and importance, jiggers (which the dear German would spell Dschigger) and missionaries. The third article, the imports of which have in recent years decreased, while those of the others have gone ahead, is *amerikani*.¹

No other article exported from America is so generally met with, or so commonly execrated in East Africa as the *pulex penetrans*, and the little pest doubtless enjoys its wonderful ubiquity and abomination.

The missionaries, although by no means so numerous or so penetrating as the lowly jigger, or so generally esteemed as the *amerikani* their homeland produces, are nevertheless distinctly useful.

"German" East Africa was looked upon as a country peopled with officials, undesirables, fools and missionaries. Some people maintained that there were only three classes into which the European settlers could be divided, and that the missionary group was to be dispensed with. There was a lack of unanimity on the subject, but some thought they should be included in Class II and others said Class III. In order that the stigma of partiality may not attach itself to my name, I must be perfectly truthful and admit that many of the officials might with absolute justice have come under one of the two remaining headings. Subsequent experience led *me* to class all the Huns in the colony under the one comprehensive heading of *Sauhunde*.

A few undesirables, such as lawyers, made a very good living out of plucking the fools, but the dealings

¹ Calico.

were not entirely one-sided. If the fool had money, there was experience to be bought. If he had none, the wily legal lights left him severely alone.

I may safely assert without fear of contradiction that there was one man, and one man only, whose popularity was general; he was the philanthropist who established the brewery in Dar-es-Salaam!

In short, the protectorate was of the greatest vital interest to the Fatherland. It was literally a "place in the sun" and, as I have endeavoured to show, had a very real value as a training-ground for the young idea.

It was *German* East Africa!

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL VON LETTOW-VORBECK, THE GERMAN COMMANDER IN EAST AFRICA

IN only one colonial theatre of war did a German force manage to evade capitulation until the signature in Europe of the armistice, and the distinction in question lay with Major-General von Lettow-Vorbeck, the commander of the German East African Protectorate Forces.

He was the heart and soul of the dogged German resistance ; it was he who rallied his war-weary troops and inspired them alternately with hope and fear. His tireless energy enabled him to pay hurried and unexpected visits to any subordinate command which might require encouragement, or whose leader was not acquitting himself in a manner satisfactory to the autocratic commander-in-chief.

If lies were necessary to rouse the drooping spirits of his men, they were sedulously circulated either as official assurances or as well-founded rumours. In case of need he was never sparing with threats, which he would have executed with as little compunction as he exhibited for the lot of the prisoners unfortunate enough to fall into his hands. Indeed, so unreasonable were the demands which he made in 1917 on the malaria-ridden, typhoid-stricken Germans in hospital and in the field that the Director of Medical

Services, Surgeon-General Meixner, resigned rather than be a party to the enforcement of them. That, however, was of no moment to the commander, who intimated his intention of working his men, white and black, as long as they would last, and who was quite willing to assume full responsibility for all his actions.

In the early months of 1914 Lieutenant-Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck, a Prussian guardsman of the stiffest type, landed in Dar-es-Salaam to assume command of the German East African military forces, which then numbered 260 white officers and N.C.O.'s and some 2,500 native ranks, exclusive of reserves.

The Colonel, though but just forty years of age, had for some time been singled out for rapid promotion. He had seen service in China and in German South-West Africa during the Herero rebellion, in which he lost an eye, and in which he was guilty of wholesale massacres of the offending natives. He was engaged in more battues than battles, but that fact was probably regarded by the German War Office as but an additional proof of his soldierly qualities, amongst which ruthlessness holds a high place. Having commanded one of the Sea Battalions at Wilhelmshafen for several years, he was in 1913 appointed to the Defence Force, Cameroons, but before he could embark for his new West African station, von Schleinitz, an officer with a distinguished record in East Africa, fell foul of the Berlin authorities and was deprived of his command, which was offered to, and accepted by, von Lettow.

The new chief wasted no time in wining and dining or in polite conventionalities, but settled down at once to learn all he could regarding his new sphere

of activity. Within a month or two he had arranged matters at Headquarters to his satisfaction, and could then set off on a tour of the protectorate, in order to visit and inspect some of the companies stationed at the different *bomas*, or forts.

Several amusing tales are told of this journey.

At Iringa, for instance, the Company Commander, who was also in charge of the local administration, turned out in all the glory of starched white linen uniform to welcome his superior officer, whose greeting was most perfunctory, being an intimation that the company would be expected to exercise in half an hour. Thirty minutes later von Lettow reappeared, marched the Company outside the station, and had it put through all possible evolutions. To add to the discomfort of the unhappy Captain, certain of his manœuvres were not approved and had to be executed again and again, while the manner in which the *Feldwebel* handled his platoon earned a word of commendation.

The next evening the Colonel said that he would leave at five o'clock on the following morning for Ubena, another *boma*, and ordered the junior officer present to accompany him for the first few miles. Starting before daybreak, they rode on hour after hour, the silent subaltern doubtless conjuring up visions of a sumptuous breakfast with his superior. His dream was rudely shattered, for suddenly his chief said, "I thank you. You may return," and, after acknowledging the salute of his subordinate, continued along the road. The unfortunate guide had perforce to do the return journey without a bite or a sup and, one may be sure, in a far from amiable frame of mind.

The Commander was in the Iringa district when he heard of the outbreak of war, and he immediately travelled as fast as he could to Kilossa on the Central Railway, from which station he got a special train to the coast. At once things began to hum. As fast as trains could be loaded in Dar-es-Salaam and Tanga, guns, maxims, rifles, ammunition, and all kinds of equipment and stores were rushed into the interior, out of the reach of any British landing-party which might seek to seize them. Defensive works were started in many parts of the colony; reserves, European and African, were called back to the colours; and the enrolment of recruits was commenced.

At this time—August 1914—the Germans in the colony were in a chronic state of nervous excitement. They lived in daily terror of a British attack, and the generally expressed opinion was that they would in any event have to capitulate within a few weeks. This belief was held by almost all the civilians and officials, including the Imperial Governor, Dr. Schnee, opposed to whom were the regular and reserve officers, led by von Lettow. This war party, though numerically weak, held great power, which it did not scruple to use whenever it was found necessary. Even in the first month the Colonel had to overcome considerable obstructions on the part of the civil authorities, as a result of which he advised his subordinates to ignore the Governor's orders, unless they were known to agree with his own. Much to the anger of Dr. Schnee, he arrested and interned a party of Belgian officials who had visited Dar-es-Salaam as the guests of the German Colonial Government; and later he ordered a

volunteer detachment of planters and farmers from the northern districts of the protectorate to attack Taveta, a British post just over the frontier, thus initiating operations against our kinsmen.

In November 1914, when the Indian Expeditionary Force attacked Tanga from the sea, Dr. Schnee ordered von Lettow to retire without giving battle. The command was disregarded and our arms sustained a severe defeat. From that date the *moral* of the German troops, both white and black, improved out of all recognition, and the Governor found himself forced to submit to the will of the energetic military die-hard.

For eighteen months the British East African Forces acted purely on the defensive, which period of respite was utilized by the enemy to raise his numbers to some three thousand Europeans and between twenty-five and thirty thousand natives, all of whom were well supplied with arms and ammunition. So when in the spring of 1916 offensive tactics were undertaken by General Smuts, he had opposed to him a strong and efficient army in the hands of a resolute soldier, and, moreover, one who hated him personally for having so faithfully fulfilled his oath of allegiance to the British Crown. Von Lettow had been one of the Germans who served in Kruger's artillery and who bore arms against us in South Africa, where he was a comrade-in-arms of Smuts, whom he never forgave for his submission to Great Britain. Indeed he is credited with having sworn a vow never to surrender to "that damned Dutch traitor."

Hustled as he was from position to position, the German leader nearly always had the situation well

in hand, and when the Allies might easily have put an end to his resistance—as, for instance, at Kahe, the Wami River, Kisaki, Chiwata, or the crossing of the Rovuma River—Dame Fortune smiled kindly upon him. Despite several reverses, he fought doggedly and always with personal courage. At Kondoa Irangi, when matters were critical and when desertions were becoming frequent, his arrival put new heart into the *askari*, amongst whom he slept as one of themselves, rolled only in a cheap native blanket. He did not make the mistake of appealing for popularity, which grew solely from respect engendered partly by fear and partly by admiration of his dauntless determination to carry on.

He had early realized the necessity of exercising a strict fire-control over his native troops and had therefore adopted as the normal Company establishment some thirty Europeans and two hundred and fifty blacks, this distribution having the additional advantages of economising in white casualties and of checking any disposition amongst the natives to revolt.

He never wore his badges of rank and was consequently unknown to many of the Europeans serving under him. That fact, and his practice of suddenly appearing without warning at a spot where he was not expected, led to several *contretemps* unpleasant to those who figured in them.

After the fighting at Tuliani a certain *Feldwebel* was granted three days' leave in Morogoro by his Company Commander, who, however, warned him on no account to be caught by Lettow. During his second day in the township the Sergeant-Major was leaning

lazily over a bridge, when up strolled a fellow-warrior, apparently a private. Having got into conversation, the newcomer asked how the other happened to be there, when such heavy fighting was taking place not far away.

"Oh, I've had a pretty rough time, you know, and the *Herr Hauptmann* gave me short leave, but told me to be careful not to get seen by the Colonel. One never knows where the beggar is."

But he knew when he received marching orders on the spot.

On another occasion the Colonel arrived alone at a telephone post on the Lines of Communication, where a middle-aged, corpulent and haughty reservist, in quieter times a successful business man at the coast, was stationed. The traveller's "Good morning!" received merely a grunt in reply. Not having been offered any hospitality, not even a camp-chair, the weary wayfarer sat for a long time on a packing-case. Then he ventured a remark, only to be given a rude answer. Ignoring the insult, he asked:

"Ought you not soon to make the round of the *askari*?"

"Oh, I don't worry myself about that. I leave it to the native corporal."

Still nothing happened, until up rode a Captain, dismounted and saluted the stranger deferentially. Next day the surly and indiscreet one was en route for the front!

If this habit of moving about incognito was sometimes unfortunate for individuals, it was undoubtedly a severe check on insipient slackness. No subordinate commander could feel sure that the chief would not descend on him, and therefore he could

not risk even the slightest falling-off in discipline or efficiency. He knew that excuses would avail nothing against the wrath of the commanding martinet, who deprived at least two of his best subordinates of their units and relegated them to administrative posts solely on account of differences of opinion. In the same way, at least two of his officers committed suicide rather than incur his censure, while one, Major Fischer, shot himself after an interview in which he was upbraided for not having frustrated the advance of an opposing British column. As the unhappy major endeavoured to justify himself, Lettow handed him a revolver, saying, "I shall expect to hear from you."

On one occasion only did he go into action with the full insignia of his rank and wearing all his medals. It was at Chiwata at the end of 1917, when he fully expected—and, I believe, hoped—that his force would be surrounded and cut off from any possibility of escape. Short of ammunition and food and worn out with incessant marching, his men were almost at the limit of their powers. He took up a strong position in hilly country and dug himself in, doubtless intending to put up a stout defence before surrendering with honour to General Van Deventer, the then British G.O.C. But as the engagement progressed, von Lettow found that the way of retreat was still left unblocked, and at last he marched out by it. Failure to avail ourselves of that opportunity of bringing to an end his resistance resulted in a further year of warfare in East Africa.

His soldierly qualities, though considerable, are not as remarkable as his virile determination, which

was not undermined by the three wounds or the attacks of enteric and dysentery with which the campaign rewarded him. Even while he lay at death's door he insisted on attending to business, and while still too weak to sit up he bullied his Medical Officers into allowing him to be carried about the country. Hunger, disease and desertion could not deter him from his object, for the attainment of which he did not hesitate to employ any means. Hundreds of thousands of natives, old men and youths, strong men, and women with child, were impressed as porters, in which capacity, they were treated worse than slaves; that thousands succumbed to the brutal conditions troubled him not at all. His men, white and black, were machines to be used as long as they would stand the wear and tear and then to be thrown aside.

It was purely his wanton ruthlessness that enabled him to evade capture¹ for over four years, for which feat a grateful Emperor awarded him the coveted Order Pour le Mérite and advanced him to the rank of Major-General. On his surrender at Abercorn, von Lettow still had with him one hundred and fifty-five German officers and N.C.O.'s, nearly twelve hundred *askari*, one field gun, thirty-seven machine-guns, two hundred thousand rounds of ammunition and a quantity of other war material, so that it was not literally vouchsafed him to carry into effect his oft-repeated assurance that, as long as one native corporal and half-a-dozen *askari* remained loyal, he would resist the well-loathed "Beefs," who should secure the capitulation of the German East African Protectorate Forces only over his dead body.

CHAPTER XXI

THE EAST AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT

DANGER is the daily lot of the combatant, but lucky the soldier for whom the monotony of campaigning is broken by romance. That fact explains the envy with which intelligence officers and agents (who ranked as first-class warrant officers) were regarded by other men engaged in the East African theatre of war.

These picked men with their native scouts were entrusted with the important and dangerous duties of finding out the positions, strength and plans of the enemy, with interrupting his communications, and with gathering the topographical information absolutely necessary to our success. For these purposes they had to live "in the blue" and, carrying their lives in their hands, often remained behind the German lines for days and even weeks. Then the direst necessities of life were supplied only at deadly risk: sometimes it was too dangerous to venture near an isolated water-hole, which would certainly be watched; frequently they dared not light a fire by which to cook their scanty food; and occasionally, their rations at an end, they had to choose between prolonged hunger and an attempt to kill a buck, well knowing that the first shot might betray their presence to a hostile patrol.

Their baggage limited to indispensable food, a blanket and a ground-sheet, comfort on such "stunts" was out of the question, especially in the rainy season. Even when occupied in the ordinary routine work of reconnoitring the country ahead of our columns and in front of the German positions, danger lurked ever at hand. Did the I.O. or I.A. pitch his light tent in the bush, it was often but a ruse to draw the fire of any marauding enemy party, for he, profiting by long experience, would perhaps roll himself in a blanket in the undergrowth a hundred yards away. Then, if the camp were surprised, he and his *askari* could escape with nothing more serious than the loss of their few loads.

Such service in a tropical country, where malaria, dysentery, tick-fever and typhoid are almost daily occurrences, could be performed only by men as sound in body as they were dauntless in spirit. Fortunately, dozens of the suitable type were available. Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Uganda, the Belgian Congo and British East Africa all harboured many of those careless, restless rovers who had wandered deeper and deeper into the African bush, striving always to elude the pursuit of advancing civilization. Many had entered Rhodesia in 1893 with the pioneer column and had lived through the Matabele and Zulu rebellions; almost all had fought in the South African war—some of them against us—and had then turned their backs on society.

Various were their occupations. While some trekked to Elizabethville in the Katanga, where vast deposits of copper had been discovered, others joined in the gold rush to Kilo, hoping to outwit the Belgian officials, who would, they knew, refuse them permission to

prospect in that region, already ceded as a concession; elephant hunting, or, to be strictly accurate, elephant poaching, in the enclave, in Portuguese East Africa (where the present of a case of whisky was often sufficient inducement to a District Commissioner to close his eyes to infringements of the game laws), and in the Kilimanjaro district of the neighbouring German protectorate attracted many; others prospected or traded cattle or merchandise wherever their fancy and the rumour of good shooting led them; some few settled down as farmers or planters. To such men, many of them the products of our Public Schools and 'Varsities, hardships and constant danger were the coveted allurements offered by the freedom of savage space. They, the material of which Empire is built, sought ever some new land, some new experience.

But these old African wanderers were of all classes and of all creeds. Of more than one, indeed, might it with truth have been said:

He wasn't a nice example,
 His morals, I grant, were few,
 But there's many a rottener sample
 Renting a stiff backed pew—
 Battered, bleary and broken,
 He shot as a sportsman should,
 And many a native, more's the token,
 Knew that his word was good.

If some were filibusters, all were stout patriots, whom the declaration of war found eager for the fray. It was of such splendid material that the East African Intelligence Department was formed.

Its members required three essential qualifications: to know thoroughly the native mind and language,

to be acquainted with the country, and to be inured to the climate. That they were all crack shots goes without saying. No man who did not possess to the full these qualities could hope for real success. Firmness but scrupulous justice to his scouts and to the natives in the area in which he was temporarily operating were as necessary as ceaseless vigilance and untiring energy.

Probably no man of the unit better exemplifies its sterling service than Major Pretorius, D.S.O. A South African Dutchman by birth, he was settled before the war in the Kilimanjaro district of German East Africa. During August 1914 he and a friend were on a shooting trip in the province of Songea in the south of that colony. They had just got wind of the outbreak of hostilities, when they learnt that the local German District Commissioner had sent out an *askari* patrol to arrest them as British subjects. Next morning their camp was attacked at dawn, but Pretorius, badly wounded, and his fellow-fugitive escaped into the bush and over the Rovuma River into Portuguese territory.

Having been nursed back to health at an English mission station, he joined the Intelligence Department and did splendid work on the Rufiji, up which river the German cruiser *Koenigsberg* was known to be hiding. During moonless nights of the month the intrepid I.O. was landed by the Navy in the mangrove swamps of the delta, whence he made his way up-stream to discover the exact position of the ship. A few nights later he would repair to an agreed rendezvous and be taken off by a picket boat. For some time this hazardous scheme was continued, despite the fact that the Germans knew of his periodical appear-

ances within their lines ; but, though they set ingenious traps and put a high price on the head of the "arch-spy," as he was termed with hatred, they were unable to capture him or force him to abandon his investigations.

After the destruction of the warship in the summer of 1915, he was employed in British East Africa, and when some nine months later General Smuts inaugurated his campaign, Pretorius was appointed his Chief Intelligence Officer for the Kilimanjaro region, a district which he knew as well as his own hand. Soon this staff duty became too tame for the captain, as he then was, and he obtained permission to go into the field once again.

For the next eighteen months his life was so full of adventure and hair-breadth escapes as to read like a fairy tale. Having enlisted as scouts a few of his old and trusty native gun-bearers—men who had followed the elephant trail with him—he took them behind the German lines and began systematically to worry the Boche. In addition to sending back invaluable reports of the dispositions of the enemy and of the location of water-holes and supply depots, Pretorius carried out many raids on small parties of Germans and *askari*. Having captured the latter, he adopted the practice of enlisting them on the British side—the German native soldier being a mercenary who fought because he must or because of the prestige of his class and of the high rate of pay offered, was quite ready to swear allegiance to the English, hitherto his enemies—and often enough he ventured on patrols that lasted weeks, accompanied by only one or two of his own boys and half-a-dozen or more ex-enemy soldiers. Had the latter been so minded, they might

easily have overpowered their officer and delivered him up to the Germans, but his deep knowledge of the negro character, and the wonderful hold it gave him over the impressionable natives, saved him from treachery. In fact, he grew in time to prefer ex-German *askari* newly-captured, and with them he performed some of his most excellent exploits. His distinguished services were recognized by the granting of his majority and the award of the D.S.O. and bar.

But it was not only this intrepid sportsman with the charmed life who wandered at will behind the enemy lines. During the advance on the Central Railway three agents, Weinholt, Brown and Lewis, left camp at Lukigura with the object of investigating conditions in the rear of the German forces. Having travelled rapidly and after numerous miraculous escapes from detection, they surprised near the Wami River an enemy convoy of over a hundred porters, whom they raided and forced to burn their loads, while the escorting *askari* were made prisoners. Not content with this daring deed and with the reports they had sent back by native scouts, they continued to march to the south, and did not start to retrace their steps until they had reached the railway and burnt a supply depot. Their raids having betrayed their whereabouts, they found the return journey fraught with more dangers than usual. Continually tracked by enemy patrols and several times unable to avoid skirmishes, they were finally forced to travel only by night, hiding during the day in dense bush. At last, a month after their departure for "the blue," they staggered half-starved and unkempt back into

our lines, bringing with them three native prisoners and information of great importance.

These episodes, splendid tribute as they are to the Corps, could be supplemented by dozens of others. The everyday job of the officers, agents and their scouts was to court danger but to avoid discovery, to run innumerable risks but not one needlessly.

Apart from the enemy and the diseases which took a heavier toll than did wounds, beasts of prey were sometimes unpleasantly active. On several occasions leopards caused casualties, while one patrol in Portuguese East Africa was stalked for days by these huge cats, who nightly secured a native victim, and at last snatched the agent from his bed and made off with him into the bush, whence he was rescued by a few faithful *askari*, who had followed their master. Everything had favoured the man-eaters, for, being behind the enemy lines and very near his posts, the patrol dared not resort to firearms or light fires at night to scare away their four-footed trackers. At other times charging rhinoceroses and crafty man-eating lions proved no less disagreeable visitors, though it was seldom that they did more than alarm or scatter the camp, or tree the prey they coveted.

Unfriendly natives were often a source of anxiety, for, though too timorous to offer open active opposition, they would send word to the nearest German posts, whence would come forth a strong fighting patrol. On the other hand, his bedraggled appearance not infrequently led the intelligence officer or agent to be taken for a German by the blacks, who would pour into his willing ear news of considerable value.

More wonderful still, it repeatedly happened that I.D. men, when trekking through bush, came unexpectedly upon enemy *askari*, with whom they chatted in Swahili, so bluffing them as to get clear away before the natives realized that they had not been addressed by their own officers. One agent of my acquaintance, finding it necessary to cross a bridge guarded by a hostile sentry, walked boldly up to him in the moonlight, cursed him stoutly in German and Swahili, and threatened him with the dire consequences of not keeping a strict look-out. So natural was this abuse to the negro, that he did not even challenge my friend, whom he certainly mistook for a German officer from the neighbouring camp.

Frequently I.D. men coming in unexpectedly from the bush, dressed more or less in rags and wearing scraggy beards, were fired upon by our own troops; while on at least one occasion one of these men was arrested and brought back so many times, while seeking to leave a large camp, that eventually the staff intelligence officer had to take him beyond the pickets.

Force Intelligence—or, as an unhappy Second Lieutenant addressed it, False Intelligence!—had its humorous side, one of its best laughs being at the expense of the Topographical Department of British East Africa. In the early months of the war a German officer set out from Taveta to blow up the Uganda Railway, pinning his faith to an old English map; but, owing to its extreme inaccuracy, he lost his way in the waterless waste which separated him from his objective and was forced by thirst to surrender to one of our outposts. This incident, faithfully ascribing the capture to the unwitting help of the Topo.

Section, was related throughout the length and breadth of the country and was often used to quip sensitive men of that service, which, by the way, in conjunction with Force Intelligence, did much invaluable but quiet work.

The intelligence supplements, composed of all information gleaned, sometimes caused as much amusement to British officers as they did anger to the enemy, into whose hands some copies fell. It will be readily believed that even a German officer did not care to read about himself or his friends such well-proven statements as: "His company did little else but rape women and loot goats," "Lacking in personal courage and loathed by his men," "Commanded enemy detachment which fired on British ambulance party," "Hard case and addicted to drink," "Falsely claims to have blown up train on the Uganda Railway," or "Old and incapable." Such references were again and again to be met with, and it speaks well for the Department that the statements were often believed by the Germans in preference to the reports of their own officers. A German field officer assured me that von Lettow suspended a subaltern who had claimed to have destroyed a portion of the Uganda Railway, but whose assertion was denied by our authorities.

To sum up, the East African Intelligence Department, composed as it was of many of the best bushmen in the country, rendered services no less vital to the conduct of that difficult and protracted campaign than they are flattering to the stalwarts themselves. Their light has hitherto been hid under a bushel as far as the home reader is concerned, but to those who were brought into contact with their work it will ever remain a memory pleasant and proud.



OX-DRAWN WAGONS.



DAR-ES-SALAAM HARBOUR.

CHAPTER XXII

BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

THAT there is actually far more of the mailed fist in German civil government than in British military administration may at first sight appear an extravagant statement, but experience in the Tanganyika Territory of East Africa points to its truth.

In pre-war days the native was ruled by his German masters with a rod of iron, and it was continually kept fresh in his memory that he had to consider himself inferior to every white man. He was taught to worship in duly reverent form the Great Ones of the Government, while all officers of the protectorate troops received his most humble greetings. He would as little have dreamt of drifting airily past a German Second Lieutenant as he would have dared to push his way in front of a European to the stamp counter at the post office.

Yet as soon as we occupied the enemy protectorate these actions became everyday occurrences. Though the country was nominally conquered, it was no unusual sight to see natives stand respectfully to attention as an enemy subaltern walked past, whereas they would continue their laughter, chatter or play while a British General rode along. What a glorious monument to British prestige!

Thanks to the fear instilled into them by their former masters, and to the machinations of certain undesirable elements of the alien European population—who realized that under the Union Jack they would be unable to utilize the blacks as in the past, and who consequently disliked the prospect of the change—the average native believed up until the time of the armistice that we should have to evacuate the country after the war, and that it was therefore politic for him always to be meekly respectful to the few Germans he saw. I do not cavil at the native showing due courtesy to the Boche, who, despite his repulsive characteristics, is still a European, but it was surely bad policy that such humility should be allowed to go hand-in-hand with indifference, and sometimes even impertinence, to Britishers of far higher standing. Any one who knows the native's trend of thought will realize the attendant ill-effects.

Until the outbreak of hostilities the very name of Englishman was like a charm throughout the length and breadth of savage Africa. In the British colonies the negroes were, on the whole, contented with their lot, while in the neighbouring territories administered by Belgians, Portuguese and Germans the few English settlers were well aware that they were regarded by their personal boys and the natives generally much more favourably than was the ruling race. I have more than once heard a servant clinch an argument with a friend with the words, "Thou art but the boy of a German; I am the servant of an Englishman."

Such was our prestige in East Africa until November 1914, when our Expeditionary Force suffered so severe

a defeat at Tanga. During the action the German *askari* found battalions of Indian troops fleeing before them, and scores of the gallant 2nd Loyal North Lancashire lads, the only white troops engaged on our side at that time, falling before their murderous machine gun fire. The attempted landing proved a fiasco and had to be abandoned after heavy losses. The moral effect of this initial reverse was incalculable. Hitherto the enemy troops, both white and black, had feared to meet us on even terms; the very thought of opposing the English had struck terror to the heart of the stoutest German *askari*, many of whom had been recruited a few years previously from disbanded battalions of the King's African Rifles and who had had personal proof of English valour and skill. Now fear gave place to contempt and timidity to indifference.

The *moral* of the enemy became a vital force instead of a negligible quality, and his native soldiers loudly proclaimed the Germans as men and the British as women who feared to fight. Nothing better illustrates the almost irreparable slight to our national reputation than the fact that hundreds of natives even in the farthest corners of the then German protectorate promptly changed their names in derision to "*Tanga*," "*Shauri ya Tanga*" or "*Mdachi*" (German). We had rendered the foe the best service in our power; our proved inferiority on the field of battle at Tanga was the foundation on which was built his wonderful resistance. Amongst European troops such an initial defeat, bad as the consequences would have been, would not have altered the whole course of the campaign. In Africa the case was different. The natives knew

nothing of the respective martial merits of Englishman and German, but their instinct and observation of individuals made them believe firmly that the former would prevail. When at the beginning of the war they had evidence of a British rout—for it was but little less—all their preconceived ideas gave place to a conviction that their harsh masters were indeed the most mighty of Europeans.

Thenceforward for eighteen months various minor successes served only to strengthen Teuton prestige, so that when General Smuts opened his offensive in the spring of 1916 he found himself opposed by a strong, well-armed, well-disciplined army with every faith in itself and small respect for its foe. His opening operations changed the outlook. Pushed out of position after position, harried on the line of retreat by numerous mounted bands, bombed in camps by aeroplanes, those evidences of British witchcraft, the German *askari* and other natives speedily readjusted their viewpoint. Always victorious in the past, they were now on the defensive; whereas they had hitherto been well fed, they now sometimes found themselves short of rations and called upon to endure unwonted fatigues. Consequently pride of power gave place to despondent resignation, desertions became common, and the general *moral* grew weak. By the time the Central Railway had been occupied by our troops, the back of the enemy resistance had been broken, and we were on a fair way to wiping from our scutcheon the blots that stained it.

The German military and civil authorities had systematically and persistently done their utmost to

undermine our influence. The tales of our discomfiture at Tanga and Jassini had spread to every village; exaggerated stories of our losses in minor engagements were circulated with untrue statements of their wonderful achievements; baseless fabrications purporting to prove British cruelty to and victimization of Moham-medans were sedulously spread in the Governor's name; German missions vilified their English co-workers; and British European prisoners-of-war were placed under negro guards and made to toil under the tropical sun at all manner of disgusting employments, which could have but the double objects of degrading them and ruining their health. Before evacuating any district the Germans summoned the chiefs and headmen, told them that their forces were withdrawing before the numerically superior enemy, but that in Europe German arms were victorious, and that that pre-eminence would force us to give back what land we annexed in Africa. They also boasted openly that we should fear to intern their civilians who remained behind and fell into our hands.

Unfortunately General Smuts, whose extraordinary progress had already made a deep impression, determined to leave the German civilians at liberty on their plantations or in certain townships; although missionaries and other unbiassed settlers of long experience pointed out that to the native mind neglect to intern all enemy Europeans, men, women and children, missionaries included, was tantamount to admitting our fear of the consequences. The Germans had treated as prisoners-of-war all Allied civilians, including missionaries, and it was manifestly necessary for us

to adopt the same procedure. The negro mind, like the German, presupposes that one knocks one's opponent down in order to kick him while he is on the ground, and cannot conceive of favours being shown the vanquished. Therefore the natives refused to believe that the civilians on parole were at large because we wished to treat them generously, and did not desire to subject them to avoidable inconvenience.

That being to them obviously absurd—for no conqueror would voluntarily forego part of the spoils of victory—what reason remained? Only the very one that the Germans themselves had preached, namely, that fear of the consequences of ultimate defeat in Europe would cause us to treat them with every consideration. This line of argument was the natural one to the child of nature, and shows why our irrational policy of undue leniency to enemy civilians was a further blow at our own prestige.

If we were weak in our treatment of German civilians, we were no better in our management of the native question. Instead of adopting a firm line of action that would demonstrate the falseness of the German assertion that the British were degenerate, cowardly incapables, our administration took no effective steps to remedy the damage done to the national name. Laziness, impertinence and dishonesty were condoned, and a golden opportunity for re-establishing our renown was thus thrown away.

It must be remembered that the military situation had brought to the country thousands of Englishmen who did not know one word of the native language, and, what was worse, had not the faintest notion in what

way to treat their black brothers. The authorities, instead of endeavouring to explain local conditions to the newcomers, made no serious efforts in that direction or towards remedying the crying evils existing.

Old East African settlers made repeated representations in official quarters, but all their efforts proved unavailing. Month by month the *laissez-faire* attitude continued, until disgraceful conditions became the rule rather than the exception. Under German martial law all able-bodied natives (and, in practice, many of the unfit) were called upon to act as *askari*, porters or agricultural labourers; under our *régime* a certain proportion of the ex-German subjects were enrolled as carriers, but most were left undisturbed and uncontrolled in their villages to pass their days in the idleness so dear to the negro heart.

Had a vigorous food-production policy been instituted, the hundreds of thousands of natives in Government service, most of whom had come from British East Africa, could have been fed on local products and expense and transport saved; but such was not the case. Instead of encouraging in every way the growth of local crops, apathy reigned supreme; as a consequence large sums of public money and valuable shipping space were wasted in bringing from South Africa and India food which might with a little foresight and energy have been produced on the spot.

Particularly in the towns, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanga and Morogoro, the natives were allowed to get chronically out of hand. (It is noticeable that the situation at Tabora and Kigoma, within the Belgian zone, was much more ably handled.) The fault was not primarily

that of the negro, who had every inducement to kick over the traces, and whose nature urged him to follow the easy road, for he allows himself always to be carried along by circumstances. The blame should be laid at the door of the responsible authorities, who persisted in their determination to do nothing, to bury their heads in the sand.

Nobody was more spoilt than the rickshaw boy. Though the German tariff, prominently notified on large boards in public places, had been twenty-five cents for every fifteen minutes or part thereof, the boys asked four times as much, and usually got double their due, from Englishmen. Frequently a newcomer would give a rupee for a run of just over a quarter of an hour. Had the German custom of prominently posting up a scale of fares been followed, such victimization of our warriors for the benefit of the blacks would have been impossible.

It was the same with local produce. It is true that prices were fixed for fruits, vegetables, eggs, fowls and so on, but no effective control was exercised, the natural result being that sellers refused to part with their goods at the figures laid down. These unnecessary inflations of prices were extremely hard on the hundreds of men drawing the princely wage of one shilling a day, and who occasionally had to supplement their rations with fruit or vegetables. Why should the soldier have been exploited for the sake of natives, who, if they had sold at the prices stipulated, would still have made a far higher profit than they did in the German days?

If such uncontrollable greed gave the natives the

impression that the English were fools, what must they have thought when they found that many were willing to treat them in every way as their equals? It was a common occurrence to see men standing and joking with blacks in the bazaar, or even to see a European and a negro walking along together quite unconcernedly. Any day the edifying spectacle might have been witnessed in Dar-es-Salaam of white men holding up burly blacks in the water and teaching them to swim! Preposterous as such conduct must seem to every one with any African experience, it was allowed to continue unchecked.

A staff officer friend of mine was one day walking down a street in the location when he saw running towards him a native being chased by two Europeans. Thinking that the pursued had stolen something or had committed some other offence, he stopped him, and, when the panting Tommies came up, asked what was the matter.

"Nothing, sir."

"Then why were you chasing him? Has he stolen anything?"

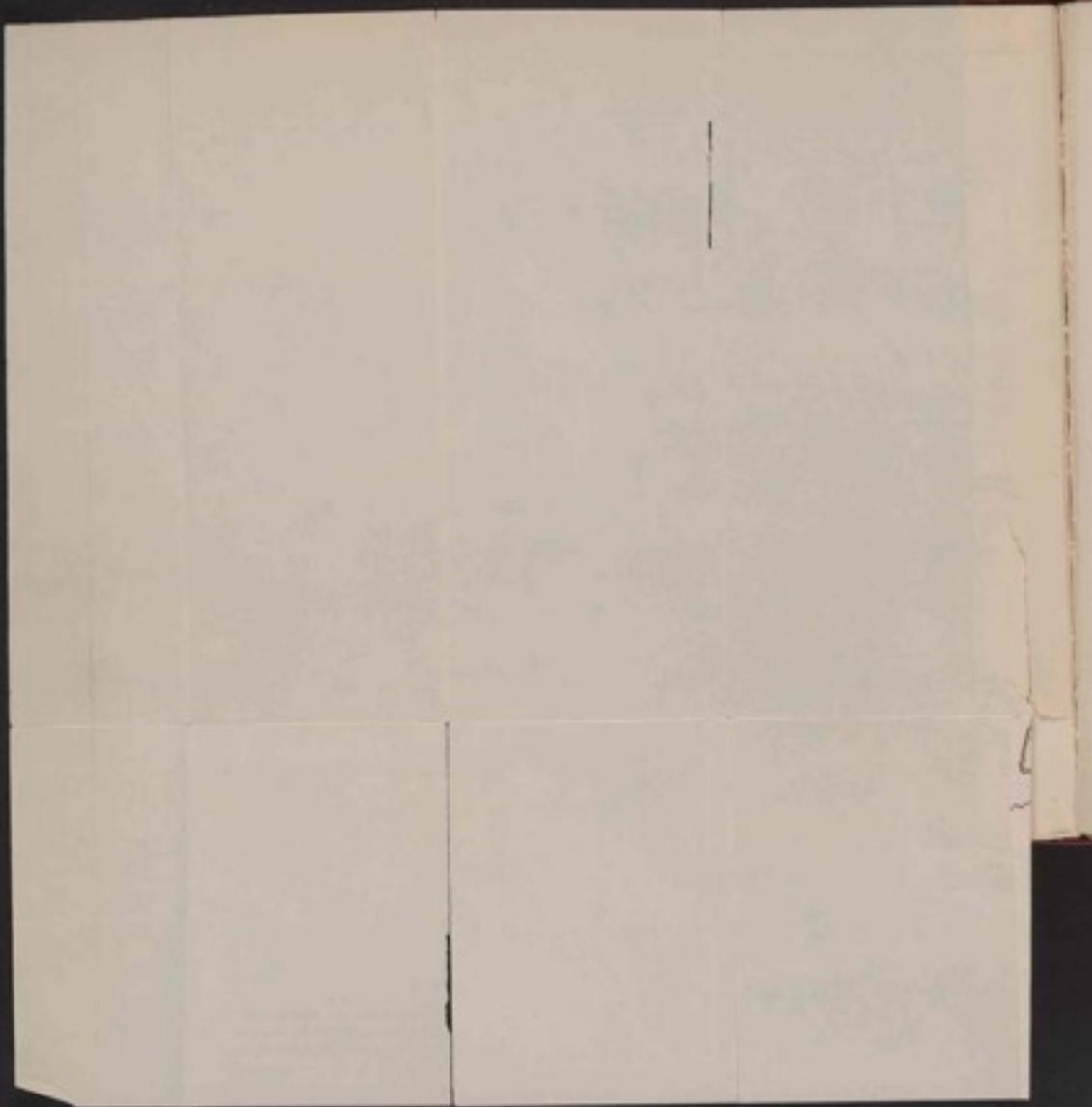
"No, sir. We were only having a game with him!!!"

The stay-at-home Briton cannot possibly realize the full seriousness of such unseemly conduct, but any one with knowledge of subject peoples and their treatment will readily appreciate the insidious effect on our prestige of such senseless and undignified proceedings, which cannot on any account be excused.

In short, it must be admitted that our authorities, civil and military, went from one extreme to the other. German heartlessness gave place to British sentiment-

ality and under this new and unaccustomed freedom the natives got quite out of hand. This is to them natural, for they have no innate sense of kindness, and so do not understand the motives of our benevolence, which they mistake for weakness. Consequently they make no efforts towards improvement, and are merely spoilt by our official pampering, which cannot be too strongly condemned.

Not for one moment would I advocate the policy of ruthless exploitation under which the millions of natives suffered while choleric Germans were their masters, but, if justice and firmness were the watch-words of all those entrusted with the administration of the valuable territories now in our hands, there can be no doubt that in a very short space of time our national prestige would again be an asset of which every citizen might be proud; though it cannot be pretended that it will ever be as high as it was before the war taught blacks to butcher the ruling whites.



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