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# THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA

FROM EAST TO WEST



GERRY KEARTON  
JAMES BARNES



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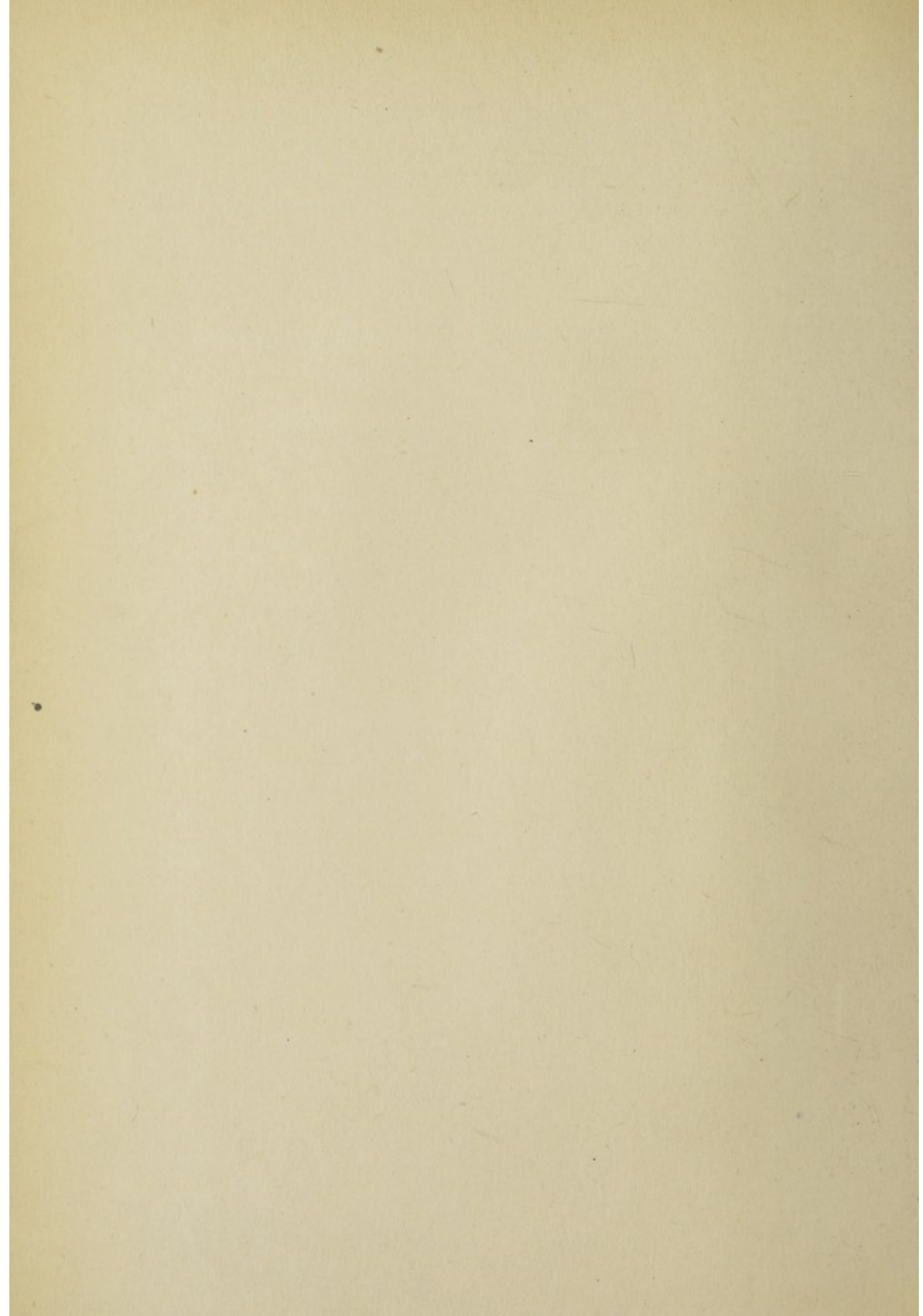
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Christmas & the New Year

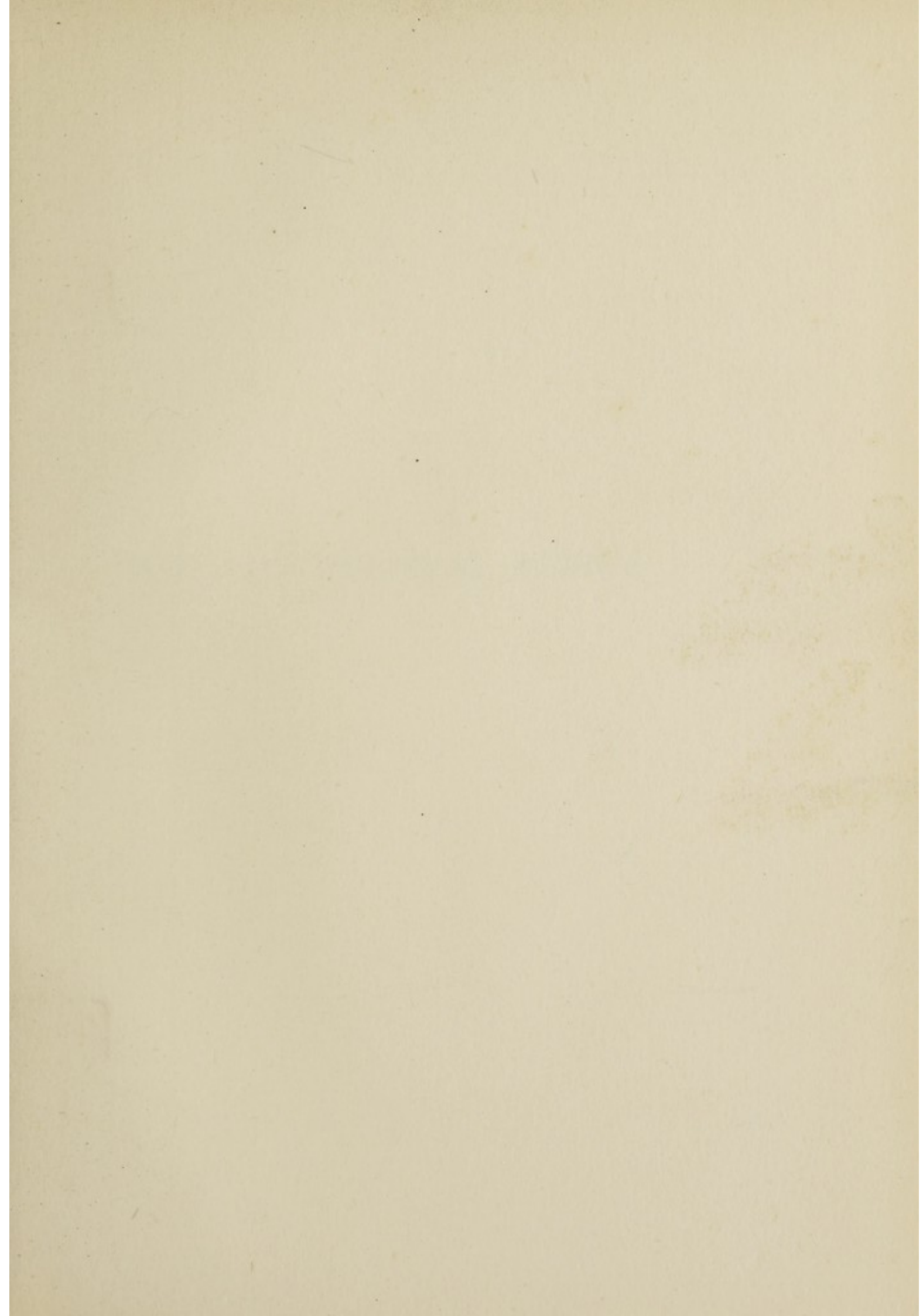
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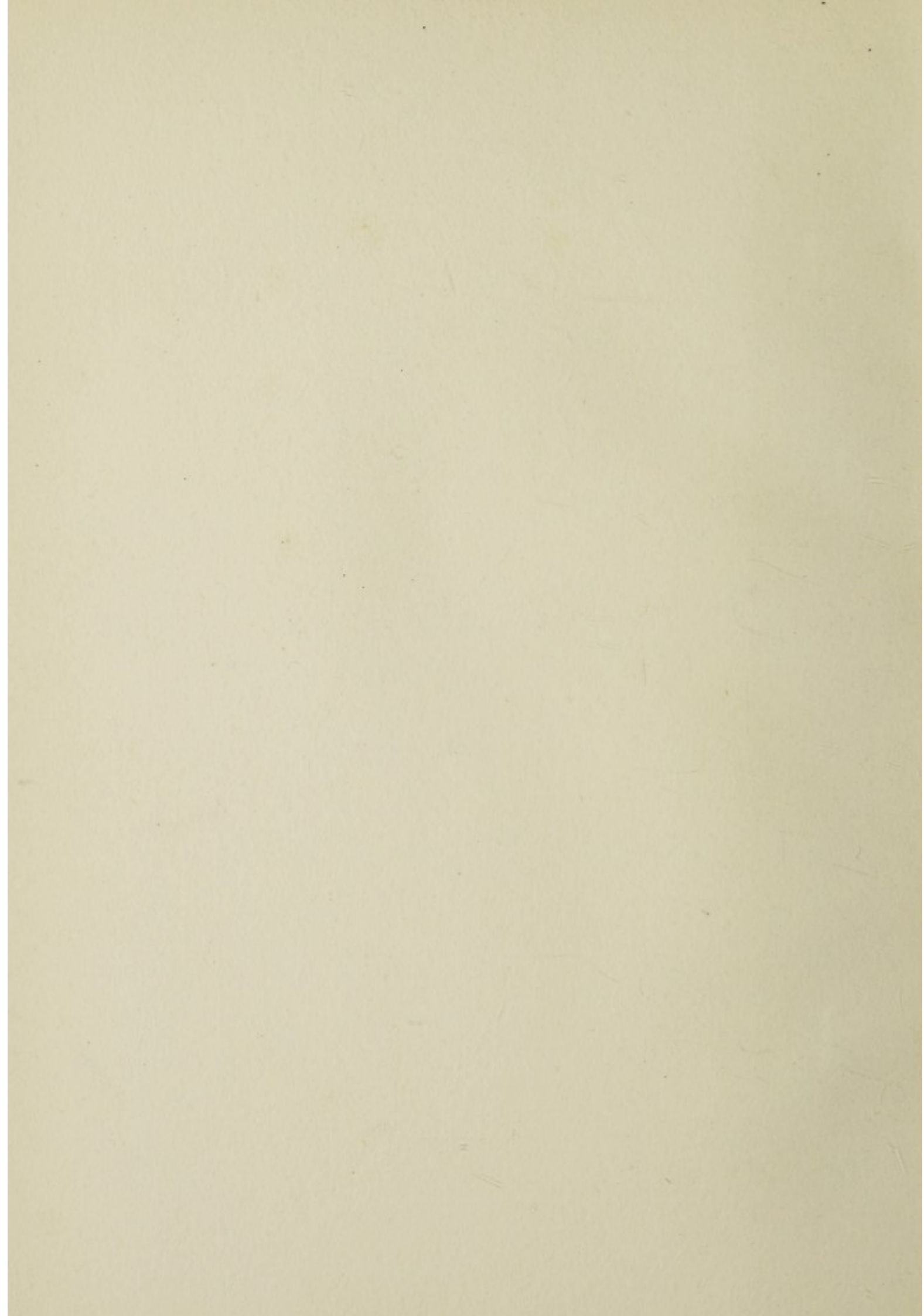
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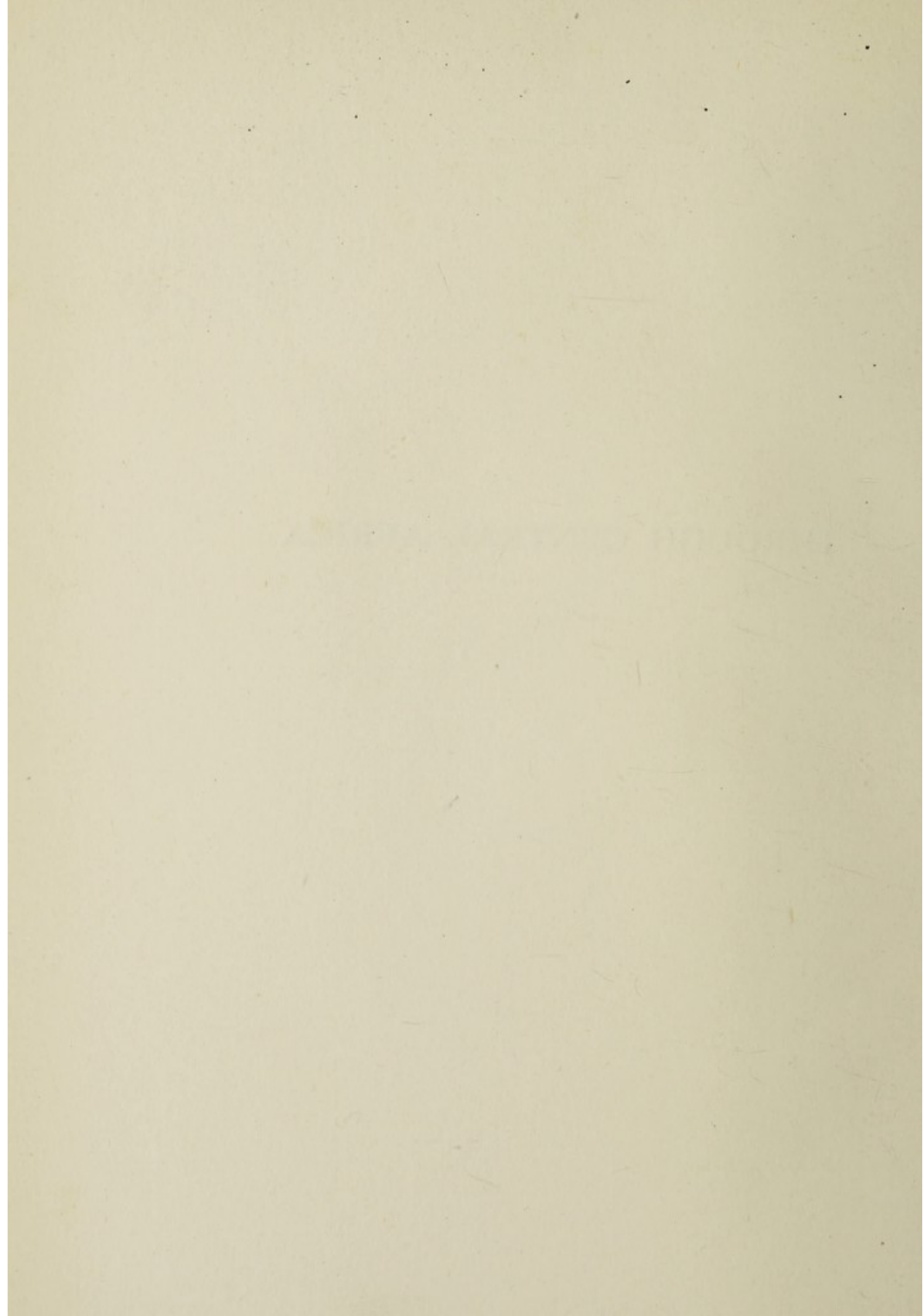







THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA

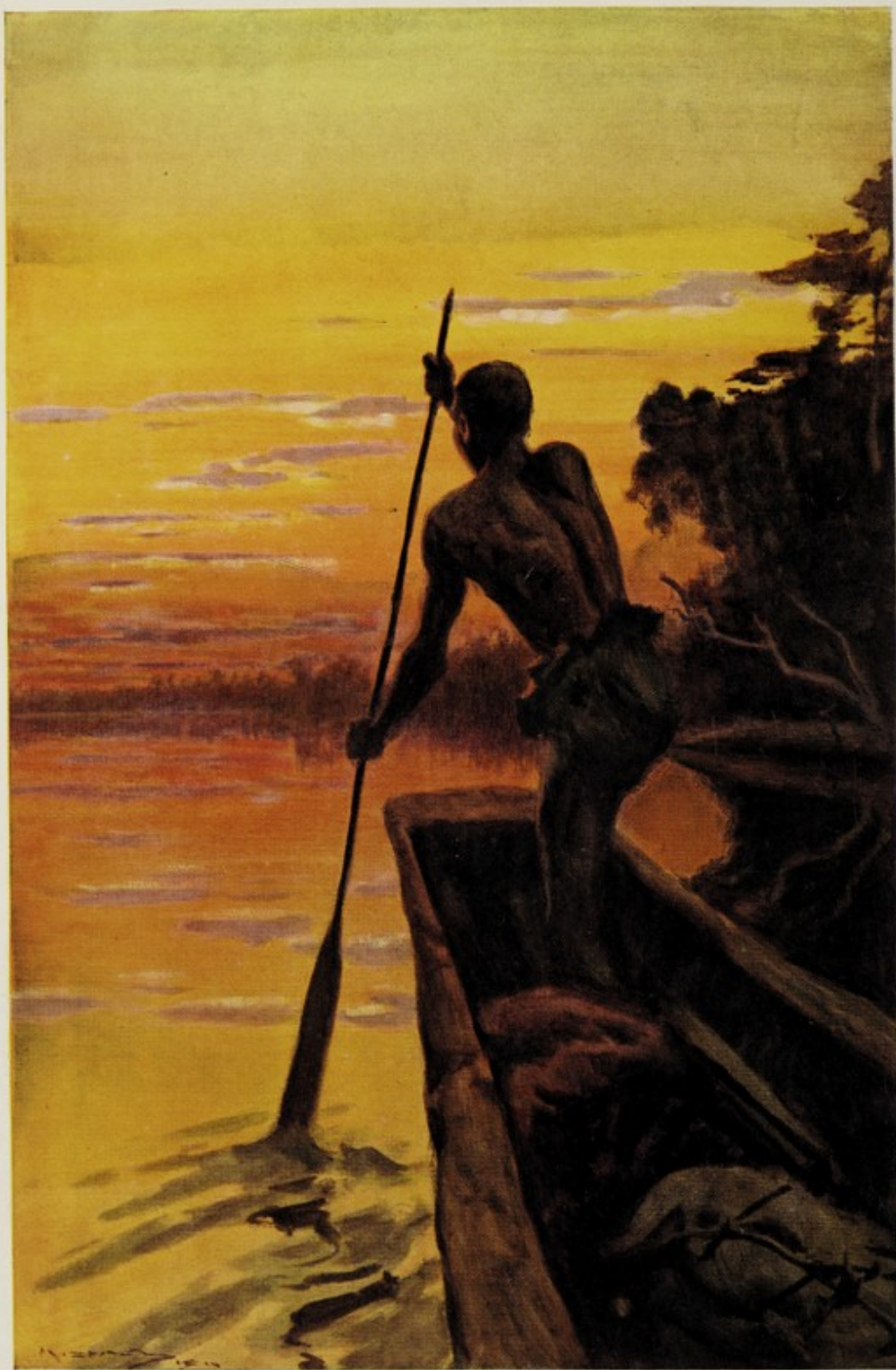






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SUNSET ON THE ARUWIMI



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# THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA

FROM EAST TO WEST

BY  
CHERRY KEARTON  
AND JAMES BARNES

With a Colour Frontispiece, 8 Photogravures  
and 160 Illustrations from Photographs by  
CHERRY KEARTON

CASSELL AND COMPANY, LTD  
London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne  
1915



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## FOREWORD

AS this book details a specific journey for a specific purpose, the plans for which were laid long in advance and carried out quite to the letter, barring some disappointments bound to occur in the furtherance of even the best laid plans, it is well to begin at the beginning; and, as it is also the personal story of the experiences and work of two men, it might be well to term them in advance, the Scribe and the Photographer.

The Scribe had it in his mind during the year 1912, that as soon as he could arrange his private affairs, and get them into condition for a long absence, he would journey to East Africa in quest of game pictures, and being very unskilful with the camera—having developed little of the patience and none of the technique—he was most anxious to secure a companion who would supply his own defects.

In the fall of 1912 the New York papers announced that Mr. Cherry Kearton, whose work in the field of natural history photography is known in America as well as in England, was in the city.

“If I could only get hold of Cherry Kearton,” said the Scribe to himself, “I would have the man I would like to go with.”

And shortly afterwards, exactly like a happening



in a story book, the Scribe was seated in a restaurant lunching, when he was approached by a friend.

"Going abroad this winter?" asked the friend casually.

"Farther than that," the Scribe replied. "If I can arrange it, I am going to Africa."

"Just met a chap who knows all about it," observed the friend, turning, "his name is Kearton."

"You know him! How can I get hold of him?"

The friend pointed, "There he is at that table in the corner. Come over and I'll introduce you."

So the Scribe and the Photographer spent that afternoon together, and the whole of the next day, up in the Bronx, rambling through the botanical gardens and zoological park, and before they parted they sealed with a handshake the partnership that resulted in a year's stay in East Africa, Uganda and the Congo, and the cinema journey from coast to coast.

There were many things to be considered in the preliminaries and arrangements made before departure, and one was that the pictorial results they would try to obtain would be different from the exhibition films or the illustrations for books that had heretofore appeared.

*Imprimis*, it was resolved that there would be no wounded, trapped or harassed animals taken, that slaughter would be conspicuous by its absence, and that, so far as possible, animals would be seen moving undisturbed in their natural habitat, and that the native life would be represented unstaged and truthfully.



So if the reader expects detailed accounts of big game bags, measurements of supposedly record heads, and accounts of terrific wounds by soft-nosed or solid bullets, he had better put this volume down on the bookseller's counter, or if he has had the good fortune to buy it, place it back on his shelves unread.

And there was another object also.

Attached to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City is a large lecture hall, where free entertainments are given to the public, and, lately with great success, moving picture films of animals in their natural surroundings have been shown there. Now, it is the idea of the Scribe and the Photographer to present to the great natural history museums of the world a duplicate set of the pictures obtained on this expedition, to form, as it were, the nucleus of a "film library" for free exhibition only, in order that the public may see at least some of the mounted specimens staring out of their glass cases moving naturally in the freedom of prairie, veldt or forest, for before long some of them may be as extinct as the dodo.

A glance at the map that accompanies this volume will show the extent of the photographic wanderings. In April, 1913, the expedition started from London, and as the preparations had all been made long in advance for the first *safari*, they waited only two days at Nairobi, and the month of May found them skirting the Abadares in British East Africa, bound for the wide stretches of sand and thornbush north of the Uashu Neru. It was at the water-holes up towards



the Abyssinian border, where the only inhabitants are nomadic tribes of Randili, Samburra and Boran, that many of the pictures were secured. The story of taking them makes up the first part of the book; but it had always been the intention to go on to the westward, through Uganda, and thence down the Ituri and the Aruwimi to the Congo, following, practically, at least from the Rewenzori Mountains, Stanley's trail on the Emin Pasha relief expedition of 1887. There was a faint hope that it might be possible to secure photographs or perhaps moving pictures of some of the rarer animals, only a few of which are represented in the collection of mounted specimens in the larger museums.

It may not be the best policy to preface a book with an apology, and yet it is rather necessary in this case, in order to explain the lack of animal pictures in the later chapters of the book.

No sooner had we left the wide-spreading Irumu plains, and entered the depths of the forest, when difficulties began. In the deep shade of the towering trees and dense undergrowth the moving picture cameras were at an utter discount. The six- or eight-inch lenses were absolutely useless. It required the exposure of from one-fifth of a second to a full second's time to obtain any result at noonday. In the morning and evening it was a perpetual gloom. The only chances for photographic work were along the rivers, in the few open glades that were encountered, and in the cleared spaces and the plantations near the native villages. Try our best we did. For many days we were



in the country where the okapi had been netted or killed by the *wambutu* or pygmies but a short time before. We saw the footprints of this mysterious and lately discovered animal, and that is all. We had the pygmies around us and tried to make moving pictures with a wide-open shutter and a slow turning of the handle, but only secured results when the subjects could be enticed out into the open. In the Scribe's diary will be found this despairing sentence: "The forest is impossible as a field for moving photography."

We were close to elephants more than once; in one instance one of the partners found himself in the middle of a herd of at least a hundred. They were all around. One could hear the flappings of the great ears, and that strange stomachic rumbling that can only be heard when elephants are near to, yet not a photograph could have been taken, for the great beasts were as invisible as if they were miles away. It was disappointing and not wholly agreeable, in fact, the time spent in getting out of such rather uncomfortable positions was hardly worth mentioning.

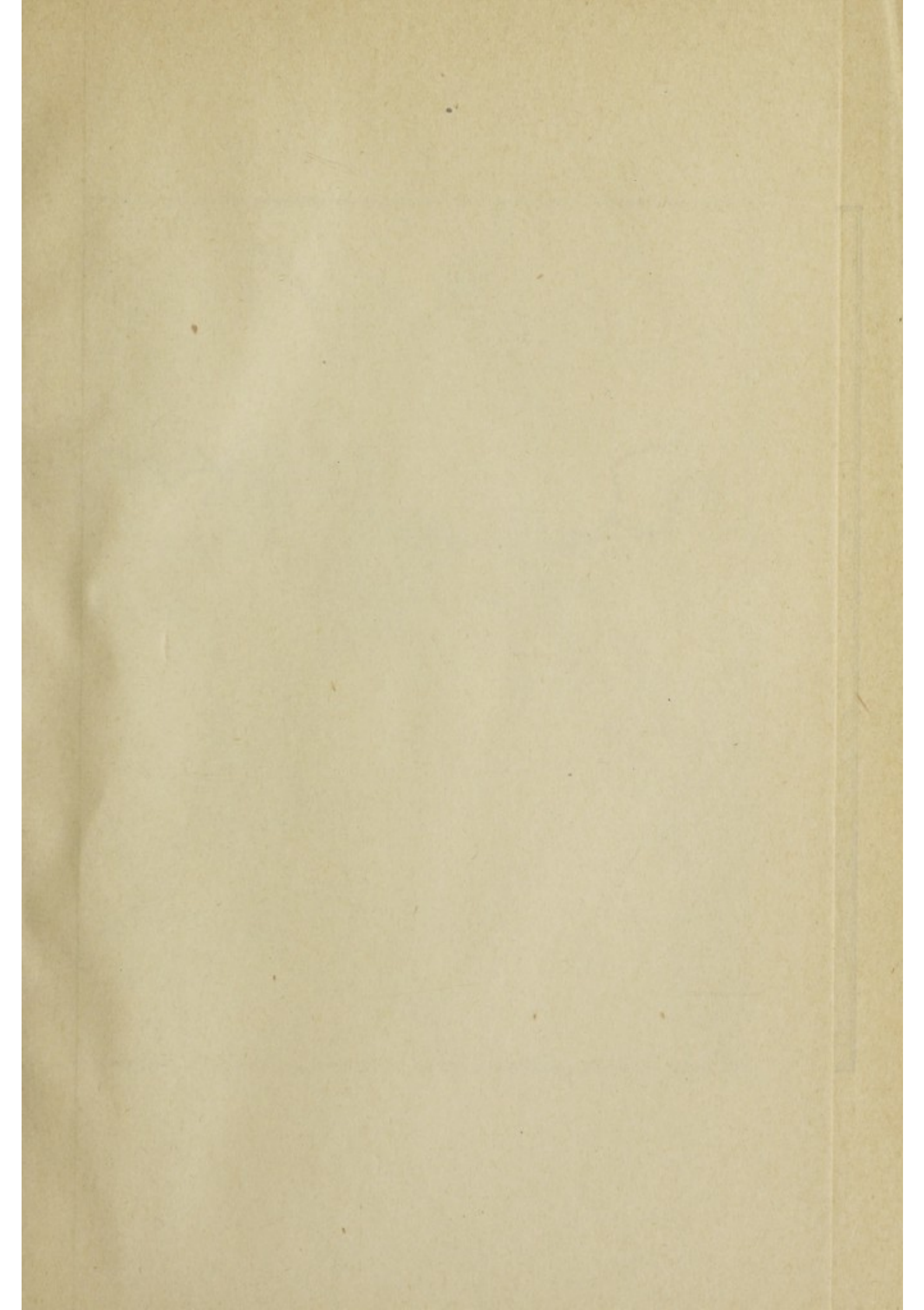
The Scribe on two occasions was compelled to shoot in self-defence, and each time managed to put a bullet in one of the few vital spots that would stop an oncoming and hostile beast—the brain. On another occasion, in the deep forest, a beautiful leopard crossed the path in one swift bound, leaving the fleeting impression on the retina of tawny spots and straight-held tail. What a picture would he have made if the camera had been gifted with X-ray quality to penetrate the curtains of thick foliage.



So the trip down to the Congo will record mostly canoe life, river and village scenes, with occasional glimpses of the forest where the percolating light was sufficient to make record possible by means of time exposure. Anyone who has read Stanley's book "In Darkest Africa" might follow with interest this perhaps unexciting narrative, for the expedition met natives who remembered him, old men now, long past the age when most savages have gone the way of African flesh, which mayhap is a little different from other flesh, in that very little is wasted. The records of impressions of this part of the journey will be found in the book. There was very little time for close investigations or analyses of native customs, for, lurking behind everything was the fear that the dampness, the intense heat and humidity might already be acting disastrously on the films already taken, and that it was necessary to carry along. There were troubles with deserting porters, rows with rebellious and truculent paddlers during the long river journey, and nights spent at villages where death and disease were rampant.

When at last the Scribe and the Photographer arrived at the head of steamer navigation, after paddling down the river in hollowed-out log canoes through half the night to Basoko, they caught the Congo river boat with only fourteen minutes to spare.

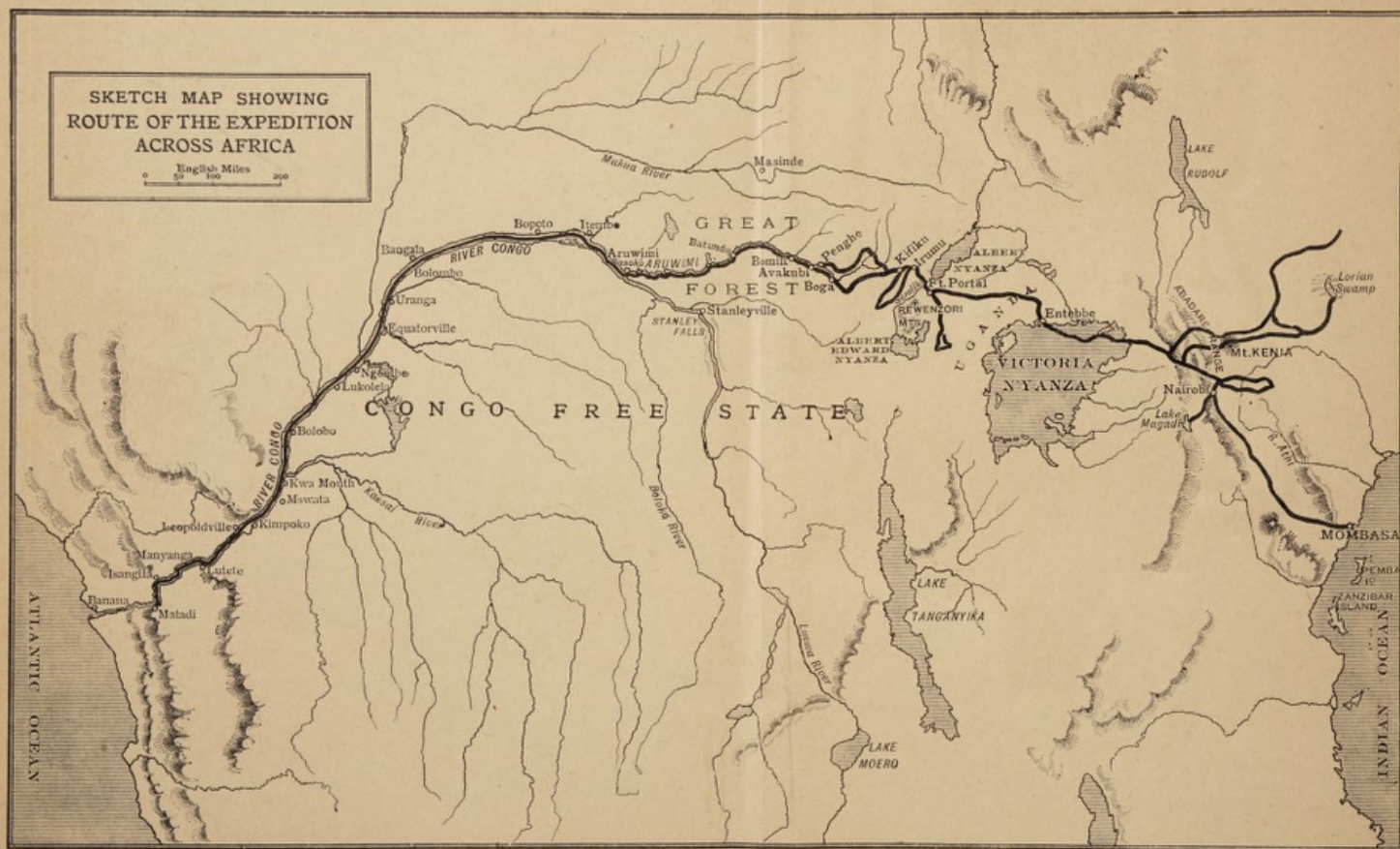
Now, looking back over it all, both the Scribe and the Photographer are very glad they went, but there are certain portions of the journey that they would not care to do again.





SKETCH MAP SHOWING  
ROUTE OF THE EXPEDITION  
ACROSS AFRICA

English Miles  
0 50 100 200



# THROUGH CENTRAL AFRICA

## FROM EAST TO WEST

### CHAPTER I

#### ON THE TRAIL FROM NAIROBI

SOME old Latin once recorded that "All things new come from Africa," but there are certainly some things that have come from there (indirectly perhaps) that are not new, and these are books. It seems to me that everyone who has ever gone there, no matter his excuse, incentive, or provocation, has perpetrated at least one volume, and some have had the temerity to repeat the dreadful experiment.

Almost all the books that I have read contain photographs and descriptions of Nairobi, that busy little centre of about eleven hundred whites, and four times that quantity of blacks, and where the Indian *Fundi* and bazaar merchant have the monopoly of the contractor's calling and trade. Suffice it, therefore, that, having reached this usual starting-point in the usual way by train from Mombasa, all of our thoughts were concentrated upon getting off on *Safari*,\* and away from the haunts of men. Nairobi irked us.

\* *Safari* = Caravan : route of march.



It was, luckily, the off season, and the visiting "big game hunters"—mostly armed tourists out to kill—were not much in evidence. There was a land boom on; everyone was anxious to sell a farm or buy one—the latter class being the great minority. Perhaps it was for this reason that porters were easy to obtain. We were fortunate also to secure, for our first trip, the services of Mr. S. H. Lydford, a young white hunter who possessed both knowledge and interest in photographic work, and who knew well the country into which it was our intention to penetrate—the little-known and waterless tracts north of the Uashu Neru up toward the Abyssinian border.

It was an old story to Kearton. It was his third visit to British East Africa. He had been through it all before. From the train window he had pointed out places where, on a previous visit, he had done photographic work, but it was all new to the Scribe, although he was familiar with the subject at second hand, having read so many of his friends' effusions and having listened to so many stories told at "Camp Fire" dinners at luxurious metropolitan hotels. But despite this mental preparation, and the recollection of much carefully garnered advice, there was a feeling of keen excitement and pleasure that came to both Kearton and myself, as, clad in our very new khaki outfits, we looked down the lines of black nondescripts who were to be our companions for nearly three months. When the column started, to the tooting of antelope horns and much shouting, out into the



Nairobi streets from the yard of the trading company that had charge of equipping our expedition, I confess that it was with a thrill of delight that I slapped Kearton on the shoulder and said: "We're off at last!"

Our destination was the railway station, but word had come in, that owing to the heavy rains the trails to Fort Hall and northward around Mount Kenia were almost impassable, so under advice we decided to leave the railway and take to the "leather express" at Gil-Gil, some six or seven hours' distance up the road.

Nothing delights an American negro so much as a railway journey—(whoever saw an unhappy porter on a Pullman train?)—and I found that this held true with his untutored and mostly unclad brother on his native stamping ground; perhaps it is the fact that he is moving without exertion that gives the negro a sort of exultation, but, whatever the reason, no jollier or more contented lot of human beings have I ever seen than these Kikuyus, Wakambas, Kavirondos, and black tramps generally, who were crowded like herrings into two open cars at the end of the train. Like the Hours described by the bored poet, they were forced to "loll in each other's laps" to the journey's end. Nevertheless, they chatted, sang, and in general wore the aspect of a black boys' boarding school going home for the holidays. Poor thoughtless devils, there was hardship enough ahead for some of them.

To a certain degree, the safari porter is a ward



of the local authorities at the point from which he starts, and there all responsibility ends. According to law, each one has to be provided with a black sleeved jersey, a blanket, and a tin water-bottle. Now, how some of those ex-warriors had found time to sell their new jerseys and new blankets and make appearance at the train in ragged substitutes was perplexing, and the number of second-hand canteens and water-bottles that appeared was beyond counting. The blankets, that I think are made mostly of cotton waste and paper stock, could not have brought much in the way of trade or ready-money, and as for the tin water-bottles, those that did not leak at the end of the first week's marching were discarded as useless incumbrances, yet what a row there would have been if every man had not received his own at the point of starting! Besides the porters, we were provided with a head man or *n'mpara*, of whom I will write hereafter, a cook, and a private servant apiece.

The cook had come with a written recommendation from a former employer. We had picked him out because I insisted that he had an honest face, despite the fact that his worn and dog-eared letter was dated some two years back; he sorrowfully averred that he had lost the others. However, at the hotel where we stayed for two days, I ran across the man who had most recently employed him, and whose name he had proudly mentioned.

"Yes," remarked the gentleman thoughtfully,



"Amassi is a good cook, perhaps the best in East Africa, but he is also one of the worst thieves and most arrant scoundrels I have ever met. He is a gambler and a general waster, but if you deal everything out to him carefully, and watch him like a suspicious constable, and beat him about once a week, he will serve you very well. He professes to be a Christian," my new found friend smiled slightly; "but the only Christian principle that he has imbibed is never to let his left hand know what his right hand is doing."

Be it therefore recorded, after this warning, without beating, we got on with Amassi fairly well. Kearton's personal boy, Abadie, was the Uriah Heep of all personal boys. He was that humble that he was afraid to assert himself by touching anything of his master's until ordered to do so, and so shy and retiring was he, that I am firmly convinced he blushed when spoken to, although it could not be detected. In my personal boy, Juma, I thought I had discovered a jewel. He was a Mohammedan with rather a shifty eye, but he certainly did know his business. He could wait on the table, clean and press clothes like a duke's valet. He could also mend things very well, after you had given them to him, and as for packing things breakable and unbreakable, he could have got a job in a glass warehouse. At making beds he proved to be an adept. In fact, he began after the fashion of the traditional new broom, and stayed so until the latter



end of the journey, when he departed with an overcoat, a suit of clothes and two pairs of boots, and failed to come back for a letter of recommendation. Oh! those letters! Those precious *barruas*, for which there must be a native clearing-house among personal boys, with fixed prices and an adept translator, who, however, occasionally lets some of the slyly worded ones get past. Lydford, the most experienced of the three of us, had drawn the worst card in the deck. I have forgotten the individual's name, but he was consigned to limbo after a few weeks' trial, and the work that he was supposed to do was practically divided between the retiring Abadie and the omniscient Juma. I have mentioned casually the head man, the *n'mpara*, and I here record that if ever I go to Africa again I will do much searching until I find him. He was tall, of Herculean build, with a voice like that of a first mate on a river steamboat, and he could have taken the two biggest porters and dangled them like two-pound dumb-bells. He mentioned his name several times to me in a very husky voice, but I always failed to catch it, otherwise I would be glad to recommend him to anyone in need of such services as he could render.

While I am on this digression, I must mention a little incident which rather disproves the theory held by some irascible travellers that the African black is neither loyal nor faithful. Kearton had often told me stories of his former trips, and how he wished that he



could get hold of his old camera boy who had accompanied him on his lion-spearing trip, and when he was taking the moving pictures for the Buffalo Jones expedition, a Kikuyu named Killenjui, but how to find him Kearton did not know. The very morning of our start, however, as he was walking down Government Road, a little half-naked individual carrying the old haft of a spear smilingly saluted him. It was Killenjui himself! When he heard that his old *bwana* was going off immediately on safari, there was no hesitation—he dropped all and followed him. Killenjui, it seemed, was prosperous and owned cattle and sheep and goats, and possessed a family; but nothing counted! Sending out word to his kraal, which was a day's journey from the town, that he would be gone for some time, he threw in his lot with us; and a more faithful, trustworthy, brave little chap never trod the long stretches of the game trails.

But to return to the train puffing up the heavy grades to the westward. We had purchased three mules, and they were in a horse-box ahead of the crowded trucks containing the tightly-wedged-in blacks. The train was late, and it was dark when we drew into Gil-Gil station, which we found consisted of two tin shanties presided over by a turbaned Indian, his tiny wife, and three roly-poly children. Nairobi itself lies at an altitude of some 6,000 feet, and during the afternoon's journey we climbed over two thousand more. It was cold. The shelter offered by the tin rest-house was seductive, and I thought almost with



pity of the unclad porters in their little cotton tents that they had pitched beside the track. A stroll over in their direction after we had made some shift at a supper convinced me that my sympathy was wasted. Great fires were roaring, and laughter and song, joke and story seemed to be going the round. Commend me for an example of contentment with mundane existence to the African porter with a full stomach; he is the one man who regrets no past, fears no future, and completely enjoys what the gods provide for the present fleeting moment, with the proviso that it is food and fire.

We were up betimes in the morning; a glorious crisp day was coming on. I ached to try my new boots (and I actually did before the day went out), so I disdained the services of my mule and started along the well-defined trail to the north, at the head of the shouting and singing line of porters. By eleven o'clock it had grown hot, and I had become convinced that I would boast no longer of the perfections of my London footgear. I decided not to waste that mule, and waited for him. It was just after I had mounted that we got our first sight of game close to. A half dozen kongoni looked over the brow of a hill at us. The two dogs that we had commandeered at Nairobi started full tilt, as if let go from a leash. Following to the brow of a hill, I turned back disgusted. There was a tin farmhouse with a wooden verandah not half a mile away! It was somewhat of a shock. The kongoni were private property. For the next few hours,





THE START FROM TOWN



DOWN THE TRAIL







FORDING A SHALLOW STREAM



WHAT TWO DAYS' RAIN WILL DO





I kept looking for more farms, but this was the last habitation seen until we came to the abandoned Government post at Rumuruti five days later. The country through which we passed still teems with hartebeeste, both Coke's and Jackson's, steinbuck, thomi, granti, and zebra roaming in large herds; bushbuck, reedbuck and waterbuck were frequently to be seen. But in a few years it will all be farm-land—there will be dozens of tin houses, instead of one. The game will go.

Although the rainy season was supposed to be over, it rained every evening, a cold, penetrating downpour. Two porters had decided by the third day that the constantly increasing altitude and cold nights did not agree with them, and had left us, one taking the precaution to break open his box and drink a bottle of bay rum in order to tone up his system, and the other—a careless beggar this—leaving his blanket and water-bottle behind him.

We saw a fine cheetah sunning himself on a rock, a long distance off, but he vanished before we could get near enough to take a picture of him. A mangy old hyena ambled awkwardly ahead of us across the trail. Both the greater and the lesser bustards were plentiful, yet too wary were they for the photographer. Prolific rains had turned everything to a vivid green. There was none of the burnt and parched effect that I had always pictured as part of the African landscape.

Charm has been aptly defined as the "capacity for infinite surprise," and it is the principal reason for Africa's hold upon both resident and visitor. As we



climbed up from our camp on the shores of Lake Olgolositt, we turned and looked back. The rains had increased the lake to almost twice its usual size, the safari had waded and paddled for hours on the day before through the overflowed meadow lands. From the high ground, we could see a little bunch of hippopotami skirting the reeds on the far-off shore. Thousands of strange herons and flamingoes were wading about in the marshes, and water-fowl of all descriptions, mallard, teal and beautiful Egyptian geese traded from one end of the lake to the other. To the north, the heavily-wooded slopes of the Abadares, the haunts still of herds of elephants, lifted their massive crests into the depths of the opaque white clouds. But we had not gone a mile across the rising table-land when we stopped in surprise and delight. There, seventy or eighty miles to the eastward, rose the peak of Kenia against the clear blue sky. It glistened like a great diamond at the apex, and the white of glacier and snow line faded into a delicate hazy blue, beneath which showed the darker line of the forest, and up to its very base swept the undulating fair green of the veldt. In the space between the Abadares and the great mountain, the thin veil of a morning shower fell slantwise, moving like a trailing feather to the west. Quite close, in almost every direction, were herds of game.

Kongoni sentinels, alert and watchful, gazed at us from what they deemed safe distance. A herd of zebra mares with their foals galloped away and wheeled





THROUGH THE HUNTER'S PARADISE



SKIRTING LAKE OLGOLOSITT





as if at a word of command, and stood as though at a review watching our approach. Little steinbuck burst out of the grass like rabbits out of their burrows and flourished off, doubling and twisting. The air was crisp and cool; it was a day in which to enjoy the essence of existence. We had started early, and we made some nineteen miles before evening, heading due north, all in good spirits, the porters singing, and "Mack" and "Lady," the two dogs, returning from a dozen futile chases with as much joy as if they had brought their quarry to the ground.

I cannot tell where the change began, but suddenly we noticed that the grass was not so green, that the reddish brown earth was giving way to sandy stretches, and that the thorn trees had a dimmed and dusty appearance. In the nineteen miles, we had stepped into an entirely different country. The game had been left behind, and we camped that night on the edge of a waterless brook, whose hot grey stones had known no rain for weeks. Our guide had expected to find it running full, but it did not flow from the Abadares for we had crossed the watershed. We had expended our last drop in making tea for luncheon, and search was made for a pool that might give us enough water for our needs that evening. At last we found one—a little pebbly spring at the base of a great rock. A porter had found it also; he was standing ankle deep in it giving himself a bath. Not only that, but his discarded single garment and a cake of soap proved that he was a man of cleanly habits.

A half mile farther on, we found another smaller pool, before a porter had come across it. It was green and slimy, but after filtering and boiling, the water served its purpose. We were learning much about the African country, and not a little about the African himself!

Away to the south some eight or ten miles, it was pouring torrents, and just at sunset the cloud effects were grand and marvellous beyond description, but only a few drops fell where we were, although one could almost have sworn that he heard the descent of the deluge so near by. It was one of the surprises that we got quite used to before the year was out.



## CHAPTER II

### ALONG THE UASHU NERU FROM RUMURUTI TO ARCHER'S POST

**R**UMURUTI had once been an important Government post and fort in the days when the Masai had inhabited the country, but now that great tribe of herdsmen have made an exodus under Government promises and supervision to the south of the Uganda Railway line, an exchange that was fair robbery in the minds of a few people to-day, who insist they know something about it. So Rumuruti has fallen from its high state, to become the residence of a lonely and much sun-burned white man who holds the important position of Inspector of horses, cattle and camels. Here were gathered an encampment of Somalis, those prideful, wealthy and self-satisfied nomads who consider themselves far above the blacks and several rounds in the social ladder above the Englishman. The Somali is a combination of the Jew, the Gipsy and the Seminole Indian. You cannot beat him at a bargain, he will do you at a horse trade, and he has all the arrogance of the still unwhipped.

We were in the land of the lions now, and it was at Rumuruti that we first heard them roaring in the distance. The inspector had shot a large lioness



inside the Government boma, while she was firmly attached to the nose of a cow, and was endeavouring to drag it out through a hole, through which she had just scraped her own lean body. A big black-maned male had taken a haunch of beef out of a tree within twenty feet of the inspector's window the night before we arrived. Another visitor put in appearance at the post about the same time we did. He was the Game Ranger, whose jurisdiction covers some hundreds of square miles north-west of Nairobi.

Newly opened countries bring forth strange characters. Extremes meet in most natural, if most unexpected places. I can well imagine G—— in white spats and a grey topper at Ascot (sans his luxuriant golden grey whiskers), or sitting in the corner at White's Club detailing his turf winnings or losses imperturbably, in the same high accents of Belgravia that he used in describing the shortcomings of his half-naked personal boy or the good qualities of his saddle mule, on the tumble-down verandah of the inspector's house. I suppose, in the first instance, his eye-glass would have been attached to his person by a silk cord instead of a shoe-string, but his personality would have remained unchanged.

I have been subsequently told that like "a trooper of the forces, he had run his own six horses," with the usual results. But if any man ever showed contentment at his present lot by his demeanour, it was our friend the ranger.

Leaving Rumuruti, we pressed on to the north-





HEAVY GOING



THE CAMP IN THE PARK-LIKE COUNTRY







GRÉVY ZEBRA MARE AND FOAL





west, skirting the long swamp, heading for the Twin Peaks, near which the trail leads down from the table-land to the valley of the Uashu Neru. The country kept constantly changing, those marvellous transitions so common to Africa. It is a curious thing to mark also the sudden changes in the animal life. In a day's march, you may leave the land of kongoni, and come into that of the oryx. Cross the river and the common wide-striped Burchall's zebra are left behind, while his more beautiful and larger brother, the Grévy zebra, is seen in abundance. Almost every night we heard the lions now, far away, while the hyenas wailed close round our camp, as soon as darkness had settled. The game continued plentiful. We got our first glimpse of eland and giraffe, a magnificent bull crossing in front of us with his rocking-horse gait, graceful for all his ungainliness. The flora was changing with every mile we made. We crossed beautiful little valleys with tall grass, springs, and high trees in which played and frolicked troops of long-tailed monkeys. Herds of the beautiful impalla gazelle were on every side of us, and a great rock rising sheer and straight like a castle some two hundred feet was peopled by a colony of large baboons. Twice we had to ford two swollen rivers, felling trees and hauling the mules across by ropes. There were no trails now except those made by the game, but we made good time along the rhino paths, and saw one or two of the big beasts in the distance as they disappeared into the thorn bush.



On Monday, the second of June, we made our longest and our hardest march, over twenty-two miles without water, and arrived on the bank of the Uashu Neru. Never will any of us forget the sight as the safari wended its way down the steep path from the upland. It was like marching into a painting. To the north rose mountain after mountain in fantastic form. In the first mile, we descended 900 feet. Buffalo and rhino spoor were plentiful, rock rabbits abounded, but we saw not another living thing until in the afternoon we sighted a troop of giraffe in the distance. Four days later, following the river, we came to Neumann's historic camp, where he had once built a big grass house and laid out a garden while he trafficked with the natives for ivory. Poor Neumann, who came to such a tragic end, became too powerful, and the Government banished him, forbidding his return to the land that he really must have loved.

We were in the land of the palm tree now, and the river banks were fringed with the gracefully drooping fan-like branches. It was growing warmer, almost too hot to march at noonday, but we pressed ahead, and on the 7th arrived at Archer's Post, the main crossing of the Government trail to its outlying military post at Marsabit. We had sent runners ahead three weeks before to see if camels could not be purchased or arranged for at this point, in order to take us with greater comfort into the waterless district north of the river, but no camels





ON THE EDGE OF THE PLATEAU



THE FAMOUS NEUMANN'S CAMP





were procurable. The few that were there were sickly, for a disease was rife among them and their Somali owners would not undertake the journey.

We found at the post a young Englishman living all alone. He had been there for fourteen months in practical solitude. Except for the visit of an occasional hunting safari during the season, and a monthly mail, he might have been living on a desert island. I was amused to see a bag of golf clubs leaning against the pole of his palm-leaf hut, and a course of three holes laid out on a sandy flat. On the table was an American talking machine and a score of disc records. His name was Claydon, and of him more hereafter, for he figures quite largely in one nearly tragic story that will be told in a later chapter.

Noticing that our attention was drawn to the pickled music, he smiled. "Have a concert every evening," he said. "I think that old machine has saved me from going mad at times."

"Yes, it is a bit lonely. Do any of you chaps play golf?"

It was a new course, and I am sorry to say that I did not distinguish myself. I lost one of the precious balls, and nearly killed a Meru porter, who tried to stop a long low drive with the back of his head.

The ferry across the river here had been an old pontoon that was hauled across by means of pulleys, on a wire, but the affair had gone out of commission, and the pontoon was now sunk in midstream, and with



it had gone down two Somalis, one of whom had been saved by Claydon swimming out to him with a rope, a plucky thing to do, as the river here is full of crocodiles of the very worst reputation. The rescued Somali was disconsolate at the loss of his friend, and he was still hanging about the banks as if he expected him to come up again. His grief was very genuine, and well understood when it was disclosed that the missing one had sixty pounds in gold on his person, forty of which the bereaved brother claimed to be his own!

It was now a case of waiting until the river should go down, or getting the pontoon over to the bank. We were making plans to do the latter when a detachment of the King's African Rifles arrived on their way south, under charge of a young captain who was certainly the best looking young fellow that I had seen in many a day. As they were on the north bank and had to cross over, we let them get the pontoon out for us. These black soldiers were a finely set up, sturdy lot from down towards Nyassaland. After two hours' work they had the ferry running.

I might here record that it was this detachment that had had the brush with the Abyssinian raiders up near the border, and a very interesting story they had to tell. From all accounts, that band of marauders will raid no more. The King's African Rifles had lost one white officer killed and one wounded, and a number of their men. I wonder if a full account of these skirmishes ever appears in



the Government Blue Book. As an old war correspondent, I would like to tell the story just as it was told to me, but it has no place here.

On the afternoon the ferry was put in order we crossed to the north bank, nearly drowning a mule in the process, and went into camp. Three days later, after three long marches, we pitched camp and raised a large palm thatched hut in which to leave a good deal of our supplies and establish a base. Owing to the lack of water, it was necessary to press on quickly to the north, and carry light loads.

Five large canvas bags had been made, holding from forty to fifty gallons, that could be carried slung on poles on the porters' shoulders. While these preparations were made, Kearton, Lydford, and myself, with a small detachment, made a little trek down along the Lorian Swamp trail to Chanler Falls, that beautiful cascade discovered by an American explorer only a few years before.

The Uashu Neru is a mysterious stream. Although broad and deep, and running in places with great swiftness, it pours its waters into the great Lorian Swamp and disappears, for so far as is known at the present time there is no outlet to the sea. Like Lake Navassha, in Western British East Africa, that figures in one of Rider Haggard's stories, it may have some subterranean outlet. The falls themselves are peculiar and picturesque. The river seems to disappear in the great ledge of porous limestone and gushes forth



as if pouring from separate culverts in the face of the great rock. At the time we visited it one could cross almost dry shod from shore to shore, although the great mass of water flowing underneath shows plainly in the photograph.

On the 18th of June, we started north by moonlight in the early hours of the morning, and before we camped for the night had covered some twenty-six miles. It was fortunate that the moon was at the full, for the midday sun was fairly scorching. The barometer showed that we were constantly descending. The character of the country became more parched and barren, and there was nothing but the scantiest forage on the thorn bushes. On the third day, we began to see signs of game—oryx, gerenuk, impalla, and many dik-dik.

On the 23rd, we arrived at the "picture ground." We had passed one oasis where there was some water, much impregnated with soda, and hardly drinkable, but here we found a large encampment of Samburra, and a very fair supply of good water in the wells that they had dug down to a depth of seven or eight feet, and where they watered their herds of donkeys, sheep, and goats. Nine miles away lay the stretch of sandy river bed where the animals came to drink at the holes dug by rhinos and elephants. Far away on either hand as we progressed lay stretches of great hills and high mountains, the tops of some of the latter shrouded in clouds. It had been our great fear that rain would fall. A week's hard downfall would





THE CHANLER FALLS







THE RAPIDS OF THE UASHU NERU



A CLOSE VIEW OF THE RAPIDS





have absolutely destroyed any chance of getting the game before the camera, unless by that most difficult of all methods, stalking, that we tried so many times in vain, but no rain to speak of had fallen for a twelvemonth, and sometimes there is no rain recorded here for two years or more. Where the water comes from it is hard to imagine, but at certain spots in the sandy stream bed it can be procured by digging, and in a very few places it showed above the surface.

The tall escarpment lined with a growth of thorn trees rose in a sheer ascent about a mile away to the eastward, and down the steep sides the elephant and rhino had worn clearly defined paths that would have done credit to a construction gang in charge of a clever engineer. The Samburra visited our camp on the night of our arrival, bringing milk in leather bottles, but it had all been singed or burnt by thrusting a burning ember into it, and it was attractive neither to look nor taste. However, before many days went by I, at least, for one, was glad to get it.

The next day we started searching for the best places to put up our blinds, or hide-ups. To our joy we found evidences that there was an abundance of game in the neighbourhood. Fresh elephant and rhino spoor and hoofprints of oryx, impalla, gerenuk, giraffe, and, to our surprise, buffalo, were apparent. Beautiful Grévy zebra abounded everywhere, and I am sure that there were two or three different species of the smaller gazelle commonly known as dik-dik. Leopards and lions had left the impress of their soft



pads in the yielding sand, and the night of our arrival we were greeted by a concert, two males shouting and roaring at each other not a mile from the tent. But up to this moment, although we had been on the look-out, and had heard them times without number, we had not seen a single lion. We were to get quite close enough to them before our stay was over.

The second day we found the place we were looking for, which was, as I have stated, nine miles from the camp. We had also laid out our plan of campaign, the two principal ideas of which were these: that we would do no shooting while the photographs were being taken, and, if there was any to be done,—and, of course, meat had to be secured—it would be miles in the opposite direction from where we had located our hide-ups.

For years, the Wanderobo, those prowling hunters of low caste that are to be found all through East Africa, and correspond in habits to the Bushman of the far south, the Wambuti of the forest country, and the Batwa of the hills, have been wont to dwell in little clefts or caves in the rocks on the banks of the dead and dusty river. Lydford had picked out one of these, that, with a little work, could be made into a shelter sufficient to accommodate four men. We bridged it over with some thorn bushes and slabs of palm wood. It did not look very secure when we had finished, and Kearton said, as he surveyed it:

“Now if a lion jumps on that, the whole thing



will come to smash and he can pick us out at his leisure."

Not a comforting thought, take it altogether, when we came to reason it out. Nevertheless, in this narrow little cleft in the rocks, we subsequently passed some very exciting, if not adventurous nights, and from here we set out every morning for the hide-ups, where, under a grilling sun, with a temperature ranging between 120 and 130, we waited for the animals to come down to the water. There were many days when we drew complete blanks, and others when the excitement and reward of accomplished purpose repaid us for the fierce grilling and all the attendant discomforts to which we were subjected.

## CHAPTER III

### PICTURE LAND—THE LITTLE BACK ROOM IN NOAH'S ARK

CURIOSITY and caution are strangely blended in all wild beasts, but the latter element is mainly predominant, and perhaps the curiosity shown is but another name for the extremest caution; that is, the animal seems bent upon making a close and still closer inspection of anything that appears to be strange and out of its usual experience, a cautious testing as to whether the unusual object, be it stationary or moving, is harmless or harmful. Every wild four-footed animal unacquainted with the death-dealing power of firearms will turn after a few swift bounds, or a frightened burst of speed, and gaze all alert at the intruder before making a swift mental decision as to the best means of self-preservation. It is the hunter's opportunity, and that sudden pause and look back has cost many a naturally wary animal its life. It is not stupidity, as some thoughtless and casual writers have observed. It is exactly the reverse. It is the instinct, the ingrained nature of the beast who depends upon eyesight, sense of smell and swiftness of foot, to escape from manifold dangers. Now, to place a strange and possibly obtrusive object





ON THE UASHU NERU: THE VOLCANIC PEAKS





suddenly in the view of animals that are preyed upon by others would serve the same purpose as erecting a scarecrow in a field of standing corn. It would take them a long time to get used to it, but if it gradually assumes proportions, they become accustomed to it by degrees, and finding always by a close investigation that it is harmless, dismiss it from their minds and forget it altogether.

Having chosen the best positions for our hide-ups, it took us a full week to finish them, although each could have been completed in possibly an hour's time. After they had received the finishing touches, they were not visited by us for three or four days, and in every case we found that they had been subjected to a thorough inspection. The wary baboons had climbed in and out of them. The Grévy zebra had walked all around them. The elephants had passed their trunks inside. The rhino alone had displayed no interest in their presence, but he is perhaps the least suspicious of all the great beasts whose size and strength precludes them fearing any foe but man.

"His brain is small, his bulk immense,  
His sight is dim, his hearing tense,  
He's lacking most in common sense."

The first week was anything but encouraging. Whether it was the fact that we had shown ourselves too openly, or perhaps our scent remained too strong in the neighbourhood of our hiding-places, we could not at first determine. At all events we got no pic-



tures worth recording, and we returned to the Samburra camp tired and disheartened. Three days, or at the best four, we found were quite sufficient. It required the remainder of the week to rest up. We found that we were not the only occupants of the cleft in the rocks. Lizards, beetles, wasps, spiders, in fact, biting insects of all kinds, insisted upon sharing our lodging, and also a most objectionable tick, that when he once got hold of you, buried his head in your tender flesh, and produced a dark red swelling about the size of a shilling, that burned and itched like a coal of fire. Entomology was not one of our pursuits, but we had found a capital place in which to pursue a few elusive and possibly rare specimens. After a consultation, we concluded that we would no longer light any fire down by the hide-ups, and that we would have our food brought from the Samburra camp, and left at a big tree a mile above the cave, sending for it in the early morning, every other day.

Our second attempt was more encouraging and prolific of experience. We discovered that we must get up earlier. We must be at the hide-ups before the animals began to move, and this meant daybreak. Another thing we learned, there were too many of the little wells pawed out by those capital hydraulic engineers, Messrs. Kifaru, Tembo, and Co., the rhino and elephant, so we employed ourselves in stopping many of the outlying ones with heavy stones and thorn bush branches, and covering the whole with sand. We did navy's work at this for



some days, and our efforts were rewarded. We began to learn much about the drinking habits of animals, at what time we might expect the oryx, when the impalla quench their thirst, the time to look for the baboon, and the Grévy zebra, or the giraffe. Some only drank in the morning, some in the evening, some twice a day, and the giraffe was satisfied with once every five days, but he was as regular as a clock. Every now and then we had unexpected visitors, a water buck, for instance, and Heaven only knows what he was doing up in that hot, parched country. Jackal, wild pig, and wart-hog put in occasional appearance. We also saw gerenuk, those long-necked, uncanny-looking gazelle, near the water holes, but not once did we see one drinking. It is the popular idea, even among the natives, that they do not drink at all. This can hardly be so, but they feed late into the evening after the dew has fallen and are moving before sunrise. Perhaps they are nocturnal drinkers. I am sufficiently convinced that they can see well in semi-darkness.

The elephants, to our great mortification, only came down at night. We could see them in the faint light, moving sometimes within less than a hundred yards from our little back room in Noah's Ark. They screamed and trumpeted, blowing sand and water over their huge bodies, but only once did one linger long enough for us to get a good sight of him by daylight. He was a huge lone bull with small tusks, and as it was the first wild elephant that



I had clearly seen I compared him with my recollection of the famous Jumbo, and Jumbo suffered by comparison. It is not always the largest elephant that carries the heaviest ivory, and I doubt if this big bull's tusks would have gone over thirty or thirty-five pounds. It was early dawn when we discovered him, wandering about the sandy river bed, and very cautiously, with the cameras ready, we began to stalk him. I do not doubt but what we could have secured some pictures had it not been for the irritating habits of the baboons, whose different colonies in the neighbourhood would have made a population of thousands. Whether they had made a compact with the elephant to play sentry for him we never could determine, but at a single bark from a watchful old female baboon, who was observing us from a tree-top, he was off, ears spread out like spinnakers. Having been thus disclosed, we started after him hot foot, but as he easily went eight miles to our five, we were soon distanced and gave it up. He must have been a rampageous old fellow possessed of great strength and a vile temper, for he had needlessly wrecked the scenery, overturning huge trees, some two feet in diameter, and tossing them about all over the place. He did not belong to the escarpment herd, that consisted mainly of cows with calves, and very young bulls. He was just a pestiferous old bachelor, or, perhaps, a disgruntled widower. At all events, he disdained the company of his kind, and when he was down, and the desire for drink was





THE BASE CAMP



WATCHING GAME FROM THE HILL-SIDE







THE LITTLE BACK ROOM IN NOAH'S ARK



THE WORK OF ONE ELEPHANT





on him, the rest gave him a wide berth and let him have it all to himself.

I have spoken of the baboons, our constant neighbours. They irritated us at times, and amused us at others. That our presence was considered an intrusion, they let us know by the use of most objectionable language. They swore at us, cursed us, threw all kinds of epithets that are quite unprintable in our direction, jeered, taunted and flaunted us, until on one occasion I thought I would have to resort to retaliation, and break the rule, by taking a pot shot at a grey-whiskered old villain who tried to incite his followers to open attack. After an angry harangue, in which he apparently called them all cowards and faint hearts, with a tremendous snarling and growling, he dashed forward in my direction, hair all abristle, and great white fangs showing below his curled up nether lip. Kearton and Lydford were at the hide-up below at the water hole, and I was peaceably but ostensibly showing myself all alone at the upper one, three-quarters of a mile away, in order to oblige the animals to go farther down for their water. Seeing that he was not followed, the old bully suddenly stopped, and began searching about him on the ground. I thought for an instant that he was looking for a stone to throw at me, and finding one first myself heaved it in his direction. He uttered a grunt of contempt at my marksmanship, and further expressed his feelings by turning his back to me, and slowly retreating, looking over his



shoulder every now and then, as if to say: "If I had only one or two to back me I'd teach you something, young-feller-me-lad!" I am not certain whether there were different varieties frequenting the water holes or not, but certainly this belligerent old warrior was twice the size of any baboon I have seen before or since; he would have weighed close to one hundred and thirty pounds.

Down in the hide-ups, when we got there before the baboons were aware of our presence, we have often been convulsed with laughter at their antics. They had regular games, and impromptu sports, and comported themselves exactly like a huge picnic party out for a good time in the country. The young ones played "king of the mound" on a great smooth-surfaced rock, hurling each other off and climbing up again, each one in turn maintaining but a momentary supremacy, and all the time in the best of humour and childish spirits. The mothers, with their infants on their backs, would come down and deposit them by the water, and then sit about and gossip, keeping a watchful eye on their offspring all the time. The old men sat apart with their hands on their knees just as you see old grandfathers sitting on the bench after the day's work is done. The loving couples found secluded corners and either sat shoulder to shoulder, in the enjoyment of soulful communion, or spooned or quarrelled to their heart's content. Never will we forget one old fellow, a great-great-grandfather he





GRÉVY ZEBRAS AND GIRAFFES  
View from "The Little Back Room in Noah's Ark"





might have been from the appearance of him, sitting in dignified solemnity by the side of a water hole. Every now and then he scratched himself in the neighbourhood of the lower ribs.

"He's looking for a match," said Kearton, in a whisper. "He'll light his pipe presently."

We got in such fits of silent laughter sometimes that it was almost impossible to photograph. A little baby bab who was still in the crawling, or, better, toddling stage, fell into the water hole near where the old man was sitting. In a very leisurely manner the old fellow hauled him out, looked him in the face reprovably, turned him upside down, administered a slap, and called the mother's attention to what the young one was about. Mind you, all this is not exaggeration. It is absolute fact. They never appeared at odd hours, but generally towards nine o'clock, and their stay never lasted longer than forty minutes. A lone bark sounded, followed by a series of others, and slowly they retreated to their rocky castles, perhaps two or three miles away. In five minutes after that signal sounded there would not be a baboon in sight.

The vultures were almost always there. There were four or five varieties of them, and frequently some eagles. The baboons—in fact, all the game—strolled in and out amongst them in most friendly fashion. These ugly scavengers and birds of prey were regular toppers. They lounged about the water holes all day, occasionally drinking, and frequently having little rows among themselves. Right under the eye of the camera



on one occasion (it is recorded on the film), a big bull oryx walked up to a group and scattered them with his horns. It was just like a policeman saying: "Here, you loafers, move on. You've hung around here long enough."

When the game was coming, we in the hide-up forgot the broiling heat and the crawling things that persisted in working their way under our clothing. It was quite fascinating to watch the timid impalla approach. The ewes shy and frightened—perhaps, being females, it was half pretence—being herded along by their lord and master, and he, jealous as an old Turk with his harem, making frequent rushes at the gay and unattached Lotharios who hung about the flanks of his polygamous family. The Grévy zebra would come trotting down, clattering along like detachments of cavalry. Prerogatives they insisted on; the stallions drank before the mares, and the mothers before their offspring. We were much amused by watching a tidy little mare teach her foal manners. The young one, a beautiful creature, insisted on putting his nose into his mother's drink, and having repeated the offence, received a good slam in the ribs by way of admonition, not a hard kick that would do any harm, but just a little lesson in family etiquette that appeared to be taken to heart.

Sometimes as we peered out through the peep holes in our hide-ups, we had the satisfaction of seeing many different animals gathered at the same time. Oryx and impalla, Grévy, wild pig and vulture were wandering about, and slowly we were accumulating our photo-





ORYX AND VULTURES AT THE WATER HOLES





graphic treasures, those we had come so many miles to get, and then, after we had been in the neighbourhood over a month, came our two red letter days. We had several nights that are firmly impressed on our memory, and I had one experience perhaps worth recording, for the reason of its varied sensations, but these two days stand out above the others, and, luckily enough, the moving picture films have recorded both occasions.

By the time we were ready to begin actual work the brilliant moon, under whose light we had marched up from the river, had disappeared, and the nights were cloudy. It seemed as if all the lions in the neighbourhood had come to the vicinity of the water hole. We kept no fires, and the meeting ground they had chosen was but thirty or forty yards from our sleeping place. We did not discover until later that there was a large cave or den in the rocks but a few yards to the rear of the cleft we had chosen, and that a lioness had evidently whelped there not long before. It was filled with bones, among which zebra and giraffe predominated, two complete skulls of the latter lying near the mouth.

Anyone who has attended feeding time at the Zoo when old Leo Africanus is at his vocal best, can recall the peculiar vibrating sensation that seems to run through the whole body when facing an open-mouthed and full grown male, and more than once Kearton, Lydford, and myself, and old Harmonica, the gun bearer, who slept on the rocky floor with us, have experienced the same vibration, only there were no intervening bars, nothing but a few slabs of palm



wood, and some thorn branches, none too thick or sturdy. They met, these serenaders, under our rock, raised perhaps some twenty feet above the river bed, but in two bounds a lion could have reached the top of it. We lay there with our rifles in our hands listening to the grand, if somewhat disturbing, chorus. It was pitch dark outside, and we had no light except a feebly-glowing electric battery lamp, which we kept hid beneath a blanket, ready for emergency. I kept thinking of the photographer's comforting suggestion as to what might happen if one of the big cats, after the fashion of his domesticated and smaller cousins, should attempt to gain the vantage point of our ridgepole. Some nights we actually got no sleep at all. One evening they began at about eight, and continued without intermission until nearly seven in the morning.

Experienced readers may wonder why these lions, or, in fact, any of the other animals, never got our wind. The explanation is simple. What air there was stirring blew constantly and without change in one direction, from the south-east, steady as any trade.

Our hide-ups had been built to take full advantage of this fact, and in every case our scent was blown away from the water holes. We had even found that by going at it very carefully, we could smoke sparingly while taking pictures, without disturbing our subjects.

One of the lions wandered up out of the sandy stretch that was all marked with their footprints each morning, and somehow did get our wind one



night. He had been mumbling and talking to himself good-humouredly enough, but now he gave a sudden snort of anger and astonishment, and then commenced low and rather threatening grumblings, and very hoarse, gurgling notes deep in his throat. The others—and we judged there was a quartette of them just below us—stopped and appeared to be listening. We thought the attack, if they ever would attack, was coming. I heard Lydford ask old Harmonica if he had the spare rifle, and I remember the little black man's calm, "N'dio bwana. Nina tayari"—"Yes, master, I am ready." There followed a dead silence, and then we heard the rattling of some old biscuit tins that we had thrown into a hollow at the base of the rock. Another gasping snort, and a silence, and we heard our friends expressing their feelings, and voicing our relief, a hundred yards away to the left.

It was the next morning but one that Kearton got a strange picture by accident. From the upper hide-up a large herd of impalla could be seen grazing down toward the water hole, and moving very slowly, when suddenly the well known deep-toned roar of a male lion was heard a short distance away to the right. It was coming nearer, and then, most surprising sight, a full-grown, black-maned fellow came walking, or, better, half trotting, along the edge of the river bank, heading toward the ramp that led down to the sandy stretch, and as he came on he kept repeating those rasping half grunts, half barks, that



always follow the deep-toned bellowing note. Without an intake of breath, he repeated this over twenty times. *And the impalla, not a hundred yards beyond him, did not raise their heads!*

They kept on quietly feeding. It was a lesson in natural history, and a moment of intense dramatic interest, and Kearton, although the light was not brilliant, had all the time kept turning the handle of the Newman silent camera, and we have that picture on the film. Although the beautiful black-maned male presented a fair target, not a rifle was pointed at him, and after another roar he walked sedately into the bush.

The behaviour of the impalla was contrary to all ideas of what animals would do under the circumstances, and the obvious lesson was this: Those timid gazelles knew one of three things, or perhaps knew all of them. The fact that the lion was roaring may have been a sign of truce, it maybe was proof to them that he had already made his kill and had fed, and was exulting over his perfect digestion; they may have recognised the fact that he was not hunting, and bore them personally no ill-will; or that seeing him in broad daylight, trusting to their swiftness of foot, that they could escape at any time if he made a move in their direction. This happened between seven and eight o'clock in the morning. A few hours later the light would have been more brilliant, and it would have made a better picture, but there it is, a witness to this story.

The day before we left the water holes, we secured



a moving picture of no fewer than twelve giraffe. It took them nearly two hours to come down to the water, but no sooner were they there, when the other animals, perceiving them, abandoned all their own cautious scouting and approaching, and came fairly galloping down, helter-skelter, as if saying to themselves: "The giraffes are here, boys and girls, everything's safe. Come on." The giraffe has probably the keenest eyesight and is, moreover, the timidest of all living creatures. It was fascinating to see them, some reaching to the height of twenty feet or more, feeding from the tops of the trees, and then when they had reached the water, straddling out their fore-legs awkwardly, and sucking up the liquid through their hose pipe of a neck. Kearton ran off all the film that he had in both cameras that morning, and probably no better picture of giraffe will ever be secured.

Not far back in this chapter, I threatened to put in a story dealing with sensations. Not a sensational story, by any means, mark you, but as the feelings and impulses that governed me were my own at the moment, perhaps I have the right to record them.

It was some time after the new moon was growing to brilliancy, and our friends the lions seemed to have deserted the neighbourhood. Their voices were few and far away, which was conducive to rest, and soothing to the nerves. I had started out one morning, taking the small calibre rifle, much with the same feeling toward it that a suburban householder has for



the revolver he slips under his pillow, that it might be useful "in case." As the "case" had never arrived, perhaps I had grown careless; on this occasion I had thoughtlessly left my cartridge belt behind, and there were but two shots in the magazine. Kearton and Lydford were at the upper water hole, and I had proceeded hardly a half mile beyond when I heard the warning bark of the baboons.

Looking across the dried river bed I perceived that every man jack of them all, ladies and children included, were up the trees, and plainly quite disturbed about something. It was an opportunity to get close to them, so ploughing through the heavy sand, I reached the farther bank, and walked over towards some thorn trees a short distance ahead of me; and now my sensations began, and I quite envied the position of the baboons.

From very close to there came a challenging, snarling grunt, followed by the appearance over the brow of a little rise of ground, about sixty or eighty yards away, of a big male lion, and, almost immediately, a lioness appeared on his left, while a third, a year old cub, of what sex I don't know, came out of the bushes on his right. Whether they had been watching me or not I am uncertain, but one thing I am sure of is that I wished I were some place else. The lion, making a very disagreeable noise, made a short rush in my direction and then stood there, continuing the noise. The lioness then took a few steps and laid down head towards me. The cub stood at the top of the hill watching me over



his shoulder. Of course, if I had been looking for an opportunity for a good "right and left," here it was. I had two cartridges, and the cub might have made off, but then again I might have missed, or only wounded one of them, and then what? Having put down these suppositions, I must honestly confess that I never thought of shooting at all, although automatically I slid off the safety catch and brought my rifle up to the ready.

All I wanted of those lions was for them to go away, peaceably and quietly, and to live the rest of their lives in health and plenty. There was nothing to do but stand there. If I had retreated, I dare say they would have come on. I had not the comfort of believing in "the power of the human eye," and although I had heard that "music hath charms, etc.," I had no instrument with me, and do not think I could have struck up a note if I had possessed the voice of a Mario.

The whole aspect of the peaceful scene seemed to change. It was no longer the same place inhabited by gentle gazelle and timid giraffe. I seemed to have been transported miles away from the scene, and quite dominating every other feeling was one of self-accusation. I acknowledged to myself that I was more kinds of an adjective fool than I had ever acknowledged before. In the first place, for leaving home and being there at all; in the second, for not having filled my magazine and having left my cartridges behind; and the third feeling was an incipient regret that, if anything did happen, I would never be able to



tell about it, or offer any excuse for my sudden and peculiar defection! These were absolutely my sensations. I shall always feel grateful to that year old cub, for he was the first one to make a move. He apparently suddenly lost interest in the state of affairs, and slowly walked over the top of the hill. The male seemed to be for a moment undecided, and then he trotted off with that easy loose-jointed way of all great cats. The lioness for a time remained where she was, then jumping up, she followed him out of sight.

From the bottom of my heart, I wished them God-speed! No sooner had they reached the other side of the hill than they put up a terrible row. I think there were others there, perhaps there was a troop of them, but by this time I had reached the other bank. I had gone but a little way back towards the cave, when I met old Harmonica, the gun bearer, coming down at a trot with the express rifle and my cartridge belt. Together we approached the hide-up, where Kearton and Lydford, who had heard the noise, were doing a bit of wondering as to what part I had in it, as they knew I was down in that direction. Kearton tells a story of my trying to whistle as I came up. It's a good story, but I don't remember trying to do anything so rash. We armed ourselves and went after the loud-voiced ones, but they had moved on.

The bird life of the country is not exceedingly varied. We missed the brilliant-hued warblers, weaver birds, hornbills and kingfishers that we had seen



farther to the south. The birds here were mostly dull in colour, and appeared to be the size of English sparrows. There were many varieties of shrikes and hawks. But if a lover of shooting had been there, for two hours of the day he could have kept his loader busy, and his gun as hot as he ever had shooting driven grouse from the butts.

At about eight in the morning the sand grouse and pigeon began to arrive by the thousand, and the same thing occurred between five and six in the evening. Flying low, they hurtled past our heads so close that we could almost have knocked them down with sticks. The sound of their wings kept up a continuous whistling and whirring. They seemed to come from all directions, flock following flock; after a long drink and a moment's pluming of their feathers they were off, but while they were there, which hardly lasted three-quarters of an hour, the sand absolutely seemed to be moving with them. The horned guinea fowl lived all about the water holes; they seldom flew unless they were disturbed, but trooped down to the water, hundreds and hundreds of them, scuttling back to the bush when they had quenched their thirst. The boys caught them and the pigeons and doves by scores in little traps of cord and twigs, but it was seldom that they snared a sand grouse, I think for the reason that these birds walk with their heads very upright.

One day a secretary bird came to visit us and stalked round on his stilted exaggerated legs like a



Hessian Grenadier. An occasional marabout would walk down for a gulp of water, standing about looking for all the world like a character from "Pickwick." We caught a falcon in the traps one day and it grew quite tame, but becoming tired of our society, it sailed off one fine morning and never came back. Once I saw some geese travelling north, heading for the Nile perhaps, from their haunts in the Lorian Swamp, far to the south.

There were plenty of snakes of various kinds near the water holes, and on our way back when we stopped at the first oasis we found four varieties up the branches of one single tree; three of these snakes were "beya," as the natives called them, or probably very poisonous.

Time and provisions were both running short, and it was necessary soon to get back to sources of supplies, but before we leave the Samburra camp there is a little story that might be related that goes to show that the black brother, supposedly so simple and childish, may possess a wily mind, and be capable of deceptions, that prove both enterprising and inventive. I possessed a Masai "syce," or pony boy, who had sole charge of my mule. Kearton's patient animal had died, possibly from a broken heart, injured back, or a snake bite, so we were one short. I had taken a great fancy to my particular syce, for he was intelligent, and possessed a sense of humour, and moreover apparently understood my Swahili. He had lived in his earlier youth close to the Uashu Neru, and understood





GREETINGS FROM WONDEROBO



ELLEN, THE STRAY CAMEL





enough of the Samburra tongue to act as interpreter in our dealings with the local chief, and with any other people with whom we wished to hold communication.

One day, there had drifted into our camp a stray Randili camel, or maybe it belonged to the Boran, who were also in the neighbourhood. It was a female camel, and bore such a strong resemblance to an aged and unmarried domestic who had once been in the employ of an aunt of mine that I called her "Ellen." Well, Ellen would have made quite an acquisition to our forces. She could forage for herself, drank but little, and could carry four or five men's loads, so she was quite welcome to stay with us, as long as she liked, for her simple board and lodging.

We made quite a pet of Ellen, but one afternoon, when we were all in camp except Lydford and the *n'mpara*, who had gone down to superintend the boys who were cleaning out one of the wells, my syce, who answered to the name of Peto, appeared and informed me that some Boran had arrived who had lost a camel, and that they claimed Ellen as their own. I asked him to bring the Boran up. Four natives carrying spears appeared, and the following colloquy took place:

"Ask them, Peto," said I, "if they are sure it is their camel."

He turned and said something in a tongue that no one but himself understood, and then showing his fine white teeth in a charmingly amiable smile, he said:



"N'dio, bwana, they say she belongs to them. See, she has a mark on her leg that they know."

"Well, then, tell them, Peto, if she's theirs they can have her," I said. "We do not wish to keep a camel that does not belong to us." I spoke, I recollect, with all the manner of the "honest and upright judge."

It seemed to me he took a long time saying this; then the Boran said something more and walked off with Ellen. That was all there was to it.

Now, what do you suppose that open, frank-faced rascal was doing all the time? We found out later. They were not Boran at all. They were merely Samburra from the neighbouring kraal. He was telling them that we wished to sell the camel, and would take four goats, two sheep and a kid for it, if they wished to make a bargain, which they gratefully did. But we saw nothing of the sheep, goats, or even the kid. Peto collected them by instalments, and he and his boon companions held nocturnal feasts up among the rocks, while we were down at the water holes. There's enterprise for you! Peto should really not have been a Masai but a Somali. Not content with this, he used to ride my mule up to the Samburra encampment, and indulge in some sort of native gambling game, at which he was probably a card sharp. He was caught galloping the mule back one evening. Ellen was found at the kraal, the story came out, and Peto was reduced to the ranks as a porter. Not liking this, he deserted



when we got back to the river, succeeded somehow in working his way back to civilisation, and, under bad advice, had the temerity to sue for his wages when we returned to Nairobi. That was the first bad break Peto made. The case went against him, and he was sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment, from which he probably emerged sleek and fat and happy. I am told they feed the natives very well at the jail; at least, their meals are regular, which is more than can be said for them when enjoying their freedom. Let us take up the trail once more.

With our precious films stowed away in air-tight boxes, we packed up our belongings, and marched southward to the Uashu Neru.

The river was no longer in flood, and we forded it at the same place where we had crossed before in the pontoon, taking the precaution to fire a few shots into the water, for a man-eating crocodile had taken a Somali here a few days previously. As he had no money on his person, his companions had soon recovered from the shock of his loss and gone on their way. A big black lion had been repeatedly seen here in the bush by the natives, and in company with Claydon we went on a hunt for him, as some of our own boys had reported seeing him while out gathering wood. He had disappeared when we got there, but a few weeks later Claydon succeeded in finding him, or, better, the lion found Claydon. Being wounded, the beast mauled the poor chap so severely that at first life was despaired of. His rifle had



jammed, and he was rescued by a Somali who bravely came up close and fired both barrels of a shot gun into the lion's body, and they only succeeded in getting him to the hospital just in time, where he spent three months recovering. After a two days' stay at the post we pressed on southward for Kenia, heading for Nyeri, that lies but a six days' march north of Nairobi.

Before we had reached the slopes where the wild olive begins, and while we were still in the land of the acacia and euphorbia trees, we had the good fortune to be witnesses to a little drama that it falls to the lot of but few ever to see. And at very close quarters, not more than fifteen yards, we got photographs of the whole thing.

It was really divided into three acts with a prologue, and I have termed it a "Drama of Greed."

Before the safari had fairly started for the day's march we came to a lion kill, a Grévy zebra, not more than three-quarters of a mile from camp. The animal had been killed the evening before and was but partly devoured, down the flanks scoring the skin were the claw marks, each cut plainly discernible and stretching fully an inch wider than the extent of a man's hand between thumb and little finger. It was evident that the animal had been attacked from behind. We frightened away two or three hyenas as we approached. Close to the body grew a large thorn bush. It required very little work with a "panga"—the heavy knife for cutting through the undergrowth—to clear out the





THE JACKAL KEEPS THE BIRDS AT BAY



THE APPROACHING VULTURES  
A DRAMA OF GREED





middle of the shrubbery. It made an ideal hide-up, and soon we were ensconced within, the silent camera in place. It was our hope that perhaps the hyenas, or even the lion, might return. At all events, we were certain to get good pictures of vultures before the morning had passed. The light broadened until it was just right for photographic work, and our first visitor appeared. It was a male jackal, a very large one, and in the pink of condition. So close were we that we could see every hair, and even the colour of his eyes. For a time he had it all to himself, and then a big vulture with a stretch of seven or eight feet dropped down out of the sky. Presently others came, until there were a score or more of them sitting round exactly as if they were waiting to be asked to draw up and pitch in.

Emboldened at last, four or five of the largest strutted up closer, but the jackal would admit of no disturbance. He charged at them and drove them back. More began to arrive; they came out of the sky from all directions, but the plucky little jackal waded into them like a constable breaking up a crowd. More came, and soon they were too many for him. With the courage of numbers they fairly smothered him, beating at him with wing, and fighting with claw and beak.

There is an old saying that "A hive of bees will whip a bull." To stretch the simile a bit, the bees in this case were quite as large as their antagonist, who at last gave up the fight and beat a retreat.



Still they came, until there were possibly two hundred of them, scrawny-necked, bald-headed cloud fliers, and smaller ones of all degrees. They fought and scrambled, cackled and screamed, amid a cloud of dust and feathers. Then quickly they started off, many of the larger hopping some length along the ground, rising with difficulty like heavy aeroplanes.

To our surprise we heard human voices, and two almost naked Wanderobo appeared. They looked at what the birds had left—and even in that short time there was mighty little of it—and began to pick up the scattered feathers, talking and laughing all the time, unconscious that their every movement was being recorded on the film. They came so close that we could not understand how they missed seeing us in the bush, for actually at one time the taller of the two savages was within eight feet of the camera. A whisper and a nod passed between us, and Lydford fired his rifle up into the air. The Wanderobo were nonplussed. Where had the shot come from? They gathered together whispering, looking round in every direction, for they had never located the sound.

Even a second shot failed to give them the information of our hiding-place, but the third, fired when they were within five or six feet, started them. With a wild howl they fled, and so far as we know they are running yet.

We packed up our things and left. The porters were far ahead of us, and it was over two hours before we caught up with them.



This day we heard a lion roaring at noon, a rather unusual occurrence. Once we just caught a glimpse of two big males making off from the water toward the hillside.

Mack, our dog, was a long way ahead, and took after them; he soon returned, however, looking a bit foolish, but endeavouring to impress us that he had made a mistake, and it was all imagination—there were no lions there at all. Even when we pointed out their very fresh tracks, neither he nor Lady displayed the slightest interest.

By the evening we reached the foot-hills.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MARCH PAST KENIA

AT the water holes, the barometer had shown that we were but 1,060 feet above the sea level. Now we were constantly ascending and on August 2nd we had reached the altitude of 5,280 feet and the temperature was delightful, the thermometer registering 78° at eleven o'clock as against 120° in the hide-ups. Our camp was pitched amidst the grandest trees that we had yet seen, immense thorns, some five feet and more in diameter, growing on the banks of a clear stream. The whole country had a well kept appearance, like a gentleman's park, the tall lush grass was almost waist high in the meadows, and there were spaces smooth as lawns. Kenia was growing clearer and clearer, the immense glacier shining in the sun with the shadows of the pinnacles slanting across it. We were nearing the Equator, but the nights were very cold. Kearton, while out with old Harmonica and a few porters late in the evening, saw five lions down in a little hollow gathered about a recent kill, and sent word back to the camp. Lydford and I ran out to him, with the two gun-bearers and the rifles, and we went after them, but



as in all our lion hunting so far, we again drew a blank. They disappeared into the tall grass like snakes.

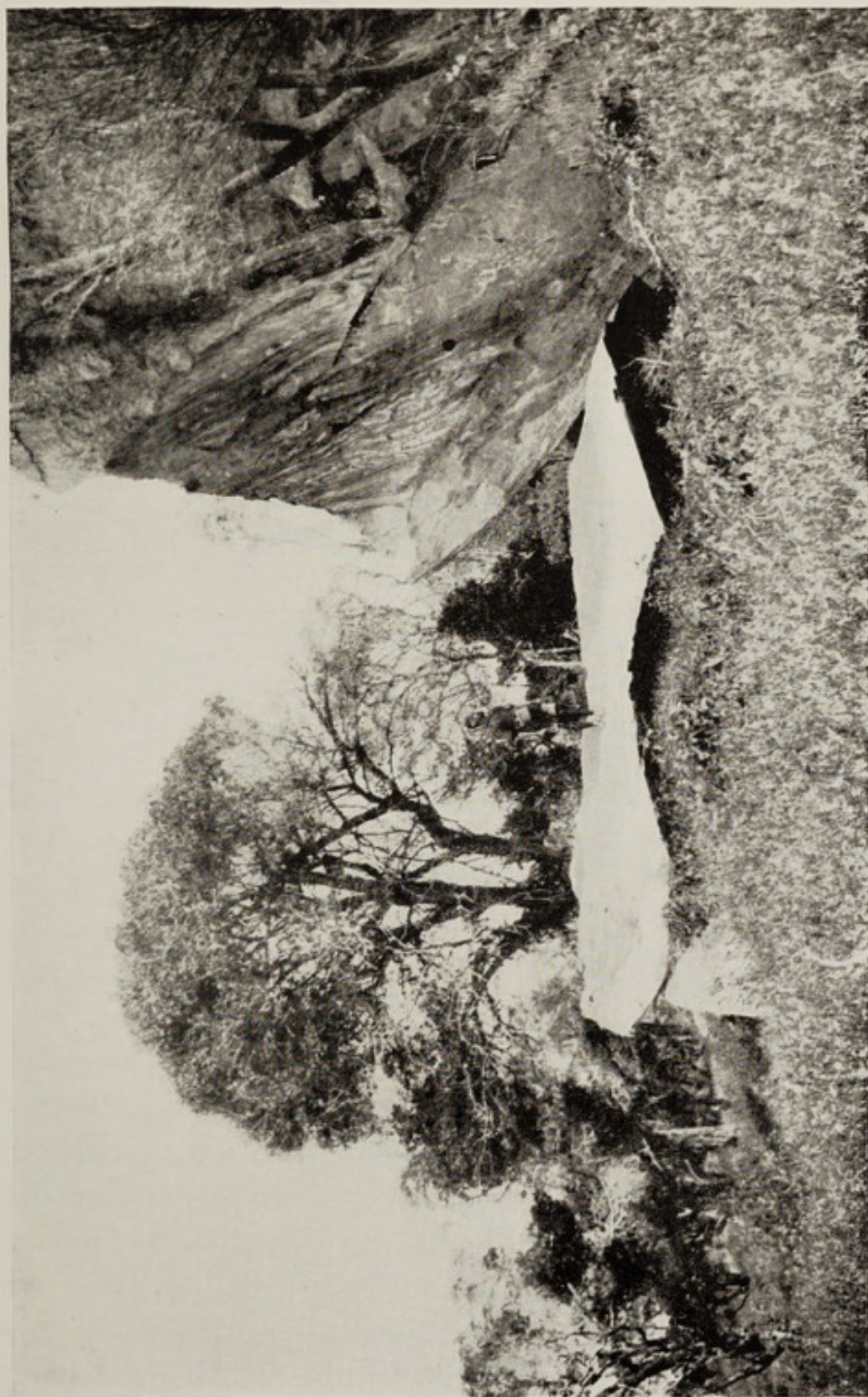
Earlier in the day, we had found a man's skull and some human bones beside the trail, and when we reached Nyeri were told that no fewer than five Meru natives had been killed by lions in that vicinity within the previous month. There was a boy in the doctor's hands there severely mauled. Possibly the man-eaters were among the lot that Kearton saw that evening. In the next few days, we were skirting the forest, and well could I imagine that I was in the woods of New Brunswick or Nova Scotia. Moss-grown larches and cedars had taken the place of palm and thorn trees. Dashing brown trout streams tumbled down the steep gorges. Buffalo spoor was everywhere. We were proceeding along the trail that leads from Meru to Nyeri when we made a strange discovery, and ran across the record of a most unusual and tragic episode. The accompanying photograph shows plainly what had happened. This great rock, rising some seventy feet, had stood there since the glacial period. Under its bulging and overhanging front, the natives of the neighbourhood had found shelter times innumerable.

Now, just three days before we came to this spot, a Meru caravan, trading through their own country, had reached here as night overtook them, and crawling under the rock that must have extended some fifteen or eighteen feet, had lit great fires to keep them-



selves warm, for shortly after sunset the temperature lowers very suddenly; in the early morning it is often only 42°. The fierce sun of noonday had beaten on the great stone until it had probably been heated like a biscuit in an oven. Then as the temperature fell there had come an icy rain. The fires the natives built had kept up the heat underneath, and in a little fissure that we could easily trace water must have gathered. At all events, without a word of warning, the huge slab, 60 feet high, 70 feet long, and 18 feet thick by actual measurement, had fallen down upon them, leaving a clean straight line of cleavage. Eighteen men and nine women were crushed to death in a fraction of a second. Their bodies, at least most of them that were farther in, were ground deep into the earth, safer from possible disturbance than any royal Cheops in his pyramid. The numbers of those thus crushed to death and entombed we learned from the three survivors whom we met the day afterwards. We could see the place where the men who escaped had been sleeping, just outside of the perimeter of the fallen mass of stone. The hyenas had already been at their ghastly work and had dug out two or three of the bodies on the edge, and the evidence that there were more still half exposed was plain to the senses. Scattered all round were blankets, spears, and bows and arrows, and over two hundred pounds of native tobacco neatly wrapped in banana leaves lay on the ground. Although it might have been considered a windfall for the natives, not a boy of our safari could be persuaded to touch





THE JUGGERNAUT ROCK





a single thing. It was difficult indeed to get them to approach the place, and the three survivors asserted that they would never go near the neighbourhood again. Both the Kikuyu and the Meru consider that the person or belongings of a dead man are "taboo." If there is a death in a village the people move away, tearing holes in the hut where the body lies, so that the hyenas can easily get at it. Not until it is thus removed will they return, when everything belonging to the dead is burnt.

Not feeling any of this superstition ourselves we gathered up some handsome bows and spears and trinkets, and so far have suffered no evil effects from their possession. This discovery was made on Monday, August 4th, the day that the Mohammedan Lent or Ramadan begins. Mysterious and wonderful are the contents of an African's ditty bag. We discovered that beside Juma and the *n'mpara* both our gun-bearers and four of the porters were devout Mohammedans. As the new moon rose they appeared clad in immaculate white, and stood there muttering prayers and slowly genuflecting. Where they had kept those white garments I do not know, but I shall never forget the sight of the huge figure of our head man in a white worsted sweater and flannel tennis trousers standing there in the faint moonlight. It is said that Ramadan is a time of fasting, but, so far as could be detected, the Mohammedans ate as much as anyone else, at least they drew their full rations. A day or two later I find this entry in my diary:



"Three more days' marching and we will be in Nyeri. Ho! for fresh eggs and milk!"

It was time that we had reached some place where we could replenish our supplies, for the very day that we got there we finished our last pound of tea, the sugar had run out, and we were on the last tin of jam.

Nyeri is a very beautiful Government post where everything is as neat as a new pin, and although there are only fifteen white residents all told, including three women, wives of officials, there are flower gardens and tennis courts and a very well laid out golf links. Thus does the Englishman make a place to follow his home pursuits and customs. Geographical position counts for nothing. Here is the spot, here is a ball, let's toss or roll, kick, knock or bowl it!

A few years before, it would have taken us six days to get into Nairobi, for the distance is 103 miles. We did it in less than ten hours over a good Government road in an automobile. The safari followed on foot.

Our gun-bearers and the cook, carrying no loads, walked in in three days, which quick going averaged over thirty miles a day.

It seemed quite exciting to be in a town again, with the streets filled with automobiles, motor cycles, and tooting trains going by on the track before the hotel verandah, but, above all, it was good to get fresh eggs and vegetables, and to see the newspapers and read our accumulated letters. Nairobi was much disturbed over the presence in the neighbourhood of the plague of meningitis that was sweeping off the natives,



principally the Kikuyus and the Wakambas, by thousands. It had also attacked the whites, and there were a number of cases being taken care of in the town. The Government native hospitals were full to overflowing. Although not much was said about it in the home papers, a man who should be well informed told me that probably forty thousand of the black population had perished in seven months. I have seen no Government statistics on the subject and only give this for what it is worth.

Africa is a land of peculiar and mysterious maladies that assail both man and domestic animals. Even the game is not proof against them, as mark the mortality among the great herds of buffalo when the rinderpest was rife.

We paid off our safari as soon as the men arrived, and I am glad to say that they left us happy and contented, but I regret also to record that beside the deserters who had run, when it was still safe for them to do so, we were short of three men. Why the head man had not reported their absence before, I cannot tell, nor the dates and places when it was first discovered they were missing. No one had gained any flesh on the journey. Kearton had lost twenty-four pounds and I seventeen. Six days were sufficient to feed me up on town life, and, an opportunity coming, I embraced the chance to go out on safari again, the reason being that I met "Fritz," a most remarkable character, known to everyone who had lived in or visited Nairobi during the past eight years, and of him, as the old writers used to say, "more anon."



## CHAPTER V

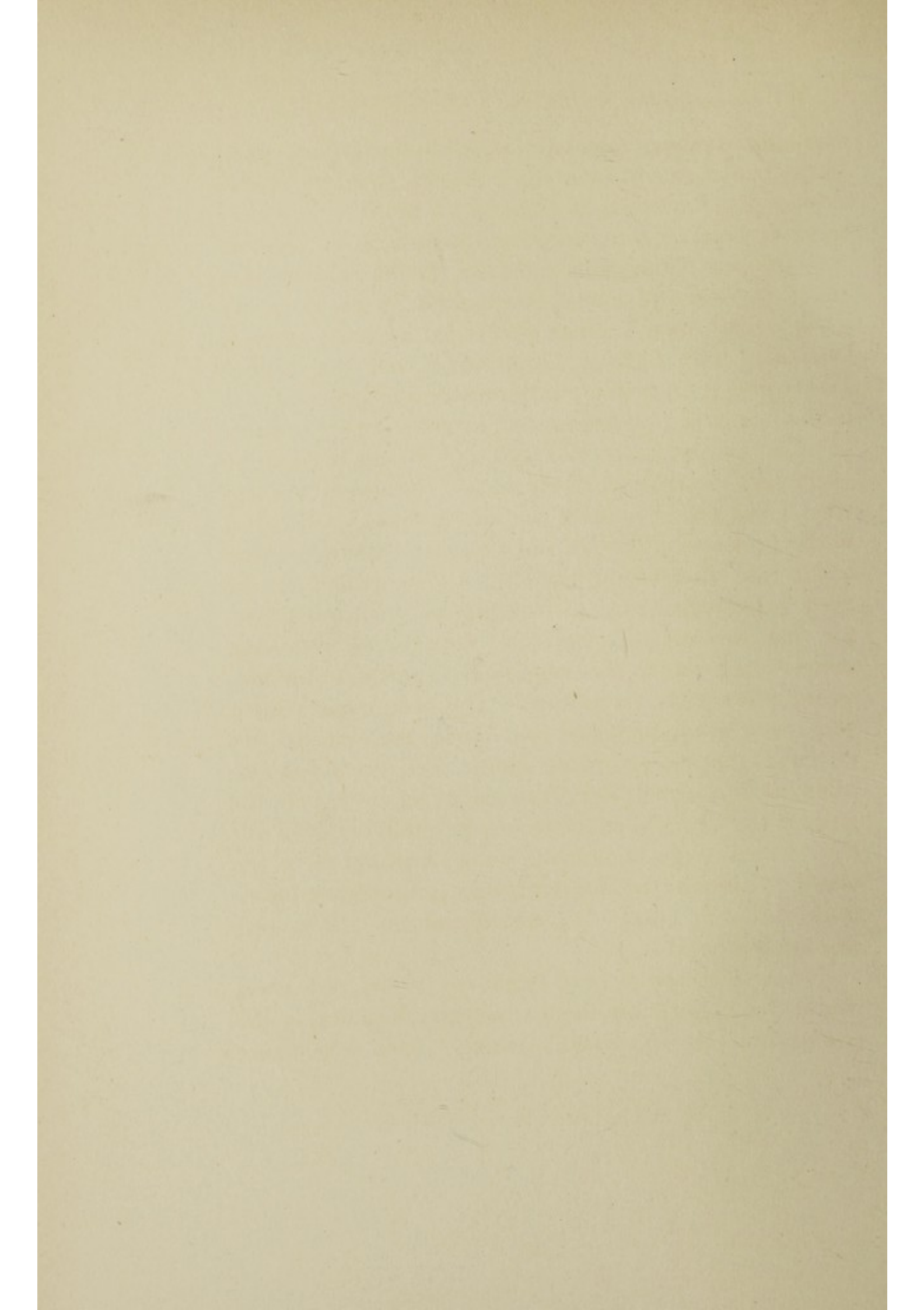
### THE WELL-KNOWN HUNTING-GROUNDS

**T**HE next five weeks were spent in efforts to obtain photographs on the well-known hunting-grounds within a few days safari from Nairobi. Hunting-grounds that will soon disappear before the encroaching farms, the coffee and sisal plantations, and the armed march against poor helpless nature which civilisation always entails. When the fences go up and the cattle arrive wild game has had its day. Of course, on the reserves, they may exist for a half century to come. Look at South Africa as we find it now. Within the memory of men not yet old, it teemed with species of antelope and gazelle now almost extinct. When I was there during the Boer War in 1900-1901, every Boer farm-house was a museum of skulls and horns, but the living representatives had already passed away. Let East Africa take a lesson and a warning. Before it was discovered that good coffee could be raised in paying quantities (and this industry is as yet in a more or less experimental state, although its success seems well assured), game was her greatest asset. It brought the men with money there. It gave thousands of natives employment, and kept many commercial enterprises on their feet. In one month a very big safari





THE FALLS OF THE NAIROBI RIVER





spent more money than twenty well-to-do families would in the same space of time. It is possible to go to Nairobi now with a hand-bag and obtain an outfit as complete in every detail as if the sporting tourist were in London.

Both the Photographer and the Scribe wished very much to visit and spend some time in the southern game reserve that extends almost to the town limits of Nairobi. The Belgian Government and the French Government, upon being informed of our intended visit to their colonial possessions, had extended every courtesy in their power, and had offered to the expedition every facility and every help, and I cannot put down what I am going to write without a smile. Oh! great is the province of British red tape! and quite amusing is the rule of small officialdom. We applied to the head game ranger for a permit, not to shoot, mind you, for that was not our object. We simply requested permission to enter the supposedly forbidden country, spend a few days and return. The head game ranger, who was most interested and amicable, referred the matter to the Government House, and, to our astonishment, the authorities declined to grant it, on the ground that "a precedent would be established." We had offered to go in without arms, trusting to a few native spearmen for any necessary protection, but it made no difference. We could not go. We were absolutely denied!

Now, this would have been all right, and there would have been no demurring at officialdom's decision, but on this same reserve there was being



built a railway that made a junction with the Uganda road and extended south-west to the great Magadi soda lake. A pipe line which supplied the spur road with water was also being constructed, and Fritz Schindler, to whom I referred in the previous chapter, had charge of the transport on the pipe line, so I engaged my services to him as consulting engineer at four rupees a month (surely a man has a right to fix his own salary) and repaired to the game ranger's office.

"Well," said the latter, when I had announced my new position. "You can't be stopped now."

And that's how we circumvented red tape! As consulting engineer, I could have taken in as many assistants as I liked, and there were forty-two white employees on the pipe line and railway, who were allowed to take rifles, and they had the privilege of shooting certain kinds of game within a zone of five miles on either side of their respective fields of labour, and great slaughter they were making of it. I know that from personal observation. Yet an innocent and harmless photographic expedition was denied entry, for fear "it would establish a precedent." However, it turned out that the portions of the game reserve visited would have been very disappointing, whether it was owing to the privileged shooting, or the veldt fires that were raging, is a question. At all events, the vast herds of game were not to be seen, but I visited one of the most remarkable sights of the world, the Magadi lake of solid soda, seven miles long and



nearly two miles wide. It is a place where I would not have worked for a thousand pounds a month, and the labour question will be a big one for the company to tackle. Imagine this great glaring sheet of white crystals shimmering under a torrid sun, and a constant miasma rising from it, that reminded me only of the chemical laboratory of my college days and the smell of  $\text{CH}_2\text{O}_4$ . There is soda enough there to supply the world for five hundred years. There is not space here to go into a description of the lake, but I should advise all visitors to East Africa to go, smell it, and see it, as it certainly ranks with the world's great natural wonders.

On returning to Nairobi, Kearton and I determined to go out to the edge of the Kumiti swamp, where there was an opportunity, so we were informed, to get photographs of buffalo. It was only twenty-one miles to the eastward of the town, and Mr. John Boyes, who owned a large farm in that direction, had offered us the use of a commodious tin house, so we took no tents, and gathering a party of twelve or fifteen boys, which included gun-bearers and personal servants, we departed by automobile, the safari going on foot, and we expected to be snugly ensconced by evening.

Nairobi, like all new towns and new countries, was full of strange characters, and perhaps none was more justly celebrated than Mr. John Boyes, "the White King of the Kikuyus." He has written a book about himself, and his adventurous career, and some critics



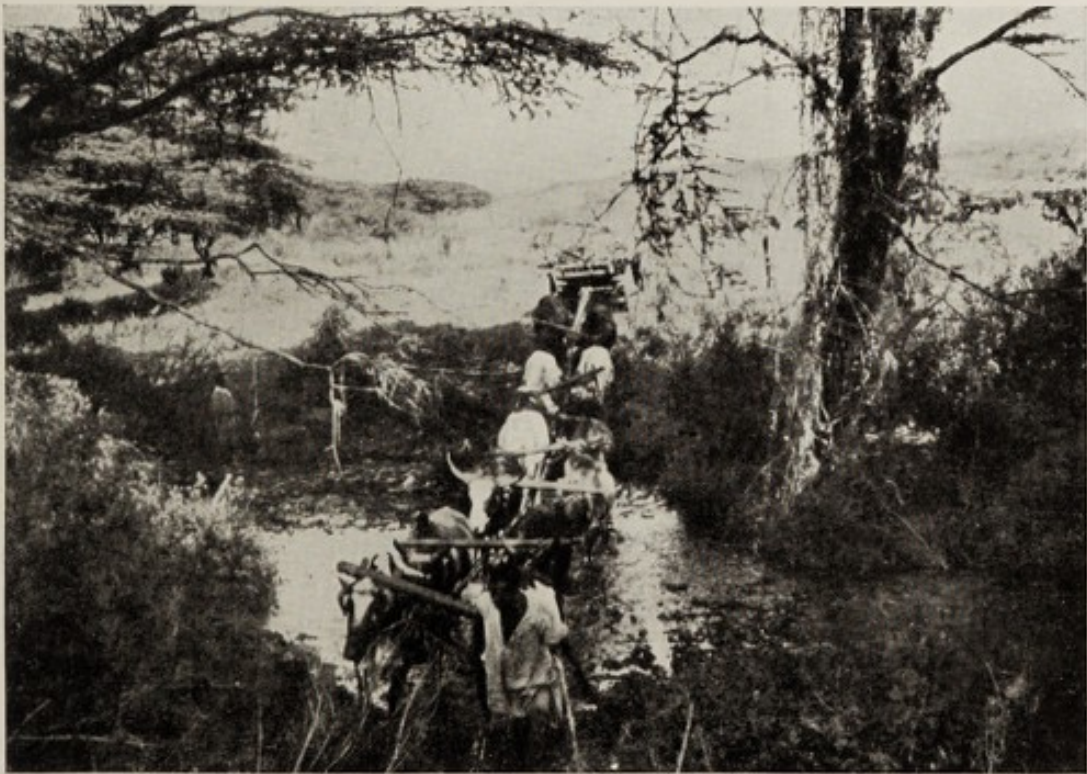
have been unkind enough to say that he did not tell a half of what he might have told. Whether this came from natural secretiveness, or from modesty, I am not prepared to state, but Mr. Boyes did not tell half what he could about that house. In the first place, he did not tell us that it was inhabited, but it most certainly was, and the occupants did not intend to leave without making a fight for it, and a means to oust them was beyond our power. That tin house was very neat and prepossessing as we viewed it from a distance, but it was not a house at all in the proper sense of the word. It was one huge bee-hive! The African bee must have very little space in which to carry honey, for he seems to be nothing but one big sting with a wing on either side of it. No one could approach within a hundred yards of Mr. Boyes's apiary, without being aware that he was treading on very dangerous ground. Within twenty yards of the door lay a dead mule that had incautiously gone too near, and had been stung to death in no time. We decided that was warning enough, and spent the night in a cotton shelter tent that a neighbouring farmer had erected for the use of some Indian *fundis* who were building a dipping tank.

We returned to town for our own shelters the following day, and started out again with a wagon and ox team. The "King of the Kikuyus," when informed of the state of affairs, replied in broad Yorkshire: "Aye, the bees, I forgot to tell you about them bees." He then offered suggestions as





THOMSON'S GAZELLE



ON THE TREK WITH OXEN





to how they might be smoked out, but we did not take on the contract, and made our camp down by the river bank.

This herd of buffalo that we were after in the papyrus swamp on the Kumiti was renowned, and justly so. An epic might be written about these particular "buffs." They had been shot at and chivied about so much that each single member has developed the testiness of an Andalusian bull in the arena, and they are animated as a whole by all the charging and fighting spirit of the Light Brigade. Colonel Roosevelt once had an adventure with this pack of bovine fiends that nearly put him out of the running for any position, except for one under a monument, and he tells about it in his book. We had been warned of all this beforehand, so we were prepared for anything, but at the end of considerable experience we reached the conclusion that the proper way to approach them would be in an armoured train with a battery of gatlings. The herd, numbering perhaps one hundred and twenty or more, did not wait to be driven out or called out. They came of their own accord, and generally they all came together! Even the natives gave the swamp a wide berth. A black teamster driving a buck wagon and eighteen oxen had gone too near only a short time before we decided to see what we could do, and the herd had signified their desire for seclusion by coming out *en masse*, killing five of the oxen, and the voorlooper or leading boy, and



smashing up the wagon in such fashion that it was quite useless to attempt to do anything with it. To go down there and ask them to sit for their pictures was utter foolishness. Our cameras were very valuable and we still had some use for our remaining years. Attempts had been made to photograph them, but so far, unsuccessfully. Kearton had tried it a year or two before, and had given it up.

A brilliant idea occurred to us, and after talking it over we determined to put it into execution. It was not the armoured train, but it was somewhat like it. Nothing less than taking down a big sheet-iron water-tank, and sinking it on the edge of the swamp, hiding it in the papyrus, and filling it full of earth and stones, and then getting on top. After some search, we found the very thing we were looking for, a big tank, ten feet high, with a diameter of about six feet. Of course, we would have to choose the proper time for putting it in position, an hour when the buffalo were elsewhere than in the vicinity of our engineering efforts. It was the intention to sink the tank two or three feet in the ground, and we figured that when full of earth and stones it would weigh about ten tons. So far, so good. We brought the tank down in an ox wagon, and then carefully scouted the swamp from a distance in order to get the proper bearings and position of the enemy's forces.

It was easy to do this if the buffalo were moving. They never straggled, but held closely together



in a compact mass, and above them, constantly hovered and fluttered their close companions, the cow herons, those beautiful white birds who feed on the ticks that infest the buffalo's tough hide. We had chosen the proper place to erect our safety tower, and one of our black scouts had reported that the herd was up in the end of the swamp some three or four miles away. All was safe, apparently, so we proceeded with the ox cart, followed by a lot of boys with picks and spades. Our party had been augmented by two white volunteers, the farmer on whose place we had pitched our camp, and a missionary who was travelling through the country. In all, we counted five rifles—quite a formidable force. As the wagon thumped and bumped along over the rough, uneven ground, the big tank boomed and banged like a hundred bass drums. It could have been heard a mile! Slowly we approached the spot where we planned to get to work, and all was merry and bright. We were going down a slight incline, and were about two hundred yards from the edge of the swamp, when suddenly a flock of white birds fluttered up from directly in front of us, and at the same instant—the beasts had probably been waiting for us—there stepped into view the whole array; over a hundred of them! There they stood, their ugly black muzzles stretched out at us, and the great horns laid back against the massive shoulders.

Kearton jumped for the camera and climbed on up the wagon. The rest of us nervously fingered our rifles. "Good-bye, wagon," said the farmer, "we



are in for it now," and he began cutting the oxen loose with his knife, not stopping to unyoke them. The drivers made shift to assist him. The digging party seemed uncertain as to what course to follow, and some of them crawled in between the wheels. All this time, the black beasts had stood there absolutely motionless, and then a bull with magnificent horns came forward a few steps. It looked as if they were coming. Kearton had got the moving picture machine working by this time, and then quickly something happened! A cow and a young bull that were on the extreme left flank of the phalanx suddenly took alarm, and turned, heaving their awkward and unwieldy bodies down the front of the line. In an instant the whole lot turned with them, and wheeled to the right, and with the cow herons fluttering above them in a white cloud, they followed the line of the swamp for some distance and then plunged into the papyrus. Much relieved, we watched their course for a few minutes, and judged that when they stopped they had probably covered two miles or more, so we went down and put the tank in position.

On the top of that tank we passed many weary waiting hours, but when the buffalo were around it we could not go down and get on top, and when we were there first they seemed to give the place a wide berth. After all our preparation, we succeeded in getting but two pictures of buffalo, although we got many of other animals that lived in the swamp. Quite close to it, the Scribe was lucky enough to





A HALT IN SCANTY SHADE



COKE'S HARTEBEESTE DRINKING





get a lioness one day while walking along the edge of the swamp. Not with the camera unfortunately, but with the rifle. We had another and perhaps a better hiding place farther down the stream, where we secured some very beautiful pictures of hartebeest, wildebeeste, gazelle, and wild ostriches.

Having done our best with the buffalo, and secured some results, although not what we had hoped for, it was determined to move on past Donaysapuk, down the Athi river, and thence to cross to the uplands between the Thika and the Tana, a favourite place for rhino and lion, and there was also a chance of getting eland and roan antelope. Our party had now been joined by Fritz, who had given up his position on the Magadi road, and gone back to his former occupation, which was, as we soon discovered, principally that of risking his life. Poor Fritz, he did it once too often. After having assisted in the death of perhaps sixty lions, he was fatally mauled by one in January, 1914.

An old hunter once observed to me : "Yes, it's a good life, but keep after lion and elephant long enough, and one of them will get you sooner or later." In the bleak walled cemetery at Nairobi there are ten or twelve graves of men who didn't quit soon enough, the lion (and in every case, so far as I could ascertain, a wounded one) being responsible for the wording of the epitaphs.

While we are on the subject of lions it might be well to gather in a few words the result of our own



experience and other people's opinion on the subject. There are two ways to exterminate the lion of British East Africa—and let us grant at the start that from the settlers' and farmers' point of view the wiping out of both the lion and the leopard would be a good thing; it would enable the herds of cattle, sheep and goats to feed at night; it would do away with the semi-cruelty of tying trek oxen to a long chain and making them fast to a wagon every evening when on the march. The poor trek ox when at work has his feeding hours cruelly curtailed. The native herders, the most successful of whom are the Masai, would no longer have to gather their cattle into closely packed kraals.

I have said that there are two absolutely sure methods—and they are poison and dogs. We were in good lion country for nearly six months, and during that time Kearton and I together saw twelve lions. We got photographs of two, and I shot a lion and a lioness. But mind you, we were looking for them, searching for them a great part of the time. When an armed tourist goes out without dogs for a month, or sometimes only half that time, and returns with fourteen or fifteen lion pelts, the knowing ones greet the news with tongue in cheek. I spoke to a professional hunter in Nairobi, whose name I will not mention, about a certain wealthy hunter's luck. He gave a shrug to his shoulders. "A little while ago," said he, "if any sporting millionaire wished to make a big lion bag and did not care how he got them, it could easily enough be arranged. Of course," said



he, "if you get on a good fresh lion trail with a pack of dogs, that lion is yours unless you wish to let him go. But I am referring to even a surer way. If you are where the lions are plentiful, and put down ten or fifteen kills a day, and your strychnine holds out, you can make a big bag; and you may find some of the lions before they are entirely dead, at least they may be able to get up on their feet and growl at you."

"I know a man," he continued, "who went out with a wealthy foreigner, and came back with eight lions to show for a fourteen days' trip, and every skin had a bullet hole in it, and sometimes two. I think it was prussic acid on this occasion. They say it is quicker than strychnine, but a little more expensive."

I knew from my own experience that what this man was saying was absolute fact. This unsportsman-like procedure is more often resorted to than reported.

Kearton and I came across the body of a zebra on a farm not far from Nyeri, and close to it were lying the dead bodies of no fewer than seven jackals. A lion had also visited the kill that night, and was probably lying dead or dying not far away. It is the preference of the King of Beasts for carrion that makes him fall an easy prey to the animal "Pritchard."

We met the watchman on this farm going down to look at his poison trap. He told us he had got already two lions and a lioness that way, and had sold their skins for a good price. Another one he had found



too late; the poison had done its work entirely too well, and the hair would not stay in the hide.

It is not everyone who visits East Africa who sees a live lion. I know a man who for eight years has been a resident of an outlying district, and has never yet seen one, although he has heard them a-plenty, shouting in the night. It is curious that as the settlers' houses increase the lion gives up roaring, and they say that a man-eater, though he may haunt a district for a long time, is always silent.

The Government have now placed a limit on the number of lions that may be shot. It would pay them well to look into some of these suspected poison cases. I myself was with a farmer, who lives not far from Nairobi, when he shot and poisoned no fewer than seven kongoni in one morning on his own ground. I suppose as he owned the property he had a perfect right in his own mind to do this; but it wasn't the first occasion, as there were many carcasses dotting the plain, and scores of dead vultures and a few marabout lying near. Needless to say, the valuable feathers of the latter had all been taken. To my mind, getting rid of animals this way is about as good sport as poisoning your neighbour's cat or dog.

Schindler, the hunter, was killed while helping to assist in the taking of a sensational lion-hunting cinematograph film for an American who holds the lion record, and owns a famous pack of dogs. The beast had been chivied about from one donga to another for a whole morning, had been pelted with stones



and sticks, and was probably in a furious state, when the luckless and reckless hunter rode almost upon him, with the result that the pony that he was riding—one that I had once owned myself by the way—was severely mauled, and he was bitten so badly that he lived but a few hours.

Fritz was a "card" if there ever was one. If a man who had never shot or hunted very much wished for sensations he had but to engage the services of this adventurous Austrian. He was a compound of four favourite characters in fiction—Natty Bumppo, Alan Breck, Tartarin of Tarascon and d'Artignan the musketeer. He was a born actor, and the best raconteur I have ever listened to. As a white hunter he was reckless to the verge of madness, and as a shot he was erratic. Excitable as a Frenchman, and of a very nervous disposition, he needed but the incentive of an audience to perform the most foolhardy feats. To hear him recount some of his hairbreadth escapes was positively thrilling. He "acted it all out." He was the hunter one moment and the hunted the next. He was horse, foot, dragoon and brass band of the engagement. To see him stalking the supposed position of a dangerous animal was a delight. He sniffed the air like a pointer dog feeling for a scent. He crouched and pointed and beckoned and cautioned with those wonderful long fingers, picked up bits of grass and leaves, shaded his eyes with his hand, and his whisper upon these occasions was thrilling to the very marrow of your bones; but once let



the action begin and Fritz went off like a Catherine wheel. We had bought some ponies, and one day we rode a fine big male lion out of a donga into the open. I can see Fritz now, digging his heels into the little Somali pony, shouting like a Comanche Indian, screaming himself hoarse, but keeping closer to the lion than was necessary for any purpose, except that of tempting Fate, and when the beast was shot and lying dead, Fritz's emotions still had the better of him. He took the big head in his lap, caressed and talked to it, called it pet names, and then, jumping to his feet without a word of warning, fired two shots into the carcass. Taking out his skinning knife afterwards, he searched for the animal's heart, cut off a piece of it and ate it raw!

"An old Masai taught me that," said he. "It is lucky to do, and keeps you brave."

Yes, poor Fritz was erratic almost to the breaking point, but he had many friends; and Nairobi, by his death, lost one of its most picturesque and taking characters.

On the plains at the foot of the rocky needles, we secured pictures of two rhinos. At this very place, some three years before, Kearton had photographed two others. On the very top of Donaysapuk, the great wooded hill that rises sheer out of the plains some two or three thousand feet, we also got the moving picture of another, "the rhino that turned eagle." From his eyrie he could look down on the encroaching farms and plantations, and there he had sought





RHINOCEROS PHOTOGRAPHED AT CLOSE QUARTERS





sanctuary in company with a little herd of buffalo that still lived on the slope. Long may he dwell there in peace, for of all the animals that are probably doomed to destruction in the near future the rhino will be the first to go. He has no place in civilisation. He belongs to a bygone age, and I doubt not soon he will disappear. His blunt-nosed brother of the South Sahara district may survive much longer, but in British East Africa the black rhinoceros is becoming rarer and rarer.

## CHAPTER VI

### FROM B. E. A. TO UGANDA: THE DEPARTURE

**I**T is a strange thing how the merest sign of the presence of civilised man sweeps back the ages. A single line of telegraph posts or barbed wire fencing transforms the open veldt, that for centuries has been unchanged, into the most modern of back pastures. A railway thoroughly commercialises the most primitive of landscapes, and as one travels in the train from Nairobi out toward the Victoria Nyanza, passing farm and plantation, and stopping at the crowded platforms of the wayside stations, it is hard to realise how young the country really is, that the oldest white child living in British East Africa born of English parents is but eighteen years of age, that the geographers of twenty-five years ago had made their maps principally by guesswork or imagination when it came to presenting the rivers and mountains of this prosperous and promising new land.

In British East Africa the Home Government has a peculiar problem that surely in the future will have to be dealt with on a less narrow basis than the one that the present Government seems committed to pursue. There is a growing feeling among the somewhat discontented settlers who make up the majority of the





SCAVENGERS OF THE VELDT





population—and here I refer to those whose connection with business or industry compels them to acknowledge Africa as their permanent home—they feel that there should be a more representative governing body dealing with their immediate concerns, and that Downing Street, with a superb indifference to actual needs, has exercised too much the prerogatives of a very busy and very distant parent, paying very little attention to advice or suggestion. Given another ten thousand, or perhaps five thousand, of able-bodied male inhabitants and I should say that British East Africa was ripe for a trial of self-government. They would face, however, from the outset the same difficulties that exist everywhere where the black man is in overwhelming majority.

If a prize were offered for the best treatise on how to make the black man a worker, or one who looks for labour, the candidates would belong to two classes. Most writers would treat the proposition as a joke, and the others would in all probability belong to the stern old-fashioned believers in forced service and bodily chastisement. Perhaps there might be a few theorists who still believe that by early education, leading and teaching, the black could be so instructed as to see the dignity of strenuous exertion. Their effusions would be more amusing than those of the professed humorists. The truth is, the White Man's Burden no more loves the prospect of hard work than does his pale-faced brother who has been initiated into the luxurious holiday system of an up-to-date labour organisation.

I have had farmers tell me that a good white labourer



could do the work of eleven black men, and some have even asserted that if he was young and active, he would accomplish the work of twenty. Having watched the field hands, and the freemen employed in digging the trench for the Nairobi sewage system, I quite believe the latter. Let us look at the black in his own particular sphere. Where would the white man be found who would carry for eight hours sixty to eighty pounds on his head, or by a band round his forehead with the load resting against his hips, and be content at the same time with one meal a day, with an unvaried menu? That white man does not exist. The black man is what he is and nothing more.

I remember seeing a book entitled, if I remember correctly: "First lessons in Ki-Swahili," and it brought to my mind those charmingly ridiculous French primers of early schooldays: Translate "The porters are lazy"—"The cook will steal the salt"—"The cook will steal sugar"—(and so on, through the rest of the dry grocery list). "He is a good boy"—"He does not take much from his master"—"He will take from his master's friends all that he can"—"Can the gun-bearer shoot?"—"Yes, he can shoot you in the leg," and so on. It was amusing, and conveyed a lot of useful information.

After a great deal of experience with the black man at home, in America, and in Africa, I have come to the conclusion that there is very little difference in the methods of reasoning between the over-educated product of the American Southern schools and the lad in the bark cloth breech clout. If he is kindly disposed to-



wards you, he wishes to please you: *ergo*, if you ask him a question, he will give you an answer that he thinks you would like to get, generally without the least regard to its bearing on the actual situation. If he possesses anything, he wants you to see it, be it a learned vocabulary, a silk hat and a diamond pin, or a yard of red calico. He hides none of his light under a bushel, and if "imitation is the sincerest flattery," he doesn't stop at half measures. You let your beard or whiskers grow, divide them, brush them back, up or down, or trim them to a point, and your gun-bearer will try to emulate your efforts. If you shaved half of your head and appeared to be proud of the result, your safari would come back after two months looking like a band of black convicts from Siberia.

I have met many men long resident in Africa who have had hardly a good word to say for the black man, and who, in summing up his manifold delinquencies, have overlooked many qualities that are interesting, amusing, essentially human, and quite endearing. Someone has observed that "human life is like a book." Taking that for granted, it must be acknowledged that a book is not what is written there, but what the reader brings to it, and though many phases and workings of the black man's mind are inscrutable, quite as inscrutable as the Oriental face, behind which it is believed no Occidental can penetrate, the qualities to be brought to the reading are patience, forbearance, firmness, and a sense of humour.

Out of the ninety odd porters, who returned from



the northern trip with us, both Kearton and myself could have picked perhaps twenty between whom and ourselves there existed a really friendly attachment, an anxiety on one side to prove worthy of trust and deserving of commendation, and on the employer's part a feeling of active interest and a desire to help and to reward.

There was Murango, for instance, a very black and intelligent Wakamba. He carried the heaviest load, although he was not half the size of some of the big lazy ones. He was always first into camp, and the first to go out and get wood for the fires. He was first into the water at the swollen streams; the only one who could be sent with a message with the absolute assurance that he would delay not in his going or his coming, and when the Scribe was taken with an attack of fever at Nairobi it was Murango who sat outside all day, although he had been discharged and paid off, to see if the *bwana* might have use for him. It was Murango who kept bringing badly mutilated butterflies and beetles for our inspection when he found that we were collecting them on our march. He would drag them forth, wrapped in leaves, from the folds of his blanket, show his fine pointed teeth in a grin, and depart without a word.

Three days after a safari is paid off it is safe to say that not one porter in ten has a cent to his name; that they have had money to spend is apparent at a glance. I knew a boy who bought two cheap watches, and wore them hanging down on the outside of a pair



of lavender trousers, yet to save his life he couldn't learn how to tell the time. The porter squeezes his horny-soled feet into brown button boots or patent leather shoes and suffers agonies, and like a true spendthrift, patronises the most expensive places, and cheerfully pays double the white man's prices. How often have we smiled at the incongruities of costume! Broad, muscular backs, that out on safari had stood the fierce heat of the sun without a blister, would be protected in town with spine pads worn wrong side out so that the red lining would show. I shall not forget the appearance of one of our old boys, a stocky little Kikuyu, a consistent loafer and malingerer, whom I saw on the streets. He must have, by mistake, drifted into a ladies' furnishing store, for he had on a cheap lace chemise, gathered with pink ribbons, tucked into a pair of very tight duck trousers, around which, at the knee, he had drawn on two hand-embroidered elastic garters. Pea-green silk socks and carpet slippers completed his make-up, and he dangled from his belt behind, like a tail, a sky blue parasol!

Murango was one of the few exceptions; he did none of these foolish things. Although I had given him a shirt when I last saw him, he wore but his old red blanket, knotted at the shoulder, and a pair of zebra skin sandals. From the belt which every boy must wear there hung a new skinning knife. That was all. Perhaps he was saving up to buy a melodeon, who knows? Murango was one of those who came down to the station to see us off the day we departed



for Uganda. There were perhaps a dozen of the old guard, Killenjui among them. He also had been very sensible in his purchases, and was neatly dressed in khaki knickers and a greyish green tail coat, with a semi-military fez on his shaved black head.

"Hiya! Quahira, bwana," they exclaimed crowding about us, and neither Kearton nor myself are ashamed to say that we shook each one of them by the hand. Killenjui lingered until the moment the train started. We had tried to persuade him to come with us.

"Wakukuyu watakufa kulé huko," he said, pointing to the west. "Nina engoja hapa." (The Kikuyus die out there. I must stay here.)

Just as the train was starting he ran up quickly to Kearton and myself. He fumbled with my thumb as he shook hands with me. There were tears in his eyes. He did not trust himself to speak! Now, after this, who can say that an African does not feel, and has no sense of loyalty? A white man standing by noticed the farewell.

"He tried to give you the shake of friendship," he said to me. "It's done by clasping the thumbs tightly and then pulling the hands apart."

If I ever meet Killenjui again, I will be the first to reach for his sturdy little thumb.

Nevertheless, we brought on two boys with us, who were destined to share our fortunes for the next five months; one, indeed, accompanied us all the way across, and is at the moment of writing in London.





THE SCRIBE AND BAKALE





As they figure in our subsequent adventures, it might be well to introduce them. Ernesti, Kearton's boy, in every way lived up to the good reputation and the letters that he had brought with him. He was a Buganda of a good family, the son of a small chief, and had been educated in a mission school. He spoke English and three or four native dialects. He could read and write, and proved to be both trustworthy and intelligent; well trained as a servant, he also possessed knowledge of the white man's ways and requirements. To Kearton he proved quite indispensable before the trip was out. Bakale, my new boy, came from German East Africa. He had no letters, and I knew nothing of him when I engaged him at a porter's wages in Nairobi; but he, too, proved to have been well trained and took an exceeding interest in all my affairs, and was soon promoted, and his pay increased proportionately. Bakale was no end of a swell. He was a good-looking, in fact quite a handsome, brown-skinned lad of that uncertain age that might have been nineteen or twenty-nine. His face was very slightly scarred; he had rings of light blue tattooing on his temples; his features were not of negroid character—his nose quite small and thin, his lips well formed—and he had the figure of an Egyptian athlete, narrow in the waist, broad at the shoulders, with slender, well-formed limbs. Not only was he no end of a swell, and a perfect "divvil" with the ladies, but he was a natural-born fighter, and could use his fists like a professional welterweight. It was the way he man-



handled a quarrelsome M'pagazi half again his size that first drew my attention to him. He was always neat, and dressed in the most becoming style from his own standpoint. In fact he had a much larger assortment of clothing than the average white man. At first I counted my own things very carefully, but up to the time of his leaving I missed nothing.

So I have spoken of leaving Nairobi. There was with us in the same compartment as we went west Stewart Edward White, the American writer, bound up the line to look for Bongo, and a young Australian named Strong, who was to accompany us down the Ituri and the Congo.

W. H. Strong had been in the employ of the Fourminière Company, an exploitation and mining company with headquarters in Brussels, although the stock is principally owned in America. He had spent two years in the Congo some time before, but so greatly had conditions altered in that short space of time that it was a new country to him when he again entered it.

The finest view on the Uganda road is that when the train puffs up to the brow of the Great Divide, the Mau escarpment, and drops by gravity past gorge and steep descent into the valley beyond. To the south lies an almost waterless tract for miles. Volcanic formations, extinct craters, low-lying hills and lava stone, interspersed with a scant growth of thorn, it used to be a famous lion country, and there are





INSPECTION ON THE S.S. "CLEMENT HILL"  
LAKE VICTORIA NYANZA





some there yet, but it is not an easy country to hunt in, and not often visited by safaris.

To the north of the road lies a distinctly different land. Attracted by the high mountains, the rainfall is quite plentiful, and as the train nears Lake Naivasha, the settlers' farms are seen on both sides, and again the country changes to grassy slopes, as the railway comes closer to the great lake. Komassi, or Port Florence, is the starting point of the steamers for Entebbe. When it is reasoned that these vessels have been built piece by piece and mostly with Indian labour at the shops and shipyards, the visitor is surprised at the size and capacity of craft like the *Clement Hill*, rating nearly 1,200 tons, where everything is "shipshape and Bristol fashion," and the crew as well trained as on any liner that sails from Southampton. The meals served on board the *Clement Hill* were the best we had tasted since leaving London, and the service was excellent. We went on board at ten on a Sunday morning and arrived at Entebbe at 9.30 the next day, anchoring near one of the islands for the night, as the shore has no lighthouses and at the present time is entirely depopulated, for it was here that the sleeping sickness swept away the inhabitants like one of the plagues of the Old Testament. Careful watch has to be maintained to see that the natives do not return. A light or the sign of a fire is immediately reported, and the Government launch sets forth to oust and punish the intruders on the forbidden ground. Most beautiful is the scenery in



this region, very much indeed like the coast of New England, and there were places that reminded me of "The Thoroughfare," that wonderful inland route through the islands of the Maine coast. But, alas, when it comes to the evidences of life the resemblance ceases entirely. It is a land of desolation. Here and there showed above the trees the steeples of missionary churches, or well built stone and concrete stores and magazines, slowly being overgrown with vines and creepers. Not a canoe did we meet with on the voyage—nor did we sight a human habitation on the shores.

Uganda was a missionary stronghold nearly thirty years ago. It has been the scene of one great native rebellion, and the railway that now connects this land of a great future with the coast, was built in order to suppress the slave trade, whose outlet from the Congo districts ended at the Great Lakes, which were the distributing points. The Arab influence has now disappeared, leaving its trace, however, in the Mohammedan religion that has counteracted the efforts of the missionary more than the apathy of the natives themselves.

Entebbe we found to be a beautiful little town, clean, neat, and attractive, and everything evinced the fact that the government here was in the hands of men who had all thought for the good of the land and its people. But impressions of Uganda that we gathered will make another chapter.



## CHAPTER VII

### IN THE KABAKA'S COUNTRY

UGANDA is a country that is bound to impress even the most casual of visitors. Although it is, strictly speaking, but a Protectorate of the Crown, it is assuredly as much of a possession as any one of the scattered islands or the wide lands mapped out in red that gird the earth.

It should be a most prideful possession from the British standpoint, and may prove a rich one also. It struck us in the first place that every man we met was there for a purpose, and was doing his work, whatever it might be, to the top of his bent. There are no remittance men, loafers, or land gamblers in Uganda. At present there is no place for them; everyone seems to have a job and all are busy.

Each Government department and each industry shows organisation and efficient management. They have studied questions and worked out problems; everything reflects the wide knowledge and close attention of a real administrative head. It is a pleasure to see it. It was a pleasure to meet the people who are responsible for it all. The very aspect and manners of the natives bear out this good work. For certainly the Buganda, take them by and large, are



the most intelligent, wealthy, and industrious, the best looking, and most polite of the many tribes with whom we came in contact.

There is little of the heavy-featured negroid type among them. In their blood there must be a large mixture of the Northern and Semitic strains that tend to make the dark-skinned man who possesses them a leader and ruler among his fellows.

The paramount chiefs, called kings in the past, ruled over vast stretches of magnificent country, and counted their subjects by the million. That the present prestige of the white man is due in large measure to missionary influence must be acknowledged at the outset.

Uganda is not a conquered country; it is one that has been acquired by the influence of sterling character, singleness of purpose, and great devotion to a cause. It is a beautiful, and, when once away from the fly-infected districts, a healthy country, despite the dreadful toll exacted by the sleeping sickness.

It is commercially productive also. The coffee has the same good qualities as that raised in British East Africa, and the cotton industry holds promise of a successful future, and cattle thrive there.

Alas, it is no country for the polo player and the racing man. Horses do not survive long. I think there was only one in the length and the breadth of the land in the year 1913. Mules and donkeys also are few and far between. The country can get along without them now as it has in the past.



Kearton had the honour to number among his African friends the Governor, Sir Frederick Jackson, and we had the pleasure of calling upon him at Government House. As we sat in the little arbour having tea it was hard to imagine that we were not at home in England. English flowers bloomed and blossomed in the garden, the turf was green and fresh, a wide sweep of lawn led up to a very modern English-looking mansion of red brick and stone, and on the near-by tennis court a game was in progress. The present Governor is not one who has been moved on from some far distant post in the West Indies, Straits Settlement, or India; he is, so to speak, one of the pioneers of the country itself, a man who has seen it grow, and who understands the needs and requirements of its people. He is also a naturalist, and ornithologist, and Kearton and he met on common ground. He was interested in our projects and in our work, and promised every aid that he could give, an aid that we were very grateful to acknowledge.

We stopped but a day at Entebbe, just long enough, in fact, to clear us with the Customs, and departed by automobile for Kampala, making the twenty-five mile journey in some fifty minutes over the best road in Africa. Our goods and chattels followed us by motor van the same afternoon. Somebody had given us the name of an hotel there. It was a very high sounding and distinguished name; it might be better to let the matter drop at that, but facts demand its mention.



At Entebbe a visitor, if he has sufficient money, can stop at a very beautiful hostelry that once was the old Government House, down near the lake, neat and comfortable, with wide verandahs and good service. If he happens to be a prospective resident in Uganda he may be able to get settler's rates, in which case, if he possesses a good letter of credit, he can stop there longer. We were not settlers, and, having regard to economy as I say, we went on to Kampala. But there are worse things than spending money. As we walked down the narrow verandah of the one storey "hotel" with the aristocratic name I peered into the six by eight apartments. In one of them a lonely man sat disconsolately on a broken-down chair. I felt very much like asking him what he was in there for, and if he had any friends to go to when he came out. I felt there must be some mistake somewhere, and expressed my views, whereupon Kearton asked our ragged black guide, who was demanding *matabeesh* for having carried a small bag some thirty-six and a half feet from the road, if this really was the hotel. The boy did not understand, so I tried him in Swahili. Kearton had addressed him in English. The boy looked doubtful. Very soon an Indian steward appeared and our fears were set at rest. It was the hotel, that is, one could go in and go out of it whenever one liked. I registered a vow to go out as often as possible. There were no locks to the doors, no glass in the windows. There were no windows now I recollect; there were no sheets on the beds; in fact, I once found a





THE KABAKA'S COURTYARD: ENTRANCE TO THE ROYAL ENCLOSURE







THE KABAKA'S DRUMS



STRINGED INSTRUMENTS AND CHORUS





better hotel eight hundred miles up the Orinoco River where a real white man was a curiosity. But what was lacking in quantity was made up in quality, human quality this time. By five o'clock in the afternoon young men began to arrive dressed in football knickers, and we found that there was a match on between the two local teams. When the referee was included you had practically the whole list of Kampala's able-bodied males under the age of forty. They ranked from the apothecary to the Resident P.M.O.; they were not in the least standoffish, and we soon scraped acquaintance, with the result that we witnessed the game, were entertained at the club, and attended an impromptu sing-song in the evening in the hotel dining-room.

Our acquaintances soon turned into friends, and our stay at Kampala was made pleasant through the hospitality extended to us by these fine young representatives of the English sporting spirit.

The golf links were almost at the door, and every evening between four and six there were plenty of people on the links, and a game of football or hockey was always in progress on the field of the sports club.

Kampala is some two or three hundred feet higher than Entebbe, and is built up the sloping sides of two ranges of hills. Within the next year the railway will connect it with Jinja, at the end of lake navigation, and I can say for prospective visitors that a real hotel is being built.

We did not stay long in the row of cells, but

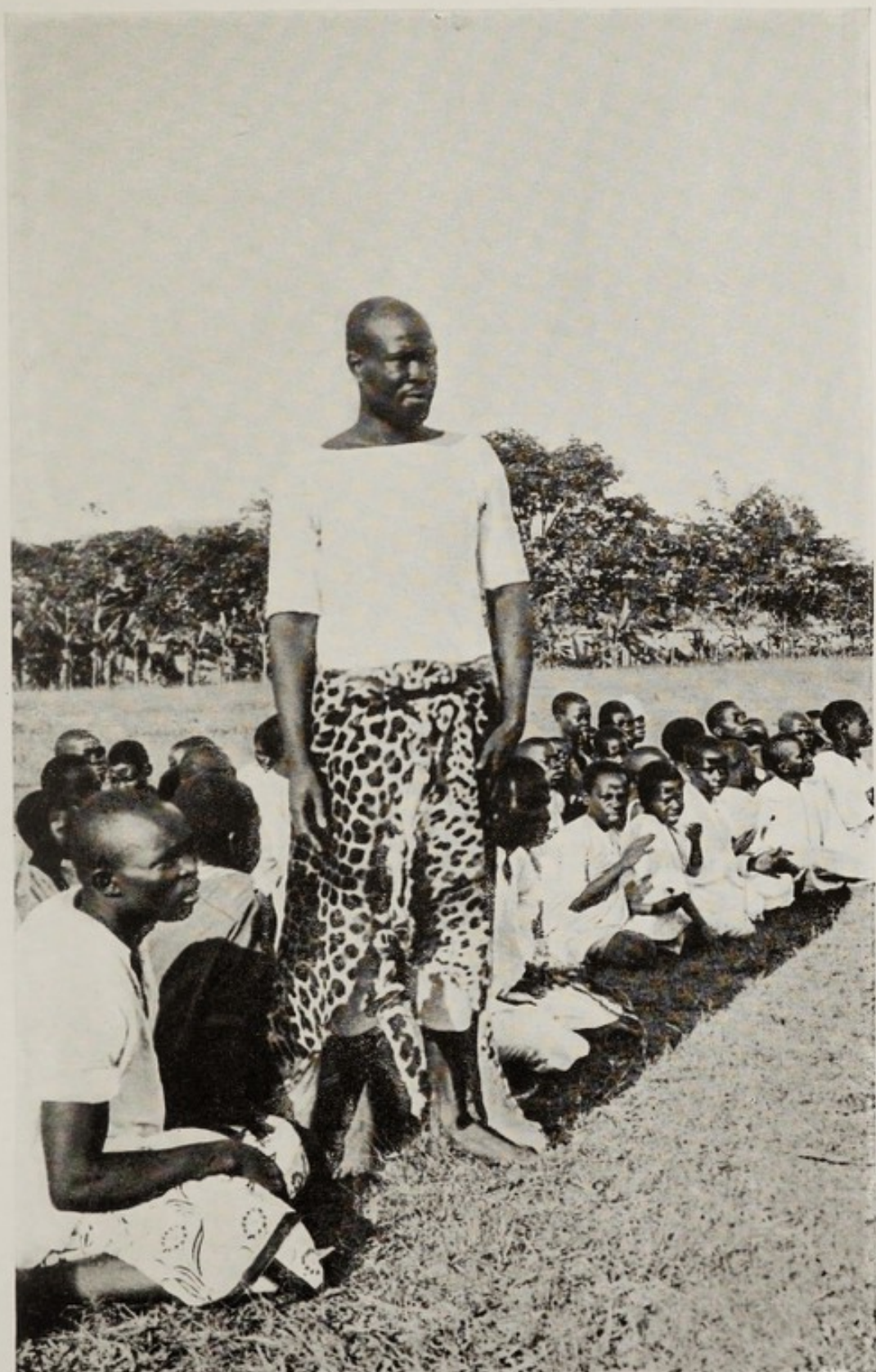


pitched our tents upon the hill-side about half a mile from the main street of the town, and went into housekeeping as it were, engaging the services of a cook, and taking on two or three extra boys. The house or palace of the Kabaka was about three-quarters of a mile away on the top of another hill, and the hospital of the three brothers Cook, medical missionaries, was about ten minutes' walk. They are the two points of interest in Kampala and worthy of full description.

Everyone in England remembers the visit of the Kabaka of Uganda to London in 1913, and his personally conducted tour to various points of interest, where he was accorded most flattering receptions. The newspapers at the time referred to him as the "Young King of Uganda," but Daudi is not a king in any sense of the word, and doubtless he will never be hailed as one. This tall, mild-mannered Buganda comes of what might be called the royal line, for he numbers among his forebears and forerunners Mtesa, and the despotic Mwanga, kings if you like, in that they were a law unto themselves and held the power of life and death over both subjects and visitors to their country. And this is what being a king in Africa means. Things have changed somewhat. Daudi is a Christian and a Protestant, some of his uncles and cousins are Roman Catholics, and I was informed, so far as their living goes, a few of his relations lean toward the practices of Mohammedanism.

The present Kabaka was chosen when he was very





THE CHAMPION WRESTLER OF UGANDA





young, and has been educated, almost one might say over-educated, by English tutors, and preceptors, until he has more or less assimilated rules, precepts, restrictions and regulations, and has adopted a standpoint toward life that more or less corresponds with that of a very dutiful Oxford undergraduate whose wealthy parents pay his bills, and purchase for him whatever his fancy may desire. He is quite tied to his (adoptive) mother's apron strings.

Wisely, those in authority over him have encouraged him to maintain a certain prestige with his people by keeping up a show of old African customs and regal prerogatives. His drums are booming all day, and at the most unchristian-like hours in the morning. He presides over a Court of Chiefs, and administers justice, but there is a calm, low-voiced Englishman beside him, and back of the carved chair in which he sits hang almost life-sized portraits of the present King and Queen. He attends the receptions and entertainments that he gives where African sports, wrestling, dancing, drum and wooden xylophone orchestra, keep up the traditions of the past, and he watches languidly the proceedings. The adulation of his subjects, who approach him on bended knees, gives him no pleasure. The whole Earl's Court atmosphere that pervades these affairs, and interests the casual visitor, bores Daudi half to death. He had much rather be spinning along the road driving his 40 H.P. motor or pottering about with his expensive cameras and his own moving picture machine. But it is good policy and it pays. The



fact is that this young scion of the "rule absolute" does what is suggested to him, or as he is told to do, and talks and acts as he has been instructed to talk and act since infancy. What he thinks is a different matter. I do not know, and I am quite sure that nobody else does. At any time, if he should kick over the traces, or display too much individuality, any old uncle of his would take his job at a moment's notice, for the increased emoluments alone. They are all pensioners or prisoners, so to speak, as are the members of most royal families, and back of their maintenance and luxury and semi-idleness are policy and politics.

We had the pleasure of meeting the Kabaka on a number of occasions. We lunched with him at his tutor's house, and he kindly arranged for us a native entertainment of sports and dances, including a sham fight.

We were pleased and were most grateful, and enjoyed ourselves, and we also took photographs. We found the young black hostage of policy to be an intelligent, gentle-voiced young man of supremely good manner, with that diffident shyness of good breeding, and possessed of a certain culture. He reminded me of a tall young Eton boy done in dark sepia. His training and education seemed to have taken the lines of Ethiopia out of his countenance and expression. The traces of his head-hacking, *malwa*-drinking ancestors are eliminated entirely. Externally he is a product, a product of up-to-date civilisation. He has about as much relation to his own past family



history as the Edinburgh professor I once met to the wild, skin-clad McLeans of Iona, from whom he sprang. Only in the Kabaka case it has been the work of a single generation, and not the result of centuries of environment.

We discussed, if I remember, golf, football, and cameras. In a lull in the conversation his tutor asked him quite audibly if he had read the three chapters that he had marked for him, "had finished his sum," as it were, to which the grandson of the great Mtesa replied quite gently and simply that he had finished two, and would do the other before the evening.

He visited us at our camp that we had pitched on the site of the old Kampala fort, took the greatest interest in the moving picture machines, and brought a camera and some films of his own for Kearton to put in order for him. The sports that had been arranged for us took place on the royal football ground. The presence of the goal-posts, an obtrusive bicycle, a line of telephone wire, and the array of white spectators sitting in camp chairs, the ladies in their best frocks and lace parasols, were not the only jarring notes in the barbaric festival. The wrestlers for the most part, with an overdoing of modesty, appeared in striped chintz or cotton shirts or even *kansas*, the long nightgown arrangement, the survival of Arab influence. They were more or less dishevelled at the end of some of the bouts, it must be acknowledged, and I could not help smiling at the champion dancer's make-up. He performed a



solo with much wild motion, snorting, stamping, and face-making, but dangling round his neck, and ever obtrusive, was a silver and gilt crucifix at the end of a long chain. The Earl's Court stage manager would never have permitted that! The presence of four or five long-bearded White Fathers in their cassocks and rosaries added another somewhat jarring note.

The whole affair was most interesting, and interesting no less so for the juxtaposition of tradition and present influence. But it differed greatly from the dances and ceremonies that we subsequently witnessed and recorded, where the white man's presence was still an intrusion.

A curious incident happened during the sham fight of the painted warriors, who used, however, for the most part long reeds in place of spears. It was unexpected and called for roars of laughter and applause, and yet it made me think, and gave for an instant a semblance of reality to the proceedings.

The black man is a good actor and exponent of the school of realism. The players in the little war drama entered into it with a spirit that was most commendable. Macready at his best in the rôle of the Gladiator never died more dramatically or realistically than did the supposed-to-be-stabbed fighter on the outskirts of the mock engagement. He rose to his elbows, half struggled to his knees, fell back and gasped his last, and lay there face upwards to the broiling sun while the battle drifted down toward





A BUGANDA WARRIOR IN HIS WAR-PAINT





the farther goal-posts, and out of the sky a big vulture dropped down like a bullet and hovered over him. The man arose quickly and beat at it with his wand of elephant grass. The audience both white and black burst into shouts of laughter and rapturous applause.

Now vultures live to a good age, like eagles, who have been known to exist for half a century. Perhaps, in the not very far distant past, this same bird had shot down from the blue on the edge of some real battlefield. Who knows?

I mentioned the football field. The Kabaka is an expert Association player, and has a team that has defeated the best that the whites can put against it. He has also won the silver cup on the golf links, and is a fair hand at tennis, I was told. I once saw some natives playing "soccer," and to see a big Buganda lift a heavy football some thirty-five or forty yards, from the point of his bare toes, made me ache from ankle to hip joint, but they played thus bare-footed all day long. At scientific heading of the ball I have never seen their equal.

In this chapter I have made mention of the three brothers Cook, medical missionaries, who have built in Kampala a hospital and sanatorium. It is not only a credit to their faith and work, but to the great nation to which they belong. Could the people in England know of the magnificent work and devoted self-sacrifice of these three eminent surgeons and medical men, the work they are doing would never lack for financial



support from home. It is this practical side of Christianity that leaves its lasting impression on a country.

Uganda ever since the days of Mr. A. M. Mackie, and of Messrs. Walker, Deakes, and Cyril Gordon, seems to have called out the best to arduous labours in this far off field. In justice to my own experience I cannot but say that I have seen times and places where missionary effort seems to have been misspent or misdirected, but certainly here the efforts have borne and are bearing fruit. White people come from all over Africa to the Cooks' sanatorium and hospital, and wealthy or poor they are treated just the same. The charge is nothing, merely what can be given to further the general work for good. My heart warms within me when I think of what these splendid men are doing. At home in Harley Street one could imagine that fashionable people would have thronged their waiting rooms. Emoluments and honours might have been pressed upon them, but out here, on the top of one of the Uganda hills, a greater and better thing is being done than gaining wealth or honour. Quietly and unostentatiously they are working out their own and the country's problem. The modest yearly report conveys little idea of the immense good of their influence over the natives. The neatness and completeness of their hospital, and the numbers of their grateful patients, prove not only their scientific knowledge but their powers of organisation.

They have combined the teaching of precepts and object lessons of faith.



Our stay in Kampala had been an enforced one to a certain extent, owing to the fact that supplies that we had sent on from Mombasa had by some mistake been forwarded to Masindi. From there we had ordered them to be taken by porters to meet us at Fort Portal or Toro, which was to be our starting point for the Belgian Congo. At last we received word that sufficient porters had been gathered through the efforts of our friend Mr. Knowles, the P. C. at Kampala, and that the first instalment of our supplies had left Masindi. We had taken on now a new cook, who subsequently proved to be all kinds of a bad one, and had engaged a big nine ton motor van to carry us and our belongings to Mbendi, some hundred and five miles due west. Captain Riddick, the chief of police at Kampala, had wired on for two Askaris or native police to meet us at this point, and convoy the porters we were to pick up there as far as Toro, a march of seven days.

The road was excellent and every minute of it was enjoyable. We found that we could go on farther than Mbendi, and ended our motor journey at Cacagua, where we gathered a safari of some eighty porters to take us the seventy odd miles that lay before us.

We travelled rather slowly, stopping at the well-appointed Government rest houses, and at every place, owing to our military escort, we found no difficulty in obtaining food. At Kehara we came across elephant spoor, the big beasts had been within a mile of our camp and had crossed the road above it.



We were travelling through a clear and cultivated country with an agricultural population, and at Kehara we pitched camp near the French Mission. The White Fathers kindly sent down to us fruit and vegetables.

Now in the far distance we could see the mountains of the Rewenzori, but the tops were always shrouded in clouds. On the 17th December we arrived at Toro at last and found that none of our supplies had arrived. It was only a twelve days' march from Masindi, but as the porters had no white men with them they took eighteen days to make the journey.

Toro is a military post of considerable importance, and in the near future it may be more so, when the military road is quite completed. Here we were received with all hospitality by the resident officers, and, though they numbered but four or five all told, here were the golf links again and the tennis courts. We were informed that porters were difficult to obtain, but that in the course of a fortnight or so it might be possible to procure them. This was rather a heart-breaker, as we wished to press on into the Belgian territory as fast as possible.

How we got out of the difficulty makes quite a good story.

I have said that Kearton's personal boy, Ernesti, came from Uganda and spoke English. He heard us discussing our difficulty, and came to our relief with a suggestion. In fact, it was not a suggestion, it was a most astounding declaration. He said he





A BRIDGE ON THE HIGHWAY



IN SIGHT OF THE FOOTHILLS: A HALT NEAR TORO





thought he could get us all the porters we needed in two days, and, when questioned how this would be possible, went on to state that his mother was a sister of the local chief, and that his own father was a chief of importance in the Hoima district not far away. Armed with credentials and a present, Ernesti started on his mission, and in two days, true to his word, returned with eighty burden-bearers. But his mother's brother must have robbed the cradle and the grave, for they ranged apparently from boys of sixteen to old men of sixty. The D.C. at the post was astonished. Usually all porters at this time of the year were gathered by Government. He wondered how we had accomplished it, and I dare say he is wondering still; faintly he expressed the hope that we had not engaged in wholesale bribery, as he feared it might interfere with the current prices paid for labour. We really got them cheaper than the Government could. It was one of those occasions when a personal pull beats red tape. As the dawdlers from Masindi had not all arrived, we determined to make use of Ernesti's contribution, and decided to go on a fortnight's expedition down toward Lake George, where, we had been told, it was possible to get photographs of elephants in the open. That trip takes but a short space to describe.

It was "go farther and fare worse." As we progressed we found it more and more difficult to obtain food, for crops had failed and the too well protected elephants had raided the plantations. When



we reached the spot where we were told we would find the herds in the open country, we discovered we were three days late; the natives had fired the grass, and miles and miles of burned and blackened veldt confronted us. The elephants had all gone back into the forests and the hills. Sadly disappointed we retraced our steps. But two days on this journey will ever linger in our mind—Christmas and New Year's Days. We spent them at the same place, one of the most beautiful spots that human eye has ever seen. We reached there on Christmas Eve on our outward journey, and on New Year's Day on our return. Lake Llonga-llonga is one of those liquid gems that Nature seems to have placed in exactly the sort of setting to display its beauty. It is a little sheet of light blue crystal lying in the depths of what must have been once an old volcanic crater. It was comparatively a new discovery. The first sight of it held us entranced, for we had been traveling through a broken, hilly country, burnt and parched from the lack of recent rains, and there from the top of a hill we looked down and saw the blue sparkle of the waters surrounded by a fringe of forest trees, palms and hard wood mingled—a perfect sanctuary for bird and beast and man. How it rested the eye to look at the deep shadows, the changing hues of green, and the blue of the water.

We camped on the steep hillside, and, following thence a narrow path, went down through the forest to the water's edge. Here we found a little hollowed-





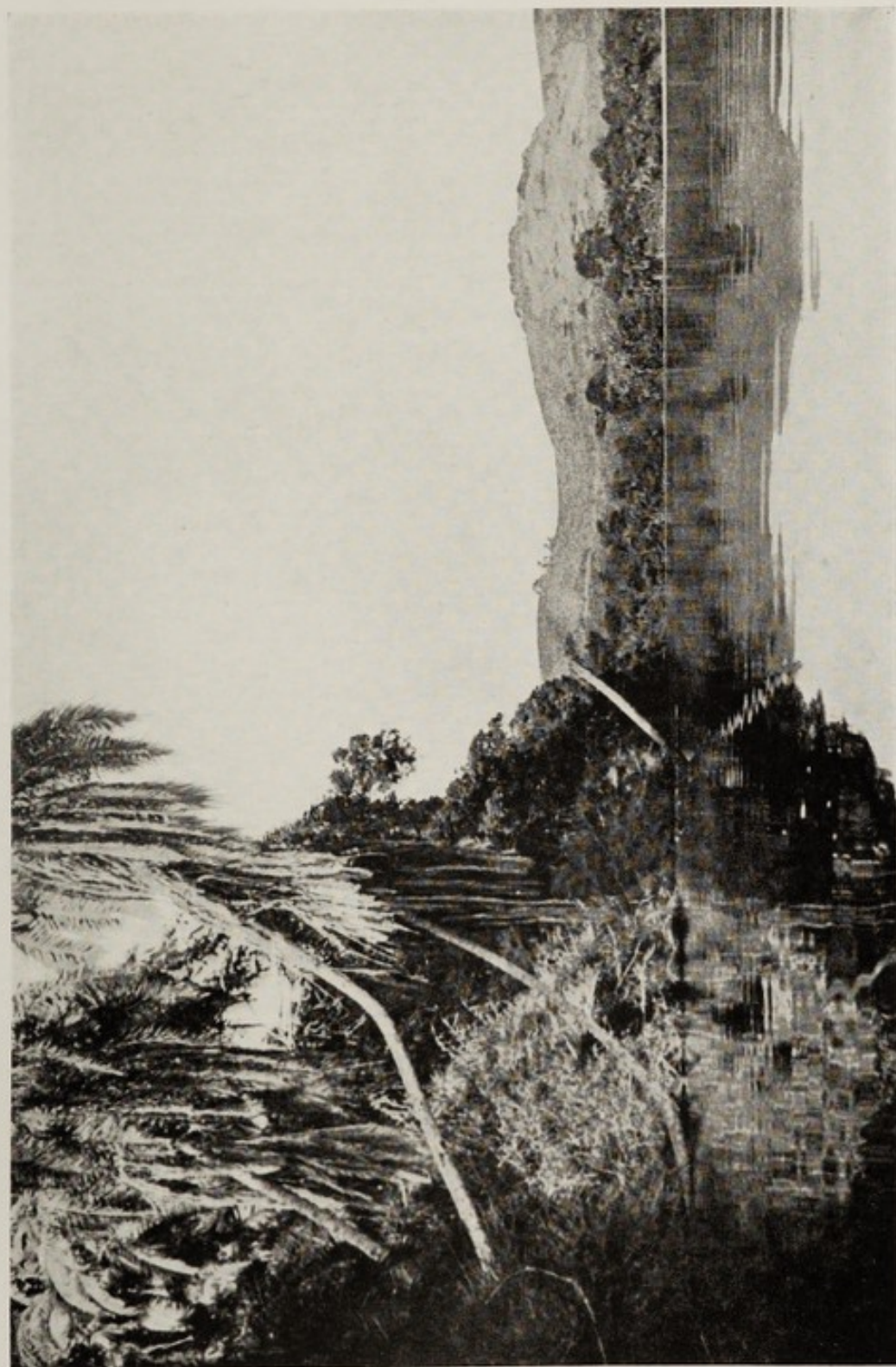
LAKE LLONGA-LLONGA



ON LAKE LLONGA-LLONGA







THE MIRRORED SHORES OF LAKE LLONGA-LLONGA





out log canoe. The lake and the shores teemed with life, waterfowl of all kinds fluttered and swam over the surface, mallard and teal, geese, grebes, coots, dabchicks, cormorants and snake birds, and high up in the great branches the white-headed fish eagles had built their nests. The lake was full of fish resembling silver perch, and ranging from a quarter to two pounds in weight; most excellent eating they were. They jumped clear of the water and played like lake trout. I am sure they would have taken the fly, but they were not backward in dashing at the grasshoppers and crickets that we used for bait.

A family of hippopotami lived at the eastern end and swam about in the morning and evening. Not a gun had been fired here, and I am glad to say we did not break the stillness and desecrate this little corner of Eden, but we got some beautiful photographs that more than repaid us for what we lost in the Christmas goose or duck that might have adorned our table.

Slowly paddling along the shore we got very close to Nature's heart. Snake birds waited with outspread wings until we were so close that we could see their yellow eyes, hornbills planed from one tree to another, with a flight much like that of a small boy's paper dart. Birds like magpies scolded and chattered overhead, and the most brilliant little kingfishers, feathered like humming birds, flashed past us. The grebes and little waterfowl scuttled ahead of the canoe into their



hiding places in the reeds. We had two almost perfect days that repaid us for the scorching, fruitless journey through which we had just passed.

On this trip we got our first touch of the forests, for going and coming we passed through one of the arms of the great wood that extends from along the foothills of the Rewenzori Mountains, and one day for the space of twenty minutes the enshrouding clouds lifted, and, *mirabile dictu*, we caught a glimpse of the gleaming peaks way above the high, forest-covered, blue-grey hills. There lay, exposed for that fleeting space of time, nearly thirty miles of gleaming ice and snow! Then the clouds closed down and no one would have known that there was a mountain within a thousand miles. Only once again did we see them, and that was when we had crossed the northern and eastern spurs into the valley of the Semliki River, when once again the cloud-lifting phenomenon occurred, but even for a shorter space of time. It was thus that Stanley had first seen them twenty-six years before: the far-famed and mysterious Mountains of the Moon, the *Lunæ Montes* of Herodotus.

Every member of the safari was tired. I would not have been surprised if some of the old men who had accompanied us had gone much against their will. Food had been scarce, but they were experts on the trail, and each night when we had reached a new camping place their little village of grass huts would rise like mushrooms out of the ground. Inside half an





FISHING ON LAKE LLONGA-LLONGA





hour from the time of halting our tents would be surrounded with them.

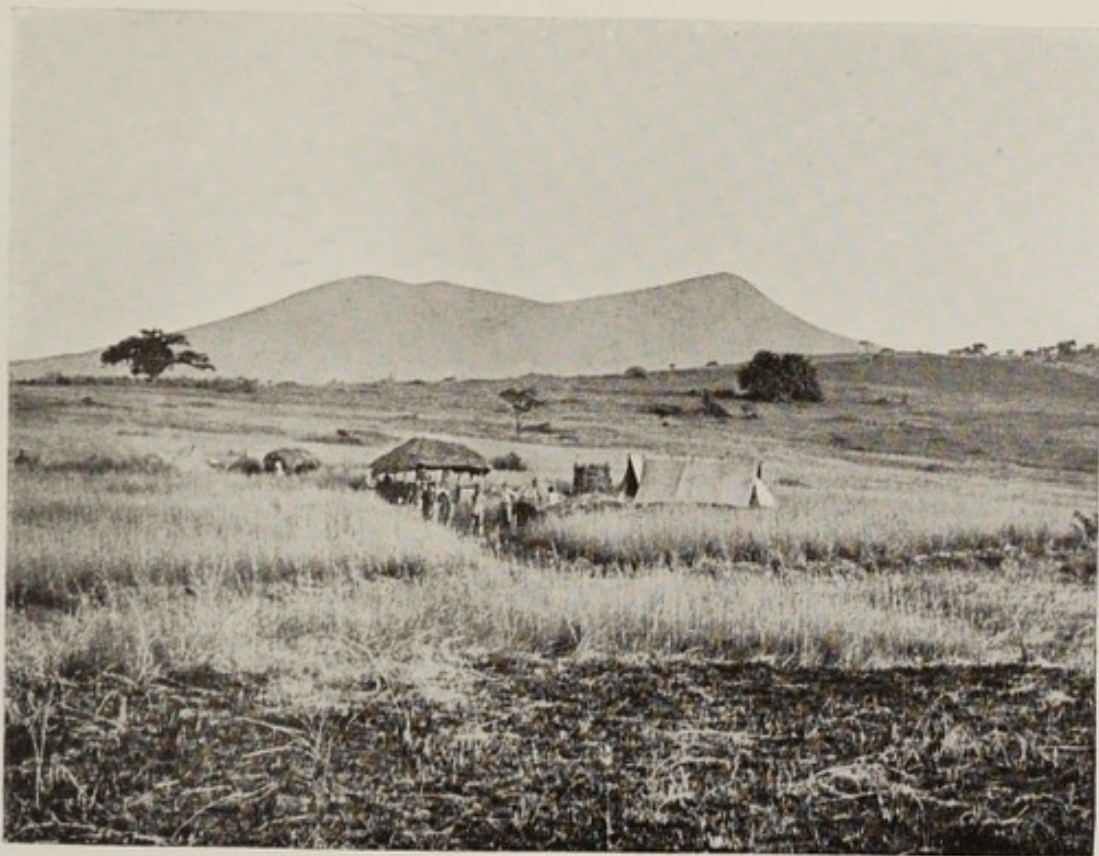
When we got back to Toro the rest of our lazy porters had arrived from Masindi, and, using our personal pull again, we secured nearly a hundred men and started on the trail for Irumu. But before we leave Toro let me relate a little incident that thoroughly refutes the theory of a renowned medical gentleman and professor who proclaimed it his belief that the man who passes his fortieth year had better be knocked on the head and consigned to the scrap heap. It is most encouraging to relate it when one has passed that baleful climacteric. There had drifted into our camp, on the second night after our arrival, a sturdy little figure, with a grey stubble on a very determined chin. That the Emerald Isle could claim him as a wandering son was evident from the first words he spoke, as he asked if there was not "a jintleman from New York in the party." Charles Malloy was our visitor's name, and he had gone to California with the "forty-niners" to look for gold, and, bless your soul, he was born in the year 1828, and he was still looking for gold on the slopes of Rewenzori! He referred to all men of sixty as "bhoys," and, ascertaining the date of my birth, proclaimed that I was a child in arms.

We cultivated Mr. Malloy, in fact made a hobby of him during our stay at Toro. He was a living encyclopædia of things that had passed away. His memory was absolute, his opinions dogmatic, and

his expressions both virile and picturesque. To hear him begin "In 1852 when I was up in Vancouver I had a great experience with Siwash Indians," and then how he crossed the Isthmus of Panama in fifty-four, and how in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies he built houses in New York was like reading the dusty back numbers of some ancient periodical. He brought the past up to date, and resurrected people dead and gone with a startling quality that seemed to make them still alive. He had been in Africa since 1875 "Sure," said he, "they know me from Cape Town to Kilo." And I dare say they did.

When the angular gentleman with the scythe and the long grey chin whisker finds Charlie Malloy, he will find him with a prospector's kit on his back, a hammer in one hand and a rock drill in the other. But we must get out of Toro, and leave him and our good friends the Government's representatives to their labours, their golf and good fortunes. There is a long journey ahead.





THE DESERTED COUNTRY



CROSSING THE FOOTHILLS OF THE REWENZORI







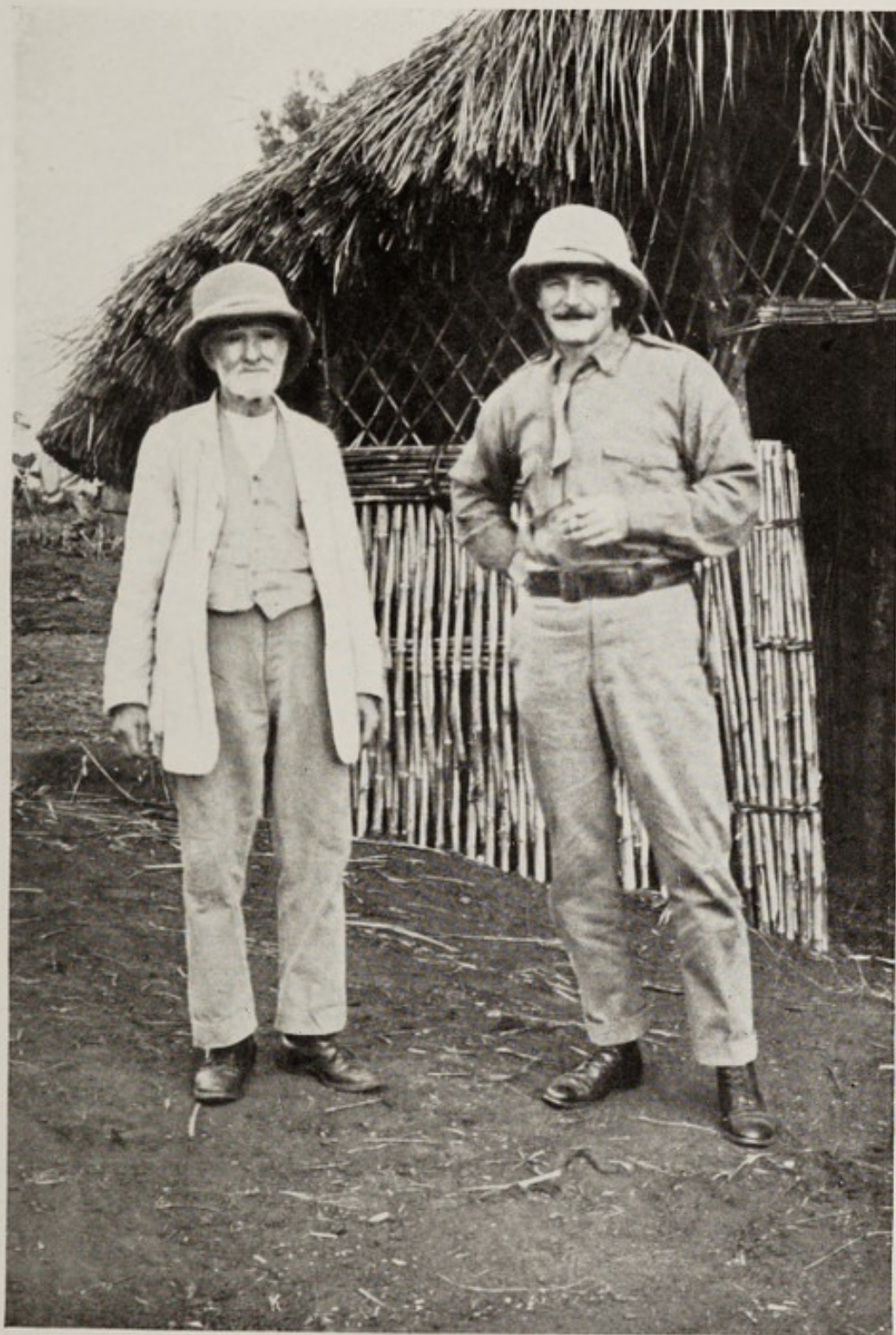
A VILLAGE BUILT IN HALF AN HOUR



AFTER THE RAIN: THE WATCHED POT THAT WOULD NEVER BOIL







A FORTY-NINER ON REWENZORI: THE SCRIBE AND  
CHARLES MALLOY





## CHAPTER VIII

### INTO THE CONGO BELGE

**I**N three days we had crossed the north-eastern slopes of the Rewenzori and had begun the descent into the low-lying plains of the Semliki. In one day's march we dropped some two thousand five hundred feet. The valley is overflowed at the time of the great rains, and is at best hardly more than marshland, and must in times past have been the bottom of a lake. The acrid soil grows a rough, hardy, and not very succulent grass; a few scattered specimens of euphorbia and acacia, with occasionally a rather sickly palm lifting up its lonely head, were the only objects that broke the monotonous view, for the slopes to east and west were hidden in the low-hanging mists.

We saw here a very beautiful species of cob, an antelope with golden hide, and beautiful curving horns, akin to the poko of Rhodesia. Traces of the black buffalo were evident, but once across the Semliki they are few, if any, their place being taken by the smaller brown and red buffalo, whose habitat extends into the Haut Ituri. The weather was dreadfully hot—a damp heat that made it more distressing than the torrid weather we had experienced at the water holes.



We crossed the river at the old ferry on the Irumu highway. I dare say that the canoes that took us over were older than the memory of man, at least any man thereabouts. They were simply aged and decaying logs, through whose rotting sides it seemed possible to poke one's finger. The river that connects Lake Albert Edward with Lake Edward Nyanza is a swift muddy stream that pursues its snake-like course through the ancient lake bottom, and for many miles runs close to the foothills of the Rewenzori. Its steep, muddy banks are constantly being undermined and washed away. The river teems with crocodile.

After pitching our camp on the Belgian side we made up our minds to secure if possible some pictures of these famous Semliki "crocs," and we fairly believed that we secured pictures of the largest ever taken. There was a sand-spit not far below our camping place where they were wont to congregate, and here Kearton put up a blind and placed the camera. Crested cranes, heron, and sandpipers were running along the water's edge, when suddenly the first saurian appeared. He was a big fellow, perhaps eighteen feet long, and rested with his mouth wide open while the birds strutted all round him. Then another appeared, some three or four feet longer, and then a third a trifle bigger yet, but all at once the grandfather of all crocodiles emerged; he made those that were basking there look like shillings compared to a crown piece. He heaved himself up from the water on all fours with his tail lifted clear and curving





POINTING THE WAY TO THE SEMLIKI



CROSSING THE SEMLIKI: VIEW FROM THE BELGIAN SIDE



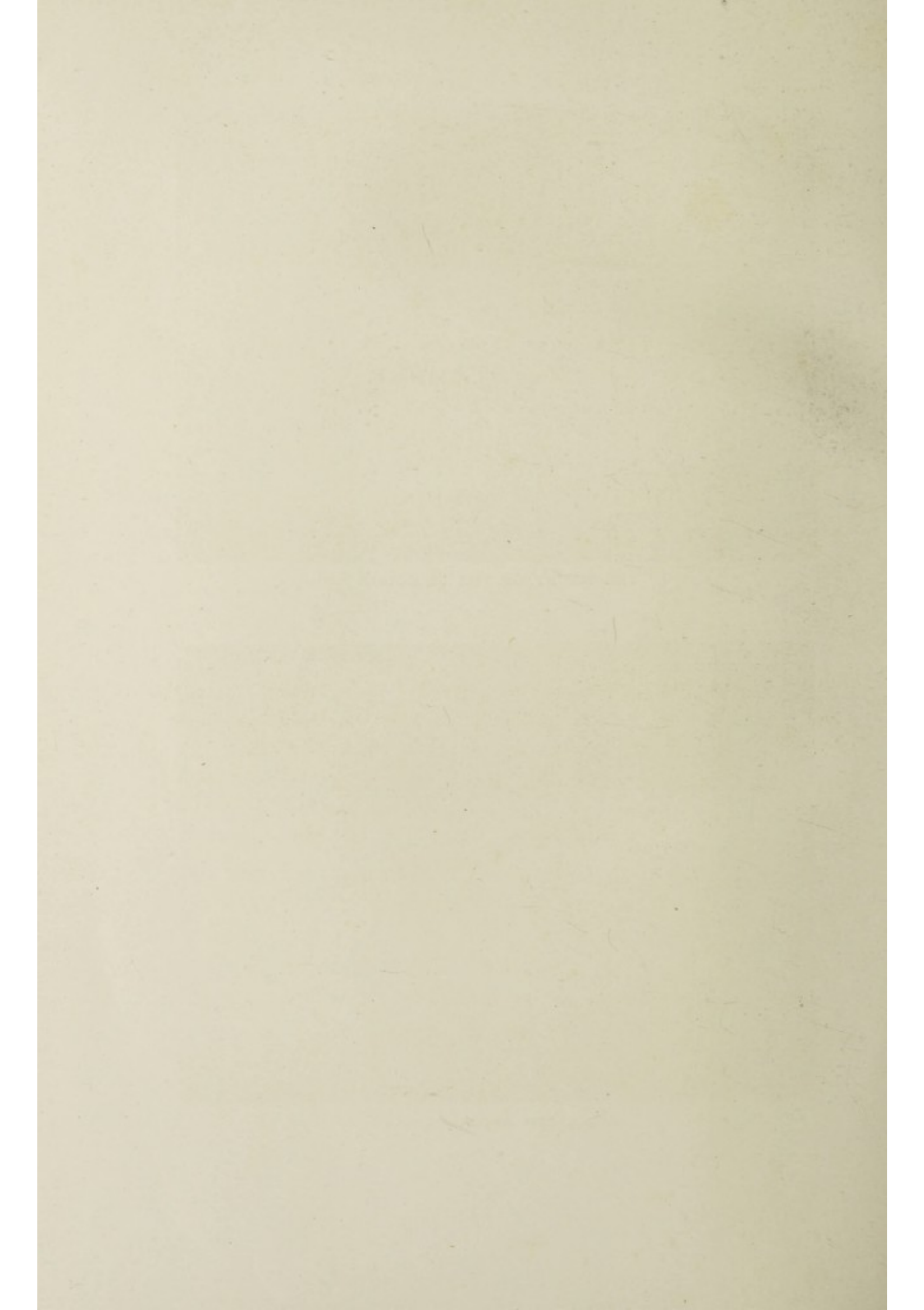




THE HAUNT OF THE CROCODILE



A GOLIATH AMONG "CROCS"





upward, at least two feet of space between his immense bulk and the sand. He was like some antediluvian monster of the reptilian epoch. As far as could be judged, by comparing his measurements with objects near by, he was close to thirty feet in length. For the sake of natural science I would like to have applied a tape to his proportions. After seeing him one could well believe the story of a drinking rhinoceros being caught and dragged beneath the surface by crocodiles, as Selous has recorded in one of his books.

Hearing that elephant were in the vicinity we decided to send part of the caravan on to Irumu, and with some forty men we moved north-west, a day's journey, to where the forests converged on both sides to the river bank. We did get a few feet of film, and possibly if we could have remained in the vicinity we could have secured some fine pictures, but there were reasons why our stay was shortened.

The people who live in this neighbourhood are very poor; their life is a constant struggle for existence. The scanty gardens that they cultivate in the poor soil grow sparse crops of yams and sweet potatoes. They possess but few banana trees, and trade with the hill natives, exchanging the muddy, coarse-tasting river fish for the nutritious *endesie*. There are no villages worth the name—scattered collections of four or five reed huts, where the combined inhabitants do not number over twenty or thirty—and their herds are a mere handful of scrawny goats and kids.



We pitched camp near one of these little hamlets, and although the petty chief did his best to provide food for our forty men it was easy to see that we would soon have eaten him out of house and home.

"An army," said Napoleon, "travels on its stomach," and so does the smallest expedition in Central Africa, although a civilised army, forced to live on the country, would starve to death in what might appear to the native a land of comparative plenty.

We despatched a contingent to the hills to the westward, to see if they could not purchase or secure a few days' supply, but as no white man went with them they decided to regard the excursion as a holiday, and I dare say forgot entirely what they were sent for. At all events as a foraging expedition it was a failure.

About three miles from the camp the forest began, and our guides took us to a little glade about a mile from the river that the elephants crossed each day on their way to the water. It was comparatively open, but as it was the grass-burning season the veldt fires had invaded the edge of the forest, and the ground was covered with a thick carpet of feathery, grey-blue ash. In some places light streamers of smoke were still rising up from the hardy bush that would seem to be impregnable to the hottest fire. The prospects looked bad, indeed, but what was our surprise to find everywhere through the still warm ashes the great round



footprints that proved that a herd of elephant had crossed there that very morning.

A few big trees grew in the glade, affording space in their great lower branches for a hide-up for the cameras, and a vantage point from which we could watch almost the whole length of this little opening in the forest.

After some difficulty we ensconced ourselves there, making a platform of reeds, and put the picture machines in place, telling the camera bearers to return to camp and come back for us in four hours.

It was early in the morning, and as yet the sun had not lifted above the tops of the trees. Before we had been there an hour two discoveries were made, one by ourselves and the other by a naked savage who lived at the hamlet where our camp was pitched. The first discovery was that we were not alone in that tree; there were some ants, and to our dismay we found that they were the belligerent, never-say-die, count-no-odds variety, that bury their short, sharp nippers in one's flesh and have to be picked off piece-meal, the nippers being the last to go, leaving a red, stinging reminder of their presence.

Kearton was below me on the branch, and acted as a sort of bulwark. He was busy as a boy picking berries for a wager, and I was not altogether idle, when we noticed the native at the bottom of the tree. He was pointing towards the forest, and making frantic gesticulations. We could not understand his hoarse whisper, but suddenly he dropped his spear



and began a pantomime. It was the best imitation of an elephant that I have ever seen; he swayed from side to side with both arms held straight in front of him, fingers close together, and we saw that he meant to convey the idea that there was a large bull elephant near by. He pointed to the express rifle that I had placed in the crotch of the tree, and by gesture implored us to get it and come with him. What we were doing up there with all those funny looking boxes he could not imagine. All white men to the native's mind fear nothing, and consequently when a native is with the *Musungu qua bunduki*, the "white man with a gun," he is also comparatively fearless.

I am afraid that the "pale face" fell to zero in this particular savage's estimation. For climbing farther up the tree I could see a splendid bull standing half in and half out of the forest, about two hundred yards away, and out of range of the camera. He had magnificent tusks that would probably go over a hundred pounds apiece. It was a rare chance for the ivory hunter, for the wind was blowing from his direction, and it would have been quite possible with the surrounding cover to have got within a hundred feet of him unobserved. We could not get that confounded native to go away. I indulged in some pantomime on my own part, but he could not understand. Still beckoning, he disappeared in the direction of the big bull; we could see him emerge at intervals, waving his hand above the bushes imploringly. The idea seized me that perhaps he was going to attack





THE WELL-CLEARED AVENUE APPROACH TO A VILLAGE





the animal with a spear alone. At all events he stood a good chance of driving the herd back into the wood, for there were others with the bull, a fact that we were now certain of, from the crashing and tearing of branches, that was distinctly audible. After five minutes' absence the thick-headed numskull appeared again, grinned at us contemptuously, and with a disdainful gesture shouldered his spear and marched off in the direction of the village, probably to spread a report of our cowardice.

"I don't know that I can stand this much longer," whispered Kearton to me, as I looked down at him. He was apparently afflicted with St. Vitus's dance in every limb and portion of his anatomy, and before long I had caught it also. It was pick, slap, scratch, search, and still they came.

Those ants were all over us; they worked their way into the most unexpected crevices and openings; they poured up our sleeves, down our backs, into our hair; it seems almost as if they came through the soles of our boots; and bite, my aunt, didn't they bite! In the midst of it four or five young cow elephants emerged from the forest and placidly shuffled toward a little patch of bushes not thirty yards away. The heroism displayed by the Photographer was worthy of a medal of the first class. With ants on his whiskers, and ants on his nose, and ants at every buttonhole, he stood up and started the aeroscope, and did secure a few feet of film. Whether the cows heard the slight purring of the instrument, it might be hard to state,



but they accelerated their pace, and guiding the little ones with their trunks they disappeared into a donga behind the bushes. If they had been a herd of wild bulls it would have made no difference, we could not stay in that tree! Kearton went first and I followed him, and no two small boys arriving late at a swimming hole were ever swifter or more careless in discarding outer habiliments than we were when we reached the ground. We did not reckon dangers, we counted nothing, least of all the ants that we swept from various portions of our anatomy.

Leaving some of our belongings up the tree, we went back to camp.

Next morning we were there again before sunrise, armed with two bottles of paraffin, mixed with salt and pepper, with which we carefully painted the tree in the hopes of creating a neutral zone between us and the ants, who were bound to be stirring as the heat of the day came on, and the heat did come along before nine o'clock; the limbs of that sparsely-fledged tree resolved themselves into the bars of a gridiron, and like slices of bacon we fairly began to curl up at the edges. Our friends the ants were at first a little nonplussed by the paraffin and salt and pepper. Up the base of the tree they had arrayed themselves by brigade, battalion, quarter column, *en echelon*, and in all military formations. Then they called up the sappers, miners, and engineers, bridged and mined the obstructions, and were on us again, and just as



they began their attack a herd of eight young bulls and five or six cows emerged from the forest.

Heroically we made ready to get our pictures, for they were coming nearer. Suddenly they stopped out of camera range, stood there in line, and then like great grey ghosts shuffled noiselessly back, and disappeared. We had lost that chance also, the reason for which we discovered when we found that a member of our party, who had come down to the tree with us in the morning, had sheltered himself under an umbrella, and was lying there, in full view, fast asleep. The elephants had approached within forty feet of him, and both seeing and winding the strange object had decided to take another way to the water.

Disgusted, tired, and thoroughly beaten, we gave it up, broke camp, and took up the trail to Irumu.

Although the trail was good, it was hard going; there was no shade, and it was up hill and down dale all the way. I felt sorry for the heavily-laden porters. They had been practically on half rations, and although there was plenty of food waiting for them at the end of the journey they showed no disposition to press on. In the mornings it was hard work to get them together for an early start, and no effort of ours prevented them from straggling and dropping behind.

When we reached Boga, that was once an important Belgian post and the frontier Custom House—alas, now fallen from its high estate, being the resi-

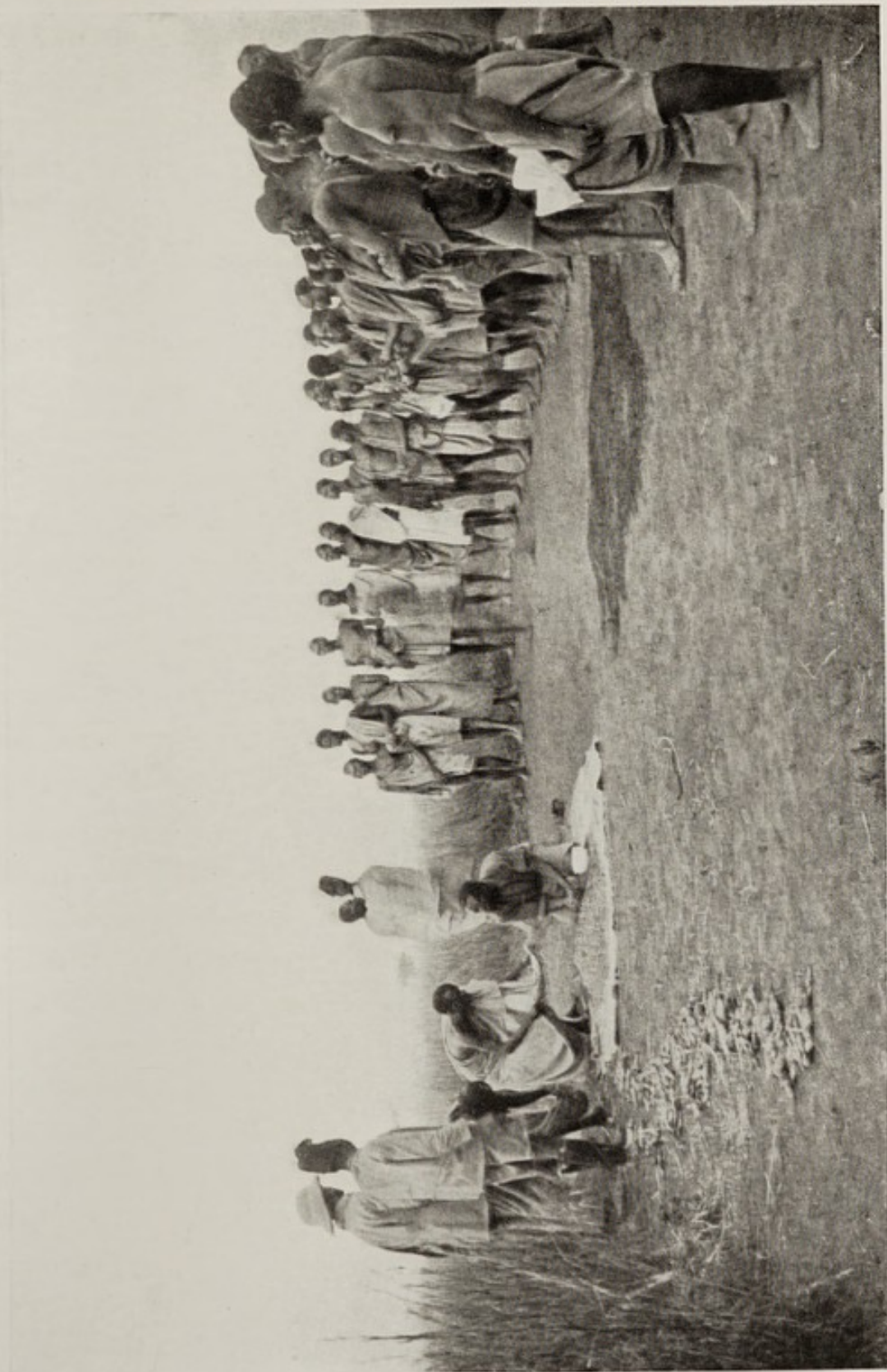


dence of a medical inspector, who from appearance should have placed himself on the sick list and ordered himself an immediate vacation—we halted. An ivory trader informed us that there were plenty of elephants to be found south of Boga on the old Beni road, that the country was open and we could possibly get photographs of them there. We decided to make a try at it, and after a day's rest we informed the *n'mpara* of the intended detour.

When the porters were told of our intention they held a meeting, and there must have been a black labour leader among them, for they immediately decided to strike. They were quite within their grounds, however, a fact that we were forced to acknowledge, as we had only engaged them to take us from Toro to Irumu, a two weeks' journey, and had said nothing about any side marches. We had heard the row going on in the big rest shed, and we knew that something was in the air. Our boys soon brought the news to us.

How Africans ever transact any business at all is a wonder. Everybody talks at once, and no one seems to be listening. If every man makes himself heard at the same time as the others the convention appears satisfied. At last they seemed to arrive at a unanimous conclusion, and sent word to us that the strike was on. Having some chairs brought out we called a meeting in turn. As it would not do for all to speak at once in this case they appointed a spokesman, and Ernesti acted as interpreter. The orator, a





SERVING THE SCANTY RATIONS





big hulking fellow, began his harangue. He talked for nearly ten minutes, and Ernesti summed it up in ten words. "They won't go, bwana," he said. "They want to go to Irumu as fast as they can and return to Uganda."

Anyone dealing with the Central African must keep two or three things in his mind. The first is never to lose his temper, and the second is that he is only dealing with a lot of great, black, ungrown-up children, and a third, and perhaps little-known bit of information, is that the one thing they are most susceptible to is ridicule. Cursing and loud talk, bluster and threat, avail little compared to a pointed shaft of sarcasm.

I said a few words to Ernesti, which he translated in the Hoima tongue.

"The master says he wishes you to talk some more, he likes to hear you talk, you talk very well." Some of the other would-be orators looked at the spokesman, and smiled sickly grins. He was a little bit embarrassed; but, not to be done out of it, began another long harangue.

"Tell him, Ernesti," said I, "that he talks better than he works. He must be very tired. Give him the smallest load, and start him on to Irumu at once."

The black orator was not a general favourite I could see, for when this was translated several began to laugh. Another man took his place. He talked, and talked himself out, and under instructions Ernesti spoke as follows.

"The bwana says that he can see you are old and weak. You can go on with the other."

The second speaker was perhaps the strongest man in the outfit, he could have carried a piano on the top of his head, and thought nothing of it.

Well, to make it short, we asked that all the "women and children" should step out and declare themselves, and they could also go on with the two poor old men. The rest who chose to remain and go with us on a two-days' trip would get half a rupee extra apiece and double rations; the result was that they all came. The strike was broken. At daybreak the next morning we were off to the southward.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE TALL GRASS COUNTRY

THE Belgian authorities make a large show of being cautious in regard to the introduction of contagious diseases into the Congo. A quarantine is established at the frontier post, and each porter who comes from Uganda is supposed to carry with him a certificate of good health issued by the Government doctor at Toro. Both of these ceremonies seem to have degenerated into a mere matter of form. There is really no telling how many natives move across the boundary each day ; in fact, very often a whole village will alter its allegiance from the British to the Belgian flag (this generally about the time of the attempt to collect the hut tax), then if they do not like the Belgian treatment they will move back again. The boundary line has been altered and changed, and many of the small chiefs hardly know which flag they are under, and do not care so long as they are left alone.

We were heading for a small village about sixteen miles to the south-west, where the chief was a friend of the ivory trader who had directed us. The country we passed through resembled a huge field that had been cross-furrowed by a gigantic plough. It was up one ridge and down another, steep ascents and descents,



and rough going all the time. Our guide took us to the wrong village, and we ended up in a most poverty-stricken little valley where it was very evident the people had been drinking *malwa* (a fermented concoction of bananas and grain) recently, for they looked quite dull and besotted.

We changed our direction, having to climb some more steep ascents, and at last reached the village for which we had set out. It was perched in a little hollow on the top of a high hill.

We ordered our tents to be pitched on the very summit. The chief, who rules over some five or six hundred people, had quite a pretentious house surrounded by a score of well-built huts. Accompanied by his cabinet ministers, he met us in a little open space in the centre of his tiny capital. With him was his standing army and police force, a thickset native in a soldier's old uniform, carrying a muzzle-loading musket that could not have been discharged except with a slow match. Possibly it had been used as a crowbar at a no distant period, or it may have been intended to shoot round a corner, but the soldier was quite as proud of the sorry affair as if it had been a modern product of the best gun shop.

The chief, who proved to be a very intelligent young man, about thirty, expressed himself as being very fond of the English, and after receiving a few presents, declared that we had come to the right place to get elephant; they were constantly raiding his plantations, and that almost every day they were





MARKET PLACE, BOGA



INTERVIEW WITH CHIEF OF THE HILL-TOP VILLAGE







PRESENTS FROM THE CHIEF'S GARDEN





to be seen. He then went minutely into the state of his health, and asked for some *dowa* that would cure him and his favourite wife, who also appeared to be somewhat under the weather. As one medicine seems to act as well as another with the African we made him up a mixture that would at least do him no harm, and the next day he reported that both he and his spouse were feeling much improved.

The view from the hill where we had pitched camp was magnificent, although the Rewenzori range, now to the east of us, was hid in the clouds. Successions of sweeping hills, dotted with villages and plantations, stretched away toward the valley of the Semliki that, shrouded in the low-lying mists, looked like a wide lake shimmering in the sunlight. Far to the south could be seen an arm of the great forest, a black mass indented by numerous grassy glades. A spring of cold clear water was just over the brow of the hill. It was an ideal place for a camp from all appearances.

At our request our friend, the chief, sent out scouts with orders to report back at once should they find any elephant in the vicinity. We had made a mistake in opening our medicine chest so early in the day; before nightfall we were besieged by would-be patients suffering from every known or imaginary disease under the sun; in fact, we could have started a good-sized sanatorium on the top of that hill. The most famous cure-all that I can recommend to African travellers is a spoonful of *aqua pura* flavoured with



a drop or so of Jamaica ginger; at least it appeared to work well in cases of headache, backache, pains in the chest, rheumatism, abscess in the ear, swollen knees, and all kindred diseases. Just after dinner we had a real sufferer on our hands. It was no less than one of our own party, who by some inadvertence has hitherto escaped mention. Mike, our pet monkey, out of ennui, desperation, or home-sickness, had eaten the best part of a box of safety matches, and was in a very bad way.

Mike had joined us at Kampala, and so far had been the leader of the expedition. Mike was a lady, to tell the truth, and had been named under misapprehension; she was a monkey of decided individuality, and, unlike the reputation attributed to most of her sex, she was consistent in her likes and dislikes, and absolutely reliable as to her habits. She would have nothing to do with any of the blacks, and only permitted Ernesti to touch her. She was very fond of Kearton, and, when he was not present, she condescended to take some notice of me. When the safari was on the march Mike would linger round until we had started, and then with a rush was off with the very head of the column, a position that she maintained all day, only coming back to see us at meal times. Possessed of none of the pilfering habits of her tribe, Mike's one weakness was matches. With the aid of sweet oil and hot milk we pulled her through two or three cases of over-indulgence. On this occasion we saved her by the very narrowest





ELEPHANT GRASS AT TORO





margin, and for a few days Mike was missing from the head of the column, and was carried along in a basket. The poor little beast succumbed later to an attack of pneumonia when almost at the end of our journey, after having travelled on foot with us for nearly eight hundred miles.

The scouts sent out by the chief reported no elephants the next day, and we rested in camp, but toward evening we had a decided diversion.

About four or five o'clock heavy black clouds began to gather in the north-east, and the barometer dropped alarmingly. The light effects were most astonishing. The evening sun, piercing through the mist, illuminated everything with a yellowish green light; occasionally bright shafts shining down into the valley, while the great bank of clouds, hanging low, appeared in successive lines of grey and a darkish blue. High overhead there seemed to be a swirling mass of opaque vapours, with here and there black fringes dropping down like the trailing ends of a velvet curtain. The breeze that had been blowing died away. Kearton endeavoured to take a photograph of the wonderful effect, but no camera could have done justice to the weird scene. Suddenly a great flash of lightning came out of the densest cloud, the thunder began to roll, and the electrical display, once started, was continuous. The natives had all left the fields, and our porters were standing silent around their extemporised grass shelters. There came a preliminary whiff of cold wind, and the oncoming clouds



seemed to burst as if gashed with a great knife. Up the hills towards us advanced a solid wall of falling water, prefaced by a few big drops. We ran to the tents. Such a deluge as now came on we had never seen before, and but once since. Everything was blotted out. It grew suddenly dark, and objects one hundred feet away were barely distinguishable. After that first torrential outburst there came the wind. No creation of canvas, rope and pegs could stand it. Before we ourselves could haul down the tents they went of their own accord, the ridge pole over my head snapped in two, and I struggled out from beneath the soaking canvas to be met by the wild hurricane. It was not the wind alone, for hurtling volleys of ice accompanied it, hailstones that nearly knocked one senseless. It was almost frightening. The tents were flapping close to the ground, tearing out the few remaining pegs; camp-chairs, buckets, cooking utensils were rolling in all directions. It looked as if we were going to be destroyed.

Wrapping a soaking blanket round my head, I flung myself on the top of the tent, endeavouring to keep it in place. Kearton, in a heavy overcoat, was endeavouring to shelter the cameras. Not a porter came to our assistance. For the most part they were lying under the ruins of their little huts, shrieking in terror. On their naked bodies the hailstones would have been like volleys of grape shot. They would have been mowed down.

The pandemonium lasted for about five minutes,





AFTER THE STORM



WHAT THE HURRICANE LEFT OF OUR CAMP





and then stopped almost as suddenly as it had begun. To save ourselves we could not help but laugh as we surveyed the wreck and ruin. Beaten and frightened, with melancholy cries the porters emerged from their hiding places. They could not understand what we saw in the situation to laugh at, and, most curious thing of all, while we could still see the hurricane tearing off to the south, the sun broke through a great red slit in the bank of the western clouds, and everything turned to a roseate, permeating glow.

The village, sheltered under the brow of the hill, had not suffered in the same way that we had on the crest. The chief's bodyguard struggled up the path and gave a hasty look around him. Immediately he began to wring his hands, gasping in consternation, "Oh, bwana, bwana," then, seized with an idea, he started off on the run, coming back with a huge drum depending from his shoulders. Standing on the top of the hill he began drumming out a call, interspersing his thumping with shrill screams. We looked around us. From the village and from the scattered huts in the valley men came up on the run. Other drums now began to take up the beating. Strange to say, most of the warriors were armed with spears, whether the drummer in his excitement had beaten the war cry or not, I cannot answer, but for fully twenty minutes they arrived from everywhere. There were so many of them that they were actually in the way, but in a very little time our



things were collected, although some had been blown quite half a mile down the hillside.

It was our first experience of an African hurricane.

Poor little Mike was dug out from under the wreck more dead than alive, and it was late at night before we had dried things sufficiently to go to bed.

The next afternoon word was brought in that a small herd of elephant were but a short distance away. We judged from what the messenger said that we could reach them in about twenty minutes; but never trust an African's judgment as to time or space.

We started off at top speed, and after travelling for an hour our guide showed no indication of fatigue, but grinned encouragingly, and stated we were now very close, so we went on for another three-quarters of an hour. From the top of the hill the low valleys that we were now entering looked like fields of grain, but they proved to be wide stretches of elephant grass, and a man to look over the top would have had to stand some sixteen feet high, and wear heavy soles on his boots. In some places the paths were nothing more than tunnels in the dense bamboo-like growth.

That there were elephant in the neighbourhood was plain to be seen; they had crossed the paths in a dozen different directions, and at the small stream the impress of the big cushioned feet, with the peculiar sole markings, showed that they had probably been there that very day.



It was frightfully hot in the damp, close atmosphere; the perspiration streamed from every pore. Suddenly we met a native with a spear who seemed to be in waiting for us. Climbing up, we came out on a ridge where the grass was not quite so high, and there, following his pointing finger, we saw a herd of about ten elephants. They were on the move, and it looked as if they would pass quite close to us, and about forty feet below. As they came through the tall grass with their great ears laid back against their shoulders, and their trunks held high, they looked like enormous black swan, swimming through the sedge. But when, almost directly opposite, a slight wind sprang up, it unfortunately carried down our scent. They halted, and we perceived that they were mostly cows, some with calves not more than three or four months old. They were within range of the camera, and Kearton began to turn the handle.

An idea seized me that perhaps I could discover a spot closer to them, and where our wind would not reach them. With my gun-bearer I set off to the left following one of the elephant paths to the grass. In a minute I was out of sight, and I do not think that I had gone more than three hundred yards, when I came to a place where a very new track crossed the one that I was following. Ten steps along this trail, and I decided that I would not go any farther. There standing facing me with ears outspread, about a hundred feet away, was a cow with a little elephant between her forelegs. I could not



imagine that they did not see me. Abdul, the gun-bearer, slid the express rifle into my reaching hand. The cow dropped her trunk and pushed the little one aside. I thought then we were in for it. There came a gentle tug at the back of my shirt. It was Abdul. He beckoned me to come away. We backed out of that neighbourhood as softly as we could.

There were doubtless other elephants close to, but so thick was the grass that one could almost have walked on top of a standing herd before one knew it.

We made our way up the hill to where Kearton had placed the camera, on the top of an old ants' nest, and we did not know how close we were to the rest of the party until we heard voices talking in half whispers not ten feet from us.

The light was fast disappearing, and we had to be content with the few feet of film that we had taken. It was a long and wearisome tramp back to our camp, and nightfall by the time we reached there.

The next morning we were off for Irumu.



## CHAPTER X

### IRUMU

UP to this time we had really encountered no "savages" whose outward appearance, habits, and customs had not to a certain extent been changed or restricted by contact with the white man. Even the naked Kavirondos had swallowed both their pride and their modesty, and condescended to put on some clothing at least when near the line of the railway.

The men and women of Uganda wore most of their earthly possessions on their backs, and even made some attempt to follow a prevailing fashion. But the first people whom we met on the Irumu trail, the Bahema—ex-cannibals, by the way—seemed to be absolutely in their primitive state. They wear no "trade stuff" of any description; in fact, they wear very little worth mentioning; their ornaments, knives, belts, and weapons are all of native workmanship. There were no glass beads or gaudy wrappings of "Amerikani" or cheap print cloth in evidence. Iron and copper wire is forged with much skill into decorations for the neck, arms, and ankles. The women invariably carry a large knife, with a blade shaped like an acacia leaf, thrust in a cord round their waist. Their cooking is done in large clay



pots of native workmanship with rudimentary designs, but we saw no potters at work and no evidence of any industry.

They are a fine race of magnificently built savages, and as we passed through their villages we noticed that their huts and surroundings were kept immaculately clean; there was no litter of old paraffin tins and the general rubbish that we had been accustomed to see in the villages of East Africa. The women perform most of the labour, and how the men could maintain their magnificent physique and muscular development without undertaking any exercise at all was astonishing.

A number of our porters were sick, two or three suffering with bad coughs and colds, the result of the exposure of the hillside. We were forced to send some of them back, but we could not persuade a single Bahema to carry a load. They looked with contempt at our human beasts of burden, and held aloof from them entirely. The women scowled at us, and the children disdained to notice our friendly advances.

It is curious how quickly one grows used to seeing facial disfigurement. The Bahema females in their endeavour to improve upon nature indulge in novel effects of lip ornamentation. The upper lip is pierced for a number of small wooden plugs that, taken with another skewer-like bit of wood running through the nostrils, would destroy the most charming smile and pleasing expression in the world.





BAHEMA BELLES



THE CHIEF'S HUT IN A BAHEMA VILLAGE





The men, who do not scar or disfigure themselves at all, appeared by far the better looking. Oddly enough, during the whole of the trip we saw but two or three children undergoing the process of tribal marking, and there is no question but in certain districts cicatrisation and disfigurement are somewhat dying out. But away from the routes of travel the custom is as frequent as ever.

We soon met with on the road some members of the smaller forest tribes that are closely allied to the M'buti or pygmies; they are well-built little people, the men carrying bows and arrows, and frequently a very gracefully fashioned throwing-spear with a narrow-bladed head. The women, who also are well-built and strong, carry all the loads, and both sexes anoint their bodies with a mixture of palm oil and a red pigment formed of clay and the bark of a forest tree. The paths to their villages led off from the main travel route, and if the people caught sight of us at long distance they would frequently avoid us by diving into the forest; if they had to pass near to us they hustled by half frightened.

Leaving the Bahema villages, we passed through several miles of what we thought to be impenetrable woods, but not until we reached the Ituri River did we learn what the Central African forest really was in growth and dimension.

The next tribe that we encountered was the Walese, a widely spread people, who are divided and subdivided into many tribes and villages that have



little inter-communication, although they come from the same parent stock, having similar customs, methods of hair-dressing and body marks. The Walese are warlike and very truculent. The great majority disdain any open allegiance to the Belgian authority, and for some time past have paid no tribute to the Government.

We were informed by the authorities at Irumu, when we reached there, that these warrior people were quite out of hand, and that a war might be expected at any time. The Walese are still cannibals. We had quite a little to do with them afterwards, and we liked neither their ways nor their manners. Taken altogether they are about as bad a lot of savages as we encountered, and, living as they do in the forest, a complete subjugation of these people would be quite impossible with any force at least that the Government could now bring to meet them.

Next to the Walese come the Babira, who, while warlike also, indulge to a much greater extent in tilling the soil, and their plantations are quite extensive.

So many caravans were then entering the Congo Belge through Uganda and along this route, that in many of the larger villages regular markets had been established; at other places the natives would not part with a bunch of bananas, or condescend to barter for a fowl.

Considering that up to the present time the supplies for all the expeditions and the up-keep of the mining companies of Kilo and the Haut Ituri have to be brought





A WALESE VILLAGE IN THE WOODS







BABIRA WOMEN IN THE MARKET PLACE





in over this rough trail, which is in very bad condition, the amount of commerce is remarkable.

An African of his own accord will never take the trouble to lift, or throw out of the way, any obstacle that may have fallen in the path. He will walk round it. Ten minutes', sometimes two minutes' work would save him a hundred yards' marching, but he never thinks of it. Even in the open country the well-trodden paths wander aimlessly. I was told that on the old slave route this was accounted for by the fact that many slaves died, and as they were not buried the path was changed to avoid the bodies. Truly they must have died by hundreds.

We had another little *shauri* with the porters when but half a day's march from Irumu. We halted for luncheon at quite a populous village, where there was plenty of food, and indications of beer-brewing. This time we all pretended to be hard of hearing, and the spokesman was quite exhausted before he had finished. In reply I made a long speech in English, which included all I could remember of the Declaration of Independence, Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," and "Spartacus's Address to the Gladiators." They seemed much impressed, and when we started on they reluctantly followed us.

We ran into a big thunderstorm, and at last arrived at Irumu in the afternoon, wet through, and tired, having this day covered some eighteen miles.

Irumu is the most important post in the Haut Iturai. Here are placed the custom-house, the Government



stores, and the prison, but no hospital. The native court is held here, and there are stationed about two hundred well-drilled black troops under a commandant, a lieutenant, and a white *sous-officier*. The white Government officials in all muster some fourteen or fifteen. As is the case with most Belgian posts, they are made up of all nationalities but English. There were here, if I remember rightly, two Germans, three Frenchmen, two Danes, two Hollanders, a Norwegian, and a Swede, and to complete the polyglot population the man most influential in securing porters and native labour was a Boer from South Africa.

Having settled with the Customs and presented the letters that had been given us by the Government officials at Brussels asking courtesies for our expedition, we discharged the Baganda porters and pitched our tents in the camping ground.

Irumu is badly located for a frontier post. It is on a river, the waters of which are muddy and unhealthy, and the white officials have to send nearly two miles for their drinking water. The post is composed of two broad intersecting avenues along which are the well-built commodious offices and dwellings of the officials. One of these streets, running to the east, ends in the wide parade ground surrounded by the quarters of the native troops. At the end of the other avenue is the market-place. The Indian traders have obtained a firm foothold here, and there are several decent shops and stores; also the magazines of one or two European trading houses. When one



thinks that all of these supplies, as well as the machinery and equipment of the Government gold mines at Kilo, three days' march to the north, and the mines of the Fourminière Company, have been carried here over that rough path on men's backs, it is a cause for wonder. We were told that nearly two thousand porters a month enter or start from Irumu. There was a large caravan just setting out when we arrived, loaded with wheel-barrows, picks and shovels for the mines.

Mr. Van Marke, the Inspector of Customs, received us most cordially, and lent us assistance in every way. He was a Hollander, but his mother was a Yorkshire woman, and he spoke English perfectly. He gave us much interesting information in regard to our route, and told us a great deal about the natives, but, alas! we were promised no porters, and it looked as if our stay might be protracted.

A storm came up on the second day after our arrival, and blew us down again, smashing the tent-poles and scattering our lighter goods and chattels all over the country.

Here practically ended our tent life, for we pitched camp but twice more. Henceforward we were to live in Government "rest-houses," or native dwellings. We employed our spare time in taking photographs, and secured some very interesting moving pictures of the black troops drilling. Our relations with the officers was a source of amazed curiosity to the rank and file. Owing to a hitch in the proceedings



two or three manœuvres had to be repeated, and one of our party, being interested in the guns carried by the soldiers, examined one carefully. They were single shot rifles with heavy hammers of about the period of the early 'seventies, and used black powder. Subsequently Ernesti, our source of general information, informed us that a rumour had spread through the battalion that the English were soon to take the Congo. He had held conversation with a black sergeant, who spoke as follows.

"Lo, behold," said he, "here come two Englishmen. They tell our officers what to make us do. Then we do it over and over again. They look at our rifles that only shoot once; theirs shoot many times; you do not have to load them at all. The English will take the country."

"Well," asked Kearton, "do you think they would object?"

Ernesti shrugged his shoulders.

"They would not care," said he, "as long as they were fed; they would not fight white men."

To make a long story short, at the end of a week we had secured some thirty or forty porters and started on toward Kifiku, the first stopping-place on the edge of the forest, dividing the column into two divisions. Another thirty were to follow in two days.





BLACK TROOPS AT IRUMU







AN IRUMU WOMAN  
(Showing Cicatrisation)







A GOVERNMENT REST-HOUSE



THE "ENTENTE CORDIALE "





## CHAPTER XI

### ENTERING THE FOREST

**A**T the head of the first division I set out to the westward with the sun behind my back. Although it was quite early the market-place was crowded with chattering groups of blacks selling bananas, yams, sugar-cane, native tobacco, some curious dried roots and firewood. A few native traders who had amassed enough wealth to buy salt and sugar had their wares spread out on the ground in little piles, like children's mud pies, on the fresh, broad palmated banana leaves. The women were doing most of the marketing. Some of them wore toga-like garments of cheap print cloth and others were dressed mostly like the September morning. A few wore great disks, two or three inches in diameter, fitting into incisions in their upper lips. They looked hideous, especially when they talked or laughed. What was my surprise to see a woman take one of these disfiguring objects out, probably the better to adjust it, and to see that the lip regained its natural shape, leaving only a small triangular scar. Catching my eye she appeared quite as embarrassed as would a lady who had been caught unawares removing her false teeth. She turned her back upon me, and then,



presto! the disk, as large as a mustard pot, was in place again; reassured, she smiled. It was a painful smile. I fled.

It was a grand day for walking, the heat had not yet come on, and by noon the gun-bearer and I were three or four miles ahead of the lagging column. We were still in open country—wide, ranging plains covered with the coarse reed-like grass. Directly before us lifted the slope of a hill broken along the ridge by sharp pointed, lofty pinnacles. Half-way up the path ran through a native village. As we entered a middle-aged man came forward with his hand outstretched.

“Bon jo,” he said.

Near the posts the natives have picked up an approach to the Belgian words of greeting.

He began to jabber something at me, and then I discovered he wanted me to follow him toward the largest of the huts. The place contained not more than fifteen or twenty at the most.

Wondering what was to do, I followed. Bending down he pulled aside a screen of woven grass and bade me enter. The close odour of the place made me feel almost faint as I thrust in my head, but distinctly I saw a woman lying there on a couch of goat-skin. It needed but a glance to see that she was dying, and but a second look to decide what was the matter. I had once before seen a case of small-pox in its most virulent stage. Hastily I withdrew.



The chief, for such I judged him, looked at me sorrowfully. I guessed that he was asking if I could do nothing for the sufferer—I caught the word “dowa.” I shook my head, waved a slow hand and left him leaning there against the side of the hut. The place was quite deserted, and I well understood the reason. I saw but one old woman and a very old man, seated in the shade of a grass shelter. They scarcely looked up as I passed.

Anxious to get to the top of the hill, where the wind was blowing, I fairly ran up the steep slope, and soon found myself amid the outcropping of stone. I stopped to light my pipe. There was still another rise of ground between me and the sky line; in a few hundred yards the summit was reached, and there I paused. It was a great sight, a sight worth coming many thousands of miles to see.

To the west, at the foot of a slightly undulating slope, only five or six miles away, rose the green walls and ramparts of the great forest. The line of demarcation was as clear as a timber claim on the American prairie. Eight hundred miles and more it stretched away to the westward like a dark green highland, with capes and promontories extended here and there into the smooth sea of the open grass country, or better, to change the simile entirely, it was like a great inundation that was flowing out on to a sedgy, rolling beach, an inundation that had been arrested and held motionless for all time.

I cannot describe my sensations as I looked at it.



To north and south, as well as westward, it held possession of the eye. I turned to the east, there, billowing far away miles and miles uncountable, swept the grey-green ocean of the open country. But it was the forest that drew me. In that blue vastness westward were people that knew no sunlight, here to the east dwelt people who could find no shade. Differing in customs and modes of life, they were born, existed—died! I stood on the summit of the barrier-land. I forgot the sick and mangy village just below, and the thoughts that came to me I wish I could record. No doubt I looked over a land—for the air was clear and I could see many miles—a land into which no white man had ever gone, and I knew that not far away, only a few hours' march beyond the wall of that great prison of foliage, flowed an estuary of the mighty river that poured its muddy volumes into the Atlantic, and yet we were not half-way across the continent. There were months before us ere we could see the great waters. There, like a Titan's contour map stretched out in front of me, lay the home of pygmy tribes perhaps undiscovered; of savages who still ate human flesh; the haunt of sorcery and witchcraft, of cruelty and slavery and death.

For countless ages it has been like this. It tempted one to enter and explore its mysteries.

In a short two hours I stood in the very gate, and then a plunge through some few hundred feet of heavy bush, and the curtain dropped behind me.





NEARING KIFIKU





The change from the heat of the plain was the first sensation, and then a thousand odours reached the senses. From some storehouse of my memory there came to me the reminiscent scents of a great mushroom cellar that I had once visited as a boy, the damp earth, and yet the feeling of near-by growing things that loved the darkness; things that sprang up and died so quickly that their living and their decaying unfragrances were mingled. I wished to go in deeper, and yet half fearfully, and half regretfully, I turned and looked back at the little ray of sunshine that filtered past the curtain I had drawn aside. A few more steps and that ray was gone.

For an instant the temptation came to me to rush back again into the sunlight. Twenty-seven years before, Stanley, travelling eastward in his expedition to the relief of Emin Pasha, had pushed aside the last gloomy veil of the forest, and "emerged upon a rolling plain, green as an English lawn, into the broadest, sweetest daylight." Well could I imagine his sensations.

Our path led now in the opposite direction towards the setting sun. It was to be a long, long time before we saw the wide open spaces again.

The trail to the Ituri was well defined. Abdul, the gun-bearer, and I pressed on, and after passing one or two overgrown clearings where old villages had once been, we came out suddenly on the bank of a swift-flowing, muddy stream some eighty yards in width. On the farther bank could be seen some well-built native



houses, and a ferry, consisting of a large canoe hollowed from a single log, was moored under the overhanging branches of a tree. At a call the ferryman responded, skilfully punting his way across, and in a few minutes he had taken us aboard and left us at the end of the Mongwana village of Kifiku, that in the native language means "The place of landing."

We had met at Irumu, a few days before, the chief of the Congo Oriental Company, the most important of all the trading companies that deal directly with the natives of the Haut Ituri, and he had invited us to stay at his headquarters at Kifiku, while we sought opportunity to get pictures of elephants, the neighbouring *m'buti*, or pygmies, and perhaps to get a glimpse of the okapi, the forest animal half antelope, half giraffe, that not more than two or three white men have ever seen alive.

Few people stay very long in the unhealthy districts of Central Africa without showing the effects of the climate, and certainly the plucky little Frenchman, who had lived there for eight years, was the sickest-looking man I have ever seen. Once strong and robust, he had wasted away absolutely to mere bones. Successive fevers and long illnesses had marked him. Nothing but indomitable will and courage had kept him going. Now he was completing his service, and going to retire for good and all from the country that had sapped him so cruelly. Yet during the time we were his guests Monsieur Delporte worked from ten to fourteen hours a day. He was virtually the white ruler of a far-flung





AN IVORY CARAVAN ON THE MARCH



IVORY TRADER'S YARD





district, and old Lombura, or Gondolo, as he was sometimes called, the paramount chief, with whom he had much to do, was but his henchman and prime minister. In fact here, at Kifiku, we entered into the traders' dynasty. It was a curious insight that we obtained during our stay into the commercial possibilities of a trading company, that under competent hands had secured a foothold stronger than any government, and a sway that required no upkeep of armed force to prolong its power.

Kifiku is the most important ivory trading post in the Ituri district, and the leading representative of the company has here installed a system that on a larger scale would be the greatest money-making project that ever could exist. It was as if by planting a few francs in the ground money-bearing trees had sprung into existence; one had hardly to shake the branches and they blossomed from one year's end to another. M. Delporte was the planter.

He was perfectly frank about it, and there was no secrecy at all in the method, and it was as simple as A B C. Money was in circulation—francs, five franc pieces, and smaller currency represented by tokens in the decimal system that went down to half a centime. The usual smaller coin current with the natives represented in value the tenth of an English penny, and was called a *makuta*. A few sovereigns' worth of them strung on stout string through the holes in the centre would make a good load for a man.

Now, the Congo Oriental Company owned all the



stores where the money could be spent, and fixed its own prices for ivory, rubber, labour and trade goods. As soon as a native was paid cash for anything, either as an advance or for services rendered, he hastened hot-foot to the company's stores and bought anything from an harmonica to a second-hand gold-braided uniform, and as the profit in these articles ran from a hundred to two hundred and fifty per cent., it can easily be seen where the money trees came in. The man who had brought in ivory was paid for it in cash, at a rate that ensured a profit of about one hundred and fifty per cent., and immediately he repaired to the store where he bought things he had no use for, giving another profit of cent. per cent. at least. The money was sent from the store to the company's offices, where the native was paid for carrying the ivory on the first stage of its long journey to the coast; the money received was the same that had been paid for the ivory in the first place, and the bearer would surely come back and spend his wages at the store again.

It was a lovely system, and the only real chance for loss was the wear and tear on the money itself, and the expense of book-keeping. If the native demanded an extra price for ivory or labour there was very little trouble made over it, the extra cost was added to the articles in the store. Quite simple, is it not?

I shrewdly suspect that old Lombura was a silent partner in the enterprise, for the attempt of any Indian



trader, or the representative of any other company, to do any business in the neighbourhood of the numerous villages under his control received an instant quietus.

Had it not been for our friend the trader's Gallic enthusiasm, and the sanguine expectations he held out, we might not have taken so great an amount of stock, as it were, in Lombura's promises, and most certainly we would not have delayed so long in his bailliewick. Monsieur Delporte had recommended Lombura very highly, and then had taken his departure.

Lombura had imbibed so much of the trading company's methods and ideas that he knew a good thing when he saw it. We were that good thing. What a bland, plausible old scoundrel he proved to be, and yet withal a man of dominance and quiet force. Never did we see him that we could remember without a smile on his face, an inscrutable, joke-on-the-universe smile that was quite unfathomable. It had been suggested that we make Lombura a present as a good way to secure his interest. We made him one to the extent of one hundred francs. He suggested that we should carry on the good work by giving him further presents that he could present to his sub-chiefs. This we did in trade stuff, iron jumbies, or native hoes, wire, and blue cotton cloth, called *kaniki*, so dear to the Congo native's heart.

From what Lombura told us, the native and tributary chiefs would, in return for all this advance "*matabeesh*," or tribute, round up a herd of fine elephant in the



open so that we could photograph them, and enlist the services of a trained corps of pygmy trackers, who would bring us face to face with the okapi; he promised that we would be given such opportunities of seeing the people and the customs of the country that never before was the lot of white men. All we had to do was to sit down and wait, and when everything was ready he would let us know. So we sat and waited, and when we met Lombura he smiled such an encouraging smile, it had all the promised divulgence of mystery; but nothing happened. The native messengers sent out into the surrounding country with the tribute never came back.

It was time to force old Lombura's hand, if such a thing could be done. After following him up pretty closely he told us that everything was ready. That he would provide us with porters at so much per head, an escort from his own personal staff, and a guide who would take us south of the Loya River where the mysteries of the forest would be unfolded.

The guide was no other than a sub-chief himself, a half pygmy, half Walese, and a most curious little figure he was when we first saw him. He was dressed in a cheap German military cap with a wide gold braid, a pair of trousers that were not rolled, but furled in successive turns at the ankle and confined under his armpits with a gaudy cricket belt. He could speak, or pretended he could speak, a little Swahili, and from politeness, or from not understanding the questions addressed to him, he always replied in the





ENTERING A VILLAGE: THE DWARF LEADS THE WAY



WOMEN RUNNING OUT TO MEET THE COLUMN





affirmative, *N'dio*. He was about the size of a boy of eleven years of age, and I judged him to be very young, until subsequently it was developed that he had a number of wives and some very promising families.

When first we met him, in the presence of Lombura, we had a most satisfactory interview.

Would we find elephants down in this country? "N'dio." Many? "N'dio." In the open where we could take pictures of them? "N'dio." Pygmies? "N'dio." Okapi? "Oh, N'dio, n'dio." So at last when the day came for setting out we were in very high spirits.

Old Lombura had secured for us two canoes in which Kearton and I were to descend the river, half a day's journey, taking some of our supplies with us. At a certain point we were to meet the porters, who had started earlier with the rest of our necessary belongings.

The expedition formed one of the most interesting chapters in our African experience.

## CHAPTER XII

### OUR EXPEDITION SOUTH OF LOYA INTO THE PYGMY COUNTRY

OLD Lombura came down to the landing to see us off. We demurred very much at the leaky old canoe which had been provided for our trip down the river, and after some conversation, during which the wily old chief never lost his inscrutable smile, he gave us the large ferry canoe, and to our surprise drew what subsequently proved to be a fairly accurate map of the country into which we were going, with a point of his stick in the wet sand.

With our personal boys, gun-bearers, and cameras we shoved off at last into the river. Within three hundred yards we had rounded a bend, and all signs of human habitation had disappeared. The great forest rose on either hand in towering palisades of green. The water was very low, and the skill displayed by our paddlers would have won the admiration of an expert Canadian voyageur; they avoided the many rocks and shoals, sometimes skirting the bank, and sometimes holding to mid-stream, with all the certainty of a Micmac pilot on a Labrador stream.

"This beats walking," remarked the Photographer, who was lolling back in the camp arm-chair that exactly fitted into the narrow space between the gun-





THE LOYA RIVER NEAR MAMAKUPI







CROSSING THE LOYA RIVER



OUR CAMP AT MAMAKUPI





wales, and most certainly it did. There was a sense of real enjoyment and novelty. We could see that our escort were happy. They all belonged to inland tribes of the plains, and hills, and it was their first experience of canoeing. If they could have understood they would have subscribed heartily to Kearton's remark.

A voluble chattering had risen among them that was interrupted by the bowman turning quickly, with upraised hand, and enjoining silence. The two paddlers and the steersman began searching the shores with what appeared to me rather anxious faces. I turned and asked what was the matter. There was some more whispering in very low tones, and then Ernesti gave us the following rather cryptic information.

"It comes out from the river bank over the water; they are afraid of it; we must make no noise."

"What?" asked Kearton. "What comes?"

"I don't know, bwana," replied Ernesti, "but if it does come we must jump into the water."

The bowman made another gesture imploring silence. The paddlers were using great caution as they softly swept their paddles through the water. It was quite uncanny. I thought it better to be prepared, and slipped the big rifle out of its cover. For fully three minutes we drifted in this way, and then an idea seized Kearton and myself at the same time. The superstitious savages were afraid of spirits that were supposed to haunt this part of the river. I was almost tempted to give a loud halloo, to break



the silence. It was rather well that I did not yield, for now we observed the bowman pointing, and this time to the branches of the great trees that overhung the water. There depending from a limb was a huge bees' nest of mud and leaf fibre some fifteen feet long, and a little way below there was another quite as large.

The African bee must possess an acutely nervous temperament. Not only does he attack objects that offend his sight, but those that offend his sense of hearing. Had there been much noise from the canoe the bees would have come out and attacked us. It was no foolish superstition, it was a "condition not a theory" that confronted us. These intensely belligerent insects do not live entirely on the honey that they may gather from the flowering trees and shrubs, they eat carrion, decaying fungi, and haunt the offal heaps of the villages.

I have never heard of any attempts at their domestication.

We had soon passed the danger zone, a fact that was signalled by a loud whoop from the bowman, and a splash and a clatter of the paddles against the sides of the canoe. Our speed increased, and after some three hours of sudden spurts, followed by lazy drifting, the steersman headed us in for shore. A green tunnel showed where a steep, muddy path came down the bank at the water's edge, and half hidden here was a hollowed log canoe in rather a leaky state. On the opposite bank was a correspond-



ing opening in the foliage. A little way in the forest there was a collection of leafy huts.

The sun was now hot out on the river, and disembarking we waited for the porters who were to make the journey on foot. In another hour and a half they had arrived, and were ferried across.

The trail led south through the forest. A narrow footpath at the best, it climbed up and down slippery gullies, over masses of fallen trees and debris, and although it was past noon, only here and there did a stray ray of sunlight filter through the canopy that stretched above us.

Our little half-pygmy guide had discarded his town finery and was much the better looking in consequence. There is a certain dignity that the well-built savage seems to possess *in naturalibus* that he loses entirely in store clothes. From somewhere the guide had possessed himself of a spear, and I noticed that he had a porter of his own carrying his somewhat heavy bundle.

We had gone on some five or six miles when we came to the first village that old Lombura had indicated on his rough map. There was a meagre plantation of banana trees, and a collection of some ten or a dozen huts. Our entrance created not a little commotion. The local chief appeared, hastily putting on a red tunic, whose remaining brass buttons proclaimed it to be of British Army origin. He shook hands, and asked for some cloth in exchange for the privilege of passing through his little domain.

A word from Lombura's representative seemed to



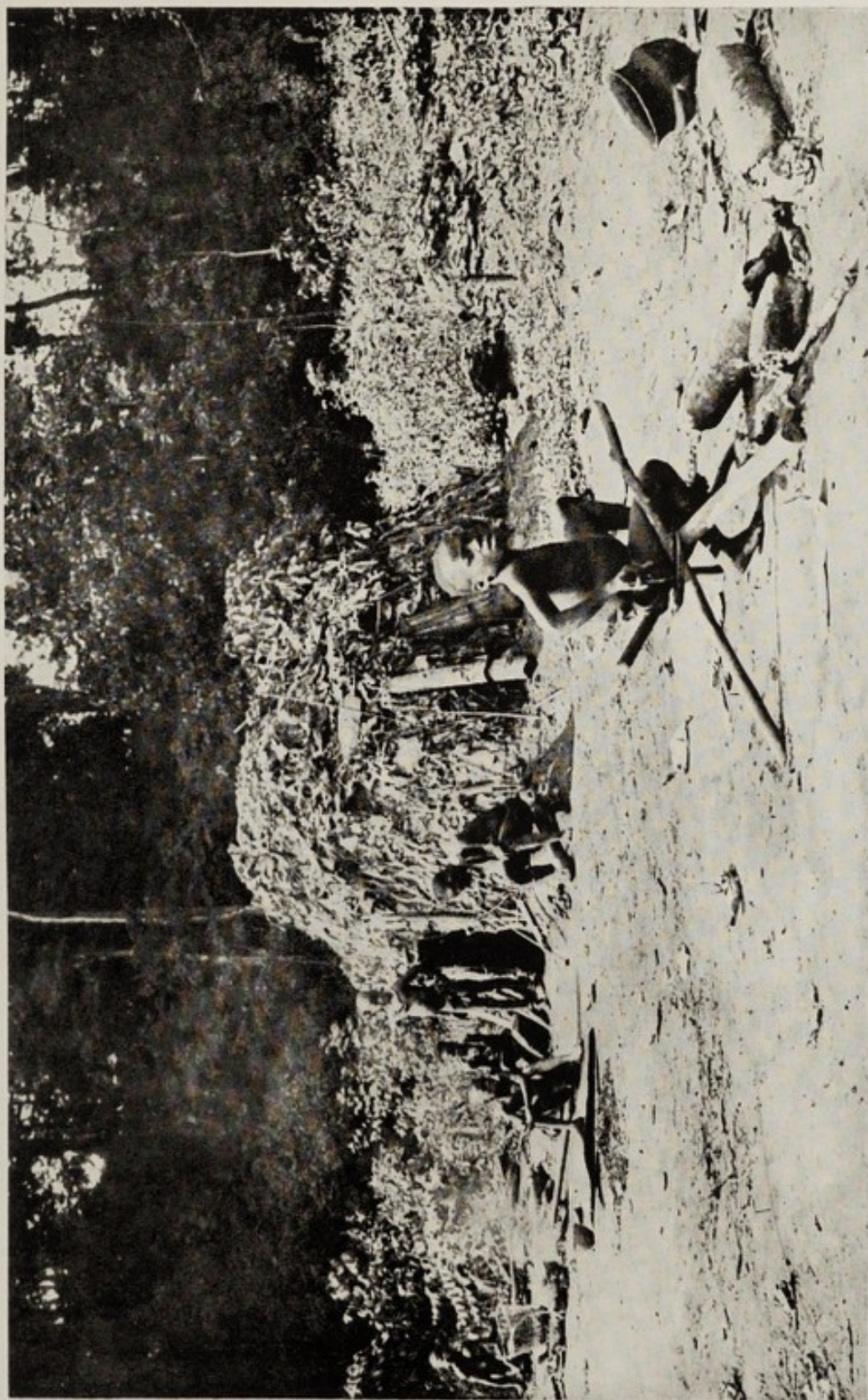
answer, however, and ours being to a certain extent a personally conducted party we passed through without paying tribute. This happened with the second small village as well, and it was late afternoon when we arrived at Mentoni.

Of all the disagreeable, and ugly looking natives, this Walese village seemed to possess the pick. The chief, of whom not a little hereafter, was a one-eyed old rascal of a most villainous cast of countenance. All of the men, who scarcely stirred at our entrance, were armed with bows and arrows, the bow being between three and four feet in length, and the arrows of very light construction, tipped with barbed iron points, and most probably poisoned.

Upon making inquiries as to the whereabouts of elephant we were informed that there were several herds in the vicinity, and that one old bull raided the plantations every night, but he was too wary to be caught in traps or pitfalls, and we were told that he had killed two of the best elephant hunters that he had caught in the high grass while they were tracking him. They would be very grateful if we would stop and rid the community of the big beast's presence.

Now this section of the Haut Ituri is supposed to be closed to white elephant hunters, although the natives are allowed to kill the animals in any way they possibly can, for the good reason, I dare say, that they could not be prevented. The Belgian Government, through the Minister of the Colonies, had kindly





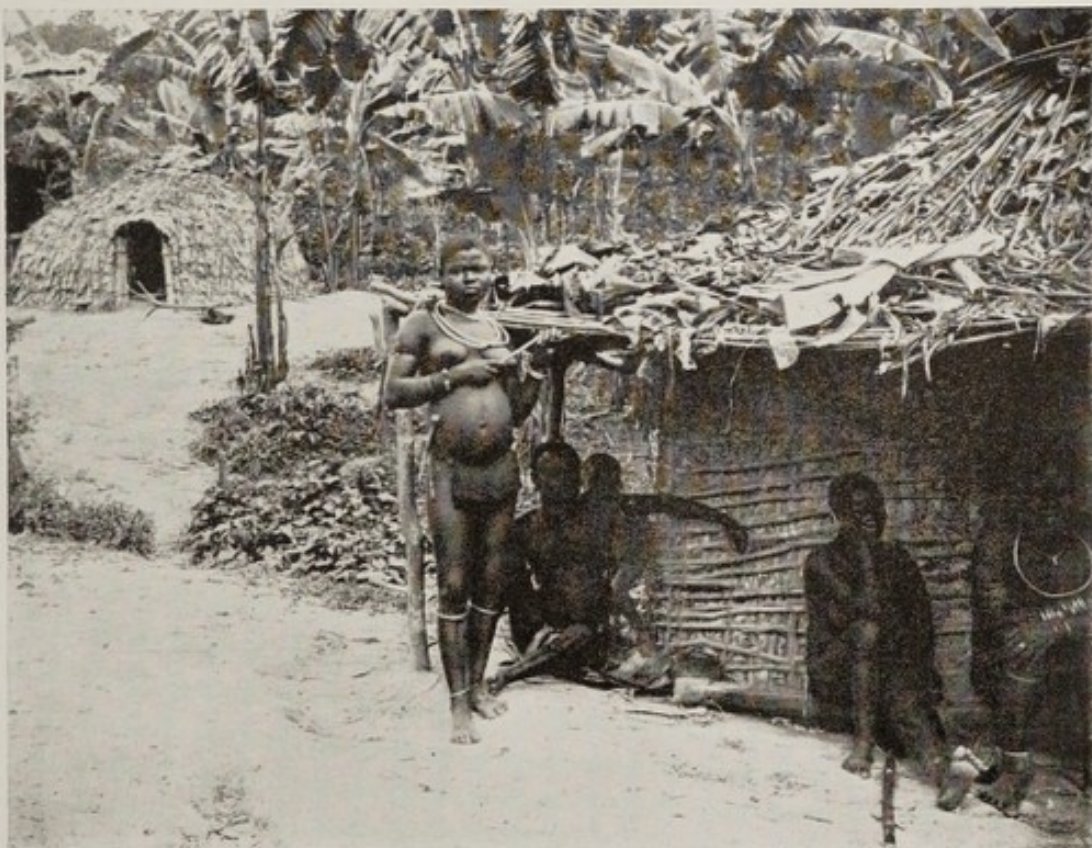
HUTS OF THE FOREST PEOPLE







SOME LITTLE CANNIBALS



THE BELLE OF THE VILLAGE





presented our expedition with a game licence that allowed us to shoot in any part of the Congo Belge, and included elephant to the number of four.

While we were talking to the chief, and our tents were being pitched, a native came in with the news that the big bull was on the outskirts of a neighbouring village helping himself to a field of potatoes.

We started after him, and having followed a very rough trail for some three or four miles we got close enough to hear him as he crashed through the underbrush, disdaining all attempts to hide his presence. It was growing very dark, too dark indeed to see the rifle sights, and photographing had long been out of question. We let him alone. Night had fallen before we got back to our camp.

Next morning we made another reconnaissance and actually got a good glimpse of the huge beast, but so rough was the going it was doubtful if we could come up to him, as he was travelling fast. We returned to the village, and, breaking camp, we went on to the Loya River, and at last arrived at Mamakupi, the home of our half *m'buti* guide.

On the trail we had followed we had passed many deserted dwellings of the little forest people, but not a sight of one did we get. Mamakupi was a large and to all appearances a prosperous community. The clearing would have occupied an extent of nearly one hundred acres; the plantations seemed to be in a flourishing condition.

The little chief, who had accompanied us, donned



all his regalia, which this time consisted of an old Belgian uniform, originally made for a man who must have stood nearly six feet. He presented a curious and amusing figure. His dignity had left him, and he resembled an organ-grinder's monkey more than anything else.

There was a pygmy encampment in the forest only two or three miles away that we were informed was occupied, and guided by one or two of the head men, and bringing the cameras with us, we visited it that afternoon. All of the men were absent, off hunting we were told, and most of the women on seeing us scuttled out of sight into the bushes, only a very few remained, mostly rather elderly females. But they seemed to possess intelligent faces, and instead of being black were of a brownish, coppery hue.

Their little village was in a glade in the forest, and there was not sufficient light to obtain good photographic results.

We left presents of cloth, beads and iron hoes, and returned there the next morning. This time the people did not appear so shy, or frightened, and there were a number of the younger women, and eight or ten of the hunters. The chief, whether from contact with the Walese, or some other tribe, was decorated with iron and copper wire, and wore a peculiar feathered head-dress. The older men were hairy and bearded, and the striplings and younger hunters were really rather pleasing to look at; they all had large, soft





“ HE RESEMBLED AN ORGAN-GRINDER'S MONKEY ”







A YOUNG M'BUTI HUNTER





brown eyes, and the younger women also were well proportioned and quite graceful.

After some trouble we got the men to go through their tracking manœuvres, and even to let fly their arrows at an imaginary foe, but, alas! the results were most discouraging when we came to make tests of the film, and it was this day that I wrote in my diary, "The forest is impossible as a field for moving photography."

With some difficulty we persuaded the chief, and a few followers, to come into the open, and thus at last we secured a few feet of quite excellent pictures. These pygmies are altogether different from those to be found north of the Ituri; they seem to be stronger and better built, slightly higher perhaps in the human scale. They stand from three feet eight inches to about four feet two in height when full grown. I do not believe that their communities consist of more than fifty or sixty.

They possess no permanent homes, and are constantly moving from one part of the forest to another. Probably they are the very oldest race of people on the earth.

The little chief of Mamakupi had arranged to give us a dance in the afternoon, but it was late in the evening before the drums began to call the people together, and when they had all assembled and the dance had begun again there was not sufficient sunlight to obtain any pictures. We were beginning to get used to disappointments.



In the afternoon of the third day word had come in that elephants were near, and having followed their tracks through the deep forest we got very close to them. It was not a large herd, and it was almost impossible to penetrate through the deep undergrowth without following directly in their footsteps. For ten minutes we were within forty feet of a young bull and a cow, occasionally getting glimpses of their huge bulks through the screen of the leaves, but it was not clear enough to see whether they were facing us or not.

They shifted their position a little, and we came on them again. This time I was obliged to fire, as it was evident that they intended to investigate us in their turn. It was a lucky shot, and the first big beast came down, burying its tusks in the ground not thirty feet away. The rest of the herd made off.

On our return we passed through the pygmy village. They had heard the shooting, and were coming out to meet us. Before darkness had completely descended elephant meat was arriving at Mamakupi in basketfuls. They brought us the tusks the next morning; they weighed under forty pounds.

Having supplied the village larder, we were quite popular, and could have remained as Mamakupi's guests as long as we desired, but unfortunately Kearton was far from well, and we decided to make haste back to Kifiku. The evening of the next day found us once more at Mentoni.

Having heard that we had shot an elephant, the





A WALESE M'BUTI CHIEF







A LIGHT LUNCH: AN ELEPHANT'S FOREFOOT





villagers here begged us to stay and rid them of their particular pest, the big tusker, and after a consultation it was decided that I should stay, with four or five of our escort, while Kearton and the rest of the party went on to the river.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ALONE IN THE CANNIBAL COUNTRY

**M**ENTONI, the old one-eyed chief, after whom the village was named, bothered me so the next morning by constantly hanging round and pointing out the various belongings of mine that he would be glad to receive, that I decided to move on to another small collection of huts about two miles away, whose plantations were receiving the particular attention of the big bull. So I pitched my tent in the squalid little hamlet of five or six huts, and tried, without being too precipitant, to make friends with the inhabitants.

As with children so it is with savages. It is really best to be entirely unsuspecting, and to have the appearance of being perfectly at home. The men were all armed; they did not seem to move, even from one hut to the other, without carrying their bows and arrows. On their left wrist was a little bag of monkey skin stuffed with dried grass, a guard against the sharp recoil of the fibre that took the place of bow-string.

I had no method of direct communication with them except by signs, but I was told that there were several parties of hunters looking for elephant.





A CHIEF ON THE LOYA RIVER





I took a book and, sitting under a tree, began to read.

There was no evidence of race suicide at this place; every hut contained five or six children, from babes in arms to stark naked little boys and girls of ten or twelve. They stood silently about at a respectful distance and gazed at me.

The first really friendly overture came from a woman, who brought an infant of some five or six months of age with a very sore and much neglected foot, the result of tick bite. Before evening I had tied up or anointed every juvenile thumb or toe in the place.

Africa is a land of sores and ulcers. A slight cut, sometimes a mere scratch, will develop into an ulcerated spot, and even the elder natives do not seem to be immune. How they recover from wounds in battle, or their self-inflicted scars, I do not understand.

They are very fond of their children. I have seen a proud young father dandle and play with his baby by the hour, or walk down the village street with two young toddlers hanging to his hands. The women also take good care of their little ones, and a girl child of ten or twelve is an expert nurse to her little brothers and sisters. Their family life seems to be most affectionate and kindly. They are nearly always good humoured, and, barring occasional squabbles, are laughing and chattering most of the time. Yet these people, certainly those with whom I was



stopping, were still cannibals, and although they would deny the fact to strangers, they still bartered and traded in human flesh.

There was no tribal war, but if a death took place by accident, or through natural causes, the body was eaten. I was told that it was customary to sell it to the next village. I am quite positive that while I was there a woman was thus disposed of at the next little village to the one in which I was stopping.

No elephants were reported the first day. I had succeeded in purchasing a couple of scrawny fowls and some eggs. Why the inhabitants of Central Africa keep fowls is a mystery, for I have never heard of one being eaten by their black owners. Eggs they never touch, and, having found that I would give beads and wire in exchange for them, I had plenty offered me. It did not make any difference to the would-be barterers whether they were stale or fresh—an egg was an egg: that's all there is to it. They used to watch me testing them against the light with the greatest interest, and could not imagine why I accepted some and refused others.

The first night I spent here was not in the least enjoyable. There was much horn-blowing, singing and shouting from a village not far away, and in the morning men and women appeared with their bodies oiled and blackened, some of them quite under the influence of the intoxicating brew, malwa.

The little head man had now become very friendly, and I noticed that the spears and bows and arrows



were no longer carried, but were left leaning against the sides of the huts. The little children had got over their fear of me entirely.

During the somewhat noisy night I had been rather touched and surprised by finding Bakale fast asleep at the door of my tent, and I noticed that he had placed both rifles against my cot, with spare cartridges under the pillow. About eleven o'clock on the third day two Walese hunters appeared with the news that they had found the elephants.

The big bull had not put in an appearance in his wonted haunts, but now I was told that there were many elephants off to the east. In the little party that stayed with me there were two young Mongwanas from Lombura's village, and excellent fellows they proved to be. I found out to my delight that one could speak a little Swahili. As we were about to depart Bakale came up and asked to go also. I suggested that he had better stay with the tent and take care of things. His reply was quite characteristic.

"These people are all bad," he said; "they eat men and are liars, but they will not steal. Let me carry the big gun and go with you."

So Bakale came.

We must have gone five or six miles beyond the farthest one of the little chain of villages before we came across the track of the herd. It was very large, for the grass and undergrowth of the swamp in which we found ourselves looked as if a tornado had been through it. The footprints and the spoor were very



fresh. When we reached the edge of this swampy ground and had entered the forest again, one of the native hunters—there were about a dozen of them with us—cautioned me to wait, and disappeared. In about two minutes he came back again; all the others had gathered with him.

They pointed off to the left. Walking very carefully we had gone about a quarter of a mile when the leader stopped, and then motioned me to go forward. I stepped ahead of him, and looking round an instant later, found I was practically alone; and then I listened—something was moving not more than twenty or thirty feet away on the left.

Without any warning but a rustle of the leaves the huge head of an elephant, with a trunk reaching and feeling for the wind, appeared directly in front of me. It was a cow, I could tell by the small brownish tusks, and actually I could look down her throat! Backing slowly, I got out of that before she saw or winded me.

My friends the trackers were not five yards off. They could not understand my not having shot, but I tried to explain that the ivory was not big enough. And now arose a strange sound of blowing, and a curious rumbling off to the right and the left; then the crashing of a branch. The herd was coming in our direction. All the men turned, silently looking over their shoulders at me. Then one of them started, walking quickly, and in single file we moved off toward the swamp.





A PYGMY HUT IN THE CONGO FOREST





We had almost reached the edge of the very deepest wood when there came a shrill trumpeting squeal. It was exactly as if some giant had severed a sheet of cloth, a tearing, ripping sort of sound. A big branch crashed behind us, and another in front. The loom of a great shape moving black through the leaves appeared now on the left. The herd was all around us! I cannot say that it was a pleasant position.

Bakale shook the little bag of flour that a gun-bearer carries at his belt, in order to find the direction of the wind. There seemed to be not a breath of air stirring. There was a cracking of twigs, and a little elephant, not more than four or five feet high, shuffled by us within a few yards. Almost instantly a large cow burst through the leaves, and so close was she that she did not stop an instant. She saw us. With trunk stretched straight out, on she came, her great ears sweeping the branches on either side of our head. As I fired, aiming directly at her skull, about five or six inches above where the great reaching trunk joined it, I saw that there was another one behind her. As she crashed down I fired the left barrel at a young bull, and managed to turn him so that he passed by. The cow never moved after falling. It was exactly five short steps to where she lay.

At the sound of the two shots pandemonium rose; squealing and trumpeting, and a great crashing and breaking of branches, all round us. Two of the native hunters ran to where I was standing and knelt beside me. Bakale, who had the second gun, had dodged



behind a tree, his nerve had deserted him, and when he came up I could see he was badly frightened. The negro does not grow pale, but under great excitement his colour seems to change; he turns a sort of ash colour round the lips. Afterwards Bakale confessed that he had never gone out for elephant before, and he never asked to go again.

I should say it was fully two or three minutes before the smashing and crashing subsided entirely. As for my own immediate sensations they had better be left undescribed. I sat down on the dead cow's shoulder—thus covering myself with elephant ticks which I did not discover until later—and wiped my perspiring forehead.

The jabbering natives now came up, and without more to do began to hack at the body. Staggering under as much meat as they could carry, they led the way back to the villages. Immediately we arrived there was a great commotion, everybody seemed ready to start to the place where the elephant lay.

I came back to my tent, drank four cups of tea, and ate a half raw and very tough chicken. But this was not to be my only experience for the twenty-four hours. The moon rose quite early and was at the full, and I was just about to turn in when I heard the sound of some excited whispering outside the tent. One of the Mongwanas, who had accompanied me in the morning, entered with Bakale.

“Tembo, mingi, mingi, caribu maginni bwana.”  
(There are many elephants round the village, master.)





ON THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE







A FAMILY GROUP IN A FOREST VILLAGE







A SCOWLING WELCOME FROM A LADY CANNIBAL





"Tembo makubwa hapa." (The big elephant is here.)

I stepped outside. The moonlight was so bright that even the colours showed plainly. The green of the leaves, the grey thatch of the hut, and the red blossoms of some flowering shrub could be made out distinctly. Testing the rifle I found that I could see the sights well enough for close shooting. It was rather a foolish thing to do, but I went after the elephants.

Following the three or four guides down a path through the overgrown plantation, it was quite exciting. The two Mongwanas were with me, and one of them took the spare rifle. I carried the big rifle myself. I do not think that a better gun-bearer can be found than the average native tracker. His faith in the white man and in the weapon itself is so certain that he is absolutely sure not to desert you, and he is never tempted to do what a professional gun-bearer is often led to do by excitement, he never fires himself.

Bakale had better sense than I had, and stayed in the village. To make a long story short, when we got into the deep underbrush it was quite as dark as one might have expected to find it; the moonlight did not penetrate the overhanging boughs. But still the guides pressed ahead, and we emerged at last into the open space of an old plantation. It was very pleasant to get out of the dark green tunnels through which we had been passing. I breathed a sigh of relief.



Other natives now appeared, they came up grinning, somewhat excited. After consultation among them we started forward again. A reedbuck burst forward with a snort and a bark out of the bushes, and dashed in front of us. The horns were blowing now in all the villages, for the presence of the elephants was known.

We passed by the ruins of some abandoned huts, plunged into the undergrowth again, and came out once more on the edge of an old clearing, and there we stopped. One of the Mongwanas, he who was carrying the spare gun, touched my arm, and pointed. Against the moonlit sky, crossing the path by which we had come, there could just be made out the backs of two or three big elephants, the rounded tops of their ears laid close against their shoulders. They were, perhaps, some fifty yards away.

When they reached our fresh tracks they stopped and began blowing. I could see their big trunks waving in the air. A little man with a spear, who stood in front of me, took hold of my sleeve and pointed forward. There were some shrubs and bushes ten or fifteen feet high through which the path led, and, plain to be seen, there was something white gleaming there.

I did not like the elephants being behind us, but went forward until we reached the edge of the undergrowth. There the little spearman knelt and pointed again. In the corner of the old potato field stood the big bull, certainly not more than sixty or seventy



feet away. It was the gleam of his tusks that I had caught a minute or so before.

He was really a magnificent sight in the bright moonlight. The ivory points nearly swept the ground. He did not appear to be in the least alarmed, yet he was listening as he stood swaying, for his great ears were standing out on either side of his head like the steering sails of an old-fashioned frigate. I knelt down, it was a good chance for a head or a heart shot, and I raised the express. A branch of the bushes surrounding me caught the gun barrel and prevented me from getting a sight at his head. Lifting his ponderous feet the bull began to turn. I fired two shots as quickly as I could, one at the point of the shoulder and the other at the hip. The huge beast staggered, and plunged forward into the bushes.

The Mongwana who was carrying the spare rifle thrust it into my hand. The elephants who were behind us had turned into the path; I could just make out a big head and outstanding ears above the bushes, and again fired quickly. The animal swerved to the right, and with his two companions passed by us. There must have been a number in the neighbourhood, for we could hear them crashing off. One, we were told later, went by within a few yards of the village where I had pitched my tent.

The horns had stopped blowing, and when we got back the whole place was excited. The women and children were out, and the men who had accompanied me began to relate the story. I could hear them imitating



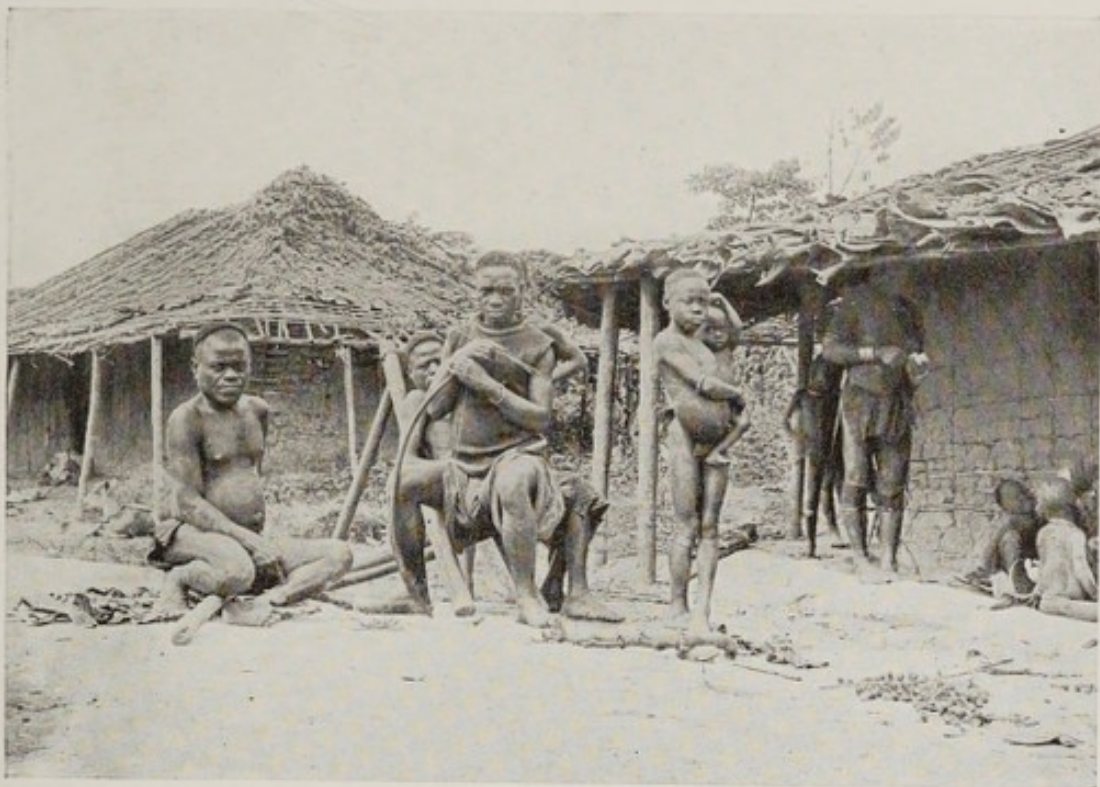
the sound of the gun. The calm that they had shown while following the elephants was missing. They cackled and gesticulated, and long after I had gone to my tent and laid down on the cot, suffering a little from the reaction myself, I could hear them still at it.

The human mind is a strange thing, and Nature takes care of herself; as soon as I had removed my boots I fell fast asleep, and was only awakened when Bakale touched me on the shoulder. To my surprise I found it was almost nine o'clock in the morning. As I took the cup of coffee Bakale offered he informed me that Mentoni, the chief, had come over from the village, and wanted to see me. The old rascal was alone; there was not another man to be seen round the place.

Through the medium of my Mongwana boy and Bakale, the chief informed me that all the elephants had left; they had gone far away. His men had searched everywhere, and could find no trace of them. He expressed his gratitude, and said that if I wished to go on to Kifiku he now could provide me with porters for the journey.

I was certain of three things: the first was that the big bull elephant was badly hit, and would not go far; that the upraised trunk of the second elephant had probably protected his brain, or he would have dropped instantly; and that old Mentoni was lying. He wanted the ivory for himself. So I quietly informed him that I intended to remain until the big elephant was found; that he was lying dead not far away, and





THE TWO HEAD TRACKERS



MENTONI'S BROTHER RE-TAILING THE BIG ELEPHANT







CUTTING UP AN ELEPHANT NEAR MENTONI'S VILLAGE





I intended to search for him. I knew that the men of this little village were very friendly toward me, and that it was merely a question of time before I should get news. So I quietly seated myself and began a breakfast of some carefully chosen eggs.

Mentoni squatted there scowling. Just before noon the little sub-chief appeared carrying the elephant's tail. Calling my own small force, I picked up the camera, and with the two Mongwanas, who did not show any surprise at what had happened, we followed the guide through the plantations and the bushes we had traversed the night before, and came upon a jabbering crowd of nearly a hundred surrounding the body of the big tusker.

As I had suspected he had not gone three hundred yards. Mentoni, who had accompanied us, was a little chagrined, but I pretended not to notice him. They had already begun cutting up the elephant. The light was very bad for taking photographs, but I secured one or two, one of which shows Mentoni's brother holding the elephant's tail in place.

The tusks were magnificent specimens, the longest one, measured round the curve, being nine feet four inches, and the other but three or four inches shorter.

Now, my interest in all this is easy to explain; for the nonce I had turned professional elephant hunter. Our friend the trader at Kifiku had told us he would take all the ivory that we got off our hands at a good market price. A remittance that we had expected to get from London before we left civilisation had not



arrived, and the truth was that we needed the money. The results of this shooting trip netted us in the neighbourhood of £100.

Before the afternoon was over the tusks were delivered at my tent. I also tasted some elephant's meat from the foot. I think I preferred the tough chicken on the whole.

But I was not through yet with Mentoni. That evening about dusk two men from his village walked in, deliberately shouldered the tusks that weighed something under one hundred pounds apiece, and walked off with them. The villagers were grouped about, evidently waiting to see what I would do. There were some men from Mentoni's village there with bows and spears.

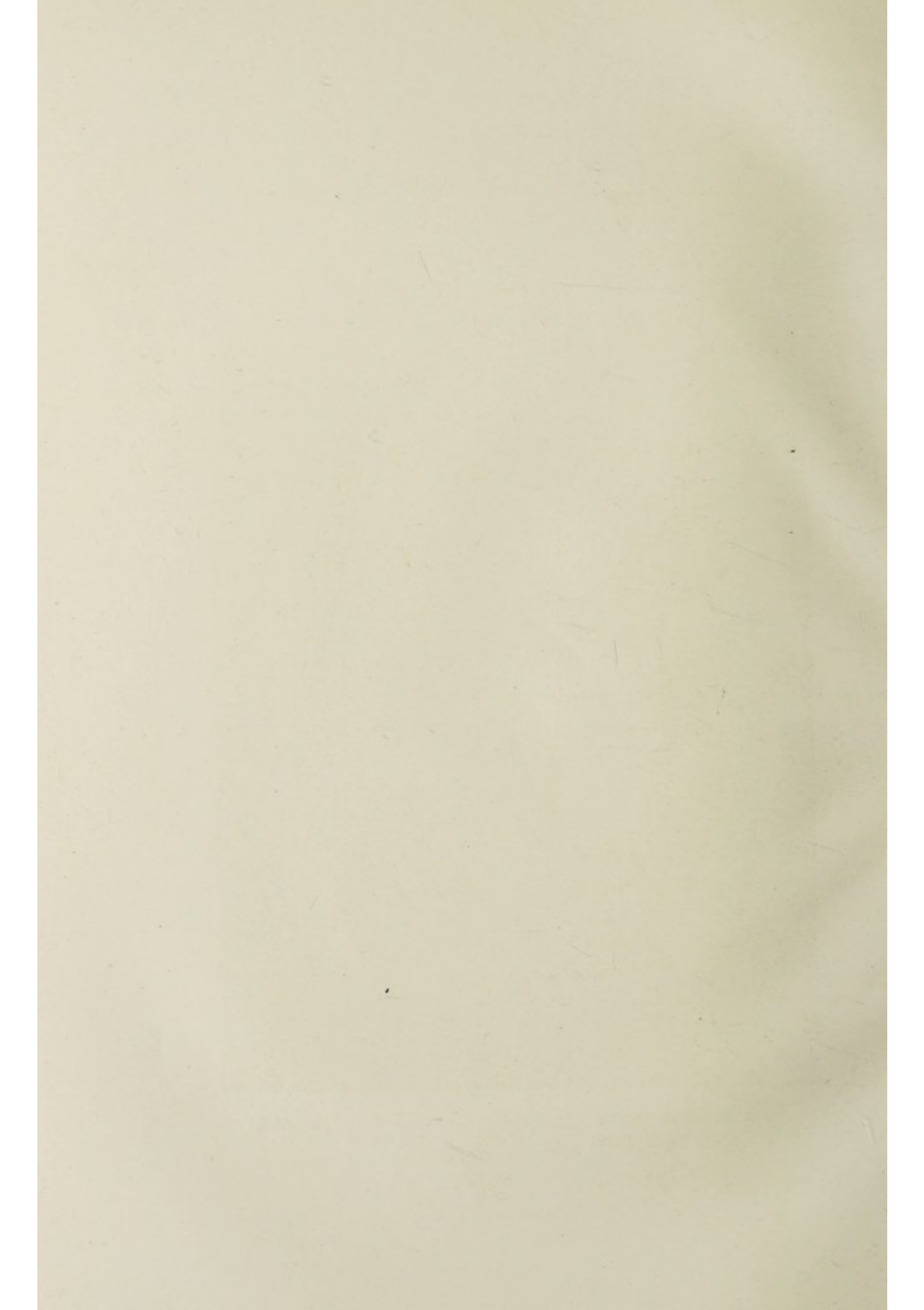
I laughed as if it was all a good joke, and sat down to a quiet pipe. The next morning the ivory was returned. But twice more was it taken. In every case I behaved in the same way and received it back again.

Now, I cannot truthfully say that I enjoyed all these proceedings. I sent word to the chief of the big village that I was now ready for the porters that he had promised me, but he sent back no answer. There was evidently a big pow-wow going on at headquarters. In the meantime I had divided my stock of trade stuff, cloth, coloured undershirts, wire, beads, and jumbies among the men of the little village, that was gorging itself with elephant meat. I could do what I pleased there now. I succeeded in stopping one or





THE SCRIBE WITH TROPHIES OF THE BIG TUSKER





two little fights that arose, and out of curiosity visited the body of the big elephant. Not a vestige of meat of any kind was left, only the skull and the huge pelvis bone. There was actually hardly enough for the flies.

By this time the news had spread through the whole countryside. Two or three other chiefs had sent in messengers asking me to come and shoot elephant for them. I believe I could have stopped in the neighbourhood a month with perfect safety. But we had got what we were after, and had shot all that our licences allowed for, and I was anxious to get off.

My ivory was left unmolested that evening, and at a call for volunteers in the early morning the whole village responded, men, boys and children. Before evening we had reached the river landing in safety.

The news that I had shot the big bull was in Kifiku ahead of us. The ivory was weighed and promptly paid for by the trading company in Belgian Congo notes, and miscellaneous five franc pieces, that ranged from Napoleon I. and Louis XVIII. to Leopold II.

But now another trouble awaited us. Despite all of old Lombura's promises, and the kindly offices of the superintendent who had taken M. Delporte's place, we could not get porters to take us on to Penghe, a fortnight's marching to the westward.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ON STANLEY'S TRAIL

THE continued irritations that we suffered with the unobliging native in the form of porter, paddler, and petty chief, would, if recorded verbatim and seriatim, read like a series of complaints; and were it not for the bright spots occasioned by the rare chances for taking good pictures, and the novelty of several situations, the account of the first fortnight of our march through the forest and much of it thereafter might be gloomy reading.

Travelling in a wild country where life is hard and time counts for nothing with the native—and means everything to the traveller—has the effect of limiting to a certain extent not only one's enjoyment, but one's mental vision. There is very little time for making careful notes or recording interesting observations. One lives up to an insistent schedule. It is: up at earliest dawn with so many miles ahead to the next resting place, so many hours to travel in, and, arriving at last, dominated by the desire to lie down and sleep, only by the sheerest will power can one summon enough energy to write a few words in the diary.

There is the constant worry whether all the loads





A MONGWANA MOHAMMEDAN TEACHER AND HIS WIVES



EX-SLAVE RAIDERS







MONGWANA WOMEN SINGING



A MONGWANA DANCE





will come in before dark, or whether some tired and irresponsible black will chuck his burden in the forest and fail to report at all. There is, moreover, a growing sense of depression in the deep forest that in the open country does not follow even the longest and hardest march—sunlight is essential to the white man.

Owing to old Lombura's broken promises we had been delayed at Kifiku for five days. Without his help we could secure no porters, and were forced at last to start leaving eight loads behind us, loads that were supposed to catch us up as soon as porters could be secured. As we had already paid exorbitantly we refused to give more *matabeesh*, knowing that it was not for lack of men in his village that he kept us waiting, for there were plenty of idle loafers lolling about in the shade of the huts.

The Mongwanas and the Manyuemas are not fond of labour. In the first place they are almost without exception Mohammedan, and were the slave raiders and ivory stealers, who under the Arab traders' influence and the regime of Tippu-Tib, had wrought havoc and destruction among the Central African tribes for nearly a quarter of a century. It is only during the past twelve years or so that their power has begun to wane.

The day before we left Kifiku we had visited Lombura's village, and, hearing the sound of drums and singing, had entered a courtyard, at the back of one of the larger houses, surprising a native dance in full swing.



Although our presence had not interrupted the proceedings, we were not welcome guests. In fact by the scowls cast in our direction we were evidently considered intruders, and after taking a few pictures we were glad to withdraw.

What the dance was meant to represent or the occasion for it, we could not make out. The dancers themselves were mainly women, and appeared to be in a state of maudlin frenzy; stamping, whirling about, and bumping into one another, without any concerted action, but paying some attention nevertheless to the wild rhythm of the tom-toms.

We were informed that already the dance had been going on for some twelve or fourteen hours. Often, the trader informed us, these wild orgies were kept up for days.

As I have stated, we needed but eight porters to complete our full quota, and there were thrice that number of able-bodied young men in the crowded courtyard, but dancing for twenty-four hours at a stretch was probably easier than marching for five or six hours, at least to the minds of the ex-raiders.

We were travelling against time now, for we knew approximately the date on which the steamer that left Stanleyville would pass by Basoko at the mouth of the Aruwimi, some two hundred miles to the westward, and failure to catch that steamer meant another month added to the time it would take us to reach the end of our long journey to where the murky Congo swept out into the salt waters of the Atlantic.





UPPER WATERS OF THE ITURI NEAR KIFIKU





If men remembered only hardships there are certain portions of their lives, and experiences, that nothing could induce them to go through again, but luckily for human nature the mind endeavours to erase the recollection of the disagreeable. Painful impressions are but transient compared to the mental records of the pleasurable, or even of the amusing.

A group of old campaigners at a regimental reunion seldom dwell on the dangers or discomforts through which they have passed. Time tempers all these things; the close touch with them seems to be forgotten. I intend to pick out henceforth the brighter portion of a very toilsome and difficult time, abandoning search in the pages of my uninspirative diary for any assistance to memory. But if a little uncheerfulness creeps in it must be remembered that these things are very recent at this present writing. The effects even yet are with the Scribe and the Photographer in tangible form.

In the first place, over nine months of constant moving and working on the Equator had borne results. Both Kearton and myself had begun to show symptoms of tropical disturbances. Sometimes it was a bit of a fight to keep up. Our dispositions seemed ruined, conversation waned at meal time, and quip and jest were conspicuous by their absence. Curiously enough it was along this very route that Stanley made this observation—"Some facts had already impressed themselves upon us. We observed that the mornings were muggy and misty—that we were chilly and inclined to



be cheerless in consequence; that it required some moral courage to leave camp to brave the cold, damp, and foggiess without, to brave the mud and slush, to ford creeks up to the waist in water; that the feelings were terribly depressed in the dismal twilight from the want of brightness and sunshine warmth; and the depression caused by the sombre clouds and dull grey river which reflected the drear daylight. The actual temperature on these cold mornings was but seventy to seventy-two degrees—had we judged of it by our cheerlessness it might have been twenty degrees less."

I think on the whole we had better luck with the weather than did the great explorer whose footsteps we were now retracing. We did not have to fight our way, and when at last we reached water navigable for canoes, we were going down stream and not up, a fact decidedly to our advantage. But the country had not changed for thousands of years, and it will not change for a thousand years to come.

Whether there are now more people along the route than there were in 1888, when Stanley's dead and dying left their sickly bones along this very route, it is hard to tell. Possibly they were more then than they are at present, but who could ever take the census of the dwellers in a forest land that without a single break covers an extent, compactly and closely grown, of three hundred and twenty-five thousand square miles? Who can describe this vast area where the new life, that takes ages to grow, springs up from the decay of the life that has taken ages in dying?





A PATH THROUGH THE SECOND GROWTH



A TREE THAT LIVES ON THE SURFACE OF THE GROUND







THE PHOTOGRAPHER CATCHING BUTTERFLIES IN A  
FOREST GLADE







THE ARMADILLO



A HORNED VIPER





Yet it is not without its beauties, nor is it without those feathered and furred inhabitants who revel in its solitudes, those lucky ones who can seek the warmth and sunlight of the upper strata and higher altitudes of green. Invisible inhabitants they are for the most part, yet their voices continually reached us; hoarse barks and chatterings, and the swaying of lofty branches told us of the presence of the monkeys. Occasionally we saw them, and not a moment of daylight but what was filled with the calling and the chattering of the birds.

How many times we sought to find the whereabouts of those unseen ventriloquists; how seldom were we rewarded; yet they were there above us, while close to us down the pathways, elusive and fast-flying, were the brilliant butterflies, seemingly aware by instinct of the sweeping net. When near the clearings where villages existed, or once had been, we got clearer glimpses of the parrots, swifts, sunbirds, finches, shrikes, whip-poor-wills, bee-eaters, pigeons, jays, and hornbills.

Over the larger streams we saw, in flight, fish eagles, and kites of various kinds, herons and ibis, but ducks and geese we seldom saw, possibly because they are too easy prey for lurking crocodile.

Underfoot, and along the paths, the ground seemed full of insects, ants and beetles, scorpions, and centipedes, and there were many poisonous snakes. Kear-ton had had a very narrow escape on the Thika River from being bitten, having stepped on a sleeping puff



adder as big as a man's arm, that had struck at him, and missed by a few inches. In searching for a dropped key to my box at Kifiku I had lifted the ground cloth, and found my fingers within an inch of the head of a horned viper that had crawled under, and had been my companion possibly for days and nights.

Oh this forest, pulsating with omnipresent life, yet so redolent of death and decay! As it was in the beginning so shall it be. I recall what Stanley wrote, and so vivid is it I feel that I must put it down. Thus he speaks of the insect armies, of the denizens and inhabitants of almost every foot of ground: "That mighty mass of dead tree, brown and porous as a sponge, is a mere semblance of a prostrate log. Within it is alive with minute tribes. Put your ear to it, and you hear a distant murmurous hum. It is the stir and movement of insect life in many forms, matchless in size, glorious in colour, radiant in livery, rejoicing in their occupations, exultant in their fierce but brief life, most insatiate of their kind, ravaging, foraging, fighting, destroying, building, and swarming everywhere and exploring everything. Lean but your hand on a tree, measure but your length on the ground, seat yourself on a fallen branch, and you will then understand what venom, fury, voracity, and activity breathes around you. Open your notebook, the page attracts a dozen butterflies, a honey-bee hovers over your hand; other forms of bees dash for your eyes, a wasp buzzes in your ear, a huge hornet menaces your face, an army of pismires





A TRUNK NO NATIVE WILL CLIMB



A TYPICAL ANTS' NEST OF CENTRAL AFRICA







AN EDIBLE LIZARD





come marching to your feet. Some are already crawling up and will presently be digging their scissor-like mandibles in your neck."

The pathway ran continually through the thick lower covering of dwarf bush, amoma and phyrnia, whose blossoms and bright berries added a touch of colour against the everlasting, but constantly changing, shades of green. Sometimes the scents that were diffused from the buds and blossoms were almost overpowering. Had there been a botanist in the party he could have reaped rich reward. Mushrooms and fungi of all sorts protruded from the rotting masses of dead foliage, but no sooner did one spring into existence than the insects claimed it.

The great snake-like vines, and convolvuli, seemed bent on throttling out of existence even the larger trees. At times the parasitic growth was so twisted and embedded round the trunk and limbs of the supporting fabric, that there appeared nothing left but the bodies of huge serpents standing erect, and reaching, and ever reaching for further holds, for more to strangle.

Orchids depended from overhanging limbs, and lichens and hanging beards of moss gave gnome-like aspect to some growths apparently stunted in their youth.

Along the edges of the river and the streams there was a chance for the larger trees to grow out horizontally, as if exulting in their elbow room, delighted to be free of their near-by neighbours. We have seen great limbs, almost the same size as the parent stem,



sweeping out some fifty or sixty feet, where they could find freedom to grow, and air and sunlight.

Occasionally as we progressed we would come across old clearings where populous villages had been. After three years of abandonment they were nothing but a wild and almost impossible jungle. The path crossed great logs, and led along extending branches; it dived under huge stems, and appeared lost at times in an intricate maze of debris and growing things.

Sometimes we would hear the "chip-chop" of native axes where the inhabitants were clearing out new spaces in which to plant their scanty orchards of bananas. The trunks of the trees were always cut some ten to fifteen feet above the ground, the men working from scaffoldings, and the severed trees being allowed to fall pell mell in all directions.

On this route to Penghe we made fourteen camps; not camps exactly, but stopping places in native villages. In some we found fairly good rest-houses, in others tumble-down shacks teeming with ticks, and requiring much sweeping out before they were habitable.

We were taking a new route to Avakubi, the old Mawambi trail having been abandoned for some months. There was little food to be found for the porters. At every stopping place they could be seen searching and digging for manioc roots and potatoes. Many times the local chiefs came to us and complained that they had but little food themselves, and that our men were despoiling them. They accepted *matabeesh* with bad grace. It did not take the place of their much needed





POUNDING RICE



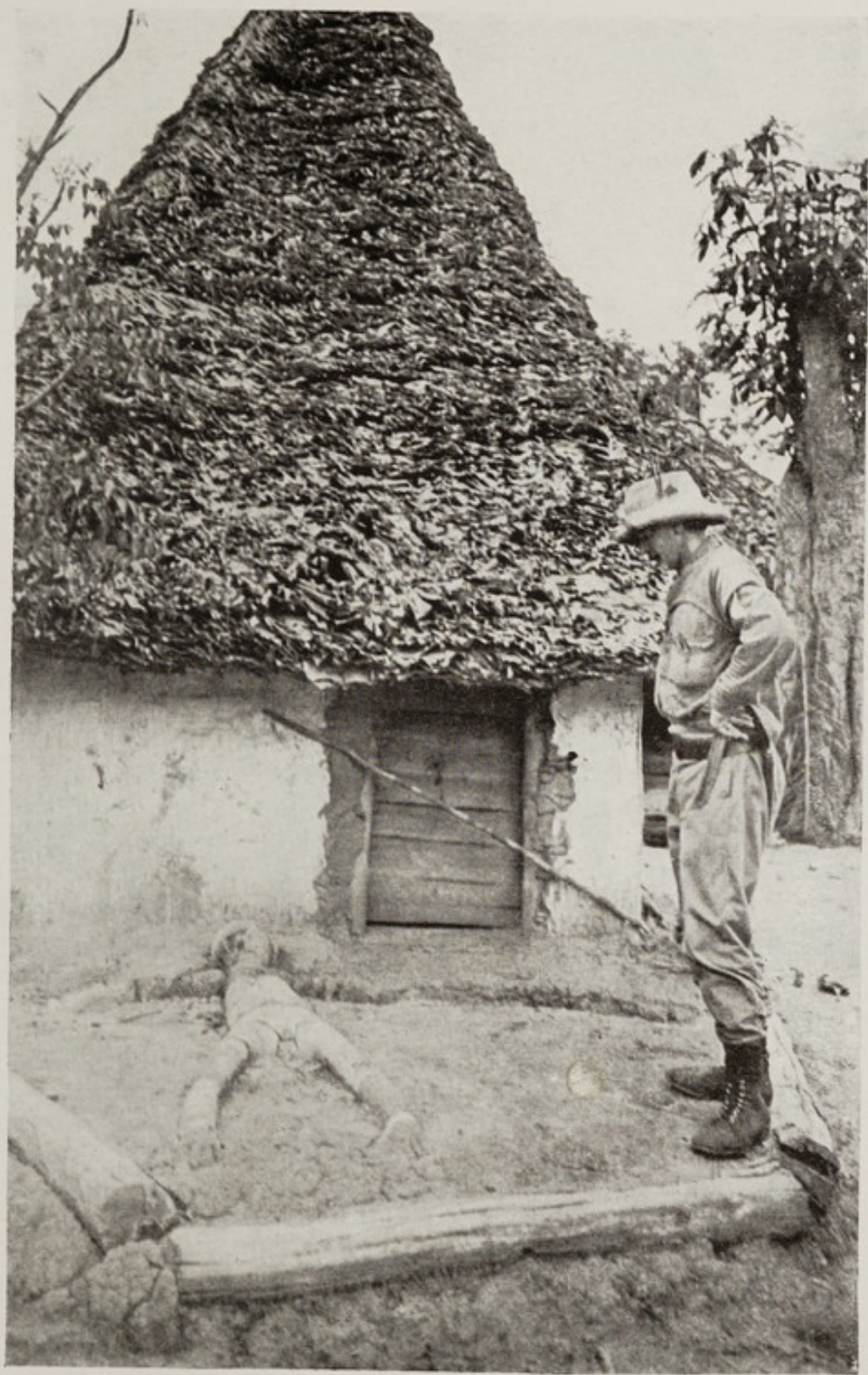




THE HOUSE OF A SPIRIT CHIEF







A CLAY TOTEM AT THE HUT OF A DEAD CHIEF





food. In some of the new villages the plantains and endesis had not begun to bear. Rice was a luxury. Sometimes we would find women pounding it in mortars made of hollow logs, and securing a few handfuls of white rice flour.

We saw but very few specimens of palm trees, although the tree fern was very prevalent. When transportation reaches the great forest there may be fortunes to be found in the hard wood growth, for there is an everlasting supply of mahogany, teak, *lignum vitæ*, ebony, camwood, and the valuable copal.

Although we saw evidence of the presence of elephant and the forest buffalo, and once the footprints of a large okapi, our guns were never taken from their cases.

At Campi na Mambuti we met a strange character—a sub-chief named Musa. He claimed to be originally a Manyuema, but in my opinion he was a Zanzibari who had deserted from Stanley's caravan, as to our surprise he spoke a few words in English, and could call some of Stanley's companions by name. Especially did he remember Dr. Parke, whom he described, in fluent Swahili, as a "*Musungu Musuri sana*"—a very good white man indeed.

He was the only head man who displayed any real generosity, for of his own free will he presented us with three fat fowls, and allowed us to purchase a goat without haggling.

At last we reached Penghe, the head of canoe navigation, and here we were met with another surprise.

The *chef de poste*, a young Belgian, informed us that there were no canoes available for at least a fortnight, and as we had to dismiss our Kifiku bearers here, we were further dismayed by being told that it would take ten days to drum up enough porters to take us over the foot trail into Avakubi.

Since leaving Lombura's village we had stopped at the following places, the names of which I had set down, and had camped at one or two others that seemed to have no names at all: Campi na Mambuti, Djapanda, Makoko, Campi na Bulongo, Umali, Pene-mafupu, Kingombe, Fundi Kitima, Mana Pela, Pene-kiluvu, Penghe. We had also forded or been ferried across three rivers—the Etito, the Epulu, and the Epini.

The anticipation of having to wait at Penghe was far from pleasant. It behoved us to stir and see what could be done.





ALONG THE BANK OF THE ITURI





## CHAPTER XV

### PENGHE TO AVAKUBI

THE Belgian officials, whom we had met at Irumu, had been more than kind to us, extending aid in every way, and it might be in place here to express our gratitude to all the others whom we met on our long journey. But it did not take a close observance to perceive that the power of the Belgian authority was on the wane with the native. Only two or three years before, so Stronge had informed us, the officers of the Belgian posts had charge of all transport service, either by land or by water, and there was a fixed rate for transportation throughout the whole of the Belgian Congo. Now it seemed that all this was changed, the native appeared to be in a position to ask any price he liked for his time, and it was a case of "take him or leave him"—it did not matter much, so far as he was concerned.

The *chef de poste* at Penghe was a very young man who was just completing his first term of service, and I do not think that he had the slightest intention of returning to Central Africa.

Penghe was a dreary place, a comparatively new clearing on the right bank of the river, that here was not more than a hundred yards in width, and very



shallow. At Irumu we had been told that canoes were available, but owing to low water the landing place had been moved to a considerable distance down stream, and there were no canoes.

At Penghe we ran across a Mr. Reid, one of the earliest and most successful of the Congo gold seekers, he having discovered the deposits that led to the formation of the Fourminière Company, whose headquarters were at Brussels. I had met him there in February, 1913. Mr. Reid had a camp on the other side of the river. When we arrived he was seated on a rock, fishing. To our surprise he informed us that fish were quite plentiful, and, though full of bones, were very good eating; some ran to twenty pounds and over. I mention this fact for the reason that only in two or three of the river villages did we see any evidence that the natives appreciated the fact of this easily available food supply. We saw fish traps along the river; and at some of the rapids they caught many about the size of whitebait, but we witnessed no attempt to spear them, or to use large nets in the river.

Mr. Reid had had the good fortune while out in the woods, a short time before our arrival, to shoot a fine male okapi. I know of but two other white men who can truthfully say they have ever had this opportunity. Mr. Reid had shot it by a lucky accident. It was in very thick cover, and towards evening he fired at an indistinct object that he took to be a buffalo, but walking forward to see the result of his shot found a magnificent okapi bull, the skin





PORTERS WAITING TO LEAVE PENGHE





and skeleton of which he presented to Dr. Christy, the well-known collector for the Belgian Government and the British Museum.

There was hardly a mile of the surrounding country into which Mr. Reid had not ventured, and his knowledge of wild animal and native life is quite wonderful. Should the Belgian Congo at any time change hands, from his intimate knowledge of the geographical formations and the mineral possibilities Mr. Reid would prove a very important man.

On the journey from Kifiku we had marked one of the porters who was carrying a heavy load of pots and pans and kitchen paraphernalia, as a man to put a trust in. He was always ready, always up in his work, and always busy. His face had none of the vacuous, animal-like expression of the average Congo black. Ernesti informed us that he lived in Penghe, and, in his way, was a man of some importance.

On the route he had dressed no differently from the other porters; in fact, he was hardly dressed at all, wearing merely the usual loin-cloth; but we had observed that the other men had treated him with marked respect. I wish that I could recall his name, for it was through him, principally, that we were relieved from the disagreeable situation of waiting indefinitely, when every day counted.

I hardly recognised our kitchen retainer when he presented himself at our camp. A brilliant red cloth was wound about his head, and he wore a toga-like garment of kaniki cloth, the fold of which he carried



in the hollow of his arm. His first question showed that, besides his ability and a certain dignity, he possessed commercial spirit. How much would we pay per head? It was really what we might call a "hold up" in American vernacular. I mentioned a price; he mentioned his; we split the difference.

Sixty porters were ready the next morning, and our friend presented himself as head man. His word was law, as we soon discovered. On the march to Avakubi he was general, adjutant, and staff. It would be hard to say where he had got his training, but if we could have kept him with us thereafter we would have been saved a great deal of trouble and, to put it mildly, some disturbance.

On the very first camp we made the men arrived on time. They were lined up with their loads, and stood in almost military formation. The little head man looked down the line with the eye of an inspecting general officer as he counted the boxes and bales. One of the porters who disputed for an instant his authority received a crack on the head that sent him reeling into the bushes.

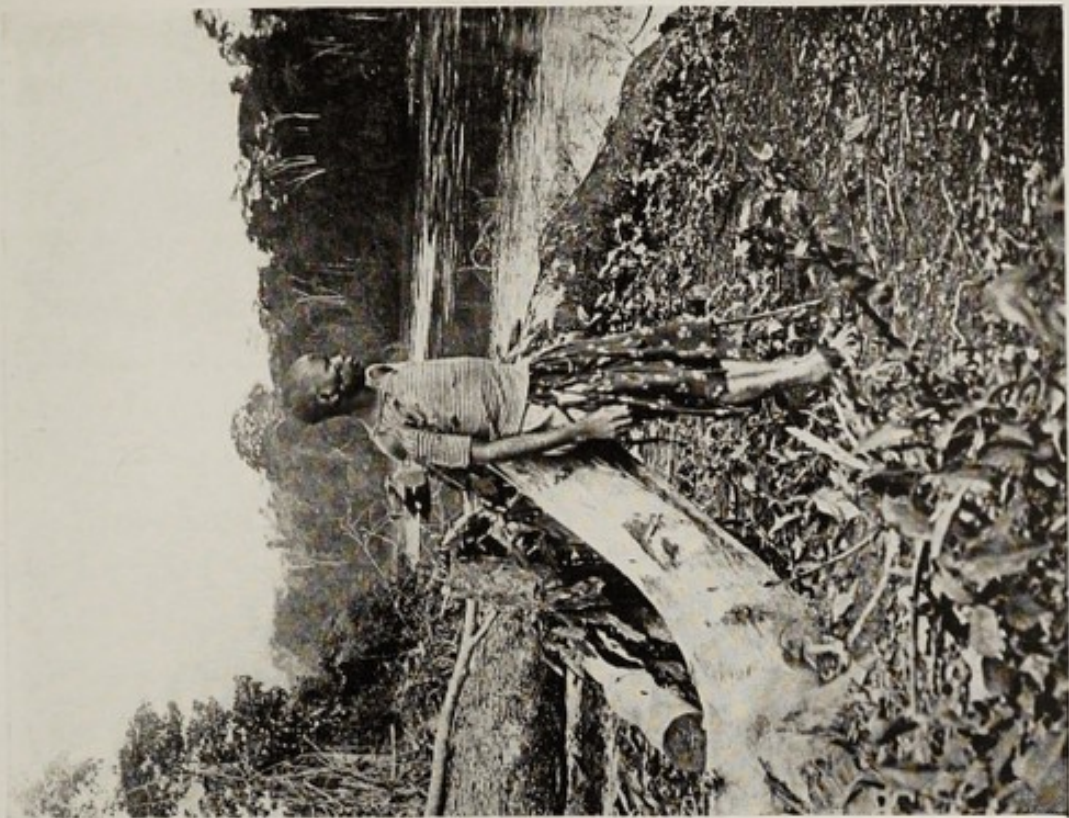
The chief of the little village where we had stopped produced food on our head man's orders at once; there was no question of *matabeesh*. The next morning when we rose shortly after daybreak we found that the porters were already on their way. The head man himself brought up the rear guard, and no one lagged behind.

Shortly after our arrival at the first camp the chief





THE PORTER WHO BECAME A HEADMAN  
(see page 181)



THE BOY WHO WAS NEARLY KILLED AND EATEN BY  
CANNIBALS (see page 185)





came to us and announced that there was a large hippo in the river, and begged us to shoot it for food, as none of the villages had had any meat for months. I wished most heartily that we had declined to grant his request, for these great beasts are very scarce in the Ituri and the Iruwimi, and, after all, this particular village had to go without its meat, for the hippo sank and drifted down the stream. How we found the body next day and what happened makes quite a story.

We had proceeded some four or five miles on the march down the right or north bank, when we came to a straggling collection of huts, and found the natives somewhat excited. Directly across the river was another village, and we soon found that a feud existed between the two chiefs and their henchmen.

Following their excited gesticulations and pointing, we saw that the body of the hippopotamus had grounded on a shallow near the opposite bank. Our own head man now begged us to cross over and secure some meat for our men.

Getting into a canoe that was crowded down within two or three inches of the gunwale, and looked dangerously overloaded, Kearton and I were ferried across; two other canoes accompanied us. As the south bank villagers saw us approaching they crowded down to the water's edge with angry faces, and much loud exposition. When they saw that there were two white men in the party they allowed us to land.

The men from the north bank sprang ashore with their knives drawn. It looked very much like trouble.



Such jabbering and talking, brandishing of fists and weapons, arose that I feared we were in for a disagreeable row. Our head man took me by the arm, and led me through the crowd to the top of the bank. He spoke a few words to the two chiefs, who looked as if they were about to grapple each other's throats, and pointing to Kearton and myself he waded into the jabbering, shouting crowd with his stick, striking out to right and left indiscriminately. An ugly-looking brute with a broad-bladed *panga*, or short sword, made as if he would run him through. The head man caught him by the wrist, took the knife from him and threw it up the bank.

Walking down to him I put my hand on his shoulder, and by signs, more than by words, conveyed the idea that the hippo meat should be divided between the two villages; that it should be placed on the bank, and no one should go off with any of it. It began to rain. For nearly an hour we stood there while the shouting, excited crowd worked, almost waist deep in the water. The head man was here, there, and everywhere, his stick busy if he saw anyone trying to abscond with any of the precious fat or hide.

We portioned out the food as evenly as we could, and loading up the canoes went back to the north bank. Here the head man repeated the tactics. Our own men were lined up, and each received what would appear to be enough food for a European for a week. One porter demurred at the portion given





THE HIPPO THAT NEARLY CAUSED A RIOT



CUTTING UP THE HIPPO





him. Without any parleying the head man took away what he had and gave it to the others.

He picked out the choice bits for us, and we had hippo soup and steak that evening. It is really not bad when one is hungry, tasting somewhat like pork; but it is tough, and requires a deal of both cooking and chewing.

Our labour contractor and general manager had turned up at Penghe with the right number, but some of the so-called porters would not have come up to military specification, and were certainly under age. Among them were two boys who were fully equal to the load doled out to them, which consisted of the butterfly nets, and the insect-collecting bottles and tins. One little fellow, whose name as near as I could get it was Kwata, had the most dreadful scars across his head and face. The top of his right ear was gone entirely, and both the cheek bone and the jaw had been fractured. It left him with no impediment in his speech, and he was both garrulous and good-natured. Probably he had had as close a call for his life as ever falls to the lot of a youngster in any savage community.

We were told that as a child he had been captured by cannibals, and been rescued when on the point of being served up as an especially tender tit-bit. Through an interpreter who could speak Swahili, whom we met at our camp on the Ituri, but one day's march from Avakubi, we learned his story, and here it is in Kwata's own words somewhat shortened.

"My father, who belongs to the tribe of Moblatili,



lived in a small village not far from Mawambi, and when I was a little *toto*, so high, I was with my mother and brother getting water, when we were found by some men who eat men, and who lived in the forest, and my mother they killed, and my brother, who was older and could run faster than I, ran into the village, and they took me with them. For two days we travelled, and then I, too, tried to run away. I hid in the bushes, and when at last they found me they struck me on the head until I was dead. Now the men thought they would go no farther, but would eat me, so they built a fire; but my brother had told my father, who was *kapita* at the village, and he had gathered all the men, and they followed, and they came up to these men in the night as they were building the fire, and my father himself killed four with his spear, and but two got away, and they brought me back to the village, and here they made much *dowa*, and the old women who know all about such things, and the man who talks with the spirits, brought me back to life again. So there was war between all our villages and the people who lived in the forest, and they drove them far away and killed many, and they brought back their children to be slaves for us."

"And did your people eat any of them?" I asked.

Little "Twenty-five cents," as we had nicknamed Kwata, answered shrewdly.

"We do not eat men," he responded. "It is only wicked people who do that. When I get bigger I am going to be a soldier and fight for the Bula Matari."



We arrived at Avakubi in the afternoon of Wednesday, the 4th of March, and our caravan entered the main square of this once important post, after having travelled for nearly a mile through a plantation of barren rubber trees—a plantation that must have cost an immense sum of money, and was a total failure from the standpoint of any return.

The soil of the Haut Ituri has not sufficient nourishment, or lacks the proper chemical ingredients, to make rubber-tree planting profitable. The stupendous waste of money and effort is seen in the immense and abandoned plantations, from which, so far as we could ascertain, no return whatever has been gathered.

Three or four years ago Avakubi must have been a flourishing station, but now the carefully laid out walks are crumbling away, and the big brick offices and officials' dwellings are falling into ruin. Only a few were occupied. Avakubi has at present no commercial existence, yet during the days of the company and wild rubber prosperity, ten—sometimes fourteen—canoes a week left here for Basoko. There were but three lonely officials and a half-dozen native soldiers left to represent the Government.

The *chef de poste* was very hospitable, and so was the postmaster, who proved to be a German. The former was the father of a very pretty little half-caste girl a year or so old. His wife was a very handsome negress, with fine eyes and teeth. By this time we had grown used to scarred cheeks and foreheads; they did not render the features so repulsive

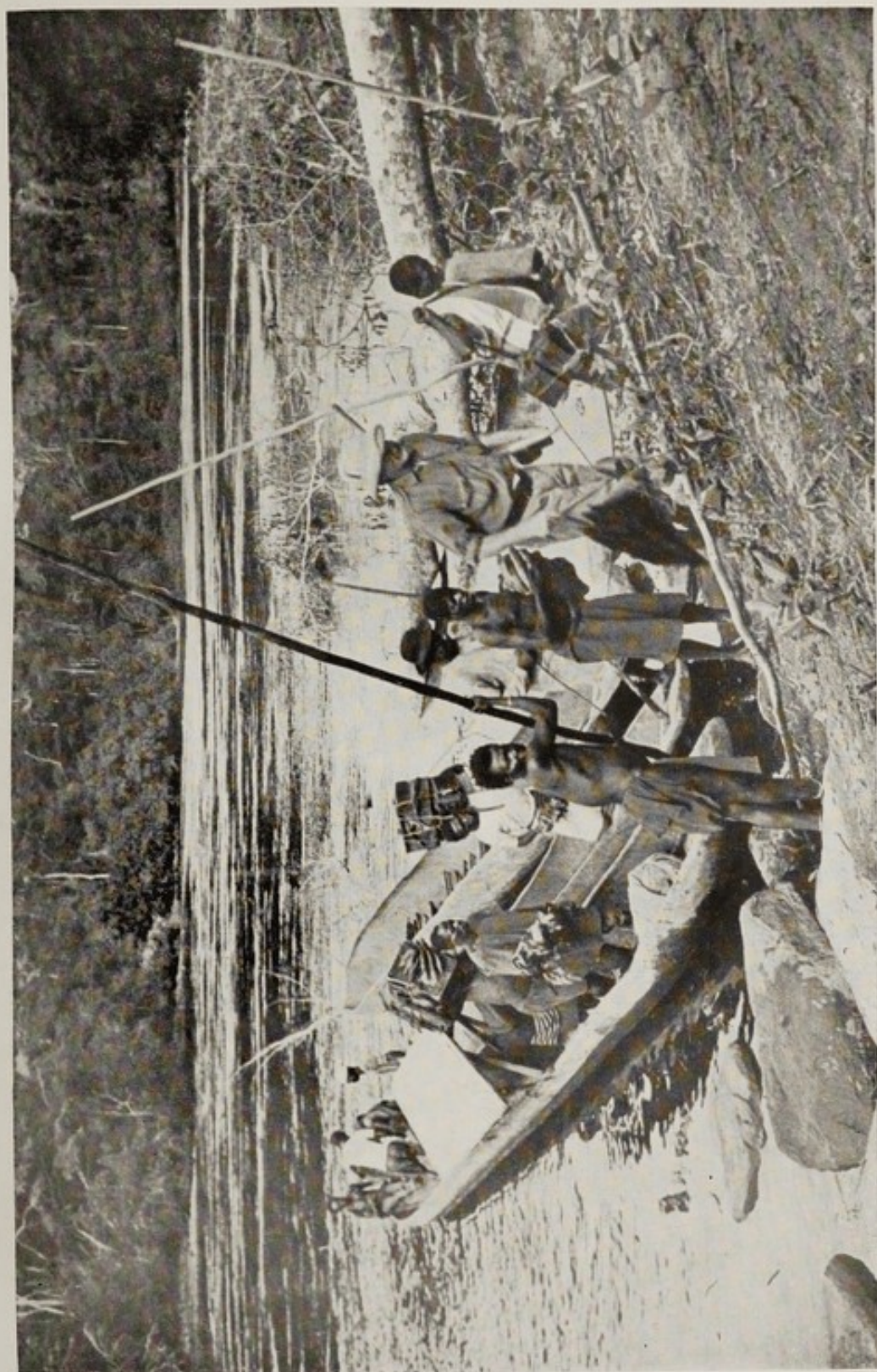


as they had before we had grown accustomed to them. But what was our surprise to have our friend the *chef de poste* ask Kearton to take a photograph of his dark-skinned family, as he wished to send it home to his parents in Belgium. Miscegenation is not only common, but seems to be the rule with the Belgian officials, many of whom send their chocolate-coloured offspring home to be educated.

To our delight we found some mails here that had been sent in ahead of us, and glad indeed were we to get letters, and a few months-old newspapers. A further surprise awaited us here also, for Kearton ran across a countryman of his, and I had the pleasure of greeting the first countryman of mine that I had seen since leaving Nairobi. Both were here collecting specimens for scientific institutions, Dr. Christy representing the Congo Museum at Brussels, and Mr. Chapin the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

For over five years the latter had lived with his chief, a German-American, named Lange, in the heart of the African forest. They had collected immense quantities of material that were waiting to be shipped down the river from Stanleyville, but it was plain to be seen that only pluck, youth, and indomitable will had kept our young friend going. Chapin was only twenty-four, but Africa ages men prematurely, and he looked much older. He had found, however, one of the secrets of living—or better, of keeping alive—that of being constantly employed, and even while we were





THE LANDING PLACE





there he was sketching specimens, preparing his skins, packing, and repacking his boxes. Never for a moment was he idle. But when we came to speak of home, he showed how he hated it all and how keen he was to get away. I am glad to state that I was instrumental subsequently in having sent to him orders of recall.

Even the *chef de poste*, and the postmaster, who admired Mr. Chapin greatly, urged the necessity of his leaving. Five years and seven months is too long for a white man to remain without a break in his term of service.

Mr. Lange was away up in the Lewelli district, so we did not have the pleasure of meeting him, but the postmaster summed him up in the description applied to Bismarck: "He is a man of blood and iron, and the only one I know who can live like a native."

I find this entry in my diary on the third day of our enforced stay at Avakubi: "After great trouble, bought some chickens. There is no news yet of any canoes. Went down to the Mongwana village and looked over stores at the Portuguese trader's; he has some rough supplies. At present rate all of our tinned stuff will be gone. The porters with our boxes have not arrived."

The chief of the village, who lived in quite a large house, was no other than the redoubtable Kil-longa-Llonga, who, in 1888, had given Stanley so much trouble. I saw him stalking down the street, a tall, gaunt, and rather austere-looking figure, in long white,

flowing robes. He condescended by the very slightest nod to recognise my greeting.

Should the natives ever rise against the waning power of the white man, this old Mohammedan will have to be reckoned with.

Disappointment still awaited us; the water was low, and there were no canoes at Avakubi capable of carrying our party. Two were expected to arrive below the rapids in a day or so. We determined to secure them if possible. In the meantime there was nothing to do but possess our souls in patience, for proceeding by foot to Bomili, the next station, was quite impossible.





A FERRY ACROSS THE ITURI RIVER NEAR AVAKUBI







THE DEPARTURE FROM AVAKUBI



RIVER SCENE BELOW AVAKUBI





## CHAPTER XVI

### DOWN THE RIVER

WE hated to say good-bye to Chapin, and when we parted it was the real feeling of regret at leaving him after his long experience in the wilds to continue for a further indefinite period. I wish we could have taken him with us, for we were headed home!

The place where we embarked, below the Avakubi rapids, was a stony little landing at the foot of a steep bank. In one of the canoes was a lot of ivory consigned to a trader down the river, and when all of our belongings were loaded both of the leaky old craft were down pretty far in the water.

The larger canoe, that was patched up with clay, began to leak almost as soon as we had shoved off into the stream, and thereafter it required constant bailing to keep her afloat. Our feet were in the water half the time.

Stronge had been left behind to bring on the rest of our supplies as soon as another canoe could be procured. The canoe-men showed their characteristics before we had gone a mile. The current was lazy, and so were they. They sat on the gunwales and talked. I wonder what the average Central Africans



find to chatter about, anyway? But they seem never to be at a loss for subjects of conversation.

We engaged a head man, a *kapita*, and he seemed to be the worst and laziest of the lot. I do not think that during the first morning he put his paddle into the water a dozen times. The two bowmen, one a boy of not more than fifteen, did all the work—what there was of it. Occasionally they stamped on the broad bow, where they stood, and pointed ahead to some shallows that were to be avoided. The motive power in the stern would respond with a great deal of music and sing-song, and four or five minutes of paddling, after which they would all sit down and rest again, and we drifted along slowly; sometimes crossing from one bank to the other as the currents demanded.

It was stifflingly hot under the canopy of phrynium leaves that was our only shelter from the sun. Our own personal boys, cook, and private servants were doing most of the bailing; and was easy to see that a bump or two on sharp rocks would wreck the rotten hollowed log, and that we could never make the voyage without securing another craft of some kind.

The trader's stuff was in the smaller canoe, that constantly lagged behind. At the rate of speed at which we were proceeding we should never catch that steamer at Basoko. In fact, it would take us a week to reach Bomili, that we should have made in three days at the least. There was no use cajoling the men, there was no use swearing at them; there was nothing to do but drift; we were getting our first





A HALT FOR LUNCHEON



CANOEMEN OF THE ARUWIMI







HAULING A CANOE AGAINST THE CURRENT



SETTING FISH TRAPS





taste of it. An intense dislike to that particularly useless headman rose in our bosoms. I longed for that black major-general, who had brought us on to Avakubi, and who, having discharged his duty, disappeared without coming to ask for the usual *matabeesh*. I could see him in my imagination wading into those lazy paddlers with that useful knobstick of his. If he had stuck by us we should have left him a rich man for the rest of his life.

We should have arrived at Bassobangi by noon, but owing to our loitering we did not get there until about four o'clock. Here are some of the finest rapids on the Ituri; a regular dam of red sandstone goes completely across the river, which in the next two hundred and fifty yards drops nearly thirty feet. The erosion of the water has washed this barrier into channels and gulleys, and worn it out into the most fantastic pots and hollows. At the very centre the wide river is pent into a narrow sluiceway, through which it is discharged in a rushing mass of froth and foam.

The first drop is fourteen feet in one great crash of water that opens into a whirling pool below. Here on the right bank lies the village, with about two hundred inhabitants, whose principal occupation is setting small fish traps in the little natural weirs and runways, and they are as good river watermen as are to be found anywhere in the world.

We had to land a half mile or so above the rapids, and our paddlers at first demurred at having to help



unload the canoe, and to carry any of the loads. As none of the villagers seemed very anxious to lend assistance we should have been held up there indefinitely if it had not been for the women, who at last we succeeded in persuading to bear a hand. Having started a few on with the bales and boxes we found ourselves engaged in an argument with the local chief as to the price of piloting the canoes down through the raging waters, upon which we finally came to an agreement.

The first canoe put out empty into the stream in charge of but one man, a short, thick-set fellow with the torso of a Hercules. He wore on his head a fantastic cap of plaited straw, with a cock's feather sticking up in the middle; it was quite like the creation of a Paris milliner, and perhaps as becoming.

The second canoe was in charge of three men, one in the bow and two in the stern. Kearton and I hurried down to the rocky barrier to take a picture of them as they passed. Although we had asked them to wait until we arrived in position, they did not seem to understand, and it was only by running and much scrambling that we got there in time. The sight was worth seeing. The first canoe in charge of the black Samson drifted lazily out into the current. A few sweeps of the short paddle and he had brought the bow on a line with the break of the falls, where the water at first slid over, turning smoothly like that at the surface of a huge fly-wheel, while below it dashed high into spray against the great rock





THE CURIOUS CROWD



WOMEN CARRYING THE LOADS







SHOOTING THE RAPIDS AT BASSOBANGI



A RIVER FAMILY ON THE MOVE





that apparently stood in the very middle of the channel. Farther below it boiled, danced and rose in successive waves and great bubbling. The centre of the crush of water was two to three feet higher than where it slid past the edges of the rocky sluiceway.

The single paddler was riding the canoe as a circus man rides two horses, with legs outstretched, his feet resting on either gunwale. How anyone could maintain his balance, or even keep a canoe from turning over in that smother it was hard to see. Now the pilot swept the paddle through the water gently, and then suddenly he began to work with all his strength. The clumsy old log swerved and took the fall at its centre; it extended out into the air some eight or ten feet of its sixty feet of length before it began to drop; then, with a rush, down it came, shooting like an arrow, missing the big rock in the centre by not more than a foot. So great was the speed that it required a quick shutter of the camera to get the picture. A fifth of a second would have been too slow to obtain any result.

It looked as if the whole thing would go under, and at one time the pilot appeared to be standing knee deep, for the canoe was out of sight in the spray and hollows. The canoeman gave a wild scream, as if of victory, as he shot out into the current below. The fishermen tending the little nets in the runways hardly lifted their heads; they had seen the thing done many times before.

The second canoe almost came to grief. It was



the older and larger of the two, and was badly warped. We could see the bow man gesticulating wildly, and the two paddlers in the stern working for dear life to prevent the clumsy craft from approaching at too wide an angle. Down she came, almost on to the rock where the water boiled and bubbled, and how close she passed by it we could hardly say. When we joined them later it was easy to see that the strain had opened up the seams, and she was half full of water.

We could not go on unless we got another craft. Here was a kettle of fish!

The worst feature of canoe travel on the Ituri and Aruwimi nowadays is that paddlers and porters demand their pay in advance, and thus there is but slight hold over them. Although this lot had contracted to take us to Bomili they would have run if they could at their first night's stop. They stood chattering, gathered about the decrepit canoe on the bank, evidently deciding that their voyage was over. We inveigled them up to the big hut on the river bank for a palaver, during which we managed to secure their paddles and mounted guard over them. It took fully an hour to persuade the local chief to part with the largest of his canoes, in fact, we had almost to buy it outright; they are shrewd bargainers, these river natives. His apology for a conscience must have pricked him, however, for after having come to terms he presented us with a couple of scrawny fowls, and brought us some fish and endesis for our crew.



Gathering the men together just after daybreak the next morning was no easy task; our spirits were sorely tried. The canoe was slightly smaller than the one that we had abandoned, and when everything was on board she was well down in the water, but to our delight we found she was as dry as a bone. We gave each man his paddle, and a few "kind" words of advice when they took their places, and at last we were out in the stream again.

We had to pass some very rapid water, in the course of which we struck a rock and almost capsized, but arrived safely at Bafualipa in the evening. The women from the village carried our belongings over the portage.

In emerging from the low doorway of a hut in the morning I had cracked my head so severely (nothing but the cork helmet saved me, the top being broken in by the force of the impact) that I have only an indistinct recollection of that day and the next, but from Bafualipa, making one or two landings to avoid the rapids, we came at last to Bomili, and here we met Monsieur Remy, a very able *Chef de Zone*, who was of great assistance to us.

But our spirits were at first cast down by the news and the advice he gave us.

If Stronge, who was following with another canoe-load of our impedimenta, was delayed more than two or three days, we would never be able to make the steamer connections at Basoko, or Barumba. This meant we would have to take to the trail again overland



to Stanleyville, leaving the river at Banalia, six days' sharp paddling, not drifting, down stream. The new route would take a week's extra marching, two days' paddling from Bengamisa to the landing-place, and there would, of course, be the delay of getting porters and crews. By the Ituri and Aruwimi, if all went well, we had fourteen days in the canoes. It all depended upon whether Stronge got off to join us in time. Every hour counted.

It was Thursday the 12th of March when we reached Bomili. In the middle of the night we were awakened by a shot, and we found the next morning that Remy had fired at an elephant that had wandered into his kitchen garden. He had taken aim at the beast through the window of his room, but as he had only wounded it, the marauder had escaped.

Friday we spent in getting some photographs of birds that were nesting in the near-by trees, and on Saturday to our relief Stronge arrived. He had had no little trouble with his crew, and had been forced to break into one of the steel boxes with a chisel, as he possessed no key for it, and had paid the rascals who accompanied him double the price they had agreed upon. They had been told, we subsequently found out, that the *Chef de Zone* was away from Bomili.

Remy was equal to the situation; the thieving *kapita* of Stronge's canoe received twenty-five lashes, and his men were forced to disgorge their plunder. It was one of the most satisfactory proceedings that I





TAKING A SUN BATH



MEN AND WOMEN PORTERS WAITING FOR THEIR LOADS







WIFE OF THE CHIEF AT MOKANGULA



UNCONSCIOUS POSES







CHIEF WITH PARROT FEATHER HEAD-DRESS AND OKAPI  
SKIN BANDOLIER



A RIVER MAN AND A FOREST HUNTER







BARTERING FOR A NATIVE SWORD



THE VILLAGE FLOUR MILL





have ever witnessed. The *kapita* was held in the proper position by some of his own men, who seemed to enjoy it also. The *kapita*, I should judge, was not a popular person, but he took it all as a matter of course, and apparently cherished no ill feeling, for he had the almost superhuman cheek to ask for *mata-beesh* afterwards.

The punishment was delivered at the hands of the local chief, for no white man may now beat a native without rather serious consequences.

Monsieur Remy promised to collect picked crews for us, and to all appearances they were a much better looking lot when they assembled on the bank early on Sunday morning.

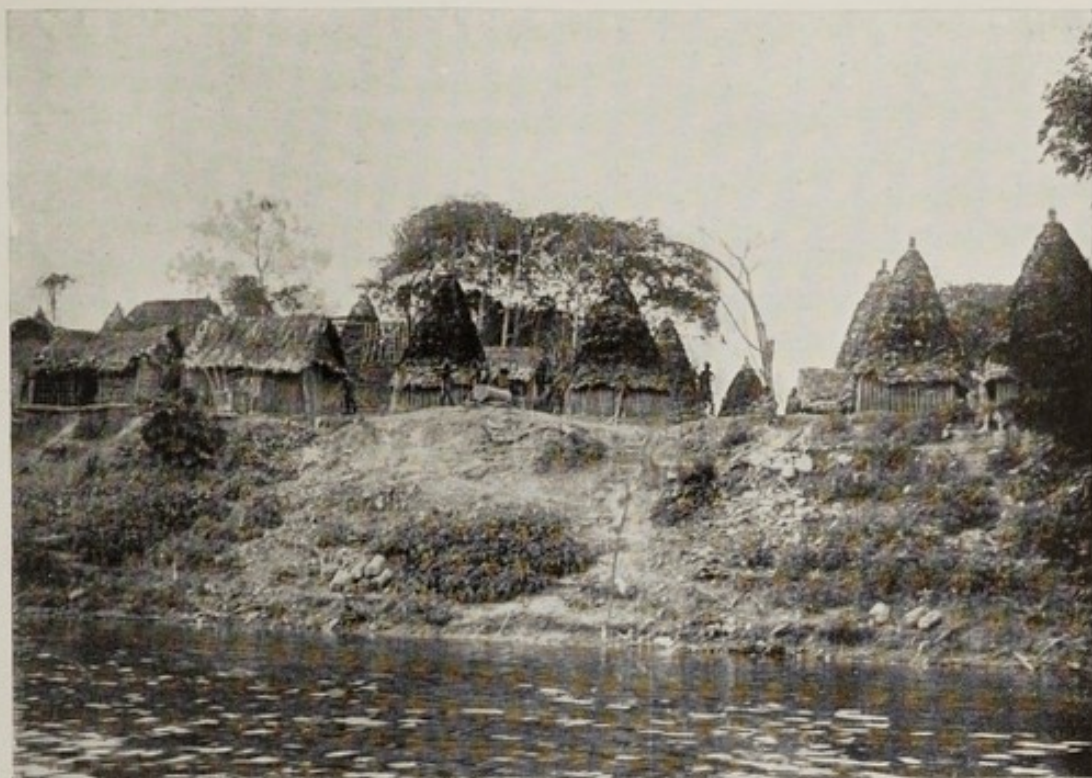
## CHAPTER XVII

### THE TALKING DRUMS

WHEN we looked over our paddling crews on leaving Bomili, as they shoved off into mid-stream, we congratulated ourselves. They were a sturdy-looking lot, and although some of them were very young, hardly more than boys, their muscles stood out like those of gladiators. Their features were not marked by cicatrisation, their peculiar tribal marks being a series of raised scars which extended down the chest and abdomen. It gave them the appearance of wearing a tight uniform coat with military frogs.

They started off with a great swing, and a cadenced paddling song that must have taken a great deal of breath, and they kept at it steadily until we had rounded a bend in the river; then somebody must have opened up an absorbing subject—local politics, I dare say—from the interest they took in it. They stopped paddling, seated themselves on the sides of the canoe and all spoke together; they talked singly and in pairs; every now and then they seemed on the point of agreeing, and we thought they might begin work again, but not so! The *kapita*, who was dressed in the fluttering fragments of an old linen





AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING: A PRIMITIVE RIVER VILLAGE



THE AFRICAN "WIRELESS": A VILLAGE STREET, SHOWING DRUMMER





shirt and a very well ventilated pair of military trousers, could not let well enough alone. He would bring up the whole subject with a few short burning words, and they were all at it again. Then they would wait until the other canoe had drifted alongside, and thus everybody got an opportunity to take a hand in the proceedings.

Soon we sighted a village, our coming being announced by the loud booming of the wooden drum. The paddlers began to sing, and we started across the river toward the landing-place. We had begun to learn a lot about the river, and one of the first important things that was forced upon us was that despite the orders of our friend, the *Chef de Zone*, we were not considered of much importance. The whole trip was a trading expedition conducted by the *kapita*. The dislike that we entertained for this individual increased. We had noticed, with some wonderment, the large amount of paddler's personal baggage loaded into the last canoe under the *kapita*'s direction. There were several good-sized bales and wicker baskets that were brought out of the bushes where they had been hidden, but as we were already afloat in the leading canoe we could not object to their being taken along. When we reached the landing-place we could see the people swarming down the bank, and at the top of the deeply-worn path could watch the energetic drummer thumping the hollowed log with his great drumsticks that were weighted at the ends with large balls of native rubber.



Suddenly he stopped his energetic pounding and stood there listening; and now from two or three miles away, down stream on the farther bank, another drum began pounding. Each drum contains two notes that are made by striking the opposite sides of the log. What code is in use along the rivers no white man has ever been able to discover, but that there is some universal system of tapping out these wireless messages is an undeniable fact. "Pom-pom, pom-pom, pom-pom," went the far-away drum, and then there came a pause. The drummer on the bank above our heads began to answer, and getting a message in return from the other operator that apparently satisfied him, he hit the hollow logs a couple of hard strokes, as if to say, "Message received—O.K.," put down the drumsticks, came down the bank, and joined the crowd around the third canoe. The *kapita* was giving orders like a captain of police.

Kearton and I exchanged glances.

"What is that black rascal up to?" the Photographer asked.

The question answered itself. The *kapita*, with the assistance of several of the paddlers, was opening up a native bazaar. He had his wares spread out on the ground, and, to my surprise, I saw that he had a very good, though small, assortment of traders' goods. He paid absolutely no attention to the suggestion we tried to convey to him, that time was valuable and that we wished to press ahead. We decided to give him half an hour and then start something.



Business did not appear to be very brisk, or perhaps this particular *kapita* had a bad reputation. Customers were scarce. Of his own accord he began to load up his things. It took another twenty minutes to gather the paddlers who had dispersed, and we were about to shove off again when a large canoe appeared crossing the stream diagonally from the farther shore, evidently summoned by the drum telegraph. Out came the wares again, and for another half an hour there was some brisk haggling. A brilliant idea occurred to us. It was to buy the *kapita's* whole supply, chuck it overboard, give it away, burn it up. If there had been any way to get rid of him at the same time, short of satisfying the keen desire to murder that was rising in our hearts, we would have put it into immediate practice.

It was late in the evening when we arrived at the village where we were to put up for the night, which I believe was called Peyari. The next day we asserted ourselves to some purpose, for we sent off the two canoes ahead of the big one and detained that thrifty headman, insisting upon his going in the canoe in which we travelled. Although we did our best to try to leave some of his belongings behind, he succeeded in getting most of them on board. After a small riot we started.

If anyone ever worked his passage down an African river, the Scribe did this day, for having secured an extra paddle, he worked energetically and succeeded,



almost alone, in getting the canoe past one or two intended stopping places.

Everywhere the news of our approach was heralded by the drums; in fact, I am sure that they know three or four days ahead along the river, of the approach of a *Bula Matari*, or an ordinary white man.

We passed the populous village of Bufuaiabo and arrived at Panga Falls, a spot that Stanley mentioned as one of the most difficult places past which he had to get his boats.

In the old days of the company's prosperity, Panga had been an important post. The houses were well built, and there were signs of past prosperity; but there was little doing here now. The *Chef de Poste*, M. de Villegas, was very good to us, and promised us a new canoe and good fresh paddlers, who, I believe, were of the Bebengo tribe. The *kapita* had the impudence to ask for *matabeesh*; sufficeth it, he did not get it.

The headman that we took on here was something of an improvement, and for the first time during the whole trip down the river, we reached the next stage of our journey, a place called Bambamga, on time. We passed many deserted village sites and skirted "Stanley's Island," where he had stopped to recruit his forces and waited for the belated rearguard that never reached him. So far we had been favoured with good weather, but the night that we arrived at Mupele, where there was a very good rest-house that had been built for an official of the old Congo





PANGA FALLS ON THE ARUWIMI



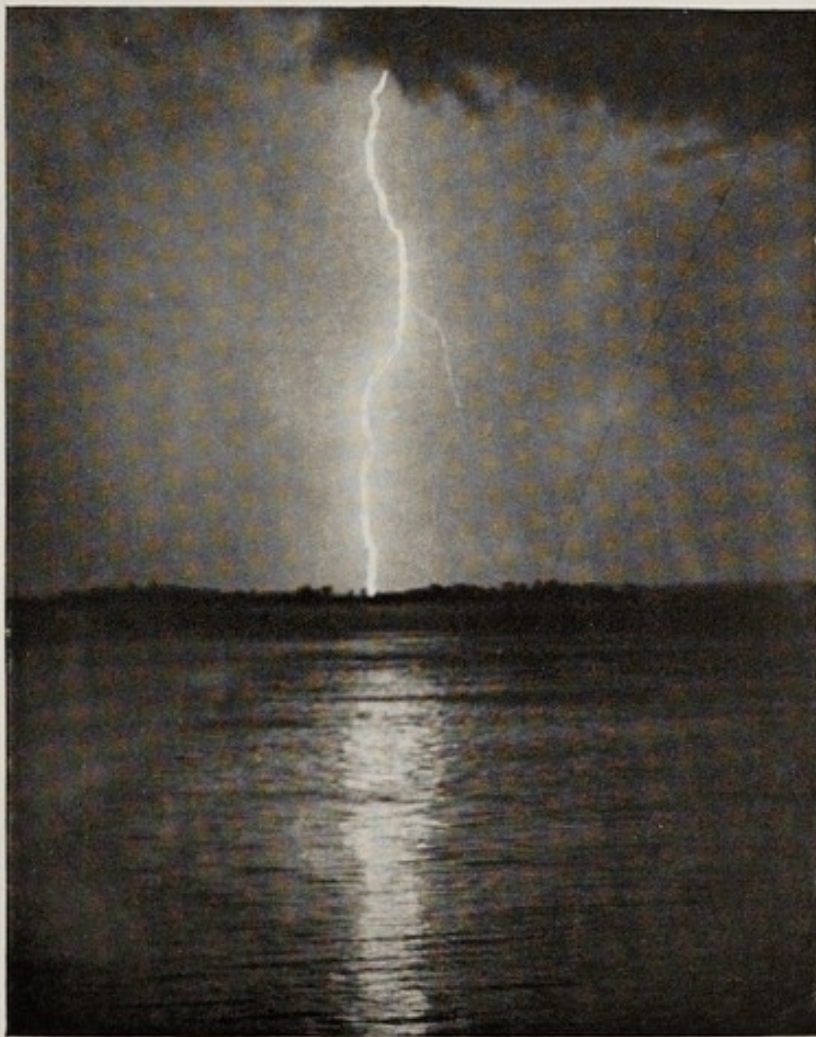
ON STANLEY'S ISLAND, BELOW THE FALLS







AN EVENING SKY



LIGHTNING AT MUPELE





Company, we got a taste of a Central African thunderstorm. Such lightning and such peals of thunder we had never seen or heard before; so brilliant were the flashes that the colours of everything could be seen distinctly. The great jagged gashes of light were almost blinding. Before the rain came on, by simply exposing the camera, we got some remarkable photographs of the electrical display, and when the rain did come it was a perfect wall of water. We feared for the canoes, that had simply been drawn up on the bank and had not been unloaded. Our photographic material was always the first consideration, and it was owing to Kearton's care and the completeness of our preparation, that the expedition was able to bring through so much of it unharmed by heat, humidity, or water. The strong steel water-tight cases were lined with felt, and outside of this a covering of heavy blanketing and a strong wooden box. Yet, even the tests that we made occasionally, and the ordinary photographs that we developed, would sometimes frighten us by showing signs of deterioration. It was only possible to do this work in the middle of the night, when the heat of the day had completely gone and the water gathered from the river had cooled sufficiently not to affect the surface of the film. We were now carrying some eight or ten thousand feet of exposed material that it was impossible to develop under these conditions. There was always the haunting fear that it would spoil on our hands, but owing to the Photographer's care, out of the whole lot the dead loss was



hardly five per cent.—a record in tropical photographic work.

Having worried so about the canoes, after the storm had passed, we lit the lantern and went down to the river bank. They were all right, but from the mere rainfall alone each was as full of water as a trough at a pump; it took a half-hour's bailing to empty each one, for these heavy logs cannot be pulled up on the bank and turned over on their sides, after the fashion of emptying a Canadian skiff or canoe.

Once in walking through the forest we came upon an old canoe almost completely finished that, like Robinson Crusoe's boat, was too heavy and big to be moved down to the water. Yet the speed that fourteen paddlers can get into one of these clumsy crafts is surprising. Under constant urging and favourable conditions they have made, down stream, nearly fifty miles in a day. Not with us, however; the best record that we could claim was about thirty.

On an average of two or three times a day it had been necessary to abandon the canoes, disembark the loads and make portages of varying distances from a half mile to two or three miles, where we would find the canoes ahead of us. The river was very low, although we noticed an increase of two or three inches following the recent heavy rain. In every case where the rapids were extremely swift or dangerous, our boatmen abandoned their posts to local pilots and crews, and it was the opportunity to secure pictures of their marvellous river work. Through many shallows



of less dangerous quality and through many swift passages of the river we passed fully loaded, but never would the natives allow a white man to accompany them where any real danger was to be apprehended. Why this was the case, I do not know; it may have been mere superstition—that it was unlucky to have a *musungu* on board, or due to the more practical reason that they wished to have as light a draught as possible to handle, but they always insisted on our getting out.

Near Bumbua we had ordered the canoes to hold back until we got ahead of them to a good position from which to watch their descent of a series of chutes and slight falls that swept the full breadth of the river for a distance of over a mile. We reached there in plenty of time and by careful wading from rock to rock, we found ourselves on a submerged ledge almost in mid stream. We could progress no farther, for beyond us a raging current tore through the rugged, broken sandstone, and a short distance below made a sheer fall of some six or eight feet into a boiling swirling pool. Everywhere the sharp edges of the rocks showed above the surface, while but a few inches below there lurked dangerous little reefs that would take the bottom out of anything but the hollow-logged *pirogues*, built to stand a tremendous thumping.

We had got the cameras in position as the first canoe appeared at the top of the rough water, and for the life of us we could not determine which channel would be chosen or where a passage could safely be negotiated. On they came, paddling diagonally across



the stream, the pilot's crew working fiercely, their bodies swaying from their hips, backwards and forwards, putting in every ounce of their weight and strength, then suddenly they turned sharply to the right, the four men in the bow using their big punting poles; missing the entrance to the chute where the water ran the swiftest, they took a narrow little passageway and, with much fending off and bumping, slid along to the edge of the little fall and plunged down into the pool below. As they passed us the noise of their excited voices could be heard above the waters. The second canoe that was following quite fast behind the first one, made even a better passage, but the third—the new one procured at Panga—was not so fortunate. Half way down, one of the strong punting poles broke; the bow swung to the left and in an instant she had run on to a flat submerged rock going half of her length clear of the water. Although the accident might have been a dangerous one it had a most funny side. There had been seven or eight men in that canoe when she struck; so great was the impetus that one after another, much as a "caterpillar" of children's blocks falls at a push, they went over the bow into the water. All managed to scramble back but one man, who made a personally conducted trip of it over the falls and was rescued by the canoe ahead.

Often along the rivers we passed the wrecks of canoes, large and small, piled up high and dry at the dangerous places. In the days of the heavy river traffic,





THE GOATS' HIGHWAY INTO THE FOREST





it must have been a very ordinary occurrence, but for us to lose a canoe at this juncture would have been very serious for the expedition, and that hollow log now swaying and balancing on its centre of gravity was our best and biggest craft. The men who had managed to reach firm footing began to work their way back to where she lay; some of them had all this time retained hold of their poles or paddles, and now followed a bit of head work that made us metaphorically and actually take off our hats. Making use of the help of the current, they swung the canoe around as if on a pivot, gave her a push, jumped in, and made the rest of the descent stern foremost.

We had begun to notice the numbers of deserted villages and, in those that were inhabited, the preponderance of untenanted huts. Smallpox had been rife, but we were now about to enter the region that possesses and offers the great question of Central Africa—the disease area of the so-called “sleeping sickness.” It was at Banalia that we first saw signs of its presence and the attempt to combat its spreading, for here was stationed the first doctor that we had met since leaving the British outpost in Uganda, and it was he who told us of the insidious creeping of the disease up the Aruwimi, for the Ituri River had for some distance past changed its name and added another syllable.

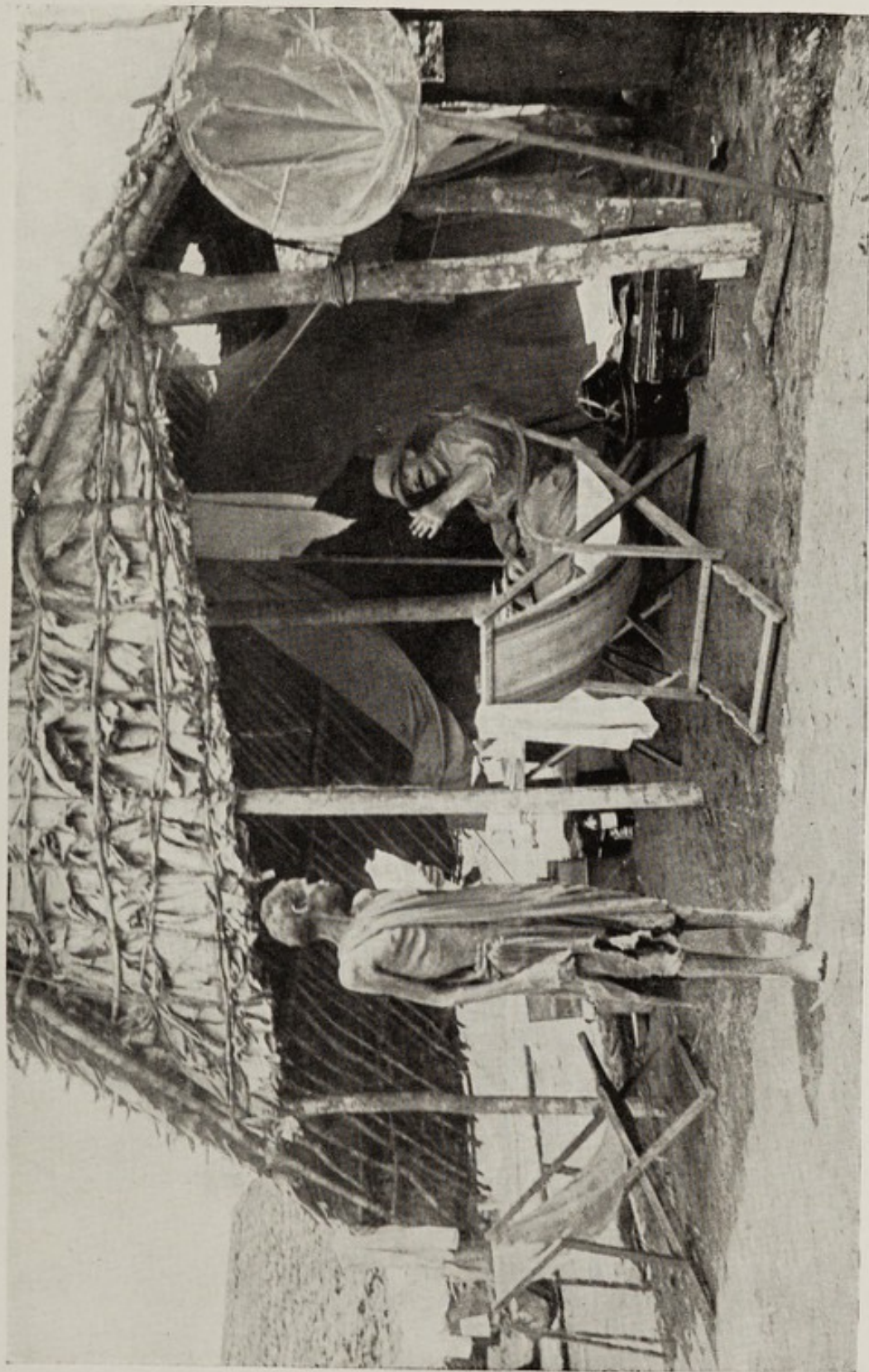
Banalia! What a flood of mental pictures came to my mind as I recalled those exciting chapters in the great explorer's book. It was here that the ill-



fated leader of the rear column, Major Barttelot, met his death at the hands of a treacherous native. And it was to this spot that Stanley alone brought back his searching party on its three months' return trip from the forest edge. Here perhaps, under the shade of that very tree near the shore, sat poor "Bonny," on whom had devolved the command of the dwindling rearguard. Like one or two other places we had passed, Banalia could once have laid claim to importance; in fact, it had been built with the lavish belief in its future—a belief that will never be realised. And in the short life of man's handiwork on this devouring continent, it may gradually disappear.

Above the post there is a large native village, and strolling up there in search of material the Scribe and the Photographer were rewarded. The chief of the village was old Lupo, whom Stanley mentions, and who was his guide up the river. He was a tall old man; his face deeply pitted with smallpox, he had, nevertheless, a remarkable dignity. But he was slowly going blind, and on this very day was turning over the chieftainship of the village to a younger and more active man. The sub-chiefs and headmen were all assembled, and we took photographs of part of the ceremony. The Banalia tribe are experts in ironwork, and here we saw a smith at work making spearheads, and knives, and swords. But the most interesting sight was the welding of the massive iron armlets on the wrists and forearm of the new chief. Unconscious that this act was being recorded





ISSUING RICE TO A SLEEPING SICKNESS VICTIM







BANALIA WOMEN OFFERING WOOD FOR PURCHASE







NEAR YAMBUYA. WHERE STANLEY'S REARGUARD ALMOST STARVED



OLD LUPO. STANLEY'S GUIDE ON THE ARUWIMI





by the moving picture film, neither he nor the man who was so deftly wrapping the metal binding over the bare flesh paid the slightest attention to us. In the photograph one may notice the folding camp-chairs of European and very modern appearance on which the two men are seated; these are to be found throughout all of the river region and are of native workmanship. All are replicas, I was told, of a half-dozen chairs that were brought in by a Portuguese trader some ten or twelve years previously. Now, no African of importance ever travels without one. Every chief has his chair boy, and even the *kapita* who was to take us on from Banalia brought his with him.

It was at Banalia that we had to make a very important decision. The time was pressing and none of us was in the best of health. I remember waking one night after a very dreadful dream—it was that we had missed that monthly down-stream steamer and were consigned to another long wait and the further possibility of not making connection with a vessel bound for Europe, at the coast. I awoke to the realisation that this was not only a dream but an actual possibility. We were advised at Banalia to consider making the long walk overland to Bengamisa and Kaparata, and thence by canoe to Stanleyville, the head of direct steamer navigation from Kinshassa near the Congo mouth. It was a toss up whether we could, everything working in our favour, recruit enough porters and get there before the steamer sailed, or by hard work and long hours of paddling reach



Basoko in time to head the same steamer off on its down trip. A little vessel that used to ply between the last-named place and Yambuya, on the Aruwimi, some three or four days below us, had long since been discontinued. We decided to trust ourselves to the paddlers again. By this time we could handle them better, and so once more we took to the river.

It seems, as I look back, that I have made a rather bitter arraignment of the various tribesmen who served us in any capacity along the rivers, and in a measure I should like to have qualified the impression that it must have left. We were not with any of them long enough to get to know them, and the black takes some knowing. For generations and generations they had lived a constant life of suspicion—suspicion of their neighbours—suspicion of strangers—and the oppression and terrorism of the slave-raiders who had only a decade or so before ceased their man-stealing and rapine through this very country. Then had come the rule of the rubber industry, with all its exactions of forced labour and tribute ; and following this, with great suddenness, a total abandonment of all traffic and the crumbling and practical decay of the most exacting monopoly in the world, and the loss of all white authority.

The Congo Belge, at this present time, is going through an interregnum of disorder ; it has ceased to pay. The new mining and commercial enterprises that are now merely in an experimental state, if worked to a successful conclusion, may help to lift it



out of this period of chaos; at present it is a conundrum to which no one has found an answer. The solving is complicated by many side issues, but the principal thing to which study and thought must be devoted, and to which lives must be sacrificed, is the combating of the devastating disease that has swept away a quarter of a million of inhabitants in the last ten years. In spots the virulence of sleeping sickness is almost unbelievable; on the best of authority we were informed that in one small section of five or six thousand square miles, out of twenty-five thousand inhabitants who had lived there eight years ago, it was estimated that there were but five hundred now alive.

But to return to our story: There was no white man at Yambuya, only a negro clerk; but he was possessed with a sense of his importance, and he ruled the once populous station with an iron hand. We had noticed some fowls in the little village above the falls where we had landed, but the natives had refused to sell any. Mentioning this fact to the black major-domo, he departed immediately, and came back with not only the two we had requested, but an additional two. Whether or no he ever divided the *matabeesh* that we gave him, I cannot say, but it is very doubtful.

Yambuya was a sad place; the last white man who had lived there had died of fever but a few weeks previously. His effects occupied the corners of the room of the only habitable house. This was



"Starvation Camp" of Stanley's ill-fated rearguard. It was here that they had died like flies, and had suffered untold misery waiting for the porters that had been promised them by that wily old rascal Tippu Tib—the porters who never came.

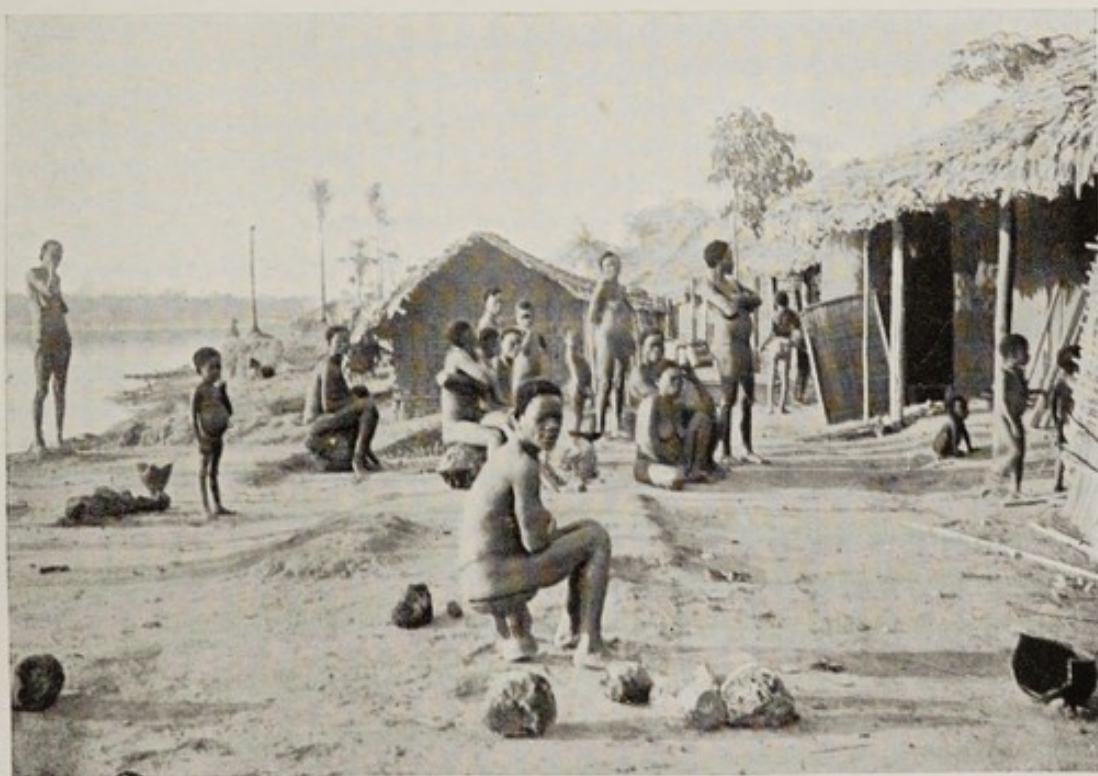
We were counting practically the hours now, for the delay of half a day in the necessary schedule meant missing the steamer. By dint of great exertions we got off promptly at daylight and reached Lakini, having done between thirty-five and forty miles—the best work of the trip.

There were no more rapids now. The character of the huts of the river villages had changed from the pointed, narrow dwellings made of phrynica leaves to wattled dwellings plastered with mud. At Lakini we were given a very neat and new dwelling for our resting-place—a house that had been built for the chief's two youngest and, evidently, most popular wives, who, with their infants, turned out and gave us place. I remember this night well, for both Kearton and myself were very much under the weather. The fever had gripped me especially hard, and with it had come a raging, thumping headache. But no sooner had I turned in, hoping to sleep, after a large dose of quinine, than the village drummer began sending out the local news to anybody within hearing of his booming log, not ten feet from our doorway. At last I could stand it no longer, and sent for the one who was summoned whenever we were in trouble—Ernesti. At the moment when he arrived the





WATCHING THE CANOES COME IN



STARVATION CAMP







A BAMBOO PIPE





drummer had ceased his disturbance, but I could hear the distant notes from up and down the river as the villages talked back and forth.

Having received instructions to do what he could to prevent our local performer from again joining in the discussion, Ernesti departed. He was successful, as usual, for the big drum made no further row that night; but the next morning, as we were about to get into the canoes and depart, there was trouble. The chief, with several of his counsellors and a crowd of women and children, were gathered at the water's edge. They seemed quite angry—some one had stolen the town drumsticks; it was like taking the clapper out of their one and only bell. My conversation with Ernesti had entirely slipped my mind; it never occurred to me to suspect him, and, under directions, the sleeping mats and personal baggage of our escort and the paddlers were thoroughly searched, without result. With a satisfied conscience we were about to shove off when somebody pointed. There, sticking out of my own blanket roll that had already been put into the canoe, were the handles of the missing drumsticks. Much chagrined I handed them over with an extra gift for the drummer, who, I must confess, took it with small grace and a snort of derision. I said nothing to Ernesti until we were well out into the stream, then I asked him quietly why he had done it.

"The b'wana asked me to," he replied.

I faintly remember now telling him to get those



drumsticks, to smash the drum up with an axe, kill the drummer, to commit any crime he pleased, but to "stop that noise." So much for faithful performance of orders!

Oh, that last day on the river! that last night, rather! Never will we forget it. At five o'clock in the afternoon the paddlers wished to put into a village for the night. At seven o'clock, when darkness was descending, they wished to put into another. By dint of threats and urging, and a little physical violence, we succeeded in getting them by. An hour later they were in a mutinous state and would have jumped overboard but for the darkness and the uncertainty of knowing where they could land. At ten o'clock in the evening they were still wearily and fitfully paddling, and at eleven a faint moon had broken through the clouds and we could see the outline of the tree-tops on the shore—a blacker mass rising above the water. In half an hour we sighted a faint light. One of the paddlers pointed and in a wearied voice said, "Basoko." We had reached the Congo waters at last; at least we were in striking distance of the great river.

We had had nothing to eat since noon; the paddlers had had nothing at all, all day. In the dim light we crept up to the landing beach. There was a fleet of canoes hauled up there, and close to the place where we got out, stiff and tired, was a large sheet-iron whale boat. We could just make out a great gateway, guarded on each side by loop-holed towers; for this was Stanley's military base when he was





FULL SPEED AHEAD



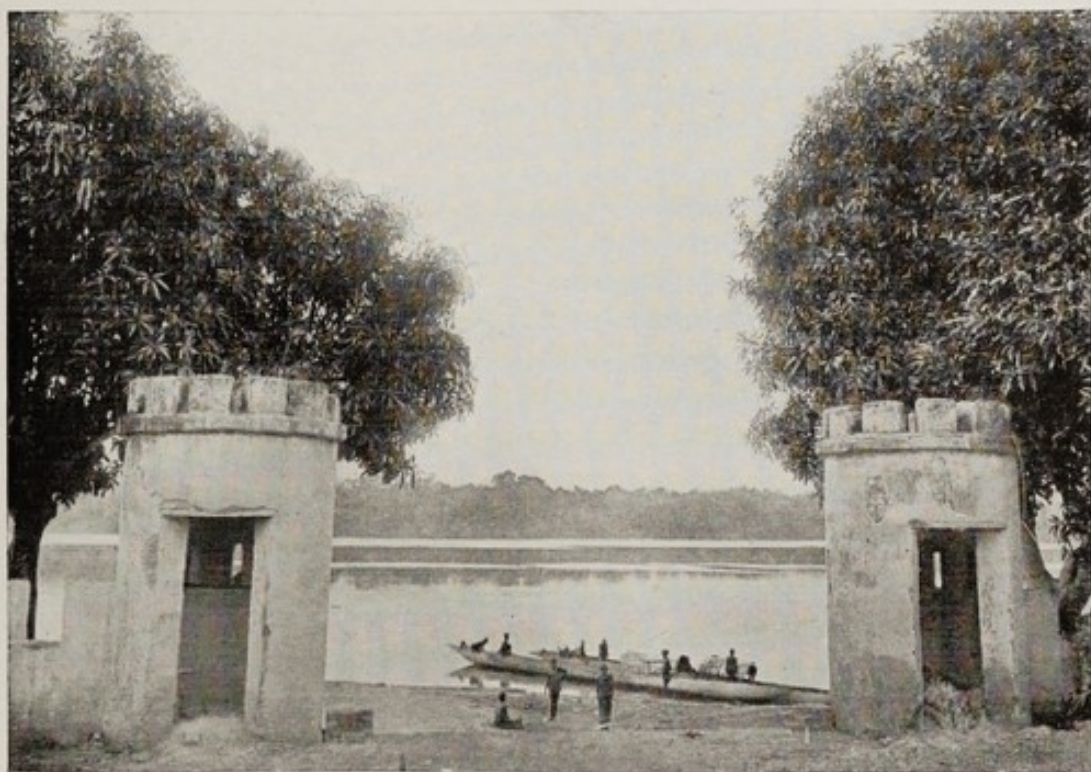
PLACID REFLECTIONS







THE FORTIFIED POST OF BASOKO



AT BASOKO GATE: THE END OF THE CANOE JOURNEY





governor of Equatoria, and had been built to stand a siege. We broke open some tinned meat and biscuits, and having satisfied our hunger, we went through the gate into the old fort. Not a living being could we see until at last we came across a sleepy native soldier, who, half frightened at the sight of strange white men at that time of the night, kept standing at salute while he answered our questions in an unintelligible jargon. We gave him up at last, and returned to the beach, where our boys had lit a fire, and we had been there hardly five minutes when we saw a lantern approaching. There were two figures coming through the gateway, and to our relief we found one was a white man. He was a pale-faced, anæmic person, literally eaten up with the ravages of fever, but he was kindness and hospitality itself. He took us into his house and emphasised his hospitality by leaving us alone to try to get our much-needed rest, departing to his own couch to shake himself to pieces for the rest of the night.

He told us that the negroes had informed him by the drums that some white men were coming down the river, but he had not expected us so soon. There was one bit of news that he gave us, however, that was consoling, the steamer would not arrive at Barunda, the stopping place, for another day. So long as we had arrived in time we did not care whether or no it delayed a week.

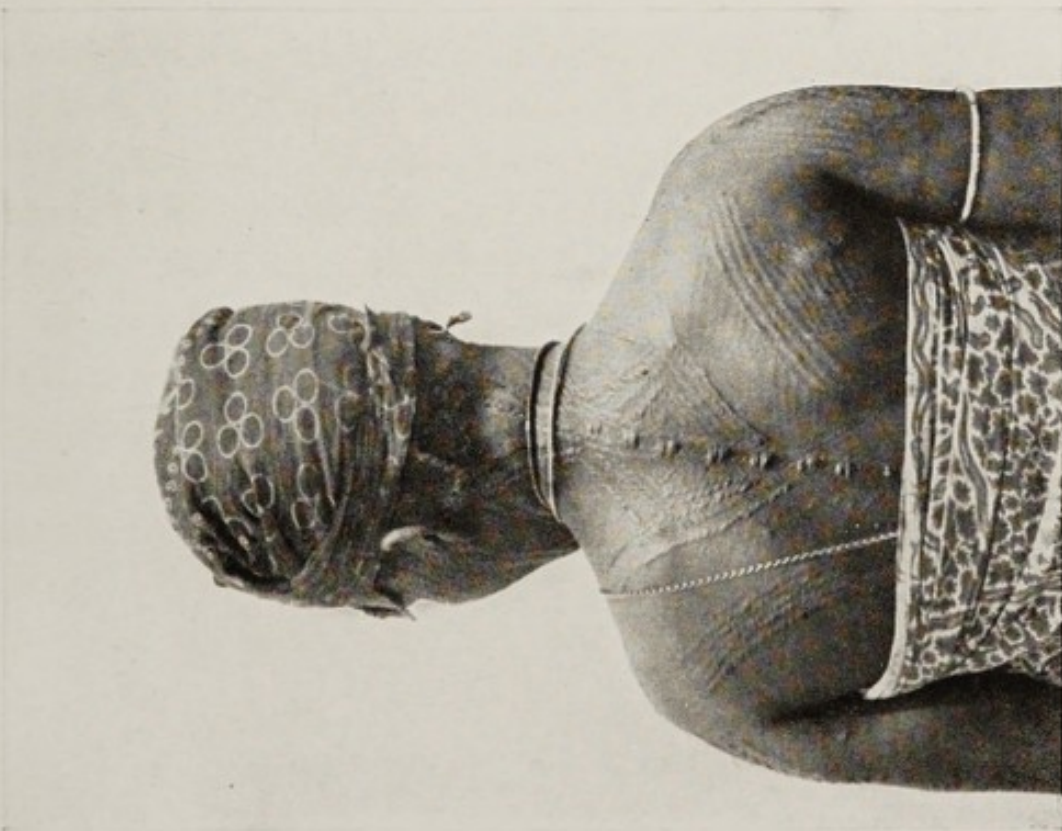


## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CONGO AT LAST

**B**ASOKO was a live place compared with the other posts that we had seen; it was linked to civilisation by a tall wireless telegraph pole, and was in charge of the able executive in the person of M. Enge, the commissioner of the district. We called the next morning at his office, and he kindly invited us to dine with him that night. This post, the most important on the Upper Congo, next to Stanleyville, was a revelation to us; here were government buildings in good repair; traders' stores; well-kept walks and even flower gardens. It seemed to us like a populous metropolis. There were perhaps in all, some twelve white men and a force of eighty native soldiers. A few weeks before there had been a white woman there also, the wife of the district commissioner, but she had died, and, as we discovered, had left him a lonely and broken-hearted man, whose only relief was the faithful performance of his duty. It was with a curious feeling that we sat down at a table with white linen and napkins and silver ware, cut glass and beautiful china: everywhere were the signs of a feminine presence. There was a touch of home in it all, for the late mistress of the house had been an American. I noticed on the walls of the big





BASOKO TYPES  
(Showing Cicatrization)





sitting-room the college pennants of Yale and Harvard and Cornell. The books and knick-knacks brought back a feeling of homesickness. On a table, littered with dainty, feminine belongings, was a photograph in a silver frame. The commissioner caught my glance in its direction.

"My wife," he said; "she lived here. She would not go home."

Yes, and she was living there yet; her presence was all around us as the big-hearted, sorrowful-faced man spoke. It was she who was responsible for the well-trained servants, and the neatness and care which showed everywhere. I glanced again at the picture; it was the face of one that men and women and children would have loved. But Central Africa is no place for a woman.

The Photographer, who was very sick this evening, had gone back early to the house by the river, but not to get the much-needed rest, as it subsequently turned out. About eleven o'clock, when I came in, he was found sitting on the edge of his cot patching up bruises and cuts on various portions of his anatomy; he was in anything but an agreeable frame of mind. Ernesti, looking also the worse for wear, was unrolling some bandages from the medicine chest. The place smelled like the ward of a hospital, it reeked with the odour of iodoform. The reason for all this was soon learned; it all came through the Photographer's keen desire to carry out the spirit of one of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the peacemakers," etc.



The cook who had accompanied us on our river trip was a bit of a Lothario, after the African fashion, and had tried his wiles and fascinations on the wife of our host's private servant, with such ardour that he had succeeded in arousing a keen feeling of jealousy, and a desire to slay, in the bosom of her lord and master. Kearton, who had just crawled into his blankets, was awakened by the noise and excitement and shouts of murder. Never again will he try to stop negroes from fighting in the dark; after all his experiences he should have known better, anyhow. Running out of the house barefooted, he found himself in the thick of it, and in about half a minute had accumulated from unknown sources an assortment of cuts and bruises that, luckily, were not of a serious character. Ernesti had left the house with him to aid in the suppression of the tumult. In the darkness and confusion Kearton had caught somebody by the throat, and was using his peace persuader to some advantage when he suddenly discovered that the one whom he had singled out as a special subject for education was no other than the luckless Ernesti. As Kearton was telling us the story Ernesti kept up one remark: "The b'wana, he knock me down, he pick me up; he pick me up, he knock me down; he nearly knock my head off. I got no chance to try to stop fight at all." It was rather fortunate that this mistake had occurred, for the other combatants, who were now behind the bars of the "choky," were suffering from knife cuts.



Hardly had we blown out the candle and settled down when we were roused by a message from the commissioner. The steamer from Stanleyville would reach Barumba at about daylight instead of noon; it had tied up for the night but a short distance above the point where the Aruwimi flowed into the greater river. Arrangements had been made for a crew for the iron whale boat, and we would have to leave at four o'clock in the morning.

Dawn was just breaking when we paddled out beyond the headland, and found ourselves on the Congo at last. In about two hours we arrived at Barumba. We had hardly got out on the shore when we heard the blast of a whistle, and the steamer, *La Reine Elizabeth*, came round the bend. She was not a passenger boat, and the five little cabins were already taken by Congo officials who were returning home for their furloughs to Europe. The captain at first did not wish to take us as deck passengers. I was trying to explain, in French, the urgency of our case, when suddenly with a grin, he said: "Oh, well, come along; get your things on board. But why don't you speak United States?" Literally I fell on his neck. He was breaking the rules of the company, which forbid white men from travelling on deck, but he could not resist our appeal. Had we been forced to wait much longer it might have gone hard, for we were about at the end of our tether so far as health and spirits were concerned. Kearton had lost forty-two pounds since starting; and I was lighter in weight



than I was in my schoolboy days, having dropped nearly thirty pounds somewhere along the Equator.

Although the captain did everything he could for us—and although the four Belgian officials, who were all Swedes, and a Jesuit White Father who occupied the staterooms, made us welcome—there was very little comfort for us during the next fourteen days down the river. No matter where we sought to put our cots, we could not find a single secluded or comfortable corner. It was sleeping out of doors with a vengeance. When it rained, as it often did, we were wet, and when the wind blew we were constantly in draughts of all kinds, and the ticks and ants that came up out of the fuel wood were pestiferous to a degree. On the lower deck there were some seventy or eighty black passengers, and twelve cases of sleeping sickness among them. Altogether it could not be called a pleasure excursion, but it was interesting none the less. Every evening we would tie up to the bank at some wood post or village, and late into the night the noise and racket of loading fuel continued. The way those furnaces ate up logs and cord-wood was a caution. It would be piled high as the deck beams in the morning, and by night-time would have vanished. Sometimes we would stop in the middle of the day and load on some fifty or sixty cords. The rest of the cargo consisted of copal and palm-oil nuts. I do not think there were fifty bags of rubber in the lot.

The river had a tremendous interest to me for





BARUMBA, WHERE WE JOINED THE STEAMER



A CONGO MISSION STATION







THE STEAMER TIED UP FOR THE NIGHT



THE FORWARD DECK





many reasons. As the days went on, as we passed by the many little villages and posts and the stretches of abandoned sites and plantations, now denuded of their inhabitants owing to the ravages of the sickness, I was looking forward to arriving at one place of special interest—Lukellia. The captain told us that we would tie up there for the night, and would possibly spend most of the day taking on cargo.

Why did this one little river village hold an interest above all others? Simply for the reason that for years I had pictured it in my mind without thinking that my eyes would ever behold it. Here was enacted a story that I had listened to more than once, and here had lived one of the best friends that I ever had in my life, and one of the finest and manliest human beings that had ever left home and comfort and battled with the wilderness. The story of E. J. Glave is known to very few. It will do to tell it.

I had met him in 1891 in New York, and in a lifetime that had known many close and intimate friendships, never had there been one that had meant so much to me, for his was the most compelling and winning personality that up to that time I had ever met. He was a knight without fear and without reproach, and his life from the time of late boyhood had been filled with the romance of adventure and successful accomplishment of tasks before which many men would have quailed or surrendered.

When Henry M. Stanley was in England in the



early 'eighties, arranging the personnel of his new government of Equatoria, among the many applicants for positions was E. J. Glave, then hardly twenty years of age. When Stanley met the young man, despite his youth, there must have been something about him that impressed Stanley, for when his force of men, picked for their promise of ability, had all been chosen, Glave was among them, and Lukellia was his station. And here for three years he had lived—for over two of them alone, and all those who had known him and all who had ever heard of him, had supposed him dead. It was a strange story, and well did I recall it as the steamer swung into the bank and I gazed at the huts ashore, at the towering forest, and the wide stretch of the silently flowing river. Many times had his eyes searched that expanse looking to the west for the relief and assistance that never came.

When he had first been left at the station he had with him a companion, a young Englishman. The natives, although cannibals, had received them kindly. Glave's force and adaptability had won ascendancy over the native mind at once, but it was not long before he and his companion were both sick with the fever that so few white men ever escape. They nursed each other through successive attacks and at last reached that state of being permanently half well which is the usual condition of men of even the strongest physique in the fever belts of Africa.

One day Glave's companion had crossed the river in a canoe to shoot buffaloes, and as my friend stood



on the shore, watching the canoe returning in the evening, he saw that there was a long space between the paddlers and no figure sitting in the middle. That space contained the mangled body of the only white man within some seven hundred miles, crushed beyond recognition by a wounded buffalo bull. I recalled the dramatic scene of the funeral as Glave had told it to me; I pictured it to myself—the grave under the big tree, and that brave-hearted boy—for he was hardly more—reading the simple burial service from the prayer-book his mother had given him. I remember his telling of naked blacks seated on the ground watching the proceedings, and how, suddenly, he noticed that all of their eyes were directed at the branch of the big tree overhead. Glancing up, Glave saw three great hornbills looking down upon the scene as if held by curiosity. But the strange thing was that they were silent, and the hornbill is the noisiest of all noisy feathered things. Seldom do its calls and squawkings cease, but these birds made no sound, no movement. Through the whole of the ceremony they remained there motionless, and when all was finished and the mound of earth completed, without a cry they sailed off on their broad wings across the river.

For days, for reasons which need not be explained, Glave watched the mound and sat near it at night. And now comes the dramatic part of the story. News travels strangely along the Equator; where the drums do not talk it out into the air it seems to go by word



of mouth, or rumour, through almost uninhabited tracts. Slowly word came to the mouth of the river that both white men at Lukellia were dead. It reached a quiet little home in England and caused great sorrow; a grieved mother and sisters put on the black garb of mourning, and for two years a young man upon that lonely river shore waited for news of the outside world. Then suddenly a little steamer had puffed into sight battling its way up stream, and a lonely figure whose clothes were patched with bark cloth came down to the shore and signalled. Glave was relieved at last! But the story is not ended yet.

When I first knew him he had just returned from an expedition into the wilds of Alaska. It was he and his companion, Dalton, who had first found gold there. And there is the last chapter to add: In '93, alone and unaccompanied by another white man, he had answered the call of Africa again, and on a trip to investigate the conditions of the dwindling slave trade, he had crossed the continent from opposite Zanzibar, much of the way along the same route that we had followed, and alas, had died of the fever at Matadi, where he lies buried.

I had told all this to the Photographer, and no sooner had the steamer tied up than we were off with the cameras to try to find Glave's old village. We had been informed that it was not at the steamer landing-place, but some three or four miles below on a trail that followed the water's edge through the forest. So we started out. The miles seemed to lengthen;





A FOREST CLEARING ON THE CONGO







the hour or so that we expected to walk grew to two hours and no signs of habitation. Then we found a small path leading to the right and we came to a spot where a village once had been, and farther on a collection of two or three miserable little huts, three or four black men and half a dozen women.

"Lukellia?"

They nodded, but that was all we could get out of them.

There were lots of big trees and branches extending overhead, and probably in the clearing that was now being overgrown there had once been room for a village of two hundred huts or more. The women and men were all young, and even if they could have understood our questions there would not have been found a single human being alive who would have remembered the white man who lived there so many years ago. Yet here, perhaps, he had stood and watched that canoe slowly crossing with the ominous space between the paddlers; and here he had waited day after day. Was it just as I had depicted it in my mind's eye? Somewhat, and yet not quite. Those mental places that we possess so vividly and that never fade, seldom bear semblance to locations of reality.

A sudden darkening of the sky warned us of a coming storm, and just as we got back to the steamer landing it burst in a drenching downpour accompanied by fierce thunder and lightning, but it cleared away about ten o'clock to one of the most brilliant starlit nights that I have ever seen.



I was leaning over the rail of the steamer when a figure joined me. It was the tall White Father, who had told me in a conversation that he had been out there for nineteen years. His hair and beard were snow white, but he was hardly more than fifty years of age. For one of his calling he was very broad-minded, and he spoke French and English and a half a dozen native dialects fluently. Knowing that all the official passengers, including ourselves, were bound for Matadi and for the steamer that would take us away from Africa, I asked him if he were going to Europe also. He looked up at the sky and out at the dark shore line.

"No," he said, rather sadly, "we do not go back. You remember what Livingstone, the great English missionary, said, when urged to return? 'My work lies here.'"

I tried to recall the last words written by the great man whose name he had mentioned which ran somewhat as follow: "May blessings fall upon the head of that man, be he Jew, Mohammedan, or Christian, who brings relief to the sufferings of these unhappy people." Yes, under that bright star-spotted sky lay one of the sore spots of the earth. Along the plague-swept banks of the great river lies work for men, not creeds or propaganda. The best results—the only lasting good—will be performed by those who, entering on their labours, will not turn back because the task seems hopeless.





WOMEN AT A LANDING PLACE





## CHAPTER XIX

### THE LOWER REACHES

BESIDES Ernesti, the only one of our boys who had joined us in British East Africa and who came to London with us in the end, we had kept on a well-trained personal servant who had joined us at Irumu. I have forgotten his native name, but he answered to Pete, as well as anything else, so it stuck by him. Pete and Ernesti had stowed themselves away somewhere on the lower deck, keeping watch over our belongings. Neither of them had ever travelled on a river steamer before. They would sit there watching the engine by hours, following the thrust of the great sliding piston rods, lost in wonderment at the never-ceasing energy.

One day, I noticed Pete standing below on the lower deck and looking up at the steering bridge or platform. His attitude was one of such astonishment, the expression of his face showed such awe and pleasure, that going back a little way, and ascending the wooden ladder I tried to see what attracted his attention, and then, suddenly, I understood it all. The pilot at the wheel of the steamer was a black man. He was dressed in an old cotton shirt and the remnants of a pair of yellow dungaree trousers. Pete,



who was attired in a cast-off suit, was much the better dressed, but what evidently impressed him was that a man of his own colour, of his own race, should know the magic methods by which the big boat turned from one bank towards the other and followed the winding channel. He probably felt a mingled pride and rejoicing in the responsibility that had been entrusted to one of his own kind. A little turn of the steering wheel and the vessel's bow swung to the right, another turn she straightened out down the centre of the stream. Pete couldn't understand; it fascinated him. The black pilot glanced down and saw him. Their eyes met and as politely as he ever lifted his hat to a *musungu*, Pete saluted and bowed to that wonderful black brother, a bow that was rewarded by a cold and self-important stare. But altogether the whole affair tended toward the uplifting of Pete.

At Volobo there is quite an important post of the Baptist Missionary Society, and here we met a Mr. Scrivener who remembered Glave and Stanley very well. There is a hospital here in charge of a young medical missionary, Dr. Gurling, who, while we were there, had a number of cases of sleeping sickness under observation. The doctor expressed the great hope that some day there would be found, if not an absolute cure, a method of preventing the spreading of the disease. The fly, or flies—for it is now thought there is more than one—that carry it, and whose bites infect, live in the low bush and generally in the



vicinity of water. They do not travel far from the shelter and apparently abhor the wide and empty spaces; in bad areas the government is clearing away the underbrush, and has made some progress in planting lemon grass, for it is said that the tsetse fly will not cross ground so planted. However, the efficacy of this has been denied. Both Kearton and myself had been bitten a number of time by this pernicious insect, and I can vouch for the fact that the after effect is quite different from that of an ordinary bite; it produces a burning red spot that in some cases will last for months. It is asserted by those who have made a study of the subject that in the bad districts only four out of every thousand flies are infected. But once the germ obtains access to the blood, the doom of the person who has been bitten, is sealed. In the Congo region as the death rate increased the birth rate has decreased. We were informed that where the sickness was particularly bad it was hard to get the people to take the slightest interest in any occupation or industry; they simply sit round expecting to die. This curious fatalism is characteristic of the African races. If a black man makes up his mind that he is going to 'Kufa' no power of medicine can save him—he departs on his own pre-arranged date.

I remember the day when rounding a bend, instead of the monotonous forest, there could be seen in the distance the rounded tops of hills. The country changes as suddenly on the west side as it does on the east. This is due most probably to the soil con-



ditions, and not to any work of clearing. Although we passed patches of woods of a respectable size, the green ramparts in their everlasting monotony no longer rimmed the banks. Through the middle reaches, where the Congo is at its widest and in its most sluggish period, the main channel runs in and out of the green, half water-swept islands, the channel sometimes appearing to turn almost diagonally across the stream. Although the pilot had to depend upon memory for a great part of the journey, sign-posts pointing the way were as frequent here as in any well-motored district in America or the Continent. Great white arrows visible at two or three miles were nailed to the trunks of the trees, and although there are no lighthouses, and Congo river traffic is restricted to the day time, a steamer could hardly lose her way.

Clearing after clearing, empty of habitation or human life showed where the sleeping sickness had done its work; deserted or half-deserted villages were on either hand. When we got into the meadow land and the country of the rolling hills, evidences of human occupation were farther and farther apart. Great flocks of little birds flew up out of the reeds; occasionally a diver or grebe scuttled out of sight. Once only did we see a crocodile raising its ugly snout, and it was not until we had nearly reached Stanley Pool that we saw any hippopotami; there a herd of a dozen or so popped up their heads and pointed their inquisitive ears at the passing steamer.



We had taken on board at one of the posts a company of native soldiers under a white officer, bound on a punitive expedition against a little tribe whose village lay up one of the Congo tributaries that flowed out of the marshy country to the south. Little vengeance would they reek on the chief. They would burn down his grass huts; he and his people would hide until the soldiers had gone away, and inside of a week build another town. At least that is what was told to me by the officer in charge, who said he did not look forward to any fighting. The natives are almost entirely unarmed now, for the importation of powder and firearms is restricted, and what they possess are useless against modern rifles. Almost all of these soldiers, although they only expected to be gone a month or less, had brought their families with them, for to move an African regiment or company—in fact, to keep them together in order—the wives have to be taken into account. I noticed that each prepared her lord and master's food, arranged his sleeping mat, and when they went ashore carried all his impedimenta, and in some cases even his rifle. They made the fires, and even filled and lit and set going their husbands' pipes.

There was a curious figure to be seen on deck and much in evidence at every landing-place, a pure albino, who came, I am told, from one of the river tribes above Stanleyville. His flesh was a pink white, much whiter than any white man's; his hair was the



lightest yellow wool, almost golden; and while his features were pure negroid, his eyes, evidently suffering from the sunlight, were squinted to narrow slits, and were blue in colour. He was a great swimmer, and it was his province to go overboard with the bow line that towed the mooring cable to the shore. The pink white of his flesh, his shoulders only slightly freckled, made him stand out in marked contrast to the black crowds in which he sometimes mingled on the banks.

Once on the march while making a long portage, we had met an albino woman in one of the villages. The dead white of her skin and her hair made her appearance most uncanny, while the pinkness of her eyes was as vivid as that of any white rabbit that one ever saw. The albino freak, we were told, occurs more commonly with the male sex than it does with the female. It was regarded as quite lucky to have one in the village. This boatman was a well-known character, and the captain said that he was one of the best workers he ever had.

We steamed into Stanley Pool one Sunday, and as we crossed the wide expanse we could see buildings showing through the trees. Soon we tied up to the bank at Kinshassa. Our river journey was over. As we went ashore, the first thing that we stumbled on was a railway track. The sight of these two metal lines of the road that runs down to Matadi, three hundred miles away, swept us into the present, and when we found ourselves in the café of the Hôtel



Cosmopolite we realised that the long journey was practically at an end.

Between Kinshassa and the port of ocean steamer traffic, Matadi, lies a succession of great rapids, impassable, and for a long time the barrier that prevented explorers from penetrating into the mysteries of the dark continent. Past them Stanley had dragged his boats on his first trip, and until the railway was constructed (the work was performed mostly by coolie labour at the cost of four lives for every mile), it was the longest and most wearisome portage in the world. But now one boards the train that runs every other day from Leopoldville, through Kinshassa, to Matadi; stopping for the night at Thysville, where there is an excellent hotel. The three hundred mile trip is made in about sixteen hours—not very rapid going. The railroad is a very good bit of engineering work; in many cases, on the steep descent from the hills, it winds along the sides and loops over itself, and descending into the valley above a roaring muddy torrent, reaches the Congo bank again.

Kinshassa and Leopoldville will be important places of the Congo, but the former, which is the starting-point for all the up-river steamers and the headquarters and base for many of the trading companies of French, German and Belgian Equatoria, is bound to become the most important. The pipe-line system, that will soon be pumping oil from Matadi, parallels the railway. When this is completed, the occupation of the people who remain along the river—that of



wood cutting—will be gone entirely, but navigation will be improved and a deck passage will probably be more comfortable.

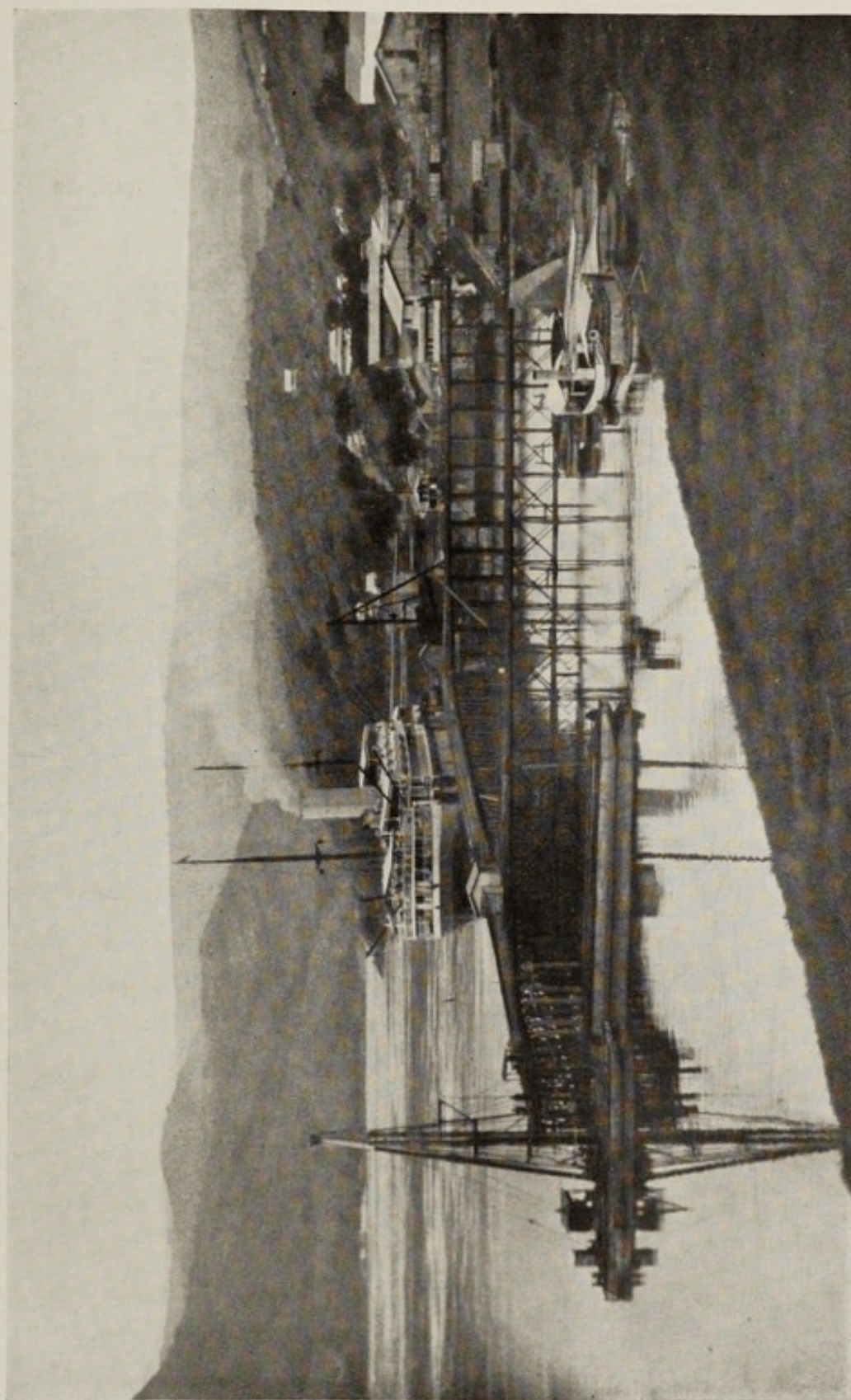
The contrast of a clean, dry room at a well-ordered hotel, and the comfort of everything was so sharp and sudden that, speaking for myself, it took me some days to get used to it. The first night at Kinshassa, I remember, I slept very badly. I was trying too hard to enjoy it. We met here a party of three or four American engineers who were going up country for a mining company. One of them was very glad to take on the services of Pete, but Ernesti was bound for London with us, to return to his own country, British East Africa, by the steamer from Southampton to Mombasa; never in the world could he have retraced our journey by himself.

There were a number of white ladies, wives of officials, living at Kinshassa, and every evening, at tea time, there was quite a social gathering at the café of the Hôtel Cosmopolite.

It was quite curious to meet negroes who spoke English with an English accent, but here we found several from Nigeria and the Gold Coast. They came up and introduced themselves in very easy and democratic fashion. Every other black we met wished to engage himself to us as cook or personal boy.

Matadi, when at last we reached there, reminded me of a score of other places I had met with about the world, and yet I could not place any one of its reminiscent airs distinctly. It was Tangier; it was





THE DOCKS AT MATADI





La Guira, on the Spanish Main coast; it was Jamaica, Trinidad, Colon, Cape Town; it was one of the little hilly towns on the Bay of Naples. But the principal thing that caught our eye as we descended from the train, was the great grey ocean steamer moored to the iron pier that stretched out beyond the railway yards. It spelt Home! It was two days before we would sail, however, and on one of these days I had promised myself to make an excursion with a particular object in view—it was to find Glave's grave. After making many inquiries I was referred, at last, to the missionary at the head of the B.M.S. Mission that lay outside the town, a mile or two away on a hill overlooking a bend in the river. This gentleman knew a black missionary worker, a Jamaican negro, who, he said, could possibly direct us; and furthermore, he promised us the use of the mission boat to make the trip down the river the following morning.

It would have been a curious thing if this short, little excursion had proved to be the most disastrous of any we had made; it nearly did so, however, and gave us some rather exciting moments.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE LAST ADVENTURE

EARLY the next morning the Photographer and the Scribe were at the mission. The missionary himself could not see us, giving the excuse that is always taken in Central Africa—he was down with the fever, and could not leave his bed. But Gordon, the black mission worker, was there, and the crew for the whale-boat, which had been pulled up on the bank, were ready. Our guide, counsellor, and friend was an impressive figure. He was dressed in a black broadcloth coat, white shirt and collar, and a clerical tie. Though Africa claimed his progenitors, all the African but the colour had been squeezed out of his system. I had seen his type in the United States, but never had we encountered it in our trip from the Mombasa to the Congo mouth. His English was perfect, and his enunciation that of an Oxford professor. He hastened to inform us that he was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and was a graduate of an English University, but having heard the “call of the Word” he had come out “to labour in the vineyard.” From his sleekness and general appearance of good health, the labour had agreed with him.

“Having heard of you gentlemen’s intention of





AN AVENUE PLANTED BY STANLEY



THE LADIES WHO WOULD DRESS FOR THEIR PORTRAITS





searching for the place of interment of your departed friend, as one capable of putting you in the right direction of finding his final resting-place, I responded with alacrity at the chance of offering assistance. I do not know the exact position of the monument erected to the memory of your friend, but doubtless we can find it."

We went down to the shore where the crew were waiting. They were dressed in blue trousers and calico jumpers cut in sailor fashion, with a regular sailor-hat as headgear. In a hollowed-out canoe they might have done very well, but what they knew about handling a whale-boat you could have put in your waistcoat pocket. And the boat itself was something of a snare and a delusion. Years before she might have been capable of any work exacted of her; and certainly she went back to the days of the old sperm-whale industry. No sooner had we got out into the current than she began to leak. Little fountains of water spurted over our feet, and those seams that were not gushing wept weakly. There was not a tight strake in her composition. Under the after thwarts were a number of tins. While the two bowmen kept rowing to keep the boat's head down the stream, the rest of the hands began to bail industriously. Mr. Gordon, sitting in the stern sheets, was muttering, "Oh dear, oh my!" And then suddenly he exclaimed, "I can't keep her straight at all," the reason for which was plainly discernible. He had the tiller ropes crossed.



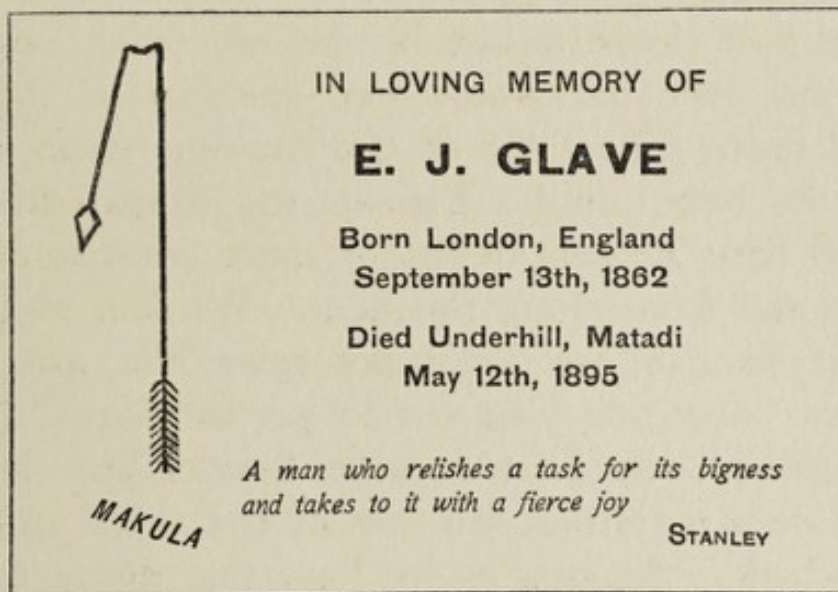
After half an hour of rowing, drifting and bailing, we rounded the point and, with an extra effort of the bowmen, got the boat turned in toward shore. We landed at a little strip of sand in a valley between two high hills. The grass was shoulder high, and in many places higher. Following a little rocky stream bed through which crystal-clear water was slowly trickling, we made our way for some three hundred yards and then, climbing a steep bank, we found ourselves amid the gravestones of a little cemetery.

Years before when Matadi consisted of a few houses and some large buildings that, in the still older day, had been the head-quarters of the white slavers who shipped their cargoes to America and the West Indies, this ground had been a mission station. No fewer than eight or ten members of British, Swedish and American missions were buried here; five of them were women, one hardly more than a girl, for her age was placed on the rough-hewn tombstone as but twenty-two years. Glave's resting-place was not among them; we searched for another half-hour before we found it. Evidently no one had visited this lonely mound for years. We cleared the grass away and took a photograph. The bronze tablet that had been sent out in 1896 by a returning missionary was in place on the granite headstone, and the wording ran as shown on the opposite page.

No finer epitaph could a man wish for than this, and no better setting for a man of his calibre could be found than this lonely Congo hillside with the



great river sweeping past and the wild thorn and the elephant grass shrouding him. There was one thing I knew, that if he had been alive and accessible he would have been with us on this trip. How much more successful it would have been! How much more we would have seen and understood! Many thoughts went through my mind. Truly he was "a man who



relished a task for its bigness," ours was much smaller, he would have enlarged it.

The black mission worker, his broadcloth coat and trousers filled with burrs and grass spears, now informed us that we had better start, as it was a long pull against a swift current back to the landing-place. So we returned to the shore. The crew had plugged up some of the worst holes in the whale-boat with wooden pegs and had caulked some of the seams with bits of cloth torn from the stern sheets covering. We



shoved off. On our way down we had had no real idea of the strength of the current, but now we could see that it was running like a mill race. For minutes at a time we remained almost stationary. By hard work we rounded the first point. Above, there was a still greater force to the water and some in-shore rocks set the stream out toward the middle of the river. Just as we caught this eddy, one of the men pulling port stroke jerked his oar out of the rowlock and went over backwards into the lap of the man behind him. The force of the running water almost swept the bow round. Two of the plugs had come out and little streams began to spurt from under the thwarts and from along the keel. We had to do the bailing now, for we could not spare the man from the oars. Our one idea was to get to shore. As the water gained, the boat became heavier and heavier. Twice we were within ten feet of the shore and were beaten back. As long as we kept that distance in we were all right, for if the worst came to the worst and the boat sank, we could still get to safety; but there was always the chance of being swept out again, and against the current in the centre no swimmer could have fought.

Noticing from the ripples that there were some shallows ahead we urged the rowers on, pushing against their oars as they pulled. The water was almost up to our knees when the two bowmen bundled over and held us from drifting back. Again we had to bail the old tub out, and trust ourselves to the





GLAVE'S LONELY GRAVE





river once more. We were nearly over the worst of it when we noticed a peculiar phenomenon. The water near the shore and farther out in the river seemed at regular intervals to spout high in the air, as if some huge animal were trying to force its way up stream. It puzzled us for the moment, and then we saw the reason. A mile or so below Matadi a telegraphic cable stretches across the river, high enough for the masts of the steamships to pass beneath it. It had been all right when we went down, but for some unaccountable reason must have parted within the last hour or so. Now it sagged down into the current and when dragged to its full length would come whipping out as if some gigantic fisherman were trying to make a wheel cast across the wide expanse of water. Had that steel cable caught us when we were floundering in the deeper water we should have capsized to a certainty. We passed underneath in safety, and after nearly three hours' work reached the landing-place. I do not think that the old boat will ever make that trip again. Tired and bedraggled we made our way back to the hotel.

With all our belongings on board the *Anversville* we stood looking over the rail the next morning, our adventures and hardships, such as they were, behind us. The last passengers were coming on board. I could not but notice how, in the majority of cases, Africa had stamped its mark on most of their frames and faces. The really healthy-looking man was a rare exception. Many of our fellow voyagers were invalids



returning home. I noticed a poor woman being helped down the dock; she had evidently come from the hospital. Her feet were in hospital slippers, and she still wore a hospital dressing sacque, soiled and worn. But from somewhere she had resurrected a frayed picture hat with dangling flowers; it made her yellow face, in which suffering was plainly marked, much more wan and sickly. She was making a brave front of it; for if the ship's doctor, who was examining all passengers, decided that her case was hopeless or very bad, she would not be allowed to board the steamer. The doctor looked at her critically. She tried to smile, even to laugh, and pushed away the friend's arm which was supporting her. One could see that her fate was hanging in the balance; but she had friends, had that sick woman, and two now came to her rescue and began to plead her cause. One was a sallow-faced young man with budding moustache and soft, fluffy beard just beginning to darken his cheeks and chin. What arguments he used I do not know, but eventually the doctor waved them toward the companion-way. Bravely the woman walked up the many steps, and when she reached the deck collapsed and was helped into a steamer chair. She sat there drawing long, painful breaths, but in her eyes and on her lips was a smile of peace and hope!

They have a right to be careful, these ships' doctors. On the voyage previous to the one on which we were embarking, they had dropped eight shotted bundles over the side before the vessel



reached the Grand Canaries. On this voyage the engines were stopped and the bells were tolled for two. Not for the young woman, I am glad to say, for she improved daily, and I saw her greet her friends on the quay at Antwerp. She grew younger also, and when the hospital clothes had been replaced by others she used to walk the deck with the young man with the soft beard. She was a widow, I was told, whose husband had died but recently up country. The young man was his friend who had promised to see her back to her people.

But the romance I was building ended on the quay, for he was met, in his turn, by a pretty Belgian girl, who threw her arms round his neck and wept her welcome on his shoulder. It is too bad that we can never follow these things out. She may have been his sister, and—but we are dealing with facts, and I am anticipating; we have not yet cleared the Congo mouth.

In Portuguese West Africa, which is just across the river from the little town of Boma, which was our next stopping-place, the blacks had been in revolt since early in March—a war was on, and many refugees had crossed into Belgian territory. From the steamer we could see the smoke of burning *shambas* and white men's houses and plantations. Twenty-one white men had already been killed in the uprising. We spent a day taking in cargo at the iron wharf, and Kearton and I called on the governor at Government House. We were both



impressed with him, and he struck us as being a strong and able man.

"The Congo," said he, "is not what once it was, some people think; its commercial future is problematical. But look at the new discoveries of gold, and, recently, of diamonds. The attention of America and England is being drawn to its great possibilities, but this dread disease of sleeping sickness is our question just at present. It is the one thing that confronts us. Whether the solution will be found in this year or next, it must be the thing before the mind of every official who has the future of the country and the welfare of his people in his trust."

What the governor said but echoed the report of every one of the thinking people, both missionaries and officers, whom we have met. I remember that in the days of the so-called Congo atrocities the whole world was stirred and all eyes were centred on the Congo. There were committees of investigation, and vast sums were subscribed in aid of the cause that finally wrought great changes in the lives and destinies of the blacks. Here was a question much greater and more vital. And yet except for the efforts of a few devoted men of science and some medical missionaries maintaining with difficulty these struggling hospitals, the world hardly knows of the extent of this great scourge. Even should a cure be found the method of its administration over so vast a territory and among so many different tribes would be a problem.

The governor got out a map and followed our



route with the greatest interest. His knowledge of the tribes and their characteristics was accurate, and he was able to give us a great deal of information. He spoke of the difficulties of photographing in so damp a climate, and told us a story of a friend of his who had taken many photographs whose heart was almost broken on finding on his return that almost everything was spoiled. It made us a little nervous and more anxious than ever to assure ourselves that our reels of film had not suffered the same fate.

In the back yard of the house of the American Consul, Mr. McBride, was the famous baobab, the autograph tree of Boma. Some ten or twelve feet in diameter, its smooth bark was covered with the names of ships that had visited the station, and of travellers and officers who had gone ashore. Some of these dates were back in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties. Stanley himself is supposed to have carved his name there, on his first visit. But as his initials, "H. M. S.," were the usual prefix meaning "Her Majesty's Ship," and as there were quite a number of such, one cannot be certain whether the great explorer left a record of his visit. Mr. McBride possessed a most interesting chimpanzee, who, although sometimes very cross, made friends with us. He had a little table and chair at which he used to sit, would pull the cork out of a bottle of sweetened water, pour the contents into a glass, and was an adept in the use of knife and fork. With a napkin tied round his neck, he was a most ridiculous figure. His table



manners were excellent except for a habit of holding the edge of the plate with one of his hind feet. When captured very young these large simians can be taught anything, but as they grow older and their strength increases they become rather dangerous pets, and are liable to sudden and violent fits of temper. We had been told a story up the river of one that had been taught to wait at table and was celebrated for miles round. He was owned by a man at Thysville. But one day having taken a sudden aversion to a white guest, the beast attacked him so fiercely that the man had to be sent to hospital, and from that moment the chimpanzee relapsed into barbarism and ended his days behind the bars of a cage, refusing even to make friends with the master for whom he had shown so much affection.

On the steamer there was quite a menagerie being taken to Antwerp, two little "chimps" among the lot. Strange to say they were the only ones who suffered from sea-sickness, the other monkeys were apparently not disturbed by the motion of the vessel.

The lading having been completed, the *Anversville* proceeded down the river, stopping near the mouth to put off the hundred or so black stevedores that had been gathered at the town of Banana. Rest, regular meals and comfortable quarters began to work miracles before we had been two days out at sea. We began to pick up our lost flesh in the most surprising manner. The days held warm and clear. The long, low coast of Africa on our starboard hand was visible for



most of the journey—our thoughts were of home. Yet one day we found ourselves talking of some day returning; we began planning future trips, and so great is the fascinating hold of the mysterious continent that Kearton decided that in another year or so British East Africa would claim him as a resident. Even those wearied officials going home on furlough spoke of coming back to the Congo. As one of them put it tersely:

“No matter where you go, no matter what you do, Africa calls you.”

We went ashore at Dakar, on the Senegal coast, and spent an evening at the little Frenchified African town, but were glad to be back on the steamer again. The days passed quickly, and the next port the steamer touched was La Pollice. It was cold, stormy and rainy when we reached Antwerp. Our voyage was finished, with the exception of the little trip across the Channel.

As I looked out of the window of my hotel on the same view of Trafalgar Square on which I had gazed some fourteen months before, it seemed all a dream. The weather was exactly the same as when I had left it—cold and rainy—although it was now springtime. The same old man was selling papers at the corner; the be-medalled porter at the door stood in the same place. Despite the sizzling coals in the grate, I felt chilled to the marrow of my bones. I felt the call! I would have given some-

thing for the sight of the wide stretch of the grey-green plains dotted with thorn trees, the warmth of the spreading sunshine, and the gleaming pinnacle of Kenia rising above the belt of white clouds! Then, again, I thought of the gloom of the forest, of the cold, damp mornings, and of the prospect of the long trudge through the muddy ooze; of the many painful sights and the sickening villages; and I was glad to be back safe with it all behind me. Experience is something that one can only buy with experience!



## CHAPTER XXI

### SOME NOTES AND FIGURES

WHEN Henry M. Stanley emerged at the Congo mouth in August, 1877, he had been nine hundred and ninety-nine days crossing from a point on the shore of the Indian Ocean opposite Zanzibar; he had travelled, in all, some seven thousand miles; by many thousand the greatest inland exploring trip of all time. Before he had entered, all on the west coast was a mystery beyond the first cataracts that begin but a short distance above Matadi, and although he brought the first light to the world of the vast interior, it was only slowly that the actual facts and figures, the distances, contours, and information of the lives and conditions of the people became known. The geographical knowledge is now so extended as to be almost complete, but the history of the inhabitants will remain to the end the great unwritten volume. Their numbers will never be known; those authorities who have pretended to investigate, and who have studied all sources of information, vary in their estimates by millions. Not one is lower than fifteen millions, and some of them as high as forty. The general consensus of opinion is that there must be at least thirty million dark-skinned people in scattered



tribes and racial divisions, and that there are more different dialects spoken, perhaps, than in all the rest of the world together. It is the land of Babel, for over two hundred separate tongues have been recorded. Dictionaries have been compiled of but five; the Bible has been translated into but four. The bewildering figures compiled and collated in the libraries of the world, having reference to other continents, cover the records of centuries; but all figures are new in relation to the Dark Continent. They are none the less bewildering, however, despite the fact that the harvest of facts and information is just beginning to be garnered.

Stanley travelled over seven thousand miles, and a great portion of it on foot. Yet in the great Congo basin there are over twelve thousand miles of navigable river waters. Up and down all these highways the white man has gone; but vast tracts of land that lie between the giant streams and tributaries to the main artery are unexplored to-day. In the basin proper, that is, roughly speaking, one million five hundred thousand square miles, all the whites taken together would not make up the population of a New England village; should they be called to their colours, not a civilised nation in the world would be unrepresented.

I kept a notebook of the nationalities of the people whom we met in the Congo Belge alone, and they footed up to twenty-two. Hailing Belgium as the mother country—for since October, 1908, the old



Congo Free State has become a colony of Belgium—the Belgians represent but little over one half of the population. Let us look at the make-up of the rest of this vanguard of civilisation, this army of adventurers. Where have they come from? Great Britain is well represented by over six hundred. Every one of her larger colonies has sent its small contingent. The United States is there, in constantly increasing numbers; and the rest? Let us look at the names of the countries they call their fatherlands: Germany, France, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Russia, Austria, Canada, Italy, Turkey, Switzerland, Greece, Finland, India, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania. "From all the red-mapped lands they come."

What have they brought out? Who knows? Some have succeeded, but many of them have failed in their ventures, many have never returned; they will continue to fail, they will continue to find their graves there. The land with whose destinies they have thrown in their lot has been called by one writer "The Coming Continent." "Coming" it may be, but this generation will pass away and its sons may be old men before the great land has "arrived." Poor little Belgium, when she took upon herself to join the ranks of the great landed estate holders assumed, with the title, obligations that must now be disheartening. The handsome blue flag with the golden star is her guerdon of responsibility. Never yet has the venture paid. The lowest deficit in her colonial year-book has been



approximately £1,250,000, the highest three or four times this. What is to be done? At the present moment no one is so wise, no one is so far-seeing as to prophesy.

The government under the old Free State, which was really but an international association, was first recognised as a great power by the United States of America in a convention signed on the 22nd of April, 1884. Thence onwards it was nothing but a history of a series of mismanagement and perversion of power. Stanley who had lifted the veil and was the best qualified to judge of the needs and requirements of native government, and who had a personal loyalty to Leopold II., wrote in 1896 of the policy then in force, that it was "erring and ignorant"; he said that to go back to the Congo "would be to disturb a moral malaria injurious to the reorganiser." It was indeed, a black page, until the so-called Free Estates became a Belgian colony and the concession companies were made to regard the laws not only of trade, but of humanity.

So many times I have referred to Stanley and the Emin Pasha expedition in the pages that deal with our route of march after leaving Uganda that I have assumed, apparently, a knowledge on the part of the reader of that most wonderful book which tells of a triumph over hardships, the victory over disheartening circumstances. I refer to Stanley's "In Darkest Africa," a book that has been translated into no fewer than six languages. A particular reference has



been made in more than one case to places and persons mentioned in this wonderful story. Perhaps in a chapter given to notes and figures, a short résumé of this expedition might not be amiss.

Emin Pasha, a German subject and a man of much learning and education, although of humble origin, had taken up service under the Khedive of Egypt. The Mahdist uprising in 1881-85 had left him cut off from the world in the equatorial province of Egypt of which he was then governor. Stanley had become deeply interested in the ideas and schemes of William Mackinnon, chairman of the British India Steam Navigation Company, who had long proposed a plan for establishing a British protectorate in East Equatorial Africa. It was believed that this object could be furthered by an expedition that was nominally for the relief of Emin Pasha. Stanley, after some negotiations, agreed to head a certain expedition that, although it was English in backing and composition, was placed at the service of the Khedive and carried the flag with the crescent moon. The English committee in charge, of which Mr. Mackinnon (afterwards Sir William), was chairman, supplied the major portion of the funds, although Egypt was a stockholder, so to speak. Stanley, as chief, accompanied by four or five volunteer Englishmen, carefully selected from a long list of applicants, left Europe in January, 1887. Instead of choosing the direct route by Zanzibar or Mombasa, Stanley decided to go by way of the Congo. He hoped thus to assist in solving some of the difficulties



of the Congo State, then in its infancy and having great difficulties with the Zanzibar Arabs established on the centre and upper portions of the great river. At Zanzibar Stanley entered into an agreement with Tippu Tib, the chief of the Congo Arabs, and whether he erred in judgment or not, he appointed him governor of Stanley Falls Station on behalf of the Congo State. He had been armed with powers to treat from no less a person than King Leopold himself. He contracted with this wily old Arab for a supply of carriers and porters for the expedition, who were to meet him at the mouth of the Aruwimi River where it joined the Congo. With most of the expedition, and accompanied by Tippu Tib and his personal staff, Stanley went by steamer round the Cape of Good Hope to the Congo mouth. Above the cataracts, steamers and boats were procured with great difficulty, but on the 30th of May the station of Bangala was reached and Tippu Tib went on to Stanley Falls, while the great white leader prepared for the journey to Albert Nyanza where he expected to meet Emin.

On the 15th of June Yambuya, on the lower Aruwimi, was reached, and here Stanley left his rear-guard under command of Major E. M. Barttelot and Mr. J. S. Jameson. On the 28th Stanley and the advance guard started for Albert Nyanza, "and until the 5th of December, for 160 days, we marched through the forest, bush and jungle, without ever having seen a bit of greensward of the size of a cottage chamber floor. Nothing but miles and miles,



endless miles of forest." Starvation, fever, the hostility of the tribes were daily incidents of this terrible march, during which Stanley lost nearly fifty per cent. of his men. On the 13th of December Albert Nyanza was reached, and, after some delay, communication was opened with Emin, who came down the lake from the Nile in a steamer, the two chiefs meeting on the 29th of April, 1888. Disquieted by the non-arrival of his rearguard, Stanley all alone retraced his steps, and on the 17th of August, a short distance above Yambuya, found that Tippu Tib had broken faith, that Barttelot had been murdered, that Jameson (who died afterwards of fever) was absent at Stanley Falls, and that only one European, William Bonny, was left in the camp. Collecting those of the rearguard who survived, Stanley for the third time traversed the primeval forest towards Fort Bodo, his head-quarters in the Ituri forest, and in January, 1889, all that was left of the expedition was assembled at Albert Nyanza. Of 646 men with whom he entered the Congo, but 246 remained. In April the return journey to Zanzibar by way of Uganda was begun, Emin reluctantly accompanying Stanley. On this homeward journey Stanley discovered Rewenzori (the Mountains of the Moon), traced the course of the Semliki River, discovered Albert Edward Nyanza and the great southwestern gulf of Victoria Nyanza. During his stay in the Congo forests he had also obtained much information concerning the *m'buti*, or pygmy tribes. As to the political results of the expedition, Stanley's pro-



posals to Emin to hold the Equatorial Province for the Congo State or to move nearer Victoria Nyanza and enter the service of Mackinnon's British East Africa Company had not been accepted, but he concluded agreements with various chiefs in the lake regions in favour of Great Britain, agreements which were handed over to the East Africa Company. On the 6th of December, 1889, Zanzibar was reached and the expedition was at an end.

Stanley, better than anyone, has portrayed the hardships and difficulties of the forest. It was certainly a greater trial of courage and endurance in his day, for he was travelling as an explorer through a new country, and he had to fight and battle his way along from one resting-place to another, a drawback that the wise traveller nowadays avoids by keeping away from the very bad country or treating generously with the native chiefs who, I can promise you, get all they can and much more than they deserve.

Let us see how the forest affected another modern traveller who went through this same region. The Duke of Mecklenburg, in his book, "In the Heart of Africa," pays tribute to the great green dungeon:

"This darksome forest, indeed, with its storms and rains, famine, disease and deadly attacks, nearly proved fatal to the whole caravan, and reduced it to a condition of utter desperation and madness. The first patch of green grass appeared to us a token and promise, as the olive branch in the mouth of the dove did to Noah of old.





ON STANLEY'S ROUTE THROUGH THE JUNGLE





"We were travelling along paths which had already been made; we knew in advance where we should lay our heads to rest from day to day; we were well supplied with stores; we journeyed more comfortably here than we did at first in the steppe country, or in the volcanic region, and yet we experienced that oppressiveness which is always felt in this gigantic forest. The conditions of travelling were different; the forest remained the same in its immeasurable and inexorable lonesomeness."

Further on this writer says: "I believe a long stay in this forest would lead to heavy mental depression in sensitive men. The unutterable feeling of oppression which makes itself felt in the course of time lies in the absence of any free view, the impossibility of permitting the eye to rove freely across a wide space, or of once catching a glimpse of sky and earth merging in the far horizon."

We can subscribe to this. I have remarked before how conversation languished; one felt no more like laughing and joking than one does in the dusk of evening in the damp gloom of the unlighted nave of some cathedral. Our voices, when we did talk, were subdued; our spirits sunk to zero. So the pleasant part of our recollections lives with the sunlit countries, they will return many times as pleasant dreams. One does not care of one's own accord to be uncomfortable, or to dwell too much even on the lesser nightmares of the past. Let the forest rest. We shall not disturb its solitudes.



## CHAPTER XXII

### RETROSPECT

THE Scribe, as he reviews these pages, feels somewhat apologetic. A book on Africa is expected to deal with hunting and shooting exploits, or to contain profound scientific data relative to the fauna and flora, or people of the country through which the travellers passed. Of the making of such African travel books, however, "there is no end." Ours was neither a hunting nor a scientific expedition in the ordinary sense of those terms. The results of our hunting are shown in the photographic illustrations to our book: our adventures, such as they were, were relative almost entirely to that quest for materials for camera operation. Had a dozen other books covering the same ground and following the same route been illustrated by photographic reproductions in the generous manner that the publishers have seen fit to embellish this volume, there would have been nothing to say, the last word would have been spoken.

The small effort—for labour it should scarcely be called—of writing these pages and compiling the volume, has been interrupted and the publication delayed for a season. Both the Photographer and the Scribe, since returning, have visited much more



dangerous places than when they were crossing from coast to coast of Africa. The Photographer has taken pictures of guns in action and of bursting shells, and the Scribe has seen the smoke rising over the blackened villages of Belgium; has watched the grey-green lines of the German troops marching out to kill the little blue-clad men in the heavy overcoats; has seen the helpless bundles of grey and blue lying motionless on the sunny slopes and meadows of what was the most happy and peaceful little country in the world. And down there in the Congo white men are fighting white men, and the black soldiers who are employed to fight anyone whom they are called upon to fight, are slaying each other joyfully.

No steamers run from Antwerp to the Congo now, no mail from home reaches the men on the up-river stations. Central Africa is cut off from the world in a way that it has not been for years. And what is to be the fate of this country? Was it with the gift of prophecy that months ago, long before war was ever thought of, at least by England, France and Belgium, the Scribe wrote as follows:—

“Curiously enough, there are rumours spreading among the natives, especially in the Eastern districts, that the conduct of affairs will soon pass out of the hands of their present masters.

\* \* \* \* \*

“There is Germany with a line of railways from the south-east to Tanganyika; there is England with a railway from the coast, and a steamer line to the



western shore of Lake Victoria Nyanza; thence to the Congo border stretches a great military road now almost completed; France, and Germany again in the Kamerun, lies to the north and east, and if the lure is strong enough, who knows? Politics at the present moment may be stirring, complications may arise and war clouds may gather. All presages toward the passing of the Congo Belge."

Since the company failed, it has been nothing but a well into which Belgium has poured millions of money. The great war that may change the map of Europe may change that of Africa also; but political changes, the altering of boundary lines, can never change Africa into anything but a task for the white man. This land of contradictions, of puzzling freaks of nature, of dank, gloomy forests where the ground is never dry, of billowing sandy deserts, of grassy upland plains, of disappearing rivers and vanishing lakes, of active volcanoes and icy pinnacles, will remain as alluring and inscrutable as ever. I remember one of my boys, Marengo, saying, with no query in his tone, when we parted:

"B'wana, u tarudi hapa, ne taona uwe." ("Master, you will come here again. I will see you.")

Perhaps he spoke the truth. Many times when feeling the oppression and depression of brick-and-mortar walls, the gloom of the narrow streets and the deafening roar of traffic, I have longed for the open spaces. I call back to my mind's eye just one spot to which, were I Aladdin, I would go this instant. It is to the Valley



of the Twin Peaks up towards the Uashu Neru. The grass is green from the recent rains; it slopes gently down to the river bank; thorn trees, whose branches stretch out so evenly that from a distance they look like great green mushrooms, rise to the right; along the river bank flourishes the great Dom palms. At the end of the valley one sees the peaks, so exactly alike in their contour that it appears that they were made from the same mould. They look to be only some six or eight miles off, but they are nearer forty, so clear is the air. Quite near stands a female giraffe with her little one; he is frolicking about, kicking his long ungainly legs like a colt in the pasture. A troop of oryx is coming down the valley headed for the water; with their long horns gleaming in the sunlight, they look like a squadron of cavalry with drawn sabres. A herd of zebra stands about under the thorn trees, and by himself, firm on his short stumpy legs, is an old rhino fast asleep; he has not moved for an hour. The tick birds running up and down his sides do not seem to disturb him in the least.

Walk down into the valley. The animals will not run from you. For a wager, if you studied the wind and used great caution, you could go up to that sleeping survival of things that lived before the Flood and slap him with your hat. I wouldn't advise you to try to hang it on the top of his ugly-looking horn; in fact, I wouldn't advise you even to slap him—but you could. I'd like to see this place and this sight again. I'd like to have once more the experience that

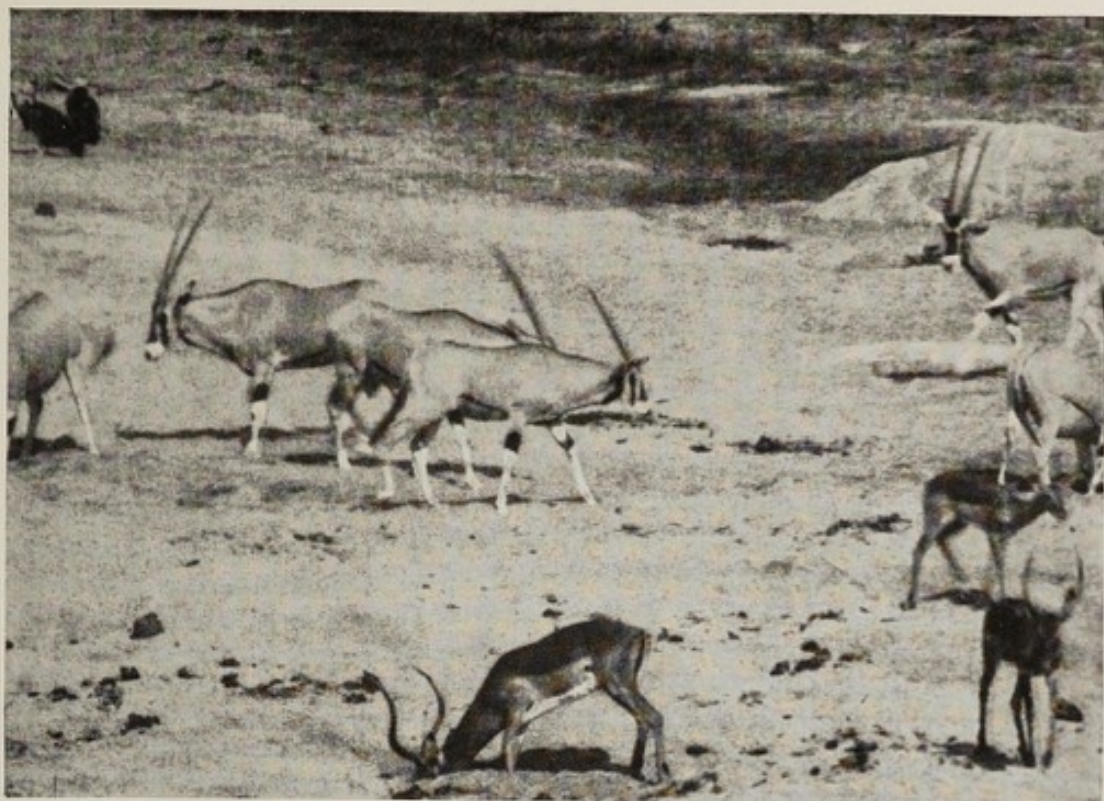


I had one morning down near the Tana river: There was a herd of kongoni, a few wildebeeste and zebra among them and some little Thomson's gazelles. I tried an experiment. Where game has not been shot at they seem by some peculiar divination to know whether your errand is a bloodthirsty or a peaceful one. If you walk steadily on, paying no attention to them, they will lift their heads, look at you, and go on with their feeding. Stop an instant and they become suspicious. I walked towards that herd of mixed game slantingly, so to speak, never facing them directly, never turning my head, only watching them sideways.

I do not know whether any hunter or sportsman had this experience before, but I actually got amongst them; suiting my pace to theirs, I drifted along with some of the animals not more than thirty or forty yards away—not one started to run. I longed for a camera, but I am afraid that if I had made any unnatural movements they would have been off. Two or three days after, in just the same country, it was necessary to shoot to get some meat for the camp. I could not get within two hundred and fifty yards of anything that possessed horns or hoofs; they seemed to know my intention. Most of the gazelles and antelopes are capable of being tamed or domesticated. The eland, the largest of the antelope, has been broken to harness. I was told that there was a white settler who had two that would draw a light plough.

Near the hill of Donaysapuk, at the edge of the Athi Plains, there is a small herd of roan antelope that





ORYX AND IMPALLA SEARCHING FOR WATER



A HERD OF ORYX WITH SOME RECORD HEADS





have been thoroughly protected, and although there has been much shooting in the neighbourhood—and they are naturally among the most timid of animals—they seem to know that they are exempt, for, apparently, they have little fear of man. I have never heard of any attempt in Africa to domesticate the buffalo, but I remember at Kampala there was a young cow buffalo that had joined a herd of cattle and went into the kraal with them at night. That nothing practical can be made of the zebra is most strange; they are immune from the fly and from many diseases that inflict both mules and horses, and although they scamper and run in the roughest and most stony places, seldom is one found whose hoofs are not in the finest condition. They have been trained both to harness and saddle, but they break down very easily and have no spirit, so, at least, I was told by a man who made the experiment. The time when I longed for a camera was paralleled by one case where I did not have my rifle; my gun-bearer was with me with only a shot gun. There were some guinea-fowl in the bushes near camp; I was gunning for the evening meal. We had not gone far; in fact, we were close enough to hear the voices of the boys who were bringing in firewood. Suddenly I looked up astonished; there about sixty yards off stood that most desired of all trophies—a fine male koodoo, the tips of his spiral horns shining like ivory. From force of habit John thrust the shot gun into my hands; he might as well have given



me a pea-shooter. That magnificent head fascinated me. I could not take my eyes off it. For fully twenty seconds that koodoo and I stood looking at each other, then with a snort and a bound he was off, and I never saw him or his like again. It is one of the chance encounters in which "the land of footprints" abounds!

I was told a story while in Nairobi, of a lady walking down to the gate of her garden in the evening and seeing what she thought to be her husband's big setter dog lying in the flower bed. She stopped and whistled to him, and suddenly to her astonishment a large leopard took the place of the supposed dog and stood there watching her, not ten feet away. She said it seemed to be hours that they stood there, then the leopard turned and in a bound cleared the hedge. The lady walked into the kitchen, locked the door, and then does not remember anything until she came to, with her back against the kitchen range, which fortunately had no fire in it. That very night the child of one of the negro servants of a neighbour was taken. Whether this is the same leopard that became so celebrated that the government and the settlers finally offered the prize of one hundred pounds for him, "taken dead or alive," could not be stated, but the story of this last-mentioned beast is a most remarkable one, and it was told to me by the man who finally got him, and as the Photographer properly comes in, too, I will tell it here.

Mr. Harris, the manager of the Kamiti estate, had





COMMON ZEBRA



ORYX AND ZEBRA STAMPEDING





invited Kearton to pay him a visit; the quarters assigned him were a little separate house or cabin of one room. It was one of a large number of out-buildings surrounding a larger dwelling. During the evening Harris had told of the depredations of a very large leopard that had taken no fewer than eight of the best imported English hogs out of a pen with a fence twelve feet high, over which it had managed to scramble and haul its heavy booty. The native villages in the immediate vicinity had lost twenty-six children taken presumably by this same beast. He was absolutely fearless, and although he had exposed himself in a reckless way, he had never been shot at. He seemed by instinct to avoid all the traps that had been set for him, and he always succeeded in getting off with the bait. For over a year that leopard had terrorised the neighbourhood. One day he had been tracked and held up by a pack of ten large dogs; out of the lot but three escaped, the rest were killed or had to be shot on account of the severity of their wounds. Kearton had reached his little house that evening and was just entering when in the light coming from the window he saw the leopard. He was inside the door and closed it behind him before he knew how he got there. The leopard sprang to the tin roof and was on it for a good part of the night, evidently watching the door. A few days later he performed his most astonishing bit of impudence. Mr. Harris and Mr. Heatley and two other gentlemen were drinking tea on the veranda of the big house.



A fox-terrier lay asleep under the table. It was not dark, only approaching dusk. Suddenly the fox-terrier gave a growl. The gentlemen looked up just in time to see, only a few yards off, the form of the big leopard coming like an arrow shot out of a bow; he took the dog from under the table, jumped almost across one of the men who were sitting in the chairs, and disappeared in the shrubbery. In telling this part of the story Harris remarked, "There are four witnesses to that; I'd hardly dare to go it alone."

Poor Fritz Schindler, who was fatally mauled by a lion a year or so ago, had an adventure with this same leopard. Three children had been taken in one week from a little cluster of a dozen or so huts. The animal would come right through the wall of one of these flimsy dwellings, pick up a child and go off. He generally seemed to choose those that were under eight years. Schindler moved out in order to try and get him; he knew the headman and was quite a friend of his. Of course, fires were kept burning all night; the leopard did not seem to mind them in the least. Although he intended to keep awake, Fritz must have fallen asleep; he was awakened by a great outcry. The headman, with a couple of distracted women, rushed into the hut that Fritz was occupying. The leopard had taken another, a little child of three, and the son of the headman himself! Fritz got his rifle, and with men and torches and spears, went down to where the leopard had jumped over a low wall and had entered the bushes. They could hear the child's



cries very plainly. He evidently was not badly hurt, and the leopard was carrying him in his mouth.

It was a very dark night and the bush very thick. Half a dozen times the leopard with the shrieking infant allowed them to come within a dozen yards of him before he moved on, but he never put the child down. At last the child's cries ceased, and they had no way of locating the animal at all. Daylight came and they found one of the poor little victim's hands on the opposite side of the road—a very well travelled highway. The leopard had simply walked round the village and had never gone more than a hundred yards away. The reward the government had offered was now increased by private persons to the amount of a hundred pounds. Traps had been set all over the place, sometimes they were found sprung with nothing in them. Harris had built a very strong box trap which he had lined with sheet iron; it had an iron door that dropped down behind any beast that entered. The bait at the end of the long box was a young pig. What was Harris's joy to find that the very first night he had made his capture—the leopard was inside. Contrary to expectation it was not very old, but was in the prime of condition, and very large and heavy. I believe his skin was afterwards mounted by Mr. Rowland Ward, of London. At this point in his story Mr. Harris observed, "I know what you are going to ask me. 'Did I get the reward?' I did not. They said I'd have to prove that this was the leopard that took all the children, which was a hard thing to do. But



whether it was the villain himself or not, the killings all stopped, and there have been no man-eaters since in this neighbourhood."

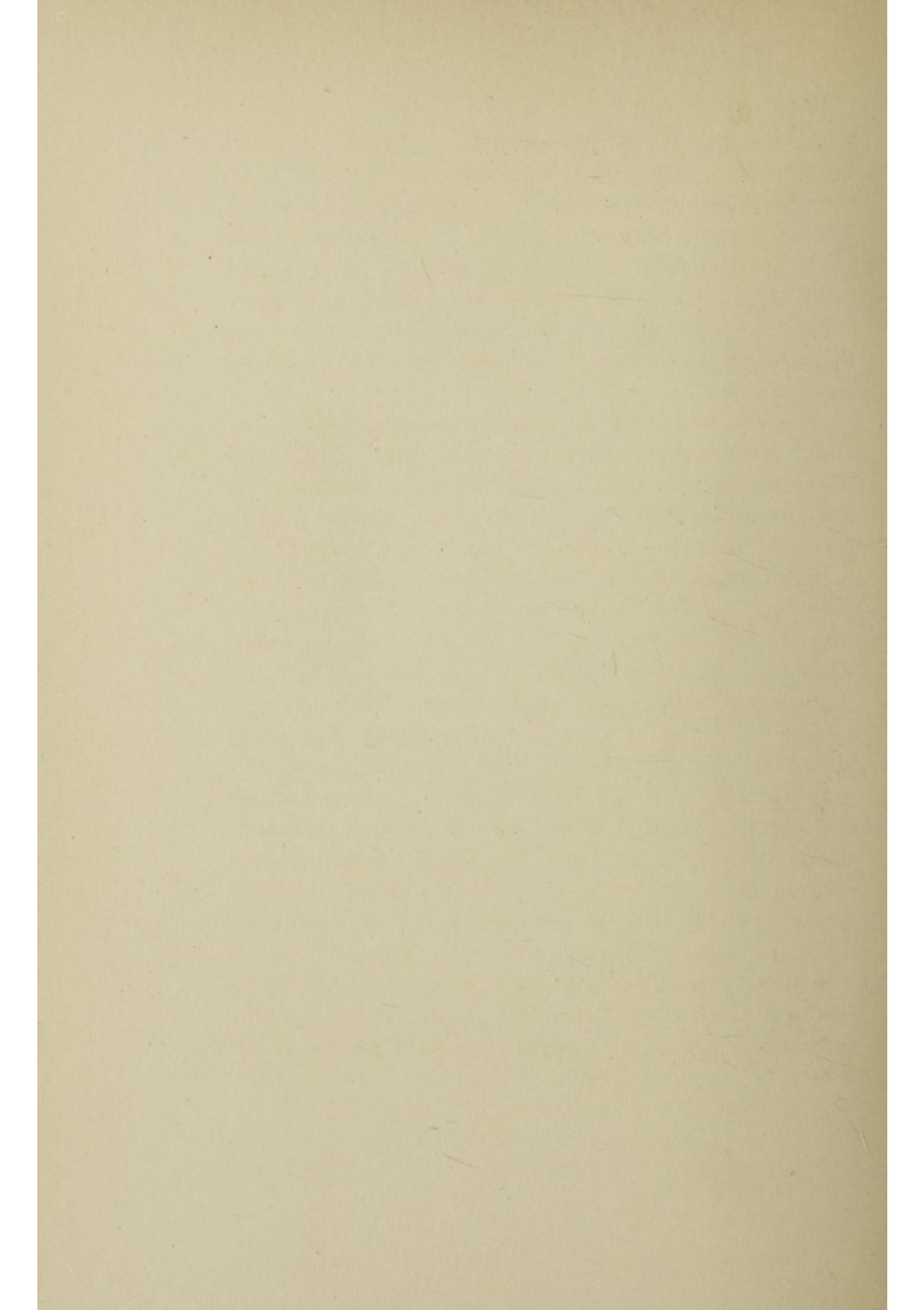
When one takes into account that human prey is the easiest that a lion or a leopard can take, it is wonderful that there are not more man-eaters or children-eaters, for the trails between the villages are filled with perfectly helpless and unarmed people all day long. Up in the Samburra country, where the lions were plentiful, we have seen flocks and herds tended by women and many children apparently unafraid. But once let a lion or lioness or leopard taste human flesh and it becomes a confirmed killer; and if it is old and its teeth worn it will touch nothing else. The same is told of the Indian tiger and the jaguar of South America. They generally fall to the experienced hunter's rifle, for they cease their roaming and confine their crimes to one neighbourhood.

Although both lion and leopard are less often met with, and undoubtedly more have been killed in British East Africa in the last five years than have been killed in all the years before, it will be a long time before they disappear completely, unless poisoning is resorted to on the game reserves. Still, Africa would not be the same if it were not for the thrill one gets at night when lying in one's tent or seated round a roaring camp fire, when the stillness is broken and out of the dark comes that magnificent voice shouting its challenge to the world. The





LIGHTING THE EVENING FIRE





hyena's wailing howl, weird and discordant, conveys no thrill; the grunt of a hunting leopard holds some threat of danger, but only the lion can stir the pulses. The shout of "Simba! Simba!" to the hunter is the most exciting call. I would hate to go back to the hunting grounds were the lion left out of the reckoning. It would not be the same land at all, even though my adventures with him have been few and far between.

Oh, the sensation of that leg-weariness; that certainty of almost dreamless sleep. After a hard day through the forest, I remember looking across the river at a new clearing and the house where we were going to rest for the night. We had gone through a drenching rain, and as we came to the river bank the sun had come through the clouds; those thatched huts looked like palaces. Our one idea of happiness was to be dry and warm and under cover. Every day was a voyage; every resting-place was a harbour made.

Do not interlard a book of travel with too much advice is a good motto for the sportsman or photographer who "takes pen in hand"; yet one could not have covered so many miles in so many months, as did the Photographer and the Scribe, without picking up a little knowledge that might be useful. There are some *do's* and some *don'ts* that might well fit in the last words of the chapter of a retrospect; somehow, most naturally, *don'ts* come first, for that is the way advice is generally given. And first and foremost I would say, don't try to do it on the cheap.



One need not go in so luxurious a fashion that it will discount that of civilisation, but don't try to rough it in the way one can on the western plains or in the woods of Canada. It cannot be done in Africa. For a white man, it is necessary to live as much of a white man's normal life as possible. He must keep dry, warm, clean, and well fed. He must be protected from that fierce equatorial sun in the way that is not necessary on the plains of Arizona or Texas. He cannot expose himself recklessly in any way and expect to live. So don't ever be without a good supply of tinned things if you can get them, of good wheat flour, condensed milk and butter, jams, dried fruit and sauces. Don't buy a second-hand tent unless you have had it passed by an expert. Don't fail to wear an abdominal belt, and in the open country if you are to be out between ten in the morning and four in the afternoon, never leave your red flannel spine pad behind. The sun's rays have a bad effect on the white man's marrow. Get the best and most expensive pith helmet, and see that it is lined with red also. Don't try to shoot in a Stetson or a wideawake; you'll come to grief some day and end in the hospital. Don't fail to take a warm bath (never take a cold one if you can help it) as soon as you come in from your day's work. Change all your clothes, and have your boy examine your feet—it is part of a good boy's business—for you may harbour a chigger for several days without knowing it, until the sudden consequences are painful if not



disastrous. These are little parasites that work in from the ground even through the boots, and burrow under the nails. Don't, when you are in the fly and mosquito country, fail to sleep under the net at night. Don't fail to have your drinking water boiled, and, if possible, filtered. Don't let your cook have the run of the chop boxes; deal out to him, yourself, what is necessary for his kitchen. Don't drink too much tea or coffee, and of strong liquors, little, if any, and never before sundown. Go to bed early and sleep warm. The boys will see to it that you are up with the sun, and one requires a lot of sleep on the Equator. If you adhere to these rules you will keep well, and probably not need even those simple remedies which, of course, you can buy all neatly packed in a tropical medicine chest.

And now for a few "*do's*." If you are shooting get as close as you can, so that there will be little excuse for not putting down your game. More animals are maimed and wounded in three months by people taking long and risky shots than are killed clean and outright in a year. Besides in these long shots, a few of which only come off, the fun of stalking is lost. In Africa any stumbling blockhead can get within five or six hundred yards of game, even in a well-shot country. It takes a hunter and a sportsman to get within a hundred and thirty, and if you can get closer, do so.

As to a battery, you want one good repeating rifle, one express, and a shot gun. I, myself, used a Ross rifle and found it the best weapon I've ever put to my



shoulder. Its flat trajectory and hard-hitting power make it absolutely deadly on all game but elephants, rhino and hippo. With a new sporting bullet it will stop any lion or put down even the largest of the antelopes to a surety. The 450 Express will knock down anything. There is no necessity for carrying any heavier calibre. I carried also a Mannlicher carbine for small game. But there are so many good rifles in the market that it is a matter of taste. Ammunition of all kinds and character can be purchased at Nairobi.

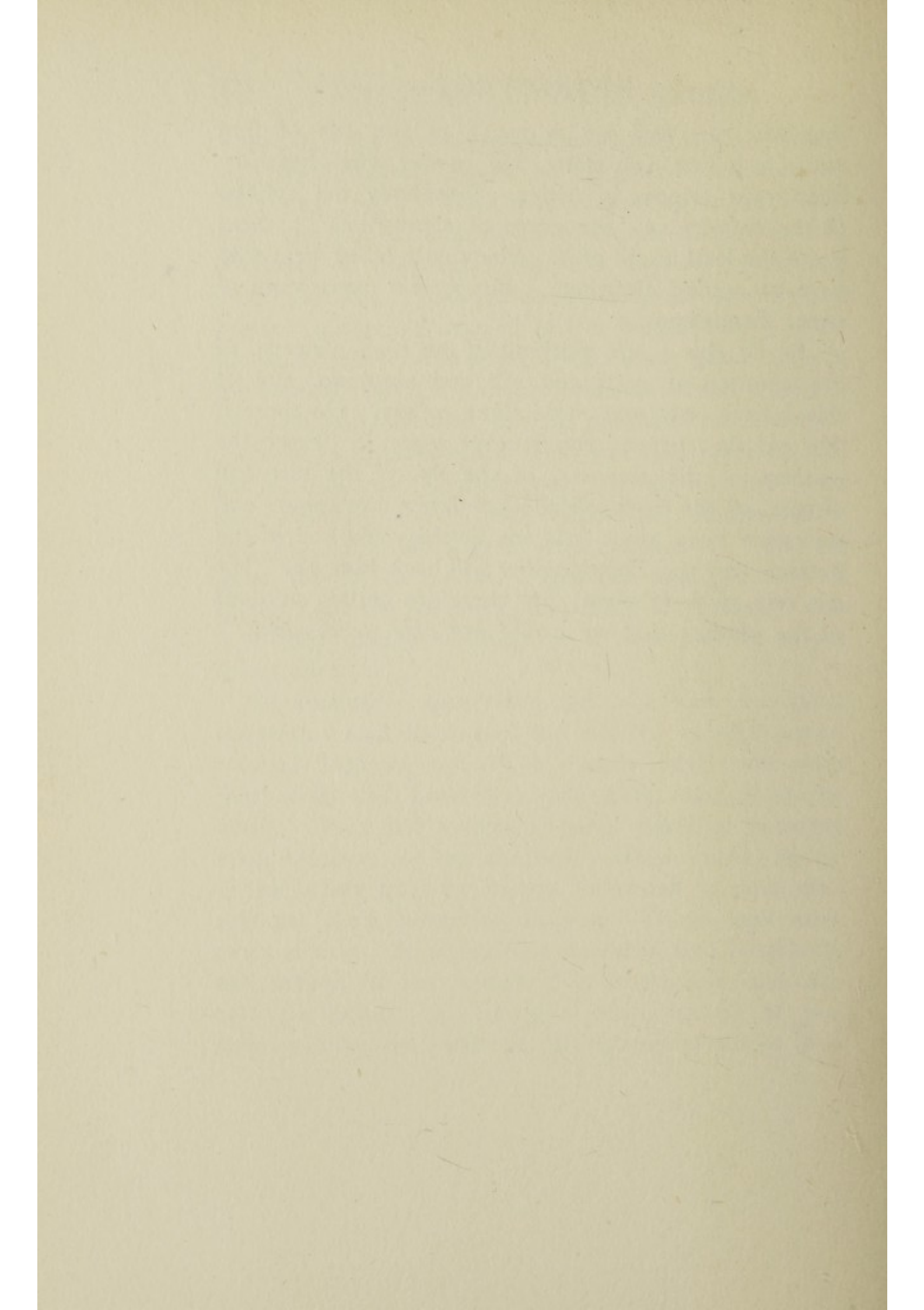
Take a good camera with you and learn how to use it, it is more productive of pleasure in after years than anything else. With regard to cameras, they, too, like rifles, are a great deal a matter of taste. A good lens is, of course, a *sine qua non*. If moving pictures are the objective, one thing is necessary, that is to take plenty of film, for it is impossible to get it out there.

In picking a gun-bearer get one who has gone out with a real sportsman and not the average armed tourist. Impress upon him exactly what you want him to do and have done, and keep him up to the mark. Don't fail to get a good *fundi* or skinner; many trophies are lost through careless work. So far as the *safari* goes try to get interested in your men and get them interested in you. Things will work twice as easy. In choosing a headman find somebody with whom he has served, if it is possible, and discuss his points. In taking a white hunter, if you have to take one, ask all the questions about him



that you can, and see as much as you can of him yourself before you start. No matter what happens, keep your temper in Africa. Somebody has spoken of the country as "the grave of reputations"; there is not the least doubt of it. Many have failed here who have succeeded elsewhere. But it is a mausoleum of sweet dispositions.

In all this I am speaking of the high plateaus, of the country of grass and hill and sunshine, and of this I have only one more thing to say. Go there if you get the chance; you'll never regret it. From the country of the sickness, of the fly, of the dirt and disease, of the dank solitudes, choking downpours and starvation keep away. As the Scribe remarked in the preface, and the Photographer will back him up, "We are very glad we went, but there are certain portions of the journey that we would not care to do again."





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