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THROUGH JUBALAND  
TO THE  
LORIAN SWAMP







### A TYPICAL BUSH SOMALI

These people wander through the interior of Jubaland in endless search of water and pasture for their stock. Wild and warlike at heart, the true Somali finds peace only in strife, and freedom only in a restless life.

*Frontispiece.*

THROUGH  
JUBALAND  
TO THE  
LORIAN SWAMP

AN ADVENTUROUS JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION & SPORT  
IN THE UNKNOWN AFRICAN FORESTS & DESERTS OF  
JUBALAND TO THE UNEXPLORED LORIAN SWAMP

BY

I. N. DRACOPOLI

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

WITH 44 ILLUSTRATIONS & 2 MAPS

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO  
MY MOTHER  
TO WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP  
I OWE EVERYTHING.

10574 2.18

“ALORS il se rappela de ces strophes du poète :

“Pars, ami, quitte tout et pars ! Tu trouveras bien d'autres amis que ceux que tu laisses. Va ! sors des maisons et dresse tes tentes. Habite sous la tente. C'est là, et rien que là, qu'habitent les delices de la vie.

“Dans les demeures stables et civilisées, il n'y a point de ferveur, il n'y a point d'amitié. Crois-moi ! fuis ta patrie, et enfonce-toi dans les pays du lointain profond.”

*Histoire du beau Hassan Badreddine.*



## P R E F A C E

IN a few years the days of adventurous exploration in Africa will have passed, and the darkness that enshrouded that continent at the end of last century will have melted away. With the spread of civilization, which ultimately, no doubt, brings peace and prosperity, the interesting customs and habits of the primitive tribes must change, giving place to new, and so brief is this period of transition, that within a short space almost all traces of the old are obliterated.

Jubaland is an unexplored country. Its inhabitants are living to-day in the same fashion that their forefathers lived centuries ago. Its wild animals roam undisturbed over its wide and silent plains, or lie unmolested in the shadow of its bush. But this state of affairs cannot last. In a few years all will be different, and Jubaland will be unrecognizable.

In the following pages I have attempted to record my impressions of the lives and habits of its people and its game, before the Somali and the Borana become civilized and the wild animals are driven out and finally exterminated.

The explorer who enters for the first time an unknown country about which there is nothing but native information on which to depend, is at once

## PREFACE

faced by a variety of problems as interesting as they are generally complex ; he can only hope, by recording the plain and sober facts which he has collected, to create some kind of foundation, as it were, upon which future travellers may build, until our knowledge of such regions is complete. I have not attempted in this book to deal with many of these problems, interesting though they are, since I do not feel qualified to do so. But as far as time and circumstances permitted, I paid special attention during my journey to the geography, the natives and the natural history of the country I traversed, and my object in presenting the results of my observations in the following pages, is the hope of adding something, however small, to the sum of human knowledge.

My best thanks are due to Captain R. E. Salkeld for the valuable assistance he gave me in Jubaland ; to the Hon. K. R. Dundas for his kindness and hospitality ; to the Director of Surveys at Nairobi for providing me with the latest maps and valuable geographical data concerning Kismayu and the adjacent country ; to the Council of the Royal Geographical Society for the loan of scientific instruments ; to Mr. F. Elliott for giving me much information as regards the Somali language and the meaning of native names ; and to my brother-in-law, Mr. Eric Corbett, for reading and correcting my manuscript.

In Chapter II., I have drawn freely from Captain Stigand's book, *The Land of Zinj*, for information concerning the early history of Lamu, and I have

## PREFACE

constantly referred to Mr. R. Lydekker's *Game Animals of Africa* in writing the chapters on Hunter's Hartebeeste, and the big game of Jubaland.

All the photographs, from which the illustrations were made, were taken by myself, except the three on page 138, which were given me by Mr. F. Elliott.

I should indeed be ungrateful if I did not mention my great indebtedness to Mr. E. A. Reeves, the Map Curator and Instructor to the Royal Geographical Society. It is to his tuition and constant help and encouragement that I owe whatever measure of success I may have obtained in geographical surveying.

I. N. DRACOPOLI.

LONDON, 1913.



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SKETCH MAP

# JUBALAND

showing  
DISTRIBUTION OF GAME  
by  
I. N. DRACOPOLI

Scale of Miles



42

41

40

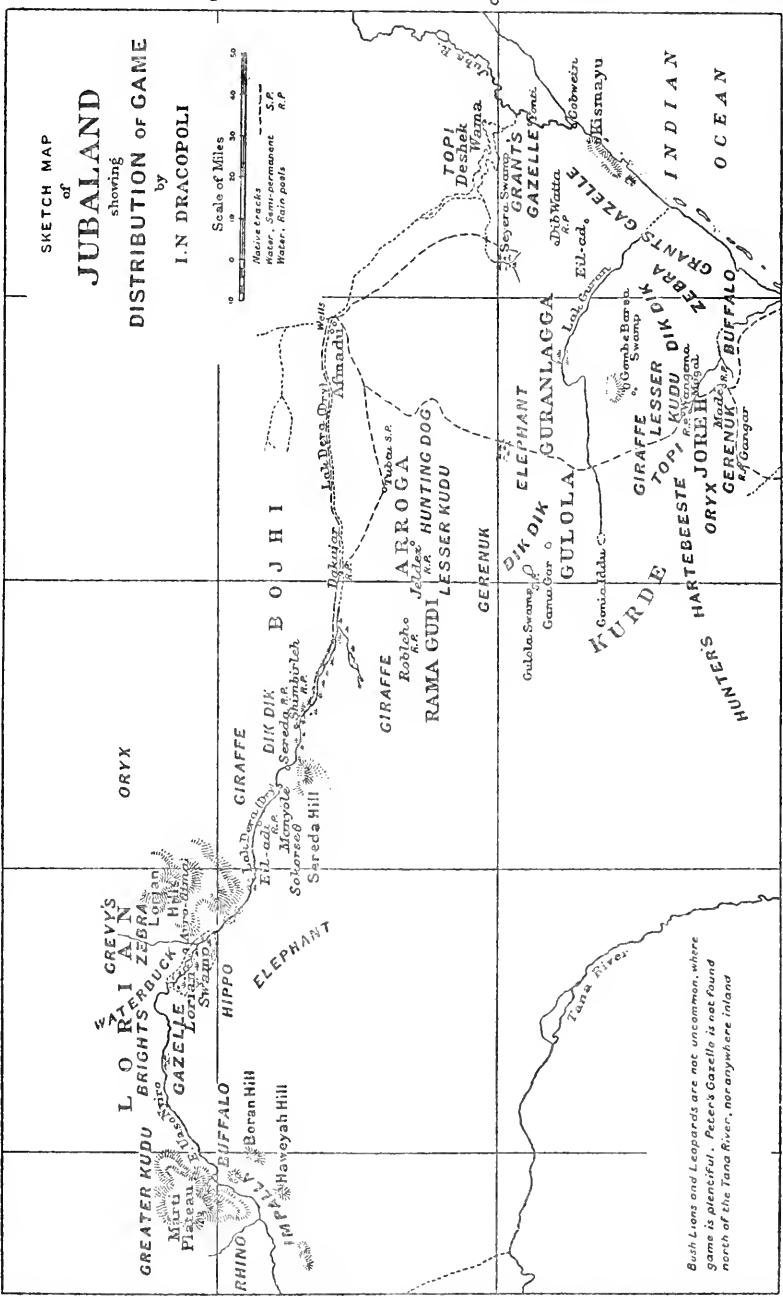
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Bush Lions and Leopards are not uncommon, where game is plentiful. Peter's Gazelle is not found north of the Tana River, nor anywhere inland.

# THROUGH JUBALAND

TO THE

## LORIAN SWAMP

### CHAPTER I

#### BRITISH EAST AFRICA

BRITISH EAST AFRICA is inevitably associated in the minds of most people with the Uganda Railway. The words conjure up a picture of what has been advertised as "Nature's Zoo"—of lions, rhinoceros and giraffes wandering across the track which winds its way through a fertile and wonderful country from the coast up to the highlands, the so-called "health resort of British East Africa," where rich sportsmen pass a few hurried weeks during the winter, shooting big game within comfortable reach of Nairobi. Even in a recent series of special articles on the country, which appeared in the *Times*, no attention was paid to any other part of the Protectorate than that which borders on the railway. Yet if the reader will but glance at a map, he will see that in size that is but an insignificant portion of British East Africa. Far away from Nairobi, beyond the snowy heights of Kenya, lies a land still imperfectly known, stretching away to Abyssinia in the north and to the Juba River in the east. There are still fully 100,000 square

## UNEXPLORED COUNTRY

miles of unexplored country, chiefly in the eastern portion of these regions ; but a great deal of attention has been paid by explorers during the last few years to the interesting country immediately to the south of the Abyssinian frontier, and to the lava-strewn plateau between Lake Rudolf and Marsabit. The former was first surveyed by Captain Maud, R.E., in 1902-3, and again in 1908-9 by Major Gwynn. In 1895 Dr. Donaldson Smith explored the volcanic regions east of Lake Rudolf, which were crossed by Count Eduard Wickenburg in 1901, and again described by Captain Stigand in his book, *To Abyssinia through an Unknown Land*. In 1909 Mr. G. F. Archer carried out the first scientific exploration of this part of British East Africa, and extended the triangulation of the Survey Department from Mount Kenya to Kulal, near Lake Rudolf, where he joined on to Major Gwynn's work. The detail work has been filled in by Mr. Archer, Captain Stigand, Mr. A. C. Hoey and Mr. N. C. Cockburn, and with the exception of the country round the Matthews range, the western portion of the Northern Frontier District is now mapped with a fair degree of accuracy.

It was in May 1909 that the Government decided to occupy effectively the country lying between the Juba River and Lake Rudolf, south of the Abyssinian frontier, though previously an agent had been appointed by the British Minister in Abyssinia to watch our interests until the Boundary question had been definitely settled. An effective administration of this territory was deemed advisable in order to check intertribal warfare and to protect the Borana, who were living in the Protectorate, and were friendly, from the lawless raiding parties from Abyssinia.

## EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION

Moreover, it was hoped that if direct communication could be opened between the settled parts of the Protectorate and the rich cattle districts in the vicinity of Moyale in southern Abyssinia a lucrative trade would ensue. By degrees military outposts were formed at Ngabotok, Kulal, Marsabit, Moyale, Wajheir and Sarrenleh, and a great improvement has been made, so that travelling has been rendered perfectly safe, at any rate in the western portion. This northern country is still a "closed district"; that is to say, that although conditions are satisfactory and on the whole peaceful, it is considered inadvisable as yet to throw it open to settlers and traders, and a special permission from the authorities is necessary to enable the traveller to enter it. This large stretch of country is divided by a provisional line, drawn from the junction of the Daua and Juba Rivers to the Lorian Swamp and passing immediately to the east of Eil Wak, into two portions known respectively as the Northern Frontier District on the west and Jubaland on the east. Jubaland is bounded on the east by the Juba River, beyond which is Italian Somaliland, on the south-east by the Indian Ocean, and on the south by an imaginary line drawn from the Lorian Swamp to the Bajun settlement of Kiunga on the coast. To the south of this line is the province of Tanaland. I have already mentioned the western boundary of Jubaland, which I have reason to believe will shortly be altered in order to include Wajheir.

While no large expeditions have been engaged in exploring Northern Jubaland, much good work has been done there by officers in the King's African Rifles, and by members of the administrative force in the course of their travels. The late Lieutenant

## GALLA AND SOMALI TRIBES

Aylmer, who was killed in the early part of this year by Abyssinian poachers, was the first to investigate this unknown region, and in two papers contributed to the *Geographical Journal* he threw some light on the general hydrography of the country. But the southern half of Jubaland and the northern part of Tanaland, that is to say, the country between the Tana River and the Lak Dera, has been totally neglected, and still remains almost completely unknown. Westwards of  $41^{\circ} 30' E.$ , as far as the Lorian, no white man had ever penetrated until I crossed it this year.

“One problem not yet solved is that of the continuation of the Uaso Nyiro,” was a statement made by Mr. F. R. Cana in an admirable summary of the unknown regions of Africa in 1911,<sup>1</sup> and he continues: “It is highly desirable that the mountains, rivers and lakes of this part of East Africa should be made known with certainty. The country is inhabited by wild Galla and Somali tribes, and most of it is a semi-arid bush-land, but the soil is rich and there are many areas beside that above Lorian suitable for cultivation.” It was to solve this problem and to add as much as possible to our knowledge of the country lying between the Lorian Swamp and the Indian Ocean that I undertook the journey that I am about to describe in the following pages. Before I do so, however, it is advisable to define these problems at greater length, and to give some account of what was already known of the Lorian.

The Uaso Nyiro, which means in the Masai language “the brown river,” rises in the Aberdare

<sup>1</sup> *Geographical Journal*, November 1911, “Problems of Exploration: Africa,” by F. R. Cana.

## THE UASO NYIRO

Mountains, and is known at first as the Uaso Narok until it is joined on the Laikipia Plateau by the Ngare Nyuki, which flows down from the western slopes of Kenya. Together they turn north and then almost due east, and known now as the Uaso Nyiro it flows for over 350 miles, until it enters a huge bed of reeds known as the Lorian Swamp. The position of the western end of the swamp has generally been given on the various maps of East Africa as in latitude  $1^{\circ}$  N., longitude  $39^{\circ} 30'$  E., and this is approximately correct, but Mr. C. W. Haywood placed it nearly forty miles farther east in his sketch map published in the *Geographical Journal*, May 1913. It was first discovered by Chanler and von Höhnel, who reported it to be apparently of great extent and filled with high reeds;<sup>1</sup> they further stated that it occasionally overflowed, and sent its waters farther east. In 1901 Count Wickenburg passed it and found no stream emerging from its eastern edge;<sup>2</sup> Colonel Broun, who reached it in 1905, corroborates this statement. He remained there two days, and says: "Most unfortunately, the small quantity of food left for my porters did not justify a longer stay. . . . What was seen was an immense bed of reeds twelve feet high and *no open water*. . . . My guide . . . said he was clear that *no water flowed out of the swamp from any point on its circumference*. He was questioned closely on that point."<sup>3</sup> Mr. C. W. Haywood, however,<sup>3</sup> who, after an interesting journey from Kismayu along the

<sup>1</sup> *Through Jungle and Forest*, by W. A. Chanler.

<sup>2</sup> *Geographical Journal*, February 1902.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* January 1906, "A Journey to the Lorian Swamp," Lieut.-Col. W. H. Broun.

## THE UASO NYIRO

Somali trade route to Wajheir, reached the Lorian at the height of the dry season, states: “. . . the Uaso Nyiro runs out of this swamp in a fairly large stream and then flows in a south-easterly direction for about thirty miles, when it reaches a swamp known as ‘Ururaha.’ Here the river splits up into little swamps running off in different directions like the fingers of a hand and gradually trickles out in a tiny stream a few feet in width and about six inches in depth. This runs on for about ten miles, gradually dwindling until it eventually dries up entirely near Marer Koh,<sup>1</sup> where the dry watercourse known as Lak Dera, which runs down in the direction of Afmadu, commences. I had not time to follow this course, but there is no doubt it is well defined. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

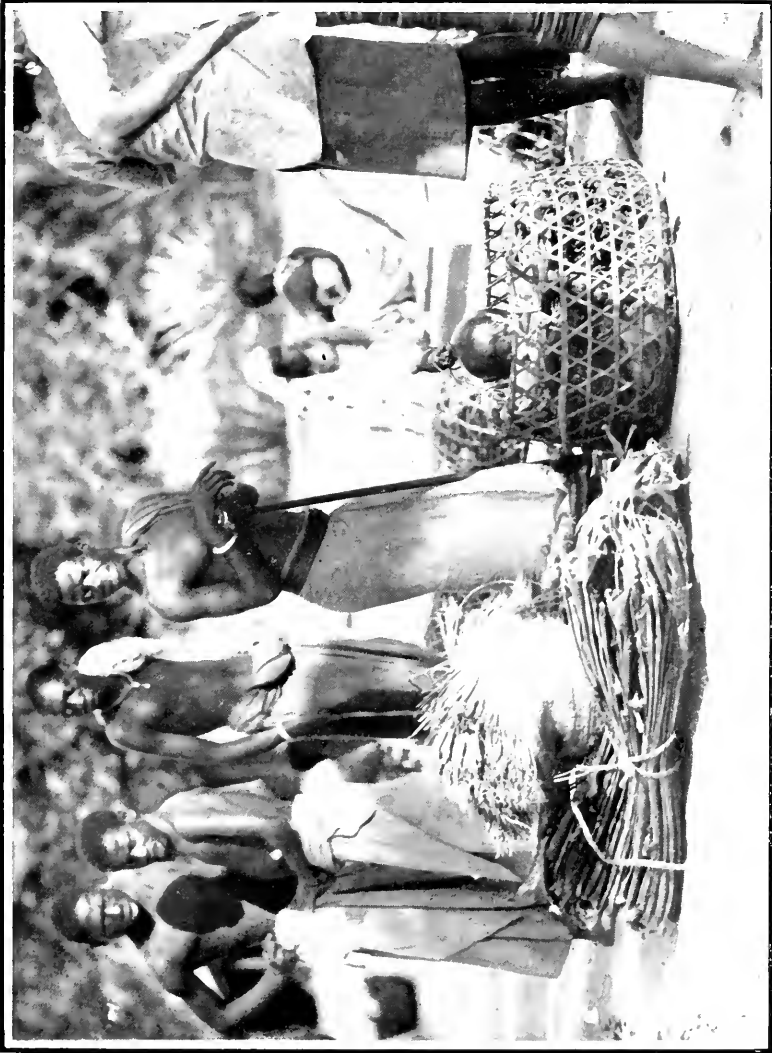
Mr. Haywood has obviously confused the main Lorian Swamp with an extensive shallow depression covered with grass and surrounded by jungle, and crossed by three shallow channels situated on the right bank of the Uaso Nyiro, and which the Borana call Melka Gela. He has called it Jaffa-wein, but this is the name applied by the natives to the southern side of the bed of *reeds*, which forms the main swamp. There are several other points in his description of it with which, I am afraid, I entirely disagree, but I shall have more to say about them in dealing with the Lorian in the course of my narrative.

Another description is as follows: “. . . the E. Uaso Nyiro was very low, and was not running into the swamp, but formed a long series of disconnected pools. These pools, some as much as two

<sup>1</sup> Probably the same place as I mention under the name of Madoleh.

<sup>2</sup> *Geographical Journal*, May 1913, “The Lorian Swamp,” C. H. Haywood.





NATIVES AT MAZERAS STATION

On the left can be seen a heap of dried hides, while the basket on the right contains fruit of various kinds. The central figure is wearing a bracelet cut from a piece of ivory.



## A SOLID MASS OF FISH

miles in length, were practically a solid mass of myriads of fish, mostly siluroids, and often running up to 30 lb. in weight. From the photographs shown the numbers of the fish were incredible. No water could be seen from bank to bank, nothing but millions of fish packed as close as could be, but all alive. There were more fish than water. In some pools the crocodiles appear to have collected, and half a dozen of these saurians could be seen lying packed in a pool not more than 15 feet across. Just before the traveller left the swamp the river was beginning to rise, rain having evidently fallen at the head-waters of the river.”<sup>1</sup>

This curious and interesting account was confirmed in a conversation I had recently with Mr. W. N. Macmillan, the well-known African sportsman and traveller, who had witnessed a similar scene.

Such are a few of the accounts given by big-game hunters, traders and officials, who have from time to time made their way into the Lorian district, and it will be seen what an extraordinary divergence of opinion there was between them. To some extent this may be explained by the fact that undoubtedly the Lorian varies enormously with the time of year, and during the rains it probably presents an entirely different appearance to what it does during the dry season. Another fact which no doubt has caused some confusion is the name Lorian, as used by the natives. The river which enters the swamp is known as the Uaso Nyiro from the junction of the Uaso Narok, and Ngare Nyuki until the remarkable volcanic plateau of Marti is reached. Thence until

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of East Africa and Uganda*, Nat. Hist. Soc., July 1912, "A Journey to the Lorian Swamp," communicated.

## THE LORIAN

permanent water ceases at Madoleh, it, as well as the country lying on both sides, is known to the Borana and the Somali under the general name of "Lorian." But since Marti Plateau is about one hundred miles west of the main Lorian Swamp, some travellers have been very much puzzled when told they had reached Lorian by the natives, and they have on several occasions returned without having penetrated farther than Melka Gela—even if they have reached as far. This will probably explain the reports of those who described the Lorian Swamp as a shallow lake or a large expanse of open water. But the greatest confusion has been caused by those who, having travelled thither and back again without any attempt to carry out more than a rough compass sketch of their route, if they even did that, do not hesitate to make a map of their journey on their return. Colonel Broun, however, brought back an excellent map of the lower Uaso Nyiro, and my work corresponded very closely with his results, except for a difference as regards the height of Marti Plateau.

But the country to the east of Lorian, between the main swamp and Afmadu, was quite unknown, and had remained unexplored south of the Wajheir-Afmadu road. The opinion had been held for some time, however, that a river, or, at any rate, a small stream called "Lakdera," did connect the Lorian Swamp with the shallow lake known as the Deshek Wama, which is situated not very far from the mouth of the Juba River, and it had been referred to as "the great watercourse which runs from Lake Lorian." Moreover, it was generally known as the "River Lakdera." The marking of this channel on even the most recently published maps under this

## HYDROGRAPHY OF JUBALAND

title is another striking instance of the confusion in geographical nomenclature which often shows itself in the maps of a new country. "Lak" is itself the native term in this part of Africa for a river-bed in which water only occasionally runs, while "dera" is a separate word, meaning, in Somali, "long." Another strange mistake was the name given to a small water-hole—Lake Worrta. For "worrta" is the Somali word for "rainpool."

In 1898 Captain C. O. Tanner surveyed the lower part of the Lak Dera from the Deshek Wama to above Afmadu, and he stated on his map that, according to native report, it came from Lorian. He also found another stream bed, the Lak Jiro, coming from the north, which joined the Lak Dera at Afmadu.

The hydrography of southern Jubaland had also aroused considerable speculation, for along the coast from Kismayu to Port Durnford there are a number of small inlets and creeks, down which water had been observed to flow occasionally. Where did this water come from? Were there any hills in the interior, or a plateau, which they drained? What was the nature and importance of the "Lak Guranluga," a river marked on every map, and which was stated in an official report, published two years ago, to rise in the El Lin<sup>1</sup> swamp and to run southwards until it joined the "River Arnole"? What was the character of the Bisahu Hamu, shown on every map of Jubaland as a very large swamp lying on the Equator, and fed by two streams from the north? Was there any important divide or watershed between

<sup>1</sup> The name El Lin does not seem to be known to the natives—at any rate to none of those I met. It probably corresponds to the swamp I have called Seyera on my map.

## NAIROBI

the Tana River and the Lak Dera? Such were only a few of the questions which it was hoped the exploration of Jubaland would solve. Moreover, the study of the inhabitants and the fauna could not fail to be of interest.

I arrived at Mombasa in the month of October 1912, and immediately proceeded to Nairobi in order to see the authorities and obtain permission to undertake my journey. The railway journey is too well known to need any description. Three years had passed since I had last travelled on the Uganda Railroad, but time had brought no change for the better in its comfort, and the carriages were not improved in any way. We arrived in Nairobi about four hours late, and having engaged a room at the hotel, I strolled round the town to renew old acquaintances. I found Nairobi much grown in size, but not in beauty. It is neither African nor European, but seems to combine in one city the discomforts of two civilisations without the advantages of either. I at length managed to obtain a pass to enter Jubaland after some irritating delays, but it was only through the kindness of Captain Salkeld, the Provincial Commissioner of Jubaland, who happened to be in Nairobi on official business at the time. I engaged, on his recommendation, a Somali headman named Dahir Omar, and also an interpreter, who came from Somaliland, while in the bazaar I found an Akamba boy, who had been my personal servant on a previous expedition, and I arranged to take him, a cook and a gun-bearer (both the latter Swahilis) with me, as it might be impossible to get others in Kismayu, the little town on the coast of Jubaland, from which I was to start my journey. Mr. R. P.

## ENGAGING MEN

Cunninghame, the well-known naturalist, very kindly found me a good native boy, who could collect birds, if necessary, and was an expert skinner. He proved to be an Akamba boy of powerful build and exceedingly ugly, who rejoiced in the name of Kampi Mbaya (bad camp). He had been so nicknamed, it appeared, from the fact that he had once distinguished himself in a big fight between porters of a safari, in which he had stunned three men; both he and the camp at which it occurred had been christened simultaneously! In spite of his quick temper, he proved to be one of the best men I had with me, and served me well and faithfully throughout my journey. I left Nairobi without regret and reached Mombasa with pleasure. In this delightful old town, so full of historical interest, I spent some pleasant days waiting for the steamer to sail for Kismayu. I engaged six porters here, chiefly Swahili; for although the arid nature of the country I was to traverse rendered it imperative to use camels which were best obtained on the coast, it was necessary to take a few porters to carry scientific instruments and cameras on the march, which would have shaken to pieces on a camel, and to collect wood and water in the evenings. I always try to reduce the number of my men to a minimum, for it greatly simplifies the question of food-supply and renders the traveller far more independent and the caravan far handier, in case hard marches are necessary. I also bought part of my trade goods here. At last everything was settled, the little steamer *Wiesman* sailed into Mombasa harbour, and I went down towards the dock full of eagerness and impatience to be gone, and to start on the long journey that lay before me.

## CHAPTER II

### BY SEA TO LAMU

THE day had been particularly hot, even for Mombasa, but now as I walked down from the club to the little harbour, the evening breeze brought freshness to the heated air, and ruffled with tiny cat's paws the smooth, glassy surface of the harbour. In the distance I could see the line of foam where the lazy swell broke over the reefs, and close at hand the palms stirred and whispered gently in the night wind. The little *Wiesman* lay at anchor in the bay ; she had that morning come in from Zanzibar, and was to start the same night for the north, calling at Malindi, Lamu, Kismayu, Brava and Mogadishu. Then she would return. She belonged to an Indian firm and was in charge of two white officers and a Lascar crew. Her sole accommodation consists of a couple of tiny cabins amidships, a minute saloon on the poop, into which five men could just squeeze at meal-times, and a toy navigating bridge above the cabin. As I made my way down the steep incline to the landing-stage, she blew her whistle twice impatiently. My men, stores and luggage were all on board in charge of my headman, so I was alone in the little boat in which I was rowed across. As I stepped on board I was greeted by the skipper, and after taking a drink with him in the little saloon, we made our way on to the bridge ; shortly after, my



## MIXED HUMANITY

two fellow-travellers came aboard, both officials bound for Jubaland, and as soon as they arrived anchor was weighed. The sun had set in a very riot of colour, and Mombasa was hidden in the soft, velvety darkness of a tropical night; but hundreds of little lights shone brightly along the shore, and were reflected in the water, as we steamed fussily out towards the open sea. The *Wiesman* emerged at length from the channel and began pitching as she met the ocean swell, leaving in her wake a line of phosphorescent fire; the lights grew dim behind us and faded from our sight, and I felt at last that my journey had begun.

At the skipper's suggestion we had our blankets brought up on to the bridge, glad to escape the horrors of the tiny cabins. Every available part of the deck below was occupied by the native passengers; covered up to the eyes, they lay outstretched in every corner, rendering it impossible to move about; among them were Somali returning to their country, "askaris" travelling to Sarrenleh, Bajun and Swahili on their way to Kismayu or Lamu, Kikuyu recruits going to the rubber plantations on the lower Tana, now all huddled together irrespective of creed or caste, overcome by fatigue and sleep. Over all hung the odour of the cargo of hides, and of the huddled mass of humanity, defiling the pure air of the open sea; and now, as the pitching of the ship increased, loud sounds of distress came from the wretched natives below as they writhed in the throes of sea-sickness, drowning the throbbing of the crazy engines and making night hideous with their cries.

At the wheel, on the navigating bridge above, stood a Lascar, a picturesque ruffian in blue overalls

## MALINDI

with enormous rings in his ears. Throughout the hours that followed I kept waking up as he called the number of bells in some uncouth tongue, or repeated the orders of the mate who was on watch. A small oil lamp threw a flickering light upon his bronzed face and bare chest, glistening with sweat, as he kept the little vessel on her course.

Dawn broke with rare loveliness upon a smooth sea, whose unruffled surface shone like burnished silver, and as the light grew it revealed on our port side the low sandy shore, fringed with the deep green of a belt of palm trees, in which the little town of Malindi was half concealed. We anchored here for an hour, but the few white houses built on the very beach, and the uninteresting character of the place decided me to stay on board; from the deck I watched the Lascars unload some cargo on to the dhows that had come out to meet us; the Kikuyu recruits were transhipped, and we were off again towards the north before seven o'clock. All through that morning and well into the afternoon, the little *Wiesman* steamed untidily over the gentle swell, leaving a broad wake of foam behind her, above which wheeled innumerable gulls in search of food; occasionally I had a glimpse of the African coast, low and inhospitable, but it showed indistinctly through the haze that hung above the water; a school of porpoises, and now and again a shoal of fish rising for a moment like silver spray above the sea, lent charm and life to a scene that was otherwise monotonous and wearisome.

At three o'clock we entered the long and intricate channel that leads into Lamu Bay. We passed at first between coral reefs, and then threaded our way down

## BAJUN ISLANDS

the narrow passage that separates Lamu from Manda Island. The shore on either side was low and covered with dense scrub, but on the landward side this was replaced by mangrove swamps; I was told that at low tide a great expanse of mud and sand is exposed, on which can be seen countless crabs and other animals. These islands, as well as those to the north, known collectively as the Bajun Islands, are of coral formation, and are very similar in appearance one to another. Ruins of ancient mosques and stone houses of unmistakably Persian design are to be found on many of them. Both the inhabitants of Lamu and the Bajun claim to be of Persian descent, and their light colouring, their regular type of features and the shape of some of their pottery seem to bear out their statement, although it is more probable that Arab blood preponderates.

We skirted the little promontory on which the old town of Shela stands, sailed close to a low open beach, behind which were some large sandhills, and dropped anchor in front of the picturesque town of Lamu. Known to the natives as Amu, it stands at the western corner of the island of Lamu, which is separated from the mainland only by a narrow channel. Like Kismayu it is said to have been founded by Abdul Malik bin Muriani in the 77th year of the Hejira (694 A.D.), but it is almost certain that there were settlements here of Hamyarites or Phœnicians at a still earlier date.

The internal strife that raged throughout Arabia after the death of the Prophet was probably the indirect cause of the colonisation of the East African coast, for the defeated sultans were obliged to flee from their country and take refuge at those ports

## PICTURESQUE BUILDINGS

which trade had made known to them ; and there they founded small separate kingdoms. The history of Lamu from that time onwards is somewhat obscure, but it is known to have undergone many vicissitudes ; it was captured by Tristan da Cunha at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and continued to be under Portuguese rule, in spite of many revolutions, for about one hundred and sixty years. Civil war and internal dissensions of all kinds then broke out along the whole of the East African coast, and permanent peace was not secured until 1893.<sup>1</sup>

The first thing that strikes the traveller on entering Lamu are the tall stone houses, built of coral rock, and constructed after the Arab fashion, round an open central courtyard. Many of these houses have beautiful doors, handsomely carved, and decorated with brass or iron knobs or handles. The streets are very narrow, only sufficiently wide to allow a loaded donkey or two men abreast to pass at the same time. Most of the refuse is thrown out into the road from the houses, so that the smell is appalling. The narrowness of the streets only serves to emphasise the height of the houses, so that as one walks along they appear to be nothing less than "sky-scrapers." But the effect, on the whole, is quaint and picturesque.

Another sight, peculiar to Lamu I believe, cannot fail to interest the traveller. A free-born woman, when she goes out into the town, holds a kind of tent, called "Shiraa," above her head. It is composed of two cloths sewn together, with a stick attached to each corner. If she has no servants or slaves, she takes two sticks in each hand and thus stretches

<sup>1</sup> *The Land of Zinj*, by Capt. C. H. Stigand, p. 15.



### A NATIVE BAZAAR IN THE HIGHLANDS

Notice the typical corrugated iron buildings of the Indian traders. The woman in the centre is wrapping round herself a Swahili robe of Manchester cotton. There are about 100 different patterns, each of which has a special native name.



## ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE

the cloth above her head. If she has one servant, the latter walks in front holding two sticks spread out fanwise, and her mistress follows her, holding the other two; but if she is a rich woman and has two slaves, she walks in the middle, while one slave goes in front and the other behind supporting the shiraa, one stick in each hand, above the lady's head. The procession thus formed is somewhat comic, and very clumsy; what the origin of this interesting custom is, is not known. Owing to the darkness of the streets in the late afternoon, my attempts at photographing were not successful, much to my disappointment.

Lamu is the administrative centre of the district of Tanaland, and is the residence of several Government officials. Its inhabitants are of various races, and consist of Arabs, Swahili, who are probably people of mixed Persian and African descent, slaves from every kind of native tribe from the interior, Somali, Indian traders and Galla. They are notorious throughout East Africa for their licentiousness, and every form of unnatural vice is common. In the days of their prosperity china and pottery were manufactured there, but it has now become very scarce, owing to the fact that it is impossible to find labourers, since the slave trade has been abolished and the slaves freed. There is very little china left in Lamu to-day, the greater part having been sold to traders and collectors under the stress of poverty; at Mombasa and, in fact, almost anywhere, it fetches a high price and is much sought after.

I was very hospitably received by the Provincial Commissioner, Mr. A. T. Reddie. He has spent twenty years of his life in East Africa, and was the

## A HORN WITH A HISTORY

first man to reach the Lorian Swamp by way of the Tana Valley. During his travels he has gathered together a unique collection of great ethnological and historical interest, part of which I had the privilege of seeing. Amongst other things which particularly struck me was an enormous ivory horn, made from the tusk of a large bull elephant, very richly carved and ornamented. The history of this very interesting instrument and that of the brass horn from which it was copied, was written out for him by the Sultan of Witu, and I give it here, exactly as it was translated from the Swahili:—

### HISTORY OF THE BRASS HORN

The Sultan of Manda bought it from a dhow which came from Arabia, previous to the Ivory one being made (Hejira 701).

The Wazee of Lamu for some reason thought they ought to possess it, or wished to possess it.

They accordingly went to the man in whose charge it was and said, "We will pay you well if you let us get possession of the horn." He said, "No! I cannot do this, as if the Sultan knows I gave it to you he would kill me." The Wazee of Lamu replied, "You can tell the Sultan that we took it by force from you," and he agreed to do so. Therefore one day when he was out blowing it at sun-set, he handed it over to the Lamu people and reported to his Sultan that men from Lamu had taken it by force from him.

A war between the two peoples was the consequence, but the Lamu people kept the "Horn."

They cast lots as to who was to look after it.



## A HORN WITH A HISTORY

It fell to the Wajiri family to be its custodians, and they keep it to this day.

### HISTORY OF THE IVORY HORN OF PATTE

The ivory horn (Siwa) was made at Patte by Sherif Jamall Lail, it is said, about 700 years ago. He made it in secret. He presented it to the then Sultan of Patte, who gave him a handsome present. It was blown on all state occasions, as well as lent to the Principal men of Patte on the occasion of marriage or other festivities in their families. At that time Lamu was a part of the dominions of the Patte Sultans. The great families of Lamu also were lent it for the above purposes.

At a recent date, namely, the occasion of the marriage of the Ex-Wali of Lamu Abdulla bin Hamed to his present wife Fatuma binti Mohamed, it was borrowed by the bride's father to be used at the marriage ceremony. At this time there was living in Lamu Fumo Bakari, one of the Ex-Sultans of the Nahaban line. After the marriage ceremony Fumo Bakari seized it; he said it must not be returned to Patte. He sold it to a woman, Binti Waziri, who was the living representative of the family which was the hereditary keeper of the Lamu brass trumpet, which was at that time in her house. Binti Waziri gave Fumo Bakari thirty dollars for it. Kombo bin Sham, one of the Patte Wazee and a resident of Lamu, stated before the then Wali of Lamu, Sudi bin Hamed, that the Horn was not the property of the Royal Family, but belonged to the Wazee of Patte. The Wali replied, "Pay dollars thirty for it and I will get it from Binti Waziri."

## A HORN WITH A HISTORY

They paid the money and the Horn was given to Kombo bin Sham and Nasiri bin Abdalla, and a document was written out by the Wali that it was the property of the Wazee of Patte and to be kept by Kombo bin Sham. It remained with him till Said bin Hamed became Wali. He seized it by force and put it in Lamu Fort along with the Lamu brass Horn.

During the reign of the Nahaban Sultans at Witu, it was offered by the then Wali of Lamu, Said bin Hamed, to the then Sultan Ahmed of Witu upon condition that he would hoist the Zanzibar flag, and if he would seize Mbaruk of the Manzrui he would be given one thousand dollars besides. Sultan Ahmed refused to do so, and the Siwa remained in the Fort. By an arrangement between the Ex-Wali Abdulla bin Hamed and Mr. Rogers, Sub-Commissioner, it was placed in the house of the latter, where it still is.

It was customary both in Mr. Rogers' and Mr. Macdougall's time to lend it to certain of the old families of Lamu for any marriage or other family ceremony (Harusi).

The above information has been given to me by Sultan of Witu, Wali of Lamu, Sherif Abdulla bin Hamed Redemi Witu, Ali bin Khalid of the Waziri, the hereditary custodian of the Lamu trumpet.

MAWIA BIN MOHAMED LAMU

MOHAMED BIN HAMED LAMU

ABUBOKAR BIN MOHAMED LAMU

Etc., etc.

A. T. REDDIE,

*Provincial Commissioner.*

It was now getting late, so I was obliged very

## A HORN WITH A HISTORY

reluctantly to cut short our most interesting conversation, and return to the steamer. As soon as I was aboard, the skipper weighed anchor and we proceeded very cautiously down through the channel out into the open sea. As we were due to arrive in Kismayu at sunrise the next morning, I went to bed early. A fresh north-easterly wind was blowing, and the tiny steamer plunged and staggered over the heavy seas in a most uncomfortable fashion, but the air was cool, and I should have slept well had it not been for the dreadful sounds that rose from the wretched natives below.

## CHAPTER III

### KISMAYU AND THE JUBA RIVER

IT was still quite early when the *Wiesman* turned inwards towards land before entering the intricate channel which is the only passage into Kismayu bay. The coast lay some five miles off, low, sandy, and inhospitable, while in front of it rose a small island and several isolated coral rocks, against which the slow swell broke and foamed. These formed a natural breakwater, and behind them rode on the smooth surface of the bay a variety of native vessels of all kinds. But before reaching this haven, a full hour was spent in navigating the passage which wound in and about between the coral reefs in a most bewildering fashion. The wretched natives had forgotten all their miseries, now that calm water had been reached, and began chatting together and discussing their plans in loud tones. Finally we turned for the last time; the skipper took a bearing, and we went forward slowly into the bay, at the other end of which the little town of Kismayu could be seen, a cluster of white houses and native huts nestling among the sand-dunes near the water's edge. We anchored at last a mile and a half out; all around the little steamboat was a crowd of native craft filled with Arabs, Somali or Bajun. Some were helping to unload or bringing more cargo; others had come to meet friends or merely to look

## THE WHITE POPULATION

on ; at any rate it was a pleasant and amusing scene. The glorious sunlight, the blue sea edged with cream where the tiny waves lazily rolled up the beach, the white houses beyond, and the happy crowd of natives, for the most part unspoiled by civilisation, and clad in loose and brightly coloured robes, together formed a very vivid picture of Eastern life.

After seeing that my men passed the medical inspection, I climbed down the ladder, not sorry to leave the wretched little steamer, and was rowed ashore, the last few yards of the journey being performed on the back of one of the boat-boys, as the beach sloped so gradually that it was impossible to bring the boat much nearer in than fifteen yards or so. There was a tremendous *va et vient* on the beach, almost the whole of the population turning out to see the arrival of the steamer ; the noise was overwhelming, and as the sun climbed higher in the heavens, the glare increased and became very trying, so that I was glad to pass out into the little town.

Kismayu boasts of no hotel or inn of any kind ; white visitors indeed rarely come to this part of the world, but when they do, the hospitality of the officials more than makes amends for any lack of accommodation. The white population of Kismayu consists of the Provincial and District Commissioners and their wives, the doctor, and the Inspector of the Jubaland police. The Provincial Commissioner was away when I arrived, but the Honourable K. R. Dundas, the District Commissioner, very kindly asked me to stay at his house, although I was a perfect stranger to him ; and for the next week, while I was busily preparing for my journey, he made me most truly welcome. He not

## KISMAYU

only smoothed away many difficulties that confronted me, but took the greatest trouble to show me the many interesting things that are to be found in the vicinity of the town, and placed a riding camel at my disposal to facilitate my movements.

Kismayu is not only the principal town in Jubaland, if it may be called a town at all, but is also the seat of Government. It derives its importance from the fact that it possesses the only well-protected roadstead between Mogadishu and Lamu, and thus much of the merchandise designed for Gumbo and southern Italian Somaliland passes through its port. It contains about 4000 inhabitants, chiefly Somali, Arabs, Bajun and a few Indian traders. Except for the custom-house and a few stone buildings in which the officials reside, the town is composed of native huts running in straight lines on each side of broad sandy streets, which in turn nearly all lead to the little central square where the Treasury, Court House, Gaol and Provincial Commissioner's office are situated. Here also is a small hall with open sides, where all important meetings (*borassa*) are held between Somali chiefs and the Commissioner. The former also often forgather within its walls to chat over a cup of coffee amongst themselves. For the Government employs a man at a salary of Rs. 15 a month to supply coffee free to all natives of any position, and sweetmeats on all festivals and fête days.

Kismayu boasts of a club, which includes among its members most of the officers stationed in Jubaland, many of the officials from Italian Somaliland and some of the planters from the Gosha country along the Juba River. Among the regulations of



#### KISMAYU

A street in the native quarter. The palms afford the only shade to be found in the town, and the road is of soft white sand.



#### ANCIENT RUINS AT GONDAL

These curious ruins are probably Persian in origin. It is interesting to note that the heart-shaped emblem, shown over the arch in this photograph, is also to be seen over the doorway of the Persian Monastery at Lamu, near the mouth of the River Tana.





## THE WATER SUPPLY

the club, there is an unusual but most excellent rule, which does not allow any member to offer another a drink without incurring a fine of Rs. 5. It might with advantage be copied in other clubs in the Protectorate, for there the habit of standing and being stood drinks has become a perfect burden, especially to those who are not blessed with an abundance of this world's goods.

There are several wells in Kismayu, but the water they contain is bitter and unpleasant to the taste ; all the water therefore which is required has to be fetched from the Juba River some nine miles away, whence it is brought back in twelve-gallon tanks on camels. But the slope of the ground is such that whenever there is any rain, all the refuse and filth from the little village of Gobwein is swept down into the river at the only place at which it is practicable to fill the water tanks, for further up there is an abundance of tsetse fly. Consequently it is not surprising that dysentery is rife at Gobwein and Giumbo as well as at Kismayu, and it is marvellous there is no more.

Formerly the Treasury at Kismayu was the fort, and around it were the officers' quarters when it was a military station. Surrounding them was a high, thick wall, which is still standing in excellent repair, but the little town has now spread beyond it, and it no longer serves a useful purpose, for conditions along the coast are quite peaceful.

The town of Kismayu, whose name is said to be derived from the words "Kisima cha yuu," meaning the "Upper Well," was founded by Abdul Malik bin Muriani in the 77th year of the Hejira (694. A.D.). At about the same time the little towns of Mogadishu,

## “THE LAND OF ZINJ”

Brava and Malindi also sprang into existence through the enterprise of Abdul Malik; he placed one of his own followers as governor in each place, and declared himself Sultan. The reader who is interested in the early history of the East African coast and in the career of Abdul Malik and his successors, cannot do better than refer to Captain Stigand's book entitled *The Land of Zinj*. In it he will find much valuable information derived from Swahili sources, translated by the author. Time, however, has hardly changed the daily life at Kismayu. The beginning of the north-east monsoon still brings traders from the north, dhows from the Persian Gulf and from southern Arabia laden with cloths and ornaments from India, with coarse, woven silk goods from Persia, and dates and dried sharks' flesh from the Persian Gulf. After six months, when the south-west monsoon begins to blow, these same traders return northwards, having sold or exchanged their goods, carrying with them in their heavily-loaded ships grain, hides, ivory and ambergris. The latter commands a ready market almost anywhere, and is very valuable, for it is a necessary ingredient in the manufacture of perfumes. The ivory too finds its way, not only to the West, but also to the East, to India and China, where it is worked into a variety of beautiful ornaments. Only one line of steamers links Kismayu with the outside world. The Italian mail-steamer call once a month, but at irregular intervals the little *Wiesman*, or the *Kilwa*, tiny obsolete steamers belonging to rival Indian firms, laboriously cover the 364 miles that lie between it and Mombasa in from three to five days, calling on the way at Malindi and Lamu.

In Kismayu the stone buildings are constructed

## THE BUILDINGS

of coral rock, with flat roofs, consisting of two storeys of rooms with a balcony running outside on a level with the upper storey, to which access is obtained by means of a broad wooden staircase. The roads in the European quarter are also made of crushed coral rock and sea-shells dutifully pounded into a hard smooth surface by the convicts from the gaol. The final appearance of the roads resembles chalk, which, combined with the sea, the sand and the white-washed houses, causes a terrible glare most trying to the eyes, which the green of a few palm trees is quite unable to mitigate. The native huts are composed of a single room with walls and roof of makuti (palm fibre interwoven with reeds and branches). The doors are low and narrow, and windows conspicuous by their absence. This method of construction renders the interior very dark, but cool; in this way the injurious effects on the eyes of the blinding glare outside are successfully counteracted, and the ceaseless and unwelcome attentions of swarms of flies are discouraged. The interior is as simple as the exterior is unpretentious. A small open fireplace in one corner, and a bed or couch, made by stretching a piece of grass matting on a low wooden framework, are the most notable objects within; sometimes a few rugs of sheep or goat skin cover the mud floor, while in another corner may be found a few simple cooking utensils and receptacles for holding water or ghee. People who have not much knowledge of the tropics may consider these huts deplorably primitive and barbaric. But they are, as a matter of fact, the outcome of long experience and are eminently suited to the trying climatic conditions that prevail along the coast. If circumstances compelled me to live in those regions,

## GALTI DEPREDATIONS

I would much prefer to inhabit a hut of this description than a house of European design.

It was not long after my arrival that I realised I should have to go farther afield than Kismayu to obtain my camels, for all available ones had long been snapped up by the authorities for the transport of supplies to Sarrenleh, a military post on the upper Juba River. For 800 men of the King's African Rifles were stationed there under eleven white officers to patrol the north-eastern corner of Jubaland. This was rendered necessary owing to the turbulence of the Galti tribe of the Marehan Somali, who had but lately entered British territory, having migrated from southern Somaliland. True stock raiders, as all Somali are at heart, they had caused much trouble by practising their favourite pastime on friendly tribes, who appealed to the Government for help, and it was in answer to this request that a patrol had been despatched to restore order and put a stop to the looting of cattle. The presence of a small army naturally checked the depredations to some extent, but such is the character of the Somali, that unless the Galti are given a thorough lesson in discipline the next time they are caught transgressing, they will immediately begin looting again with renewed energy as soon as the force is withdrawn.

Seeing how matters stood, I decided to go over to Gumbo and try to obtain permission to buy my camels in Italian Somaliland; so I rode over one evening to Gobwein on a camel in company with Mr. Dundas, and remained the night there, as the guest of Lieutenant Phillips, who was in charge of a small detachment of the Camel Corps. Gobwein, which means in the Somali language "a large plain," is

## A MILITARY POST

situated on the very banks of the Juba River. Between the village and the sea is a low and narrow range of hills, running north and south, approximately 200 feet in height, through which the river has cut its way, leaving on each side of its bed cliffs that rise perpendicularly from the water. On the Jubaland side, on the very top of these cliffs, stands the little military post of Gobwein, and at their foot nestles the village itself, consisting of several hundred native huts, an unpretentious bazaar and the Camel Corps lines. To the north-west the little hill called Helwalud can be seen covered with dense vegetation, which grows even more profuse, if possible, as it nears the water's edge. But in between Gobwein and Helwalud is a plain (from which the former gets its name), that stretches away to the north-west until it is lost to view. In times of great drought immense herds of cattle are driven down to water here by the Somali, thousands upon thousands of head packed tight together, for it is unsafe farther north, owing to the tsetse fly that haunts the bush along the river banks.

The Juba is here a broad stream of muddy colour, which has cut a deep bed for itself in the rich alluvial soil. It rises in the mountains of southern Abyssinia and flows in a southerly direction, but its windings are innumerable, and below Sarrenleh its current is very slow. The latter place has hitherto been mis-spelt "Serenli," owing to ignorance of its true meaning. In the Somali language the suffix "leh" is often added to a word, and means "containing or possessing." Sarrenleh means "containing Sarren grass,"<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the place where Sarren grass grows. Other

<sup>1</sup> *Eragrostis papposa.*

## VALLEY OF THE JUBA

names formed in a similar way are, for example, Shimbirleh "(pool) of birds," Madoleh, "(place) of darkness," and Arnoleh, which means "containing milk," in other words, "a good place to graze cattle."

From Sarrenleh to the sea, the valley of the Juba is extraordinarily level, the fall being roughly 500 feet in 450 miles. The river, which is known locally as the Webbe Ganana, rises to its maximum height between the months of October and December; it then falls slowly until April, when it begins to rise again; in June the floods subside, in July it is at its lowest ebb, but in August it increases once more. Between the two low-water periods, shallow draught steamers can proceed for nearly 400 miles up river. Owing to the extreme flatness of the country, it has no important tributary in Jubaland except the river Daua. During the rains there are no doubt several small streams that temporarily discharge their waters into it, and of these probably the largest is the outlet from the Deshek Wama. There are numerous swamps on both sides that lie just outside the belt of tropical vegetation that clothes the banks. Above Mfudu the country is at first densely covered with forest, but below, as far as Helwalud, the country is under cultivation. Maize and sim-sim are doing well in the hands of natives, and an English company is busy growing cotton in the district between Yonti and Helwalud. I was fortunate in being able to visit this plantation through the kindness of Mr. Gabriel, to whom it belongs, and I was very hospitably entertained there by Mr. and Mrs. Sargent, who are interested in the estate. I was much struck by the extraordinary fertility of the soil; moreover, the physical formation of the

## THE TANA

country and the nature of the river lend themselves admirably to irrigation, so that there appears to be a very prosperous future in store for this part of the country.

It is interesting to note that on a map, published in the year 1806, the Tana was confused with the Juba River. It was known presumably that a large stream rose in Abyssinia and flowed southwards. Travellers had also certainly reported that an important river flowed into the Indian Ocean south of Lamu. The draughtsman at home, responsible for the map, was evidently struck by these two facts, and immediately drew in a new river which rose in Abyssinia, flowed across the country which is now called Jubaland and poured its water into the sea near Lamu.

On the hill immediately opposite to Gobwein stands the little town of Gumbo. This is the administrative capital of Italian Somaliland, which stretches from the Gulf of Aden to the mouth of the Juba River between the Indian Ocean and the East African boundary line. To be accurate, it is the southern part only of this large territory that forms the true Italian colony, for the northern parts consist of native states under Italian protection.

The little town of Gumbo is beautifully kept and very clean. There are a number of white officials and officers, and their houses are built on European lines. In addition to a very nice club, where every one meets daily for lunch and dinner, there is a wireless station, by means of which the inhabitants are kept in touch with the outside world. I was received with the utmost cordiality by the "Residente," who willingly gave me permission to send my headman

## A CORDIAL RECEPTION

into the interior to purchase camels, and insisted on my riding his mule when I returned to the river, before crossing over to Gobwein. In addition, he provided me with soldiers to see me safely down, and they formed an escort which, although totally unnecessary, was highly picturesque. These native soldiers wore white cotton shirts and loose trousers with crimson belts, and long cock's feathers in their red fez, but this uniform does not look nearly so smart as that of the Jubaland Camel Corps. The latter wear tunic and shirt of a peculiar shade of khaki, almost a warm grey in colour, blue puttees, and a yellow cap with peak and a white cloth to protect the neck. Over this uniform the smartly polished brown leather accoutrements look particularly well. In war time, or when marching, the tunic is replaced by a blue cotton jersey, which is not only inconspicuous but is highly serviceable.

Having thus successfully accomplished my purpose, and despatched my headman in search of camels, I returned to Kismayu, and decided to go for a short expedition to the Dibayu Plain while awaiting him. I therefore hired five camels from an Arab, and having selected the things I should need for a few days in the bush, was ready to start on the morrow. I always think it is a good plan, previous to embarking on a long journey, to take a little trip such as this. It enables one to try the men, and, if necessary, to weed out the undesirables before it is too late; moreover it gives them a chance to know your ways, which may save friction and unpleasantness in the future.



## CHAPTER IV

### A SHORT EXPEDITION ACROSS THE DIBAYU PLAINS

THERE was but little life in the streets of Kismayu as I mounted my mule and started off. I had already sent ahead the five camels I had hired from the Arab with instructions to camp at a rainpool on the other side of the sandhills, and with them had gone the few porters I needed for collecting wood and pitching my tent. So it was but a small cavalcade that made its way down the broad sandy street that led southwards through the native quarter. I caught now and again a glimpse of a shadowy form sleeping in the cool darkness of the huts, a few diminutive hens were moving restlessly about in search of food, and occasionally camels would be seen, solemnly chewing the cud in the thin shade of a palm tree. All else slept or was at rest, for the hour of the siesta was not yet over.

The little town was soon left behind, and we followed a narrow trail that led at first over some rolling sanddunes, which soon gave place to a series of sandy hillocks covered with dense thorn scrub. The ground gradually rose till a moderately high ridge was reached, from which an extensive view was obtained over the country which lay to the south-west. It seemed to be a vast expanse of green scrub stretching away to the horizon, in

## SCRUB AND CONIFERS

striking contrast to the white sand and arid appearance of the dunes through which we had been climbing. A very noticeable feature on these hills was a large number of conifers (*Juniperus procera*). This tree, which is common in many parts of Somaliland, Abyssinia and British East Africa, under normal conditions is of a pyramidal shape, but here on the coast of Jubaland it is flat-topped and table-like. As may be seen in our own coasts the effect of wind on the growth of trees and shrubs is to prevent them from growing perpendicularly, and such trees as the oak and hawthorn and even the elm and sycamore may be seen stunted and flat-topped from this cause.<sup>1</sup>

Slowly we made our way down into the plains, and towards sunset we came upon two "worrtas" or rain-water pools. Two Somali were filling up their leather water-bottles here, and loading them on their camels, while their little boys were running around playing and laughing. It formed a most picturesque scene in the fading light, when both colours and outline are softened by the afterglow. A little farther on I found my own camels and my tent pitched. The following morning I was awakened long before dawn, as there was a lengthy march to be accomplished before the next water was reached. The headman woke me punctually at 3 a.m., and as usual, while I had breakfast, down came the tent, the camels were loaded to the accompaniment of loud snarling, and we were soon away. I could not see what the country was like for the first two hours, although the bush looked very dense in the moonlight. It was already oppressively hot, and we were all per-

<sup>1</sup> *The Field*, 5, vii. 13, "Juniperus Procera."




A FLAT-TOPPED CONIFER (*JUNIPERUS PROCERA*)

This tree is known popularly as the African cedar and is common on the highlands of Equatorial Africa, Abyssinia, and Somaliland. It often attains a height of 100 feet and more in favourable localities, but in Jubaland they are small and flat topped, probably owing to the effect of the sea winds and the arid nature of the soil.



## YAK TREES

springing freely before the sun rose behind some threatening storm clouds; these gradually dispersed, and as the light grew brighter we emerged into a large level plain covered with thin scrub and a few large yak trees. These trees serve an extremely valuable purpose, for often in their thick, stunted stems large cavities are to be found, which become full of water during the rainy season. It is from the living wood round these cavities that the branches spring. Native hunters nearly always carry a hollow stick, approximately two feet long by half an inch in diameter, by means of which they can suck up the water from these holes, the opening to them being often too narrow to allow them to obtain the water in any other way. Whenever they see a number of birds collected together in the mornings or evenings on one of these trees, experience tells them that water will probably be found there.

I noticed that on many of the larger trees queer marks were cut, such as the following , and on questioning the guide I was told that they were cattle brands and indicated what sub-tribes or families were grazing their stock in that locality. A couple of hours later we entered another belt of thick bush. There was no breath of wind, and the heat was extremely oppressive, so that we were all glad to emerge about an hour later into the next plain, where there was a slight breeze. This district is called "Dameir Baktis" (meaning "a donkey, its corpse," *i.e.* a dead donkey), so named from the fact that a long time ago a small herd of donkeys was killed by lions near two very large bushes that are still a distinctive feature on these plains. It struck me as curious that so extensive a tract should be

## GAME

named from such a trivial occurrence. For, after all, similar events are by no means uncommon in these unsettled parts, where lions are a constant menace to the Somali and their stock.

Small herds of game were grazing on the coarse grass that covered the plains ; a few gerenuk galloped away at our approach, their long necks stretched out in a futile attempt to avoid observation as they made their way through the scattered scrub. A small band of what I took to be Peter's gazelle, and a solitary oryx beisa with a single horn gazed for a moment at the oncoming caravan, and then they too fled away and were soon lost to sight in the bush. They were astonishingly shy, but I was still close to the coast, and I learned later that the Herti Somali were fond of hunting. Not long after we were joined by a wild hunter from that tribe. He was neither an interesting nor a picturesque figure ; I merely mention him because of the very curious wooden pillow he carried, of which I shall have more to say in a subsequent chapter ; his round war shield, made of giraffe hide, also attracted my attention, for it was deeply scarred in many places in an unusual way. He told me that the shield had once been his brother's ; but the latter had been killed one day by a lion while out hunting, and the scars I had noticed had been caused by the lion's claws in the struggle that took place before his brother's death. I was able to persuade him to let me have the shield, and it bears eloquent testimony to the desperate struggle that had been fought between those strange antagonists.

Towards noon we passed through another narrow belt of bush, but emerged again shortly into Dibayu Plain. Grass was more abundant here, showing that

## A CHARACTERISTIC SCENE

a fairly plentiful supply of rain had fallen, and soon we reached two shallow pools, around which a small herd of native cattle were resting during the heat of the day, huddled together in the scanty shade afforded by a few low camel-thorn trees. A couple of hundred yards away was a group of Somali huts surrounded by a thorn fence, above which hovered and wheeled innumerable vultures.

I camped here, and spent the afternoon in taking photographs. Towards evening I was visited by the headman of the village, who brought me a sheep and some milk. He carried a large black umbrella, and no weapons, but was dressed in the usual white "Tobe," as were his followers. The whole scene was very characteristic of Jubaland, and typical of many others that I was to see later on my journey to the Lorian. It reminded me very vividly of passages in the Old Testament; the same conditions are found to-day as prevailed two thousand years ago by the shores of the Dead Sea. I held a long conversation with him through my interpreter, but unlike most Somali, he was stupid and unintelligent, and I could get little information from him. He told me, however, that his village was about to move south, as water was getting scarce in Dibayu. Having obtained all the news I could, I gave him a small present and then dismissed him.

The following morning I started shortly before dawn in a south-easterly direction across the plains; occasionally we passed through thin belts of bush, but on the whole the scenery was very monotonous, the country being too flat and overgrown with low scrub to afford any extensive view. Animal life was also little in evidence, but while on the march I was

## A USEFUL TREE

able to obtain a silver-backed jackal (*Canis mesomelas*). These beautiful little animals are among the most handsome of the smaller carnivora, their bright rufous coat showing up in vivid contrast to the silver-coloured patch along the back, from which they get their name. I noticed, among other small birds, a species of horn-bill (*Lophoceros medianus*) whose harsh note and curiously uneven flight, continuously dipping and then rising again, renders it very conspicuous.

Some four hours later we reached another small Somali "boma" or village, and I camped near a clump of "araru" trees, about half a mile farther on. These trees, which resemble a diminutive baobab tree, are much valued by the natives, as by peeling off the smooth outer bark they obtain a tough and resilient fibre, from which the women make many useful household utensils. The camel mats, which serve also as a covering for their huts, are skilfully woven of grass, and tied together with this fibre, which renders them extremely durable. While waiting for the camels I strolled down to the water-hole, which lay a quarter of a mile distant, to see what it was like. The bush was very dense all round, but situated in a little clearing were five shallow depressions or pans, averaging 15 yards broad by 30 yards long, filled with rain-water to a depth of about 6 inches. The water was grey-brown, covered with patches of green slime, and was much soiled with the dung of cattle and goats. The pools had evidently been far larger, but they were fast drying up, and the Somali were already moving to "pastures new." I took the temperature of the water in the largest pan, and my thermometer showed 84.5° in the deepest parts and slightly more at the edge.



## A SOMALI FAMILY

Whilst I was taking some theodolite observations here, a typical Somali family passed on their way to a new camp. First came the father, accompanied by a little girl about twelve years old, driving some fifty head of cattle and half a dozen donkeys. The man was fully armed with spear, shield and knife, and carried in addition a small gourd of water, his wooden pillow and a tooth stick. Having allowed the animals to drink they passed on, and were shortly followed by a woman, presumably his wife, leading a large camel. On it were the fibre and grass mats, called "Herios," the curved posts of their hut, several water-bottles made of gourds or wood and hung in wicker baskets, and various other household goods. The woman stopped to have a drink, and was joined by a very old man, probably her father, and two tiny children; she made the latter drink by dipping her two hands in the water, thus improvising a cup, and when they had all satisfied their thirst, they too passed on, and were soon swallowed up in the thick bush.

While working near camp in the evening I shot another silver-backed jackal, a female, and so secured a pair from this district. There were also many vulturine guinea-fowls about, of which I shot two. This exceedingly handsome game-bird is very common throughout southern Jubaland, and later on in the interior, where all other food is extremely scarce, it formed the "pièce de résistance" of my daily menu.

My next move was eastwards towards the sand-hills which separate Dibayu Plain from the sea. In the early dawn there was the usual bustle and confusion on striking camp, while the tents came down and the loads were made up, but in this case it

## A CHARMING SCENE

was intensified owing to the objections of one of the camels to being loaded. There was consequently much excitement among the syces; everyone, including most of the Somali from the village, was giving advice and generally getting in one another's way, while the camel snarled and gurgled, making the most hideous din. Before his load was finally adjusted, he managed to smash one bucket and several minor articles of less importance. All this delayed the start till 5.30, but as there was only a short march to be accomplished, it was of no great consequence. The whole caravan straggled through the bush along a narrow sandy trail that wound its tortuous way through the acacias, mimosas and scrub that covered the hillside. Only once did we come to a clearing, a beautiful little meadow with green grass, starred with wild flowers and shaded by three huge yak trees. In the centre nestled a tiny rainpool, as yet unsoiled, with a ring of clean white sand between it and the vivid green of the grass. There were many brightly coloured birds and many curious tracks, those of giant lizards and rats, whose broad tails had left a smooth line between their footprints, and all around and about signs and tracks of dik-dik and guinea-fowl. Two hours later the crest was reached, and here I pitched camp in the shade of some huge acacia trees. Only water was lacking, but it was a lovely, picturesque spot, and the north-east monsoon tempered the heat which had been so trying on the plains. Two days were spent here in shooting and working, and I was able to add to my collection, among other animals, three dik-dik and fifteen species of birds. The dik-dik, of which I shall have more to say in a subsequent chapter, are found in

## A FINE LEOPARD

this district in the most extraordinary numbers, but owing to the thickness of the undergrowth they are hard to see. While creeping very slowly and cautiously through the bush in search of them I suddenly came across a fine leopard; as he rose, I fired two shots at him with my shot-gun, very unwisely, but I had no other weapon; for a second I thought he would charge, but he changed his mind, and with a low snarl turned and vanished into the bush before I could reload. Although I followed the blood spoor some distance, I never found him, much to my disappointment, and though later I often came across fresh leopard spoor I never saw another. They are, as anyone who has hunted them knows, very hard to bag, and in Jubaland this is especially the case, owing to the dense undergrowth. They appear to feed mainly on dik-dik and gerenuk, which are very numerous everywhere. In rare cases, when pressed by hunger, they may attack larger game, and in one instance I found a young giraffe killed by leopards after a desperate struggle.

All through the march from this camp down to the sea, near Gondal, the half-sneeze, half-whistle of a frightened dik-dik was constantly heard, and I saw quite a number in spite of the thickness of the bush. Down by the seashore also I saw some cranes and several pelicans, but they were out of range and very wild, so that I was unable to obtain a specimen.

Gondal is a small flat promontory, T-shaped, that forms the southern extremity of Kismayu Bay. Within a quarter of a mile inland from its base are some very remarkable ruins. They consist of the remains of two buildings and a shrine; the accompanying photograph shows what is left of the latter. They

## REMARKABLE RUINS

are built of coral rock ; the walls are nearly 3 feet thick, and about 30 feet long. There is a doorway in one of the houses, flanked by pillars, and this, as well as the opening of the shrine, faces south. The latter is a most curious ruin, and is covered with a simple type of carving cut into the coral rock to a depth of about a quarter of an inch. The entrance, which is about 4 feet high, is arched, and at the top the stone has been cut into the shape of an inverted heart, while the walls on both sides are covered with carving.<sup>1</sup> The interior is smooth, apparently plastered over, but the floor has crumbled away. To the north of the houses I found a quantity of broken but highly glazed pottery of a kind that is quite unlike any manufactured by the natives to-day ; especially interesting were some pieces of china, the bottom of a stone ewer and a piece of glass that would appear to have been the neck of a bottle or flask. These ruins are so buried in the dense bush that it would be easy to pass close by without seeing them. I learned from Captain Salkeld and Dr. Wilson that there are remains of a similar nature on the Bajun Islands farther south, and the latter was fortunate enough to obtain several unbroken specimens of what seemed to be oil lamps, unmistakably Persian in design. Repeated inquiries elicited no information from the Somali as regards the origin of these ruins ; they said that they were in the same condition when they entered the country ; the Galla seemed to know no more. Captain Stigand, in his book, *The Land of Zinj*, has given some very interesting information concerning the ruins he

<sup>1</sup> Similar ornamentation occurs above the doorway of the old Persian monastery of Lamu.

## PERSIAN RUINS

discovered farther south, near Lamu, but at present the origin of these traces of the early occupation of the Jubaland coast remains very obscure.

The cool wind from the north-east made Gondal a very pleasant place to camp in; bathing was delightful in the evening and early morning, and it was with regret that I turned north along the coast towards Kismayu, whose white buildings could be seen across the bay nestling among the sanddunes.

## CHAPTER V

### FINAL PREPARATIONS AND START FROM KISMAYU

ON arriving at Kismayu I was again very hospitably entertained, this time by Captain Salkeld, the Provincial Commissioner, who had just returned from Mombasa, where he had been on official business; and for the following days before I left on my long journey inland I was his guest. Much remained to be done before I could depart; my provision and trade goods had been purchased already, but I had to choose my men, get their clothes and outfits, collect the pack-saddles, ropes, girths and mats for the camels, and finally to inspect tents, water-bottles and water-tanks, rifles, ammunition and all the innumerable details upon which not only the success but even the safety of an expedition depends. The selection of a suitable variety of trade goods is of the utmost importance, and in this my headman was invaluable, being himself a Mohammed Zubheir Somali born in the interior of Jubaland. I shall refer in Appendix C to the various articles which I found most useful, but I should like to emphasise the fact that it is the worst possible policy to stint oneself as regards presents for natives. However distasteful it may be to spend money in this direction it is absolutely essential to give somewhat lavishly (as it may appear at first), for it not only keeps the natives in a con-

## PACK-SADDLES

tented frame of mind, but it makes them anxious to help in the hope of further favours; moreover, it distracts their attention from your real object, and in this way much can be accomplished that would otherwise be impossible. At the same time the presents must be given judiciously in proportion to the social importance of the recipient; otherwise jealousy and ill-feeling will be aroused, which is very hard to overcome.

The pack-saddles I used were made for me by Arabs at Kismayu. They consist of two V-shaped pieces of wood, connected by transverse bars. The former are made from a single branch of a tree, and are well dried and seasoned. In choosing a saddle great care has to be taken to see that the V is not too broad; for, if it is, the saddle comes too far down on the back of the camel and soon causes a nasty sore. The inside of this primitive saddle is padded by means of two small gunny sacks tightly packed with grass or dry seaweed; and to the near side of the saddle is attached a long and thin girth, made of fibre or plaited rope-strands. This is tightened by means of a small cord running through a noose at the end of the girth on the offside of the camel. There are two mats to be added above the saddle before the load can be tied on. One, consisting of a large sack about 4 feet square and filled with seaweed, is placed over the hump behind the saddle and tied tightly to the latter, while the other, which is merely a long strip of matting, hangs down on either side of the camel to prevent loads from chafing the animal's body. Two stout poles must be provided, to which are attached 30 feet of grass rope for tying on the loads; the latter, divided into

## EXPORT AND IMPORT DUTIES

two approximately equal packs, are each securely tied, and then in turn are lashed together on the camel's back just above the saddle tree. It will be easily seen, therefore, that to get the whole outfit together requires time, and I spared no pains to see that everything was as good as possible, in order that I might keep my camels in good condition, for only thus can the maximum amount of work be obtained from them.

When all my preparations were nearly completed, I heard from my headman that my camels were waiting for me at Gumbo; so I rode over to Gobwein on one of the riding camels that Mr. Dundas had very kindly placed at my disposal. It took me a day to complete the custom formalities, for there is an export duty of Rs. 7.50 on each animal from Italian Somaliland, and an import duty of 10 per cent. *ad valorem* into Jubaland. For mules the tariff is even higher, the export duty in their case being Rs. 35. I am unable to understand why the British authorities should levy custom duties on cattle and camels brought into their territory. The demand for them, especially for any kind of beast of burden, is far greater than the supply, and therefore it would seem only sensible to encourage importers of such animals. So great is the difficulty of obtaining camels that both the military and civil authorities are obliged to hire them from the Arabs and Somali at the ruinous charge of Rs. 1 per diem, and are liable to pay Rs. 75 in case of death, besides the amount incurred for work done previously. The native traders therefore calculate that within a month of coming down to the coast they can earn the original cost of the camel, and every day's work



## CROSSING THE JUBA RIVER

after is clear profit; for they send their camels out to graze in the middle of the day, and their keep therefore costs nothing.

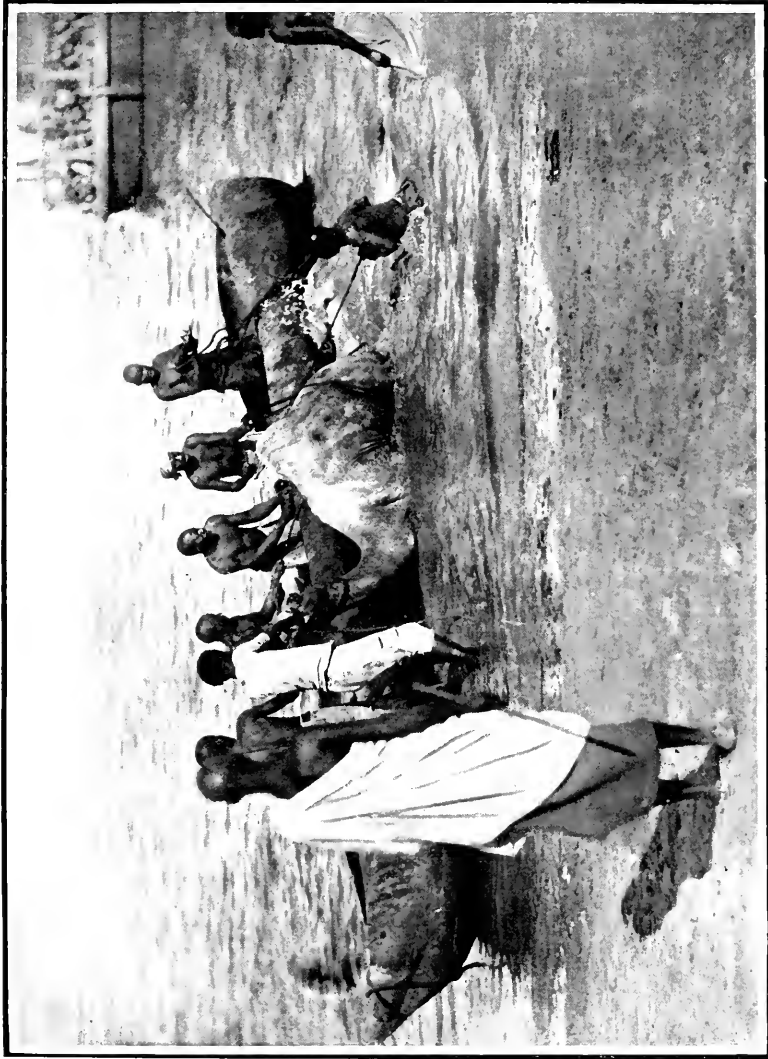
Getting the camels across the Juba River was a slow and tedious proceeding. Early in the morning they were collected close to the shore on the Italian side in charge of my head camel syce, a handsome Herti Somali of about thirty-five years of age, Farar Ali by name, whom I had engaged the day before. He had served as orderly and interpreter to an officer in the K.A.R. some years before, and his frank cheerful countenance impressed me very favourably. Nor was my first estimate of his character falsified by subsequent events, for he proved invaluable, faithful, obliging and hard-working, and a better companion in the bush it would be impossible to find. Sixteen natives manned a large flat-bottomed boat, and the camels were led two by two to the water's edge, not without difficulty; for no animal is more helpless in the mud than they, and many times I thought they would slip and break a leg. Once there, they were made to lie down; a noose was slipped over their lower jaw and they were dragged over the mud, powerless to resist, to the side of the boat; the crazy old barge was then poled out into the river, three men holding the camels' heads above water. Once they had reached the other side, the animals struggled out with much splashing and gurgling; they were then untied, when they at once rolled in the clean sand, and kneeling down patiently awaited the coming of the others. Only two camels were brought over at a time, so it took seven trips to complete the passage of my fourteen animals, and it was not till

## CHOOSING THE SYCES

nearly sunset that they were all safely across. They were then led away to feed slowly through the night under the supervision of Farar Ali, and arrived at Kismayu early the following day.

I had in the meantime engaged six more syces. I took care to select those who had had but little experience of civilisation and were thus unspoiled, and I was much helped by my headman, who was a wonderful judge of character. They were each provided with a crimson shirt, so that in case of a night attack in the interior it would be possible to quickly distinguish friend from foe; and in addition they were given a pair of shorts, sandals and a blanket.

I also purchased four more camels from Mohammed Aden, chief of the Herti Somali. He receives a monthly salary of Rs. 75 from the Government, in return for which he is supposed to help the officials in every way. The Herti have now realised the value of trade, and, though despising in their hearts the "Ferinji" (the white man, literally, "the proud one"), are quite willing to submit to his rule in order to obtain the benefits which this submission gains for them. But a more contemptible old scoundrel than Mohammed Aden it has seldom been my lot to encounter. Not only does he impose on the good-nature of the officials, but he is suspected, on one occasion at least, of plotting the murder of a white man when camping in the interior, by sending to the native chiefs of the districts inland letters calculated to arouse all their worst passions against the perfectly innocent and friendly traveller. The paramount chief of the Herti is really Mohammed Shirwa, a handsome boy of some eighteen years of age, and Mohammed Aden is only acting as regent



#### SWIMMING MY CAMELS ACROSS THE JUBA RIVER

This was a very tedious proceeding, only two animals being brought over at the same time. The heads of the camels were tied to the side of the canoe, which was then poled across the river. A camel is helpless in the mud, owing to the formation of its feet; they had to be hauled up the bank, therefore, until dry sand was reached.



## THE START

until the former is ready to take the affairs of the tribe into his own hands.

Everything was ready for my departure, when I was suddenly taken ill with dysentery. Lately I had been feeling far from well, and now I had to give in altogether, though the delay was terribly exasperating. Six days later I was sufficiently well to get up, and, weak though I was, I decided, perhaps unwisely, to start two days afterwards. My caravan consisted of my headman Dahir Omar, my interpreter Hassan Mohammed, my gun-bearer, skinner, syce, a personal boy whom I had had on a previous expedition, a Swahili cook, seven camel syces, six porters from Mombasa, four Somali police or Askaris, and a Herti guide who was to accompany me as far as the district of Joreh. I had eighteen camels, of which five were used solely for carrying the ten water-tanks so essential to the traveller in Jubaland. The Government's travelling allowance for its officials is twenty-five camels, so it will be seen that I had cut my loads down to a minimum. My own personal equipment, tent, bedding, instruments, guns, collecting boxes, and stores for four months, weighed nine hundred pounds, or three camel loads, while the other ten camels carried the men's tents, cooking-pots, rice and trade goods. On the day I started I sent the caravan on ahead with instructions to pitch camp in the plains beyond the sandhills, and I set out myself late in the afternoon of the same day.

At first the trail led across the hills behind Kismayu, winding in and out among the giant umbrella trees, until the crest was reached. Turning back, I gazed for some time upon the beautiful scene that lay below, at Kismayu and at the ocean beyond,

## A CAMP SCENE

for it would be many months before I should again see any town or even a village. I then descended into the plains that lay to the west. In the midst of the thick bush on the lower slopes were several large yak trees, in one of which was a natural cavity containing some fifty gallons of rain-water. For two hours we made our way through the scrub until at last, when the sun was sinking, we emerged into a little open plain where my camp was pitched. My own tent was in the centre, with the porters' little white tents behind, while all round the camp the headman had built a three-foot thorn hedge; inside were my eighteen camels with all the loads, saddles, etc., piled near by, while an Askari kept guard over the only entrance. It was typical of many a camp scene I was to see daily throughout my journey, and I was filled with joy at the thought that a start had been made at last. As I rode into the boma the piled rifles and the bandoliered men were a grim reminder to me of the condition of the country I was going to traverse; but they were really a precaution and an emblem of authority more than anything else, for in case of a serious attack four police and seven armed but undisciplined syces would be of little avail.

Early the following morning, after a night marred by the attentions of countless mosquitoes, I set out towards the north, intending to see if I could obtain a specimen of the Grant's gazelle which I knew to be fairly plentiful in this district. I had hardly gone a mile when I saw in the distance a cloud of dust, which, as I soon made out, was caused by some of these animals, which were running round in the bush, presumably in play. I hastily took my rifle and

## GRANT'S GAZELLE

set out after them. The wind was right, and there was plenty of cover, so I was soon fairly close to them. As they were now feeding quietly towards me, totally unconscious of my presence, I lay down to wait for them, and in about twenty minutes a fine buck came out from behind a bush about a hundred and fifty yards off. I fired, hitting him a trifle behind the heart. At the shot four more appeared, and all five made a tremendous dash towards me, but, suddenly catching sight of my mule and followers in the distance, halted and turned within fifteen yards of where I lay behind the bush. I had a glimpse of these beautiful gazelles, their graceful heads and slender horns, before firing again. The buck collapsed to the shot, the bullet entering just above the tail and lodging under the skin of the chest. On examining it I was immensely pleased to notice that it was a variety of Grant's gazelle that was entirely new to me. Although in bodily size and horn-measurement it resembled a Peter's gazelle, yet in colour it was more closely akin to Bright's gazelle. In a subsequent chapter I propose to deal more fully with these differences, and to describe in detail the characteristics of what is undoubtedly a distinct race of Grant's gazelle.

I did not go out again till the afternoon, when I made my way slowly on foot through the most atrociously thick bush and thorn-scrub to the top of Eyladera, the low ridge that runs north-east and south-west between Gobwein and Yonti, in order to do some geographical work. In spite of the heat and thorns, I was very glad I came, for when I reached the summit the view well repaid me for my trouble. To the north and the east the Juba River, fringed with

## A MONOTONOUS SCENE

a broad green belt of vegetation, twisted and writhed across the plain like some monstrous snake, till I lost sight of it beyond Yonti. Southwards, the low red sandhills near the coast gave a warm note of colour to the landscape, but it was towards the west that I looked longest, for there lay my way. Three hundred feet below, the plain began and stretched away, as far as the eye could reach, absolutely flat without ridge or hollow, and without one single object to break the monotony of the scene. Even the brilliant sunlight was unable to relieve the utter dreariness of that great expanse of desert scrub. But it was unknown, a blank on every map, and I was filled with joy to think that it was to be my home for weeks, perhaps months, and that day by day it would reveal to me its secrets, from which, as they were unravelled, I hoped my map would grow. And then my thoughts turned to people who live amid the bush, the people I should meet, who make it their home during the rains—nomads, dwellers in tents, living the same life now as in the days of the Old Testament, tending their flocks in endless search of water and pasture, moving with the seasons, restless and warlike.

The following day I was able to obtain another silver-backed jackal, which completed my series of them from the Kismayu district. Later, close to camp, I saw three gerenuk, one of which had good horns. It took me, however, quite a long time to get within range, as they were feeding away from me, but finally, as I was crawling round a bush, the buck grew suspicious and turned round, giving me rather a difficult shot at about 200 yards. Greatly to my delight I heard the bullet clap loudly, the poor brute



## A CIVET CAT

gave a convulsive leap forward and then fell quite dead. Although fully adult, he was distinctly small in bodily size, and compared very unfavourably in that respect with others I had shot in the highlands of East Africa. I was to learn later that this decrease in size is apparent in all the common specimens of the game I shot in Jubaland. It would seem probable that the poor grazing and the hard physical conditions of the country which they inhabit are the causes of this. I spent several days in this district hunting and working, but saw little game except a few dik-dik and some small birds, of which I shot several for my collection.

The night previous to my departure from this camp was not without incident. I turned in about 8.30, and was fast asleep when, at ten o'clock, my boy, Juma, came in and woke me, saying that, "There was a little thing outside to shoot." So, hastily putting on a pair of boots, I crept out with my shotgun, and sure enough I saw some small animal in the moonlight just outside the boma. It heard me coming, but as it turned to run I fired and killed it, a clear proof of how bright the moon was. The camp was instantly in a hubbub, as every one woke at the shot and came running out with their rifles. It was exceedingly amusing to watch them before they realised what had happened. The midnight visitor turned out to be an exceedingly pretty little animal with small, pointed grey head and beady eyes, a grey body with rich brown spots on it, and a ringed black and grey tail, while all down the back was a crest of long black hairs. It appears to be a civet cat (*Viverra civetta*).

After it had been carefully put away I returned

## THE EYLAD BUSH

to bed, but it seemed scarcely a few moments later when I was again awakened, and I could already see the loads being done up and the camels being saddled. We finally started, shortly after three o'clock, and marched across a perfectly flat and dusty plain, which in the rainy season must, I should imagine, become somewhat swampy, until at noon we reached the edge of what the guide told me was the Eylad bush. The Eylad water-hole was still twelve miles on, but as I did not yet wish to over-exert myself by taking long marches in my present weak condition, I decided to camp here and proceed the following morning. It had been very hot and muggy all day, and at 2.45 there was a heavy storm to the west, great black clouds and obvious rain, which cleared off about four, when the air cooled somewhat. I did not go out again in the afternoon, as I knew I should not see any game, this part of the country being too hopelessly arid even for such desert dwellers as the gerenuk and Grant's gazelle.

## CHAPTER VI

### A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

I LEFT Dol, by which name my last camp was known, just before 5 a.m., and in an hour's time, as the sun was rising above Eyladera, we left the plain and entered the real bush. In all my life I have never seen such a tangle, such thick, clinging, thorny scrub, twelve feet high, leafless, grey and dead-looking. Fortunately there was a native trail running due west to Eylad (white well), and this we followed for two and a half hours, before emerging into a delightful little meadow of ten or twelve acres, with thick green grass and two large circular depressions in the centre full of rain-water. I later discovered, by careful observation, that the ground for miles around slopes very gradually, and, to the casual observer, imperceptibly, down to these pools, which, when full, contain sufficient water for four hundred cattle for at least three months. As I rode out into this delightful spot, I saw a large number of guinea-fowl feeding, and a dik-dik disappearing into the bush. I fired and got a guinea-fowl, and a second as they rose, and, hastily reloading, I shot a francolin as it came flying directly overhead. These two game birds are common throughout Jubaland, and are both exceedingly handsome specimens.

In the francolin (*Pternistes infuscatus*) the head and upper part of the neck are devoid of feathers.

## ELEPHANTS' SPOOR

The bare skin of the face and throat is a brilliant red, abruptly changing to yellow on the neck. This colouring in life is very striking and beautiful, but in the dry skin it fades into a uniform dull brown, and gives no idea of the gradation of the rich crimson of the upper portion into the clear lemon-yellow of the lower parts of the neck. Neither of these birds affords really good sport, as they trust for escape rather to their legs than to their wings. When flushed they rise with a tremendous whirr, flying away in a straight course, and their large size and steady flight make them an easy mark. The harsh chattering cry of the francolin is most characteristic and cannot be mistaken, and it soon becomes one of the most familiar sounds to the traveller in Jubaland.

In the afternoon, while investigating the country in the vicinity of my camp, I killed several more guinea-fowl, of which I lost three, owing to the thickness of the bush, which prevented our finding them. I also noticed some elephants' spoor, but none of it was fresh, and they appeared to have left the district, trekking westwards. I now proposed to march due west, in which direction lay the Guranlagga, according to existing maps, but my guide insisted on going north-west, as he said that the bush was so dense that we should be unable to make our way through it in a direct line with camels.

The following day we left camp at 3 a.m., and proceeded by moonlight through a country similar to that which we had traversed the day before. As dawn broke, it revealed a scene of luxuriant vegetation such as is always associated with tropical Africa. Huge trees festooned with creepers and brightly coloured flowers, brilliantly feathered birds flitting



#### OUR GUIDE

He was a Somali of the Herri tribe; notice the fringe to his "Tobe, which was striped yellow and white, and the broad-bladed thrusting spear.



## LUXURIANT VEGETATION

in and out amongst the branches, tall grass and shrubs in astonishing profusion, formed an almost theatrical picture to which the finishing touches were added by a thick white mist that rose from the ground, blurring the outlines and adding mystery to the scene. As the sun grew hotter, a perfect swarm of small flies collected around us, maddening the camels and driving my men and myself almost crazy. There was not a breath of air, and, to make matters worse, huge storm-clouds were quietly gathering, rendering the air oppressive beyond description. At last, close on 8 a.m., we reached a small Somali boma, and about a quarter of a mile beyond I camped near a little rain-pool. The camels did not arrive for another hour, having had trouble with the loads in the bush. The storm threatened all the morning, but did not break till 2 o'clock, when rain came down with truly tropical violence. In three-quarters of an hour we actually filled eight tanks (ninety-six gallons) and two buckets with rain-water. It cleared up completely by three o'clock, and the sun came out, making the atmosphere, already stifling, perfectly indescribable. But, on the whole, the rain was really a blessing, as the water was clear and sweet, a delightful change from the usual kind found in the bush, which is either full of mud or tastes strongly of the animals which have been watering there.

When the storm was over, I went out in search of game, as I had been told that there were oryx and topi in this district, but I saw no traces of them, and came back in disgust about dark, very much exhausted. We broke camp at half-past three the following morning, marching northwards, but at the very start there was an unfortunate accident, my servant, Juma,

## SOMALI BOMAS

slipping in the mud left by yesterday's rain and cutting his shin to the bone on a piece of wood. He was much scared at the sight of blood flowing rather freely, and wept copiously ; however, I quickly bound up the wound, and, as he was obviously incapable of walking, put him on my mule, and we proceeded on our way. I passed two Somali bomas of about fourteen huts each, in little clearings in the bush, and unloaded at a third. There were several tiny children playing outside the boma, who, on seeing me, fled howling to their mothers. I was soon surrounded by the male population of the village, numbering about fifteen fully-armed men (one with an ugly-looking hatchet), but on walking forward with the interpreter and explaining that I had come merely to shoot and amuse myself, they became quite friendly, putting away their weapons and bringing me milk and ghee. In my turn I gave them some "buni" or Somali coffee, and I further cemented our friendship by presenting several of the youngest boys of the village with small presents. One of them, who could scarcely have been more than a couple of years old, came clinging to his father's leg and seemed perfectly terrified, but I managed to pacify him by giving him a piece of cloth for his mother. Its crude colours seemed to soothe his fears, and, giving me an enchanting smile, he clutched it in his tiny fists and toddled off to the boma to his mother.

In the afternoon I marched on again towards the north, as the bush, in a westerly direction, was impenetrable. The country alternated between dense jungle and little open plains, but the going was easy, as we were following an old elephant trail. Old spoor of this kind was very common, although just before



## THE DESHEK WAMA

camping I came across some very fresh tracks of a small cow-elephant, and near by the pug marks of a lion, almost equally fresh ; but of antelopes I saw no sign at all.

Although heavy clouds gathered in the afternoon, no rain fell, and towards evening the sun came out again with renewed intensity. During the second part of the journey, Juma travelled tied on to one of the camels, as I did not fancy walking all day if it could be avoided.

On the following day I had a renewed attack of dysentery, but was compelled to proceed until water was reached. This we found in considerable quantities ten miles farther on, in a little valley that sloped downwards in a northerly direction towards the Deshek Wama. The latter is a large, shallow depression about sixteen miles long by two broad, which used to contain permanent water, thus forming a natural lake. It was fed by a stream that issued from the Juba, and also, during the rains, by the combined waters of the Lak Jiro and Lak Dera, while in turn it was drained by a stream that joined the Juba River again just above Yonti. But the feeder has now been cut off by an artificial bank, and the Deshek Wama is dry, except during the rainy season. The valley, where I camped, occupied almost the exact position on the map that had previously been assigned to El Lin Swamp, from which the Guranlagga was said to rise and flow southwards. But to the natives this name is unknown, and, though questioned separately, they all referred to it as Seyera. It is a shallow valley whose sides are covered with jungle, while the bottom forms a small swamp three miles long by half a

## A TRYING TIME

mile broad. This is drained by a small stream that runs into the Deshek Wama at a place called Soya. From the head of the valley the country rises gradually towards the south, with an average slope of 1:800, so that it was at once obvious that the Guranlagga did not flow southwards, and that therefore existing maps were at fault. My guide also declared that it was still three days' march from Seyera and that it flowed west to east, and I discovered later that his statements were not far wrong.

The next sixteen days were a very trying ordeal to me. Between attacks of acute dysentery I managed to do a little work, and by short and painful marches reached the little district of Gururu, which is situated some sixteen miles west of Seyera Swamp. Here I had to give in, and while lying seriously ill, I sent back to Kismayu for various things I needed. I was disheartened, and almost despaired of being able to accomplish my purpose of reaching the Lorian Swamp. It was an unenviable position, for although I was extremely ill and in great pain, I was compelled to issue orders daily to my headman, and keep my men busy. I lacked invalid food of any kind, for I had been obliged to cut down my own provisions to the barest minimum, and a continued diet of weak tea and toast, although harmless, was not calculated to check my growing physical weakness. The damp, enervating heat night and day, when the whole world seemed steaming, and the unpleasant attentions of a variety of insects, which ranged from mosquitoes and flies to wood-lice and giant spiders, added greatly to my discomforts. As a last misfortune, malarial fever broke out among my men, and I was obliged to attend to the sick

## MY HERTI GUIDE

every evening, although I was so exhausted myself that I had to be carried out of my tent to my table, where I could dispense medicine to them. At last my illness took a turn for the better, and I received at the same time from Kismayu, in answer to my message, medicines, invalid food, consisting of eggs, cocoa and biscuits, and a stretcher in which I could be carried back in case of necessity. And here I must again express my great indebtedness to Mr. Dundas for the trouble he took on my behalf, and for the unfailing kindness he showed me.

As I grew stronger I passed much time in a shelter I had had built near my tent; here my chair was placed, and I would sit and rest, reading and re-reading the books I had with me, and smoke or doze the long hours away, longing to be up and working once again. The days passed pleasantly and quietly; I wandered round the camp, took some snapshots, and saw that everything was in good order, so that I might start as soon as I felt strong enough. I had long been anxious to obtain a photograph of my Herti guide, but till now I had not been successful in persuading him to sit for me, for nearly all Somali have a great objection to doing so, either from a superstitious fear of the unknown, or because, by twisting the meaning of certain words in the Koran, they have come to the conclusion that the law forbids it. But at last, I thought that if he saw the picture on the ground glass, his scruples might be overcome. And my plan succeeded, for, on seeing the people upside down on the focusing screen, he was immensely amused, and thought it a splendid joke! He told me that if my object was merely to view people in that ridiculous position

## TRAVELLING UNDER DIFFICULTIES

he could see no harm in it, and forthwith agreed to be photographed as often as I wished! I allowed him to continue in this belief, for his interpretation of my actions was pleasing and unsophisticated, and could do no harm to anyone.

While at Gururu, I witnessed a curious incident. I was sitting in front of my tent after tea, when I saw a large green snake come out from the thorn fence, which surrounded my camp, in pursuit of a frog, which he caught and swallowed, before my eyes, not three yards away. I quickly got my whip and killed it, having noted the time. Exactly nine and a half minutes after the frog had been swallowed, I had the snake's stomach opened and found the frog still living, and, though dazed at first, it soon began to hop about. However, he too had to be sacrificed on the altar of science, and they both found their way into the collecting box.

On 11th January I decided to move on westwards, for, although far from having completely recovered, it was very necessary that I should continue my journey. I had only a limited supply of food, and I feared lest the water should dry up in the arid country that lies between Kurde and the Lorian, which would make it impossible for me to reach the latter place. As I wished to husband my resources, I put my pride in my pocket, and was carried in a stretcher. The porters shared the work of carrying me and of clearing the road, while my syce came behind leading the mule, on which was attached my medicine chest and a little food, so that I might have something to eat on arriving at the spot where I should decide to camp, instead of having to await the coming of the camels.

## BRUSH AND FOREST

This method of travelling, so long as it is in a bush or forest country, does not prevent one from carrying out a prismatic compass traverse. At frequent intervals I took both forward and back bearings of the direction of the trail, and read my aneroid, or noted the temperature at which water boiled, in order to get the variations in altitude. This method of surveying sounds extremely rough, but it is the usual, and, in fact, the only practicable one in dense jungle, and when checked by proper astronomical observations yields surprisingly accurate results.

At first the country consisted of the usual bush, but gradually this gave place to forest equally dense but more interesting. Huge yak trees with weirdly gnarled trunks, and tall, slender mimosas took the place of the withered scrub of which I had grown so tired; and the undergrowth of thorn and aloes changed into green shrubs with beautifully coloured flowers, some red, others mauve, but the majority white. Fluttering from bush to bush were a multitude of white moths, and so numerous were they, that they became almost as annoying as the flies. Except on this one occasion I saw not a single other specimen of this particular moth in Jubaland. The road wound in and out among the trees in a most bewildering fashion, until, some four hours later, we emerged into a little glade where two gigantic yak trees stood sentry over a little pool of rain-water. Here I decided to camp, and, after a welcome cup of cocoa, lay down and dozed until the camels arrived about noon. As I moved to allow them to pitch my tent in the shade beneath the tree, a francolin rose at my very feet with a tremendous whirr, leaving her nest with six eggs

## A PLAGUE OF FLIES

in it. It is extraordinary to think that in spite of the noisy porters and the confusion on the arrival of the caravan, she had remained hidden within fifteen yards, and had only flown away when I nearly stepped on her. In the afternoon I strolled round in the bush, and was lucky to shoot two guinea-fowl quite close to camp. There was but little game, although here and there I came across the monstrous spoor of elephant, which showed them to have trekked westward a month or so ago.

Practically this whole district, from Seyera Swamp southwards, is avoided by the Somali, although it possesses some very rich pasture land, because of a certain kind of fly (*Tabanus africanus*) which infests its forests. They are said to cause fever among cattle and camels, and certainly my own camels suffered severely here, and large fires of green wood had to be lighted, in the smoke of which they used to stand, refusing to feed, and obviously terribly tormented by these flies. I believe, however, that it is the irritation caused by the bites of these insects, rather than any poison they carry, which causes the fever.

## CHAPTER VII

### A NEW RIVER

WE reached the river after a long and tiring march, accomplished without incident. I left Agodi in the early morning on my stretcher, and we marched through thin scrub and large acacia trees until noon. After leaving Agodi the ground sloped slightly upwards towards the south for about three miles, when the crest of the divide was reached. This is the main watershed which divides the valley of the Lak Dera from that of the Guranlagga, and it follows approximately a line drawn between Liboyi, Agodi and the Dibayu Plain. When this is crossed the ground slopes gradually downwards towards the south-west. A thick line of big trees stretching across the plain and showing above the thin thorn scrub was the first indication that we were approaching the stream at last. We crossed the river-bed at four o'clock, where it was dry, but there were large pools above and below as there were in the bed of the small tributary that ran down from the hills parallel to the trail by which we had come. In both rivers trees, shrubs and creepers grew in the most astonishing tangle; no words of mine could convey an adequate impression of the scene, but some idea can be gained of the tropical vegetation by referring to the accompanying photograph of the river. While camp was being pitched I strolled down along the bank of the river and shot

## “THE POOL OF BIRDS”

a francolin and a duck, which I was very glad to have secured for my dinner. The name of this place is Shimbirleh (“the pool of birds”), and here it may be explained that Guranlagga or the Lak Guran means, freely translated, a “jungle stream.” Either name is correct, for Lak is a Galla word for a river that runs only after the rains, and is universally used in Jubaland by the natives to distinguish such streams from the permanent rivers, for which the Somali word is Webbe. When the word Lak is put after the name of a river, its form is changed into -lagga, although the meaning is preserved. Guran is a native word for a thornless acacia; hence the literal meaning of Guranlagga is “the stream where the Guran bushes grow.”

Its general direction at Shimbirleh is from west to east, and a month later I discovered that its source was due west of that place. On previous maps it was shown to run from north to south, and its name was given as “Lak Guranlugga,” which shows how easily confusion is brought into geographical nomenclature by people who do not carefully question the natives as regards the meaning of local names.

As a long and waterless march of 58 miles lay between this place and the districts of Joreh, I decided to spend a few days here and give the camels a rest before undertaking it. I spent much of my time in exploring the river, as far as it was possible to do so, both east and west. At intervals I did a little hunting; the game was scarce and I was only able to add birds to my collection. However, one day while I was out in the jungle that fills the river-bed, I heard a tremendous rustling of branches, as though some large beast was making its way through the





THE LAK GURAN AT SHIMBIRLEH (THE POOL OF BIRDS)

This stream had never been previously explored. It plays an important part in the drainage system of southern Jubaland. The photograph gives some idea of the dense character of the vegetation, which renders travelling so arduous in the interior of Jubaland.



## A TROOP OF MONKEYS

forest, and I had visions of a magnificent bull elephant or buffalo. Unfortunately it was only a troop of monkeys jumping from branch to branch amongst the tree-tops, so I exchanged my express rifle for a shot-gun, and as they approached I shot one as he was crossing above the stream. He fell with a splash into the water, and at the sound of the shot the rest dashed off in alarm, their frightened chattering soon dying away in the distance. I sent one of the porters to retrieve the one I had killed, and it proved to be an adult male of a small species of monkey which is only found in the bush near the coast. Much to my surprise it was clasping in its arms a tiny baby monkey not more than one or two days old. The expression of anguish on its face, in fact, its whole appearance was so distressingly human that I hurriedly sent it back to the camp in charge of the skinner, in order to be rid of it. It appears, from what the natives told me, that it is not unusual for the male parent to look after the newborn monkey, while the mother goes out in search of food, during the first few weeks after birth.

On the same day I managed to replenish my stock of food by killing two guinea-fowl and another duck. This was really welcome, for, owing to the heat and humidity, I had been compelled to throw away the rest of my potatoes, which had gone bad, and a sack of mealies that had become mouldy.

Owing to the uncertain and cloudy weather I was often compelled, at this time, to take observations for latitude and time to the sun. This was a very trying performance, especially as at midday the sun was almost vertically overhead, since Shimbirleh is situated only a few miles south of the Equator, and

## LOST IN THE JUNGLE

often the telescope of the theodolite was so hot that it became painful to the touch.

On one occasion I came across the fresh spoor of what must have been a gigantic bull buffalo, but so thick was the bush that it was impossible to follow it far, as I could only proceed on hands and knees. I was therefore reluctantly compelled to retrace my steps, but before I had reached more open country darkness had fallen, and I realised, to my dismay, that we were lost. I was only accompanied by my gun-bearer, who, having been born in the highlands, was useless at finding his way through the jungle. Fortunately, however, I found an old game trail which led us down to one of the main pools in the river-bed, not far from where I was camped. Here, owing to the bright moonlight, I recognised my whereabouts, and reached camp safely just before ten o'clock.

On leaving Shimbirleh we started out in a south-westerly direction, and on our way crossed the river twice again where it makes a big bend to the south. We then turned south ourselves up a slight slope that rose about 150 feet in the next 10 miles, when we reached a plateau densely covered with trees, a very good example of a tropical forest. Here I saw again the same flowers and the same trees that I had seen at Agodi. I unloaded and let the camels feed, but later in the afternoon pushed on again in the same general direction, at first through forest and then through the usual grey thorn-scrub that rose above our heads, completely obscuring our view of anything, even within a few feet of us, but giving no protection from the burning sun. We marched on steadily till shortly after five o'clock, when we entered a little

## GIANT SPIDERS' WEBS

clearing where I decided to camp. The camels arrived very shortly after, as they had not rested long at midday ; my tent was soon up, and I was obliged to be content with a frugal meal of rice and tea, for I had been unable to shoot any game during the day. The men were very tired and, instead of the usual singing and talking, they were silent after their dinner and were soon asleep. At eight I went my rounds ; all was quiet, the camels chewing the cud in a great semicircle behind my tent, the dim figures of the sleeping men lying around the fires and the two sentries pacing up and down, the light from the new moon shining on their fixed bayonets ; all around was the dense bush, broken only by the yak trees whose giant forms rose here and there above it, their whitish trunks gleaming like silver in the moonlight. All day long I had seen no living thing except a few lizards, snakes and ants ; that night, at any rate, we were the only human beings in that huge wilderness.

The next morning's march was through a country very similar to that which we had passed the day before, except for the thorn scrub, which was more than usually dense, so that I foresaw trouble for the camels. Moreover there were thousands of giant spiders' webs, almost invisible in the early morning light, which kept brushing across my face in a most irritating manner as I rode along, so I decided to walk, especially as I was somewhat saddle-sore after the long march of the previous day, and had not yet recovered from my illness. We marched on at a very good pace, the sun rose a dull smoke-coloured disc seen through the thick mist, and the heat grew ; but at 7.30 a great surprise was in store for me, for as we emerged from the forest for a moment, I saw a

## A DEPRESSING SCENE

large swamp right in front of me. It was a real discovery, as it was marked on no map, so I was immensely pleased, and took great pains to fix its position, and that of two smaller ones a little farther on. The first was a huge circular depression, now dry, three miles in circumference, filled with tall elephant grass and surrounded by numerous yak trees. It is known to the natives as Gombé Barsa, and is an important water-hole for the Somali who are trekking from the Deshek Wama to the district of Joreh. I attempted to take some photographs, but they were unsatisfactory owing to the thickness and height of the undergrowth.

After leaving this spot we passed through another broad belt of forest, which gradually grew thinner until we emerged at last into a large open plain covered with very rank grass and dotted with small clumps of stunted grey thorn bushes. The scene was desolate in the extreme; there was something physically depressing about it, and, though I cannot explain the feeling, even the bush with its big trees and tropical vegetation seemed preferable to the hopeless aridity of this plain. My guide informed me that this was the beginning of Joreh, that land of promise teeming with game—a true hunter's paradise as it had been pictured to me. I did not halt here, but marched on, and soon, much to my disgust, the guide confessed he did not quite know where he was, for he had never been there before, and it was only his cousin who had told him the way. My inability to speak Somali prevented my telling him what I thought of him, so, leading the way, I struck southwards across the plain, following an old game trail. We had still three tins of water, sufficient at a pinch

## A DISAPPOINTMENT

for two days, so I decided to march on as fast as possible till we came to a native track, and then to follow it. As a matter of fact I found one within three miles, and shortly afterwards reached a deserted Somali boma with a little rainpool in the bush near by. I camped there, but the camels did not arrive till late in the afternoon, for they had had great trouble with the loads in the thick bush, as I had foreseen. One of the collecting boxes had been broken by a branch, and most of the contents ruined. The heat had been excessive all day and tried both camels and men severely, but, in spite of an attack of fever, I was compelled to go out in the afternoon in search of game, as I had no fresh food.

After a little while I saw a few topi grazing in the open, and I managed to get within 100 yards of them, but being far from fit, and my hand being rather shaky, I made a disgraceful shot; I saw the dust fly to the right of the animal I was aiming at; off they went at a lumbering gallop, and we saw them no more. Although I was very disappointed, I could not help laughing at the guide, for he, in the anguish caused by seeing himself deprived of the meat for which he had been longing, let out a string of Somali oaths, and then distinctly said "damn!" As he did not even know "yes" and "no" in English, and had probably only heard the word for the first time that morning when I was talking to him about losing the way, it struck me as particularly humorous. The wearisome return to camp, however, was not so funny, although I managed to obtain a couple of doves, which made an excellent meal.

Two days later I reached a Somali boma called Goloshé Waré, and found a small settlement of Herti

## HERTI SOMALI

Somali who had been detained there by illness (which proved on investigation to be malaria), but who intended to move on southwards as soon as possible, since water was giving out. The headman proved very friendly but unintelligent and not very accommodating. He agreed to sell me a little ghee in exchange for some cloth, but could not be induced to part with a calf at any price.

We were much bothered by flies here; the heat was indescribable and the humidity of the atmosphere excessive, so that it was with pleasure that I broke camp the following day, still going southwards. The two guides went first (for I had to engage another from this village), then I followed on my mule, with my syce, two gun-bearers, two orderlies, two camera and instrument bearers, interpreter and skinner; after us came the long line of camels, their loads swaying as they walked, their wooden bells sounding cheerfully and blending with the songs of the syces who walked alongside, the rear being brought up by two more askaris, the headman and the head syce. The whole village—men, women and children—turned out to watch us pass, and they seemed greatly amused at the sight. My clothes, and especially my double terai hat, with its crimson puggaree, caused them more merriment than anything else.

The Somali at this boma were a poor lot of men physically, although rich in cattle. They lived chiefly on milk, and were pot-bellied and weak. They spent most of their day asleep on their prayer-mats under a tree, sipping coffee, if they were lucky enough to have any, and chatting with their cronies in the intervals of wakefulness. The climate may partly account for this absence of energy, as it is terribly relaxing and



## GIRAFFES

unhealthy ; they seemed to feel its effects very much, and were constantly suffering from fever and dysentery, while hardly one of them was free from ghastly sores on some part of his person.

After we had camped that afternoon in a little clearing, I went out in search of game, and within half an hour of leaving camp I saw a bull giraffe and three young cows. Giraffes are protected in East Africa, and I was therefore unable to shoot one, but after a good stalk, I managed to get quite close and sat down to observe them. It was a beautiful sight watching them feed, quite unconscious of danger, nibbling daintily at the green leaves, and I was struck by the fact that they were scarcely noticeable amid the bush, in spite of their vivid marking and enormous size. I soon lost sight of them and came across nothing further for more than an hour, when I found some very fresh spoor which I carelessly took to be that of a topi. Leaving my gun-bearer behind I went forward alone, and soon after, on looking cautiously over an ant-hill, I saw, not 100 yards away, five oryx feeding quietly among the bush ; there was no big bull, so I picked out a good cow, and sitting down took careful aim and fired. She pitched forward as the bullet hit her, and I knew that I had at last got meat. The others had not gone very far, so I fired again, and by a lucky fluke broke both hind legs of a young bull at about 200 yards. Both proved to be in splendid condition, with plenty of fat under the skin, which is somewhat unusual in African game. As I had had no proper food for three days, I there and then sat down and roasted a nice piece over the embers, and ate it, although I had no salt with me.

Meanwhile, I sent the guide back to camp, and by

## TOPI

the time I had finished my impromptu dinner he turned up again with two camels, and every scrap of meat was taken back. Everyone was in the best of spirits, and when I refused to give out any rations, the men took it very well, only asking for plenty of meat, which I gave them.

The following day I continued southwards and in the early morning I was again successful in obtaining more meat. We entered a small open plain, about two miles across, with a large swamp on the west, now dry. I left the camels here to go on, while I turned off to investigate, but I had not proceeded very far before my syce gave a low whistle. I looked up, and there, about 100 yards away, stood a solitary topi, looking very handsome in the early morning light. I sat down, and taking rather a quick sight, fired, and to my delight the bullet clapped loudly, telling me of a well-placed shot. The topi made a tremendous spurt, but soon stopped, and I saw that it was in great trouble, so I sat down and smoked a cigarette before going cautiously forward. I soon saw her lying down, and as she got up I gave her another bullet at close quarters which finished her off. She proved to be a splendid cow, with very long horns, although in basal girth they were much smaller than those of topi in the more westerly parts of East Africa.

Later in the day I saw another small herd of topi, of which I managed to bag three more. All the meat was taken, and what was not eaten immediately was cut into strips and dried. The game was very tame. They were not much alarmed at the sound of a shot, but seemed bewildered, running round and round unable to detect the direction from which

## MONOTONOUS COUNTRY

danger came. But if once they have caught sight of the hunter they will make off directly, and it is then useless to follow them. The secret of success consists in keeping as much as possible in the shadows and in remaining as motionless as possible after the first shot, until their alarm has somewhat subsided.

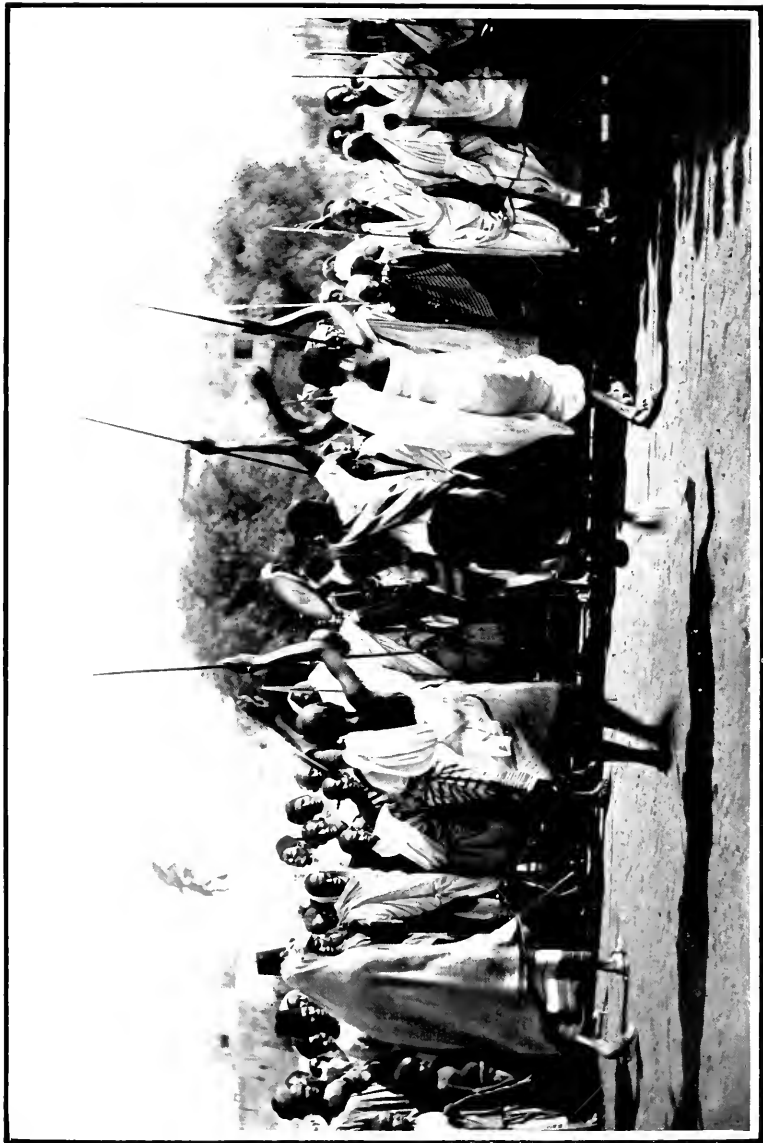
The days passed pleasantly enough in working and hunting, but I kept gradually moving southwards until I reached the little village of Guratti. The country in its vicinity is much pleasanter than any I had yet met with in Jubaland. There were large shady trees overshadowing picturesque glades carpeted with grass, and a few euphorbias lent interest to a scene that was otherwise tame. It is difficult to give an adequate description of the country through which I had passed. There were no mountains, rivers or lakes to form a dominant feature in the landscape; constant monotony was the keynote of the country; mile upon mile of grey thorn bushes, whose delicate leaves and thin thorny branches shut out the view, only gave place here and there to flat meadow-lands clothed with coarse grass and dotted with mimosas. Now and again there were some large trees, chiefly yaks; or perhaps great patches of reeds, 12 or 14 feet high, that met above your head, and rustled back to their places as you passed; but otherwise there was no striking landmark, only the extraordinary flatness of the whole country. And in colouring it was the same, endless greens, more vivid where there was water, and greys, with here and there the brown of a dead tree, or of some curiously shaped ant-hill.

As soon as we reached the boma, the headman,

## A HOSPITABLE RECEPTION

who was most decidedly Chinese in appearance, with almond-shaped eyes, and long thin moustache, came out and begged me to camp, saying that as I was the first white "officer" to come to their village they wanted to do me honour. I could hardly refuse, for the country here is only nominally administered, and I was dependent on the goodwill of the natives to allow me to go through their country; and a delightful camp it proved. At a discreet distance all the male population watched the pitching of my tent with the greatest interest, and bright-eyed, brown-limbed little children, with long curly brown hair, gazed with solemn wonder at me from the safety of the surrounding bushes. When the tent was up, I saw a procession being formed, and the elders of the village came up to welcome me, bringing with them an ox, a quantity of ghee and eight pots of milk, "all they had," as the headman said, "to show me honour and make my heart glad." He further begged permission to hold a dance in the afternoon; naturally, I gave it, and after thanking them for their welcome, and for their friendly attitude towards a stranger, I proceeded to question them as to their country and the whereabouts of game. In the meantime I ordered my headman to prepare coffee for them, and they remained the rest of the day within my boma, talking to my men for hours, while they sipped the sickly buni, of which they seemed so fond.

The dance, which was to be somewhat similar, I was told, to one I had witnessed in Kismayu, took place in the afternoon. Boxes meanwhile had been placed in a semicircle in front of my tent, for the elders to sit upon. My men put on their best clothes



#### AN OGADEN WAR-DANCE

Some chosen warriors dancing at Kismayu ; the spectators and the dancers work themselves into a perfect frenzy of excitement. The warriors dance round and round brandishing their spears, leaping high, and singing. The spectators join in the songs and keep time by stamping on the hard ground. (See Chapter VII.)



## A DANCE

and their cartridge belts, and took their rifles, while my escort, together with the headman, interpreter and gun-bearers, came up armed to the teeth and stood behind and on each side of me. There is always a certain element of danger in these dances, for the young men, or warriors, work themselves up to a high pitch of excitement, and sometimes the elders lose control over them.

Soon the whole village assembled, and the dance began. It was characterised by much noise and extreme energy, but, like all African dances, it soon became very monotonous. In the same way as at Kismayu, each warrior came springing towards me, brandishing his spear a few inches off my face, crying out, "Modt" (Hail!). Everybody watched me to see if I would flinch, but I had been warned beforehand by my headman of what was going to happen, so that I was able to maintain my self-control, although I must confess it was somewhat disconcerting at first. This went on for about two hours, when I called a halt, as I was growing very tired of the performance. I then made another short speech of thanks, gave the dancers some more coffee, and the elders some presents, with which they were very pleased, and then dismissed them. Thus ended a very pleasant and interesting day.

As I had now reached the northerly limits of the country inhabited by Hunter's hartebeeste, I propose to give in the following chapter an account of the characteristics and habits of these rare and interesting animals before proceeding to describe the days I spent in hunting them.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ARROLA, OR HUNTER'S HARTEBEESTE

ONE of the objects I had in view in undertaking this journey was to obtain specimens of Hunter's hartebeeste, or arrola, as it is known to the natives. These antelopes were first discovered by Mr. H. C. V. Hunter, in 1887, when travelling near the mouth of the Tana River. He found them in herds of from ten to twenty, frequenting open plains and thin thorn bush, but he never saw them in thick scrub or forest.

At present there is a fine pair, male and female, in the Nairobi Club, and also about a dozen specimens in England, but exceedingly little is known of their habits or of the country where they are to be found.

They belong to the sub-family BUBALIDINÆ, which is constituted by the true hartebeeste, the bastard-hartebeeste and the gnu, and each of these genera is represented in East Africa. According to Mr. R. Lydekker, to whom I am indebted for much of the information on this subject, the members of this group are ungainly looking ruminants of comparatively large size, and with naked muzzles, although the lower part of the nostrils is covered with short bristly hairs. The tail is generally long, covered with hair, and ending in a tuft, and lateral hoofs of large size are generally present. The females, as well as the males, carry horns, as is the case with the "bovidæ," but



## TRUE HARTEBEESTES

the teeth, which in the upper jaw have tall and narrow crowns, resemble those of the sheep or goat.

The true hartebeeste is characterised by the enormous development of the upper prolongation of the forehead, known as the "pedicle," on which the horns are mounted; the latter are doubly curved and heavily ringed, while the remarkable height of the withers and falling away of the hindquarters is another noticeable peculiarity. There are nine well-known varieties of true hartebeeste, namely:—

1. The Bubal Hartebeeste (*B. boselaphus*), North Africa.
2. The Western Hartebeeste (*B. major*), Senegambia and West Coast.
3. Tora Hartebeeste (*B. tora*), Abyssinia and Blue Nile basin.
4. Swayne's Hartebeeste (*B. Swaynei*), Somaliland.
5. Coke's Hartebeeste (*B. cokei*), British and German East Africa.
6. Cape Hartebeeste (*B. cama*), South Africa.
7. Lelwel Hartebeeste (*B. lelwel*), East Central Africa.
8. Neumann's Hartebeeste (*B. neumanni*), Lake Rudolf.
9. The Konzi Hartebeeste (*B. lichtensteini*), East Africa, north of Sabi River, Nyasaland and Mozambique.

There are several varieties of the above species, but it is unnecessary to name them here, as their final classification is by no means complete.

We now come to a group of antelopes closely akin to the more typical hartebeestes, from which they are distinguished by the more moderate length of face, by the absence of the horn pedicle, and by the simple lyrate form of the horns, while the withers are much less elevated above the hindquarters. There are five well-known species in this group.

1. Topi, korrigum and tiang (*Damaliscus corrugum jimela*).
2. Bontebok (*D. pycargus*).

## THE ARROLA

3. Blesbok (*D. albifrons*).
4. Tsessebe (*D. lunatus*).
5. Arrola (*D. hunteri*).

I shall refrain from discussing the third group, *Connochœtes*, since no representatives of it are present in Jubaland.

Of the animals mentioned above, Coke's, Neumann's and the Lelwel hartebeeste are found in the highlands of East Africa: the *topi* is common along the German border and near Muhoroni, but the race to which I have referred (*D. c. jimela*) is typically from the Juba River Valley. It is also found in considerable numbers near Lake Rudolf. In Jubaland the *topi* takes the place of the true hartebeeste, which is absent. It will be seen, therefore, that it is widely distributed in the Protectorate. On the other hand, the arrola, which is the only other species of the family *Bubalidinæ* in Jubaland, is extremely local in its range, and is found only in the Tana Valley and on the borders of Tanaland and Jubaland and nowhere else in Africa.

Standing about 48 inches at the shoulder, the arrola is of a light and attractive build, while the horns are of a simple and graceful form, slanting first outwards and upwards, then bending backwards, after which the long slender points are directed upwards and outwards. They are heavily ringed for the first 12 inches, after which they are quite smooth. In the bulls that are not quite fully adult, the tips of the horns are directed noticeably inwards and not outwards, though in the case of immature females this does not appear to be the case. The face is of medium length, without any horn pedicle. The cheek teeth are large, and are peculiar in that there are only two,

## COLOUR AND PECULIARITIES

instead of the usual three, pre-molar teeth in the lower jaw. The face glands situated just below the eyes were remarkably developed in all the specimens I shot, and the pits in the skull corresponding to them, though shallow, are large (43 mm. in diam.). The glands are surrounded by white hairs, and the central cavities (which are on an average 7.5 mm. in diameter) exude a thick, dark-coloured excretion.

This species is of a uniform pale café-au-lait colour, the cows being somewhat lighter than the bulls. The latter often become slaty grey towards the end of their lives, in this respect being similar to the eland (*Taurotragus oryx*). On the face they have a white chevron, joining the two white patches round the eyes. The inner surfaces of the ears, the belly (in Jubaland specimens at any rate) and the tail are also white. The latter is about 18 inches in length, the lower part being sparsely covered with coarse white hairs.

There is one peculiarity in the arrola that I have not seen mentioned anywhere, nor have I noticed it in any other antelope; they have a large roll of loose skin underlaid with fat, situated just behind the horns across the skull between the ears and horns. This is a very marked feature, and it is more developed in the male than in the female; moreover, it is especially noticeable when the animals are in good condition. What purpose this may serve, I am quite at a loss to say.

I questioned the natives very carefully as regards their range, and I have come to the conclusion that they are not found west of longitude 40° E., or north of latitude 0° 35' S. They do not inhabit the country south of the Tana River nor the district immediately adjacent to the coast. I was much puzzled and

## ITS DISTRIBUTION

surprised at first when told by the Somali that I should find them to the west of the Lorian Swamp, but I discovered later that they apply the word "arrola" to the impalla (*Æpyceros melampus*) as well, and this animal is, of course, found all along the Uaso Nyiro.

If the reader will glance at the map, and note the range I have given to Hunter's hartebeeste, he will see what a very local animal it is; and if it is remembered that the whole of that country is practically unadministered, and inhabited by the most warlike and truculent of the Ogaden Somali, it will not seem so strange that only a very few specimens have ever found their way to this country.

It is of course an infallible sign of ignorance to attempt to dogmatise on the habits of animals, with which one has had but a month's acquaintance. I saw ninety-seven arrola in all, and made careful notes at the time of what I observed, both of their movements and of the country they inhabit; and I shall therefore confine myself in the following description of their surroundings and their habits, to the facts I noted down on the spot in my field-book, and to a few deductions that may legitimately be drawn from them.

I saw no arrola outside the district of Joreh, though the natives told me that occasionally there were some near Goniah-iddu, but when I passed through that district later I did not see any spoor. They inhabit a country of small open plains, covered with thin scattered bush alternating with belts of dense acacia scrub. In the early morning and towards sunset they may be seen in herds of from twenty to thirty animals, feeding on the coarse grass that is generally found on the plains; but during the heat of



THE ARROLA. ♂ (DAMALISCUS HUNTERI)

This rare and interesting antelope was shot by the author in Joreh, and its horns are the longest yet recorded. Length on front curve, 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Basal girth, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Tip to tip, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".



## HORNS

the day, especially if they have been disturbed by the passing of natives with their cattle, they retire to the depths of the bush, where it is almost impossible to see them, so close do they lie. I have often crept along, following their trail as quietly and silently as possible, only to find the place empty where they had been resting, and whence they had fled in alarm at my approach. Big as they are, they yet make their escape without noise, seeming almost to melt away in the bush. On one occasion only have I been able to creep close up to them in the middle of the day. It took me over three hours of most careful stalking, at times bent almost double as I made my way through the thickets, at others crawling on hands and knees, only to find that there was no head worth shooting, when I finally caught sight of them. Few people, who have not themselves hunted in the shadeless scrub of an East African desert right on the Equator, can appreciate the difficulties and the fatigue that have to be endured for days, and often for weeks, before success brings its reward.

On this occasion, however, I was more than repaid by the delight it gave me to watch these beautiful antelopes at close quarters; they were quite unaware of my presence, without any suspicion of the close proximity of danger. Of the eleven arrola there, two were young bulls which had not yet attained their full growth, for the slender points of their horns were turned inwards. It is interesting to note that this sign of immaturity is also found in the impalla, and is due to the rotation of the horny sheath on the bony axis during growth; but in the considerable number of female arrola that I saw, the inward inclination of the tips in the young was never so

## A SMALL HERD

pronounced as in the case of young bulls. This may be explained perhaps (and I only offer this as a suggestion) by the fact that the horns in the females are shorter and lack the strong backward bend so noticeable in the bulls.

Of the nine other hartebeestes that completed the group, seven were females and two calves, of about two months old. During the month of January I saw several other young calves, varying in age between a few days and two months, which would seem to indicate that the cows drop their young generally about the beginning of December, which is somewhat earlier than is the case with the Lelwel hartebeeste. But I did not see a sufficient number of them to be certain of this, and I could not get any reliable evidence from the two guides I had with me, who were the only men in the caravan who had ever seen them before. However, one of the syces who came from the interior of Italian Somaliland near the Webbe Shebeyli, on seeing the first arrola that I killed, maintained with the utmost conviction that he had seen similar animals in his own country, but I think it almost certain he was mistaken, although there are large unexplored areas in those regions.

The majority of the group I was watching were lying down, but there was a sentinel on guard as usual. Now and again one would get up, feed in a desultory manner for a few seconds, and then lie down again, while once, apparently for no reason, the two young bulls rose simultaneously and started fighting though without much vindictiveness, and as abruptly left off to resume their "siesta."

During the whole time I was watching them they made no noise of any kind, but when alarmed or



## SHY ANIMALS

suspicious they emit a sound that is half sneeze, half snort, and is very characteristic of all the hartebeestes. It is a sound that once heard is not easily forgotten, and when it comes, for instance, from a kongoni, which is a solemn melancholy-looking animal, it is decidedly comic.

During the day, if they have not been lately disturbed by natives, they will sometimes rest near their feeding-ground, if any shade can be found there. I have seen several old bulls under a tree in the open at midday, but rarely any females, and I think that on the whole it is the latter who are the more suspicious. But, with few exceptions, arrola are some of the shyest and most wary animals I have ever hunted. Mr. A. B. Percival, who has had upwards of twenty years' experience with big game in Africa, is of the same opinion, and found them incredibly hard to approach in the Tana Valley, where he was hunting them. They are not much alarmed at the sound of the rifle, but the mere sight of a man even at a great distance will send them flying into the bush in the wildest alarm, and they will not halt until they have put a great distance between themselves and their pursuer. This seemed very strange to me, as at any rate at Goloshé Gormé it is improbable that they had ever seen a man dressed in clothes before. Another interesting fact concerning their habits is that once they are thoroughly alarmed they will not return to that spot for at least a week, or even more. They generally trek off to some other small plain, fifteen or twenty miles away, and seem to remain uneasy and very much on the *qui vive* for days afterwards, as I found to my own cost.

Old bulls generally lead a solitary life, or may

## DESERT DWELLERS

associate with one or two others of the same age; it is these animals that carry by far the finest horns, although in extreme old age the tips may be worn away.

Arrola are essentially desert dwellers, and are as a rule found at a considerable distance from a permanent water-supply, though an exception must, of course, be made in the case of the herds that inhabit the Tana Valley; in the rainy season there is a quantity of water in the shallow pans that are so plentiful in Jubaland, but these soon evaporate and are dry for at least six months in the year. What they do then for water I am at a loss to understand, but it seems probable that when the pools have given out entirely they may find sufficient moisture in the heavy dews that fall nightly, and in the coarse grass that forms their principal food. Lesser kudu, which are numerous in Joreh, are very partial to the succulent leaves of the aloes, but I failed to find any traces of this plant in the stomachs of the arrola I shot, and I am inclined to doubt whether they ever indulge in this diet.

In some books the Galla name for Hunter's hartebeeste is given as "Blanketta," and sometimes as "Herola," while the Somali are said to call it "Arôli." Personally I have never heard them called anything but "Arrola"; and Somali, Galla and Waboni, when speaking of them, even to each other, have always referred to them thus, at any rate when I have been present.

## CHAPTER IX

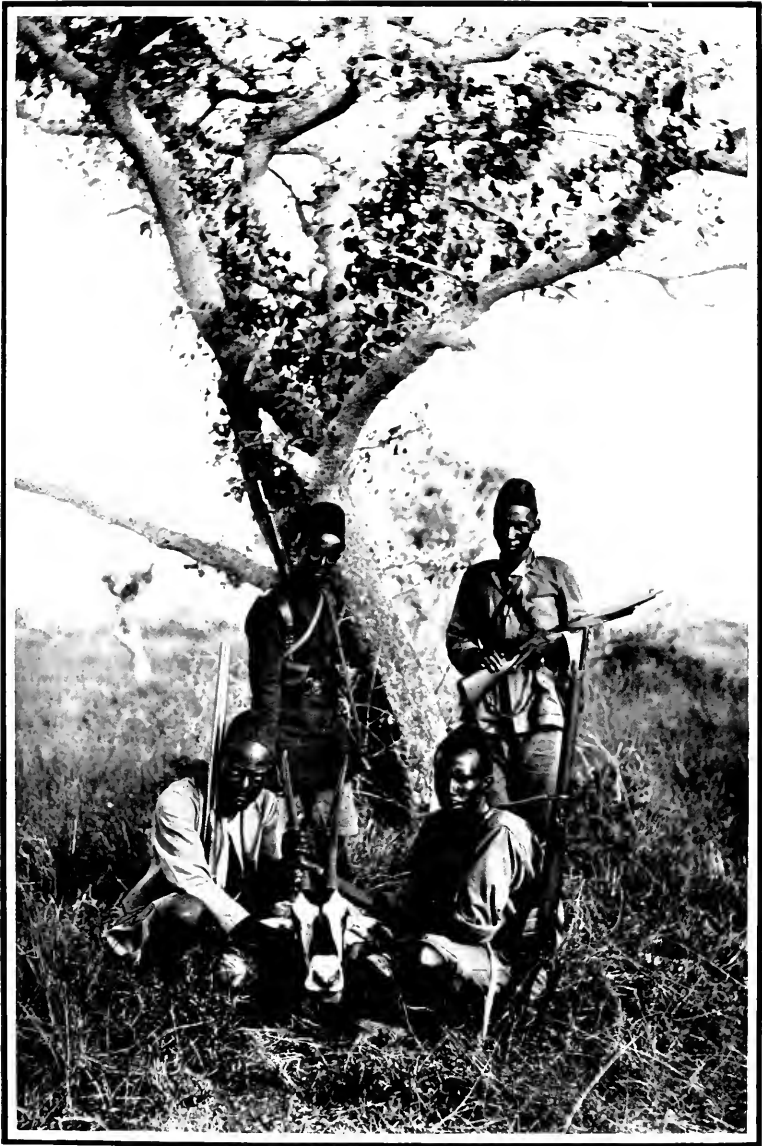
### HUNTING IN JOREH

THE day after the dance had taken place, I left early with two new guides supplied to me by the headman of the village, who seemed confident that they could show me Hunter's hartebeeste. We marched at first through a kind of meadow-land with big trees here and there, and when the sun had risen, but while everything was still glittering with dew, we came upon another Maghabul village, the last we were to see for some time, as we were going into an uninhabited country. There were many marabou storks about, so tame that I had no difficulty in walking close up to one and shooting it. These hideous birds, who feed on all the offal from the village, are only valuable because of the beautiful feathers they carry under the tail. The latter are worth about £12 an ounce, but, large though the birds are, they only possess very few of the precious feathers, and it would take six birds to yield one ounce. At the sound of the gun three flocks of teal rose from a pool which I had not noticed, and flew over to another a short distance away. I managed to bring down two as they passed overhead, and then, as I needed food, I crept down to the edge of the swamp, and, taking a pot-shot, killed four more as they were swimming about. Two were skinned and added to my bird collection, while the others I decided to eat in due course.

## THE FATE OF A GERENUK

In the meantime the headman of the village, a venerable old Somali with white hair and beard, came out with lots of milk, insisted on all my men drinking their fill, and would take nothing in return. I must say that nothing could be more hospitable than the welcome I had so far received from the natives. We then proceeded for a couple of hours through the same pleasant kind of open bush until we reached a little pool, covered with mauve and white water-lilies (*Nymphaea stellata*). The water it contained, however, was very nasty, and full of slime, so I did not stop here, but marched on and soon entered a large open plain covered with yellow brown grass and some scattered bush. The heat was now growing intense, yet presently I saw a gerenuk buck feeding right out in the open, and as he carried nice horns I decided to shoot him. Taking advantage of every little piece of cover that offered, and keeping in the shadows wherever possible, I managed to get within 100 yards of him, while he was yet unaware of my presence; then, taking careful aim, I fired and heard the bullet clap loudly. The gerenuk made a wild dash past me and into the bush beyond. Here I lost him, although I spent fully an hour searching, and at last I gave him up, although I knew he must be lying dead quite close. I was much disappointed, but as there was nothing else to be done, I marched on for a little way till I reached a dried-up swamp.

Here the guides recommended me to camp, as they thought there would be game near by; so I chose a big tree under which my tent was pitched, and gave orders to my headman to give out water to the men and then send back two camels with the



ORYX BEI-A. ♀

Standing from left to right : (i) my orderly in the uniform of the East African Police, (ii) my gun-bearer, a Swahili. Kneeling : the skinner, an A-kamba, and the interpreter, a Somali.



## A FAMILY PARTY

four empty tanks to fill up at the last pool. At twelve o'clock I sat down to lunch, and was just thinking over my hard luck in losing the gerenuk, when my eye was caught by the sight of several vultures hovering over the bush in the direction from which we had come. So I immediately sent one of my guides to see if he could find what had attracted them, and told some porters to go with him. Sure enough in less than an hour they were back with the little that remained of the buck, for the birds had completely ruined the skin. I was delighted, however, as the horns were uninjured, and they proved to be a fine pair, heavy and symmetrical.

Later in the afternoon I left camp in search of game; for a long time I saw nothing, but at last discovered a family party of gerenuk, buck, doe and calf, resting in the shade of a bush. I was again favoured by the wind and plenty of cover, and approached to within 90 yards, when I stumbled over a branch. The gerenuk whipped round in alarm, so seizing the opportunity I took rapid aim, and made an excellent shot as he was almost facing me. The bullet entered the front of the shoulder and lodged just under the skin near the hip, mushrooming perfectly and making a terrible wound. The buck was in beautiful condition, and carried a handsome pair of horns, so I decided to take the whole skin. I was very much gratified with my success in getting two nice specimens from this district, and began to think that, after all, the guide was not far wrong in describing Joreh as a hunter's paradise.

I decided I would go on a little farther, although it was growing late, in the hope of seeing arrola, which my guide insisted were to be found on these

## HARTEBEESTE AND ZEBRA

plains ; but I saw nothing, and was just thinking of turning back when I saw some animals standing under a tree. We all immediately crouched down, and my gun-bearer with his usual idiotic self-assurance whispered "Water-buck !" But I knew better ; they were the longed-for Hunter's hartebeeste, and with them a solitary zebra. Now, being somewhat excited, I did not sufficiently consider the lie of the ground before beginning the stalk, and when, after great exertions, I managed to get within 150 yards, I found the sun, which was low on the western horizon, right in my eyes, and the glare upon the sights made accurate shooting extremely difficult. My first shot was low, breaking the back leg of a buck. They all dashed off, and though I fired three other shots I missed terribly badly.

They seemed at first quite bewildered, moving round and round, unable to see me hidden under a bush, but while I was reloading they caught sight of my men in the distance and immediately made off, as I thought for good. I took up the spoor at a trot, for it was easily followed in the soft sand. Just as the sun, a glowing disc of deepest red, was sinking over the trees, I came upon them once more, and, resting my rifle against a branch, fired at the only one I saw clearly. The sound of the bullet told me that I had made a well-placed shot, and I dashed forward as I saw the poor brute make a desperate spurt and pitch head foremost to the ground.

She proved to be a young cow, with small but wonderfully symmetrical horns. Her sleek, coffee-coloured coat was soft as silk, and she was in the height of condition. The lower part of the tail, the under parts and the inverted chevron between the



## THE MAGHABUL SULTAN'S UNCLE

eyes were white, while the muzzle was a rich dark brown. We did not reach camp till long after dark. I was delighted with my success and gave out sufficient coffee for all my followers, which pleased them greatly. They spent the evening in singing and dancing, and kept this up throughout the night.

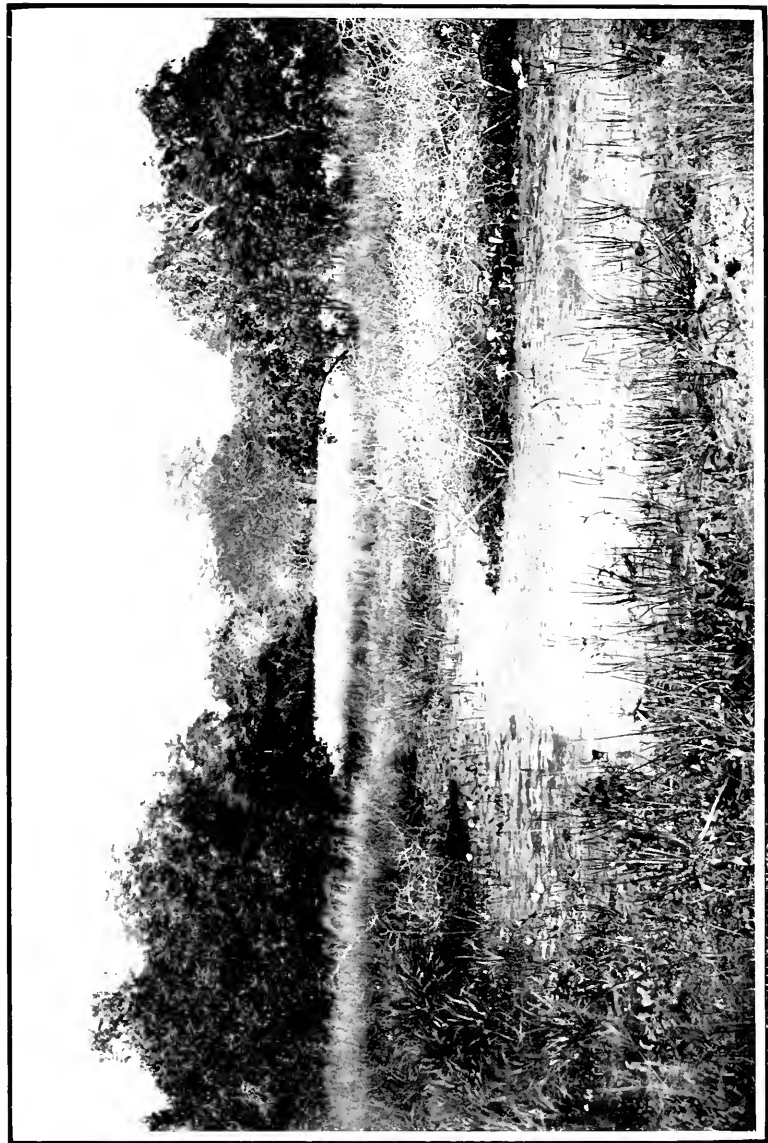
After dinner a very old man, the uncle of the Maghabul Sultan, who had arrived in the afternoon, after a thirty-mile walk, came to my tent and told me that another chief, Abdi Aden by name, was coming the following day in order that I might be able to discuss with him the best routes from here to the Lorian, and then, if possible, he would provide me with guides to replace those I had taken from Guratti, who were anxious to return.

The following morning, before dawn, I had reached the plains where I had seen the arrola. For a long while I saw nothing, until at last my gun-bearer pointed out something moving among the bushes. I crept forward and saw between the branches a dark piece of skin striped with white, but could not at first make out what the animal was. I moved on hands and knees to the left and shortly saw, not 80 yards away, the head and horns of a lesser kudu (*Strepsiceros imberbis*), at which I promptly fired, and brought him crashing to the ground with a broken neck. On coming up to where he lay, I was struck with the great beauty of these antelopes. Indeed, I think they are the most handsome I have ever seen. Their glossy coat is of a grey fawn colour, and the face is black with white spots on the neck. The body is fully striped with white, and the throat is also white, while the tail is short and covered with long hairs like that of a bushbuck.

## LESSER KUDU

It is strange how perverse things are sometimes. All through the districts of Guranlagga and northern Joreh I was on the look-out for them every day, for that country is especially adapted to their habits; for lesser kudu are generally found near water in thick bush, especially where there are aloes; but there was never one to be seen. As soon, however, as I had reached a more open country typical of the true East African desert, with no water for several miles at least, I saw two and killed one. The other was a doe, and this one a young buck full-grown, but with horns which had not yet reached their maximum length. I sent to camp for a camel to bring him back, and after I had photographed the kudu I went on again, walking across open bush country, and keeping a sharp look-out all the time. Not long after I saw a fine bull arrola, but he unfortunately had got my wind and was looking fixedly in my direction. I stood motionless for about five minutes, but he was highly suspicious and, turning, trotted off into the bush. I only saw him once more, when I took a long shot, but missed completely, and he went off at a clumsy gallop, and though I walked through the bush for two solid hours on his trail I could not even get another glimpse of him. From the way he ran and from the uneven spoor he left, I believe, and my orderly thought so too, he was the buck whose leg I broke the day before.

Finally I returned to camp very weary, and after lunch had an interminable discussion with Abdi Aden and two other chiefs that had come with him. I thought I should never be able to get rid of them, but he was exceedingly friendly and promised to accompany me to the Sultan's village. Thence he



#### A WATER-HOLE IN JOREH

Notice the little thorn fence in the centre of the pool. This is made by the Somali in order to prevent cattle or game from soiling all the water. The surface was covered with water lilies (*Nymphaea stellata*).



## A SATISFACTORY INTERVIEW

said I should be able to reach the Lak Dera and follow that up to the Lorian. I had never imagined for a moment that I should be able to go that way, for not only is the country absolutely unknown, but its inhabitants are reputed to be the least friendly and most truculent of all the Ogaden Somali.

I had anticipated a complete refusal on the part of the natives to allow me to do so, and had intended to go by way of the Tana Valley. But as the latter had been explored previously, it would not have been nearly so interesting, although game would have been much more plentiful. Abdi Aden told me that he believed the Lorian to be thirty marches by this new route through bush the whole way, but with water to be found, as rains were reported to have been plentiful. The question of water, game and roads was thrashed out over and over again in all its bearings, and he assured me of a warm welcome in his country, so the interview was on the whole very satisfactory; but I decided that I would stay in this vicinity for another week in order to obtain more specimens of arrola and other animals that I might find.

For the next few days I hunted with varying success. The country I traversed was in parts exceedingly fertile, consisting of rich meadow-lands with long green grass and shady trees. These were separated from each other by dense belts of the more familiar acacia scrub, and it was thither that the animals retired to rest during the heat of the day, only coming out to feed in the little plains in the early morning and towards sundown. One afternoon a syce, who had been on guard while the camels grazed, reported having seen five arrola in the bush, so off I started in a broiling sun and began hunting

## VARYING SUCCESS

carefully. The time went on, but though I saw some gerenuk I did not fire, for fear of frightening more important game. At about five I was making my way, very carefully as usual, through extremely dense thorn-scrub towards a small swamp which my guide had found, when suddenly I heard a snort right in front of me, and the crashing of heavy bodies through the bush. I caught a glimpse of six arrola galloping away, and although I was afraid it would be useless I made a wide detour as fast as I could go, and by and by made them out in the distance; but they were very nervous and uneasy, and before I could get a shot they were off again, led by a cow and a little calf. They did not rest again, and though I followed on the spoor for half an hour I was unable to catch them up.

I then climbed a tree to see if I could detect my gun-bearer, guide or orderly, whom I had left behind when I began the stalk, but they were nowhere to be seen; but under a large yak tree to the south I saw a topi feeding. So I came down and started towards him, but I had not seen some others, and a frightened snort on my right made me crouch down behind a bush. Just then another topi showed behind a tree about 150 yards away, so I took a quick shot and heard the bullet hit. I ran forward and saw the whole herd disappear in the bush, the one I had wounded being last and apparently in difficulties. I followed him for some time, but could not find him, and, as the sun was now very low, struck out in a north-westerly direction where I thought camp was.

Greatly to my relief some ten minutes later I heard my orderly whistling for me, and calling back in answer I soon found him, and some thirty minutes

## DIFFICULT HUNTING

after reached camp, which was in the opposite direction to that in which I had been walking. This shows how extraordinarily easy it is to lose one's way in the bush, where there are no landmarks of any kind to guide one. The Somali get lost quite often, but they generally cut marks on all the big trees which direct the real bushman, but convey nothing to the others.

I had many such unsuccessful days, for hunting in Jubaland is particularly difficult, and weeks may be consumed before success at last crowns your efforts. On another occasion I left camp long before dawn, and reached a large plain half an hour later. Here I waited till the first streaks of light were apparent in the east, when, leaving everyone but the guide under a tree, I started out on foot. I had not gone half a mile, when in the dim light I made out a small herd of topi, who saw me at the same instant, and faced round sneezing and stamping. I immediately sank down into the grass out of sight, as it was too dark to shoot; and then began rather a curious wait. I lay on my back on the burned grass and watched the light increasing and the soft fleecy clouds growing rosy as dawn broke, and all around me I could hear the sneeze, sneeze of the topi, with now and then a grunt and a snort; but they did not run away immediately, for their curiosity was greater than their fear.

It was extraordinarily peaceful and I thoroughly enjoyed the half-hour that passed before these sounds died away, and I knew I could get up and follow the herd. But to cut a long story short, I never got a shot; they were thoroughly frightened, and finally I lost them completely. So I gave up the chase and rejoined my men where I had left them.

## A FINE HERD

We then proceeded eastward for about five miles, when I suddenly spotted in the shadows a couple of topi resting under a tree; motioning the others to lie down I went on alone, determined to get one this time. As long as game can be seen in this kind of country, before they are aware of the proximity of danger, it is generally possible to get within very short range, but it means constant watchfulness and very careful walking. I made a good stalk, and finally crawling round a bush saw, not 35 yards away (for I paced it afterwards), a herd of twenty-three topi, some feeding, others resting. It was a beautiful sight; their coats glistened in the early morning sunlight, the purple patches showing clearly on face and shoulder against the buff of the body colour; they were motionless save for the twitching of their tails to and fro as the flies bothered them, and were quite unconscious of my presence. I watched them for a minute or so, and then, choosing the one with the biggest horns, shot it through the neck, killing it stone dead. It proved to be a large cow, with fine heavy horns, nineteen and a quarter inches in length.

After I had photographed it and had sent back a man to fetch a camel, in order to carry the meat back to camp, I went on again in search of arrola. Just before noon I reached a thick belt of forest, with a most lovely pool of water among the trees. It was the first clear water I had seen since leaving Kismayu, and though it was stained a deep brown, from the roots of the surrounding trees, it was cool and sweet to the taste. My guide told me that this was a well-known game resort, and was called by the natives Jana Nyeri; so I decided to camp here, and sent



## GIRAFFES

back a man with a message to my headman, telling him to strike camp and make his way here without loss of time. I had now been on the move since five o'clock, and since it was too far and too hot to go back with a messenger to camp, I decided to do without lunch, as I had nothing with me, and rest here. So, stretching out my saddle blankets in the cool shade of one of the enormous trees that overhung the pool, I lay down and was soon asleep, and did not wake again till two o'clock.

After a pipe and a drink of water I set out once more, although the heat was intense. Old elephant tracks were numerous, and giraffes' spoor, fresh and otherwise, crossed our path in every direction. The country here is indeed beautiful; in the rich pastures there are conifers and mimosas to afford pleasant resting-places, while there is plenty of water and less moisture in the atmosphere, probably because the altitude is some 200 odd feet above sea-level. After marching for a little over two hours I came across a troop of twelve giraffes quietly feeding on the green leaves of a mimosa tree. I got up quite close and watched them for half an hour. As luck would have it, I had finished the last plate in my camera, so I again could not photograph them; suddenly there was a slight puff of wind from behind, a startled movement among the giraffes, and they were off at their curious undulating gallop, and were soon swallowed up in the bush. On my way back to camp I shot a couple of francolin and a dik-dik, so I was well off for food. On my return to the water-hole I found the camels had just arrived; within an hour I had had a most refreshing bath, and sat down with a ravenous appetite to an excellent dinner.

## CHAPTER X

### MORE ARROLA AND A NEW ZEBRA

MY first day's hunting from Jana Nyeri was quite successful. I left in the early morning on foot towards the east, and we crossed the belt of bush or forest which surrounded the water-hole by a kind of tunnel about 4 feet high, and then passing across a plain entered once more the thin thorn-scrub which had that very desolate aspect so characteristic of Jubaland. Giraffes' spoor was exceedingly common, and I was not surprised soon afterwards to see one of these animals, but it was already in full flight. By and by I reached some more open bush, but no game could be seen at all, and it was not until we had passed another belt of extremely dense thorn-scrub, and were about to enter a small open glade, that the guide who was walking in front of me suddenly crouched down, whispering "fer'ro," which is the Somali word for zebra. And sure enough I saw, on looking cautiously through a bush, a zebra feeding under some mimosa trees in the middle of a small open plain. There was not a breath of wind, so choosing that part of the bush towards which he was slowly grazing, I crept in and out well within the scrub, bent double, as it was too thick to walk, until I had reached the place I had previously chosen; there I crept on hands and knees till I reached the

## AN UNCOMMON ZEBRA

edge, where, making myself comfortable, I settled down to wait with my rifle in my hand. I was wearing a pair of thick corduroy trousers, but they afforded me no protection from the thorns, and the puggaree of my felt hat was torn to ribbons.

As I cautiously looked out I saw a most interesting scene, five zebra in all were feeding quietly and slowly towards me, now and then looking up but quite unconscious of danger. They were led by an old stallion whose body and ears were much scarred by fighting. At last he left the others, and, ceasing to feed, walked up under a mimosa tree and stood still, not 80 yards off. His appearance, even at that distance, seemed different from the zebra I had shot previously in East Africa. In size he resembled Grant's zebra, so commonly seen on the highlands, but the arrangement of stripes was unfamiliar to me. Moreover, I had expected to find Grevy's zebra in these regions.

Mr. Lydekker states in his book on *The Game-Animals of Africa*, that the latter species range from the Tana River into Abyssinia, and the game-ranger in Nairobi, Mr. R. B. Woosnam, had corroborated this statement. As the zebra drew nearer and nearer my excitement grew, till I was afraid I should not be able to hold my rifle steady, but at last, as the foremost was within 70 yards of my hiding-place, and halted for a moment, I raised my rifle cautiously, aiming at his neck. I was too close to hear the bullet strike, but saw him drop like a log. The others seemed to vanish into the bush, so small was the little plain in which they were. I had no time to shoot again, and never saw them more. I ran forward and carefully looked him over. He proved

## ABSENCE OF MANE

to be a very old stallion, much scarred, but fat, and sure enough his appearance was in many respects different from the forms with which I was acquainted.

Among several other points, which I noted at the time, was the curious arrangement of the stripes on the back; the total lack of any mane, as though the neck had been carefully clipped; the full and bushy tail, distinctly ringed on the upper portion; the white ears; the legs fully striped down to the hoof, in which it differs from *E. b. granti*, the lower portion of whose legs is black; the narrow dorsal stripe and the presence of three faint shadow stripes on the thighs. In a subsequent chapter I intend to deal more fully with the characteristics of this animal, which has proved to be a new race of zebra, closely allied to the *E. b. granti*, which is typically found on the Athi Plains.

After carefully photographing him in several positions, I measured him and finally told my men to skin him. Two things then happened that might have resulted in serious accidents. First, in getting out my pipe from the deep and narrow holster on my saddle I got my hand caught, the mule got scared as I tugged to get free, the stupid syce pulled on his bridle and made him worse, and I found myself being dragged along, my wrist bent and almost breaking from the strain, and my right shoulder somehow in the mule's mouth! I shouted to the syce to let go the bridle, and then I gradually quieted the mule, which was frantic with fear, and worked my hand free. The whole affair only lasted a minute or so, but it was very unpleasant for the time being, and my shoulder showed the teeth-marks plainly for

## SKINNING THE ZEBRA

days afterwards. Indeed, the men I had with me that day were the most incompetent it has ever been my misfortune to deal with.

My skinner was in camp, looking after the trophies I had lately obtained : neither my gun-bearer nor guide, nor any of the other porters I had with me had the haziest notion of how to undertake the work of skinning so large an animal as a zebra. I sat down at first under a tree to have a quiet smoke, but soon got tired of watching their inefficient attempts, and since I was afraid that they would damage the skin, I pushed them aside and completed the job myself. I skinned the whole of that zebra in three-quarters of an hour, under a broiling sun, alone, with my gun-bearer only helping by holding on when I told him. At the time I was not a little proud of this feat, especially as right at the beginning, my hands being slippery with sweat, and my knife with blood, I cut the inside of my thumb to the bone, making a fearful gash which gave me some trouble, until at length I managed to stanch the flow of blood.

After this I went on for some time, through a country which alternated between little open plains and patches of acacia scrub, but, seeing nothing further, returned to camp about midday. As I was having lunch, a porter, who had gone down to the pool to fetch water, came in and reported that he had seen a herd of topi quite close, so I went off in search of them, and not long after spotted them resting under a clump of trees. The lie of the ground and the direction from which the wind was blowing were all in my favour, and I got to within a very short distance of where the foremost stood. This good stalk was spoiled by a lamentable shot. They immedi-

## JUBALAND GERENUK

ately dashed off, but by a most colossal fluke I hit a young bull in the neck as the herd galloped past me, and he turned head over heels like a rabbit.

After sending the meat back to camp, I turned westward and, on reaching a large plain some five miles farther on, I saw the same herd of arrola from which I had shot a cow a few days previously. They were very much on the alert, however, and very suspicious of danger. Cover was scarce and the breeze fickle, so that I was unable to get anywhere within range, and finally lost them altogether.

Much disappointed, I made my way back to camp, and, as I entered the valley of Jana Nyeri, I caught a glimpse of a gerenuk feeding. Although I got very close to him I missed badly with my first shot, but broke his neck with the second before he had time to escape. No gerenuk seemed to have very big horns in Jubaland. They averaged from twelve inches to fourteen inches, although three out of the four that I had killed were solitary bucks fully adult, and one even of great age. As is the case with nearly all antelopes, it is the old bucks that always carry the finest horns, herd bulls being generally younger animals, whose horns have not yet attained their maximum development. In bodily size, however, the gerenuk I killed in Jubaland were not noticeably smaller than those inhabiting the country farther west on the banks of the Uaso Nyiro.

In direct contrast to the success which attended my efforts at first, the rest of my stay at Jana Nyeri was marked by unrelieved failure. Principally due to bad shooting, but also to the fact that the solitary herd of arrola inhabiting this district were growing ever more suspicious, I was unable, during my last

## A NEW GUIDE

four days, to locate the herd at all. In fact, it was only on the third day that I ever got near them or had the remotest chance of success. Up at five, I reached the plains before dawn, and soon sighted the same herd, whose individual members I was now beginning to recognise quite easily. Then began a most exasperating stalk, that lasted four hours; time and time again, with the help of a guide, I thought that I should be able to approach close enough to get a shot, but invariably when I emerged from the bush the game was gone; and finally, at ten o'clock, we lost them altogether, and though I searched for them most diligently until long after noon, I had to return, empty-handed and disappointed once more, to camp.

Here I was informed that Abdi Aden had arrived and had brought me a new guide to take me farther west. He very generously presented me with some fine wooden pillows and hair combs, which made a valuable addition to my ethnological collection. He was delighted with a present of a full "tobe" of bufta, a brilliant loin-cloth, a coloured piece of silk and some coffee, which I gave him in return; but his father-in-law, who accompanied him, on receiving his piece of calico (which, I must say, was a little soiled by contact with the camel's back), merely remarked that "he would now have to buy a piece of soap to wash it with." I firmly ignored this gentle hint, and having submitted to the scrutiny of some half a dozen friends "who," as he said, "had never seen a white man before," proceeded to pay off my old guide. He demanded an exorbitant price for his week's work, and when reproached for this, Abdi Aden answered for him, and remarked that these bushmen did not

## DIMINISHING FOOD AND WATER

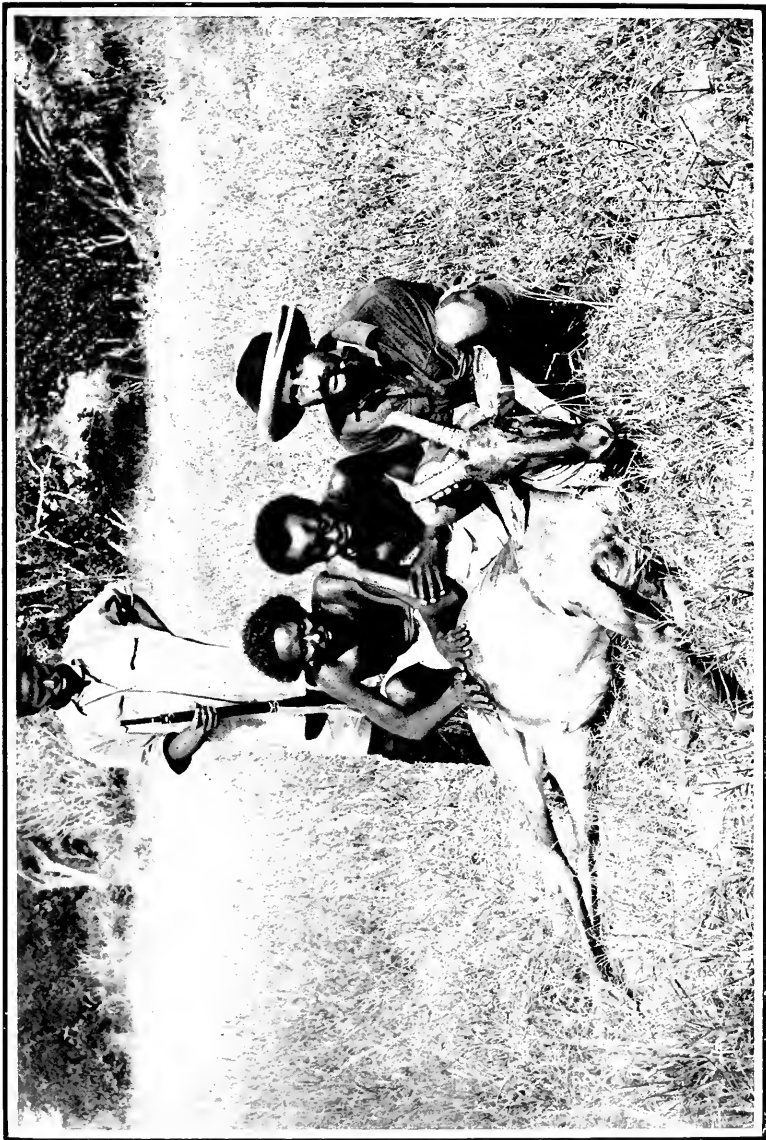
know the value of things. But I noticed that their ignorance has a very practical side, and I hesitate to think of the value they will put on their services when they do get to know "the value of things."

Water and food were now fast diminishing ; the animals in the district were becoming shy and wild, so I decided to move on to another haunt of the arrola, farther north. All the afternoon I spent in writing letters and getting ready to plunge once more into the bush on another stage of my long journey to the Lorian. Abdi Aden excused himself now from accompanying me, but as he had provided me with another guide to take his place, his refusal was of no importance. We parted on the most friendly terms, and throughout my dealings with him I found him pleasant, helpful and trustworthy. One of my camels had been ill for some time, and now he died from some obscure internal complaint called "gainda" by the natives. But in proportion as the food diminished the loads grew lighter, and his loss, therefore, was of no serious consequence.

Here Saïd, one of my porters, caught a delightful little pet in the shape of a young mongoose. In size he was as big as a small rat, with silk-like olive-coloured hair and pink face. He quickly became very tame, and was a general favourite with everybody. He had for companion a tiny hare, which one of the camel syces had caught in the plain near by. They were kept in a curious little cage of bark, really very ingeniously made by one of my men, in shape and size similar to a large Rugby football.

Very early the following morning the caravan got under way. I left at the head of my men in gorgeous moonlight ; we passed my old camp at Obé as dawn





TOPI. ♀ (D.C. JIMELA)

In Jubaland the topi takes the place of the true hartebeest. They are very handsome antelope, their coat having the appearance of watered-silk. The two natives kneeling were my guides, the one on the left a Herri, the other an Ogaden Somali of the Maghabul sub-tribe. The native standing was a syce. The photograph was taken by my interpreter.



## A PARK-LIKE COUNTRY

broke, and then turned north-west. Shortly afterwards we entered a most beautiful park-like country, with long green grass, shady oak trees and delicate mimosas. The going, however, was rather heavy, as we were not following a path, and the grass was knee-deep and somewhat tangled; but the whole aspect of the place suggested cool running streams of clear water. Would that it had been true! But our next camp was to be a dry one, and some forty miles of desert lay between us and the next rainpool.

After marching through this kind of country for a couple of hours, we suddenly entered the bush again, and a more complete contrast can scarcely be imagined. The low grey scrub, without shade and covered with thorns, formed a scene as arid and desolate as the other was fertile and beautiful. We marched along at a good pace, for the path was good, though it wound endlessly in order to avoid the densest parts. We emerged at last into a minute little plain, in which was a deserted Somali boma. Here I decided to allow the camels to feed and rest before going on once more.

While lunch was being got ready I took some photographs of the abandoned huts, and while doing so, found an old broken spoon, very handsomely carved. I was exceedingly interested to find that on the back of the handle the man's cattle brand had been cut, and my guide, on seeing it, stated that it must have belonged to Abdi Aden, who had had his boma there during the previous rains. Later I found the same brand on some of the trees in the vicinity.

We left again in the afternoon, first going westwards for quite a long time and then N.N.W.

## A LARGE HERD OF ARROLA

through very dry and arid bush country. Here I saw a large herd of giraffe, thirty-eight in all, mostly young cows; but they had had our wind and were already in full flight. Towards sunset we once more reached a large plain, covered with small trees and short withered grass. I saw a large herd of oryx feeding, and after a poor stalk took a shot, but only managed to wound one. I was much annoyed, as I needed meat, not only for myself, but for my men. I had seen no arrola on the march, but the country seemed very suitable, so I decided to camp and try my luck on the following days. The heat had been terrific and had tried men and camels severely, and the long march had proved too much for the little hare, who succumbed during the night; but the mongoose was growing more tame each day, and seemed to enjoy the weather rather than the reverse.

My first day's hunting was unsuccessful. As soon as I had left camp in the early morning I saw some oryx in the distance, and started in their direction, but there was little cover and I was doubtful of being able to approach sufficiently close without alarming them. But as I was moving slowly forward, I suddenly saw to my left a large herd of arrola walking slowly across the plain toward the bush. Very quietly I turned back, and making a detour reached the bush at a trot before they arrived; then settling myself in a comfortable position, so as to be sure of my shot, I awaited them. They came all right, twenty-eight in all, big bulls every one, except the last two, which were young cows. I took careful aim, and fired, hitting the foremost one rather far back behind the shoulder. Then followed a series of really shameful misses, and I finally lost sight of

## STALKING ARROLA

them, without being able to bring a single one to bag. I was thoroughly ashamed of myself, but on returning to camp and trying the rifle at a target, I found that I could not get anywhere near it. Then it dawned upon me that I must have struck a bad box of cartridges, and so it proved, for, on opening a new box, I immediately found the bull's eye.

Of course when I went out in the afternoon I saw nothing, and returned in disgust after a trying and disappointing day. The following morning I was on the warpath at dawn. I made my way on foot to where I had seen the arrola the day before. I carried my double-barrelled '450, while my gun-bearer followed behind with my '318 magazine rifle and a new batch of cartridges. I crept through the scattered bush extraordinarily cautiously, and soon I was rewarded by catching sight of a white rump patch disappearing in the long grass some way in front. With redoubled caution now I crept forward by myself, leaving the other man behind, and soon saw a beautiful buck arrola feeding slowly away from me. Then, risking everything to get close and be sure of my shot, I made a long detour; doubling back, and crawling on hands and knees through the grass right across his path, I reached the shelter of a bush, and there, concealed in the shadow, awaited his approach. This manœuvre was entirely successful. He was quite unaware of any threatening danger and was feeding slowly in a direction that would bring him within 20 yards of me. It was a beautiful sight to watch him, moving slowly through the bush, now and then looking up, his great lyre-shaped horns showing clearly against the blue sky. He gradually sheered a little farther from me, but as he drew level

## A FINE PRIZE

he was just 81 yards off. Now was my chance, so, grasping the '450 firmly, and taking a fine bead on his shoulder, I fired; the report was too loud for me to hear the bullet clap, but I saw him fall, rise and fall again, the blood pouring in torrents from his mouth. Greatly delighted I ran forward, and found him lying dead, the bullet having gone through the lungs and out on the other side.

And what a magnificent prize he proved! Absolutely in the height of condition, and in the prime of life, he carried on his small and shapely head a wonderfully handsome pair of horns. They were enormously massive and measured  $27\frac{1}{4}$  inches on the front curve, thus exceeding the previous record. The following are the measurements which I took upon the field: Height at shoulder, 48 inches; length from tip of nose to root of tail along the curves of the body, 69 inches; girth behind shoulder, 48 inches; length of tail, 18 inches.

After taking several photographs of him I sent for a camel and had him taken back to camp while I went on; and while returning to camp I saw two topi and five gerenuk; two of the latter were fighting furiously, their little horns locked, often going down on their knees in their furious endeavours to overthrow each other. Watching them and apparently totally absorbed in the sight the two topi stood together quite motionless on an ant-heap. They looked exceedingly foolish and solemn standing there, and their interest in the fight cost one of them his life, for I crawled through the grass till I was within 50 yards. Before firing I too watched the gerenuk until one had almost overcome the other; I then aimed at the biggest of the two topi and brought

## TOPI AND GERENUK

off a successful shot, dropping him in his tracks. He proved to be a big bull, with heavy horns, measuring  $18\frac{3}{4}$  inches, and I was delighted, as we needed meat badly and it saved one day's rations.

During the rest of my stay at Goloshé Gormé I hunted with varying success, and bagged, amongst other things, another fine bull arrola and an oryx, but I saw no more zebra and no lesser kudu. Finally, the herd of arrola which I had been so assiduously pursuing became very wild and shy, and left the locality at last; so, having already obtained a small, but fairly comprehensive bag of the game-animals found in Jubaland, I decided to proceed northwards. One day was spent in getting ready and putting everything in good order, and on the following day at early dawn we broke camp.

## CHAPTER XI

### ACROSS THE WILDERNESS

I NOW regretfully turned my back on the haunts of the arrola, and faced the difficult problems that lay in front of me. For now I had to cross a huge stretch of wilderness, a vast expanse of bush that separated me from the Lak Dera and the Lorian. Much of it was unknown even to the Somali, who prefer the district of Bhodji, and have named the country immediately to the south of the Lak Dera Rama Gudi (the bush wilderness). The district of Gulola, however, towards which I was now travelling, is inhabited, as I have said elsewhere, by the Maghabul Somali, and I hoped to meet their sultan, from whom I desired to obtain guides to lead me westward.

As we left camp there was just that almost imperceptible glow in the east, called, I believe, the false dawn. I always think the sunrise one of the most beautiful things I know, and I never grow tired of watching and enjoying it. On this occasion, owing to the heavy clouds and thick mist, it was particularly lovely, the sky shading from a lovely blue to mauve and rose, while on every branch and every blade of grass the dewdrops sparkled and glistened and the countless spider webs seemed iridescent in the growing sunlight.

I led the way along the trail, leaving the caravan



## SENSATIONAL RIDING

a little way behind, enjoying the comparatively cool air and the beautiful scene. Suddenly two lesser kudu, to my mind the most handsome of all antelopes, dashed across the path, startled by the sounds of the camels' bells, and were immediately lost to sight in the bush. Otherwise an unbroken calm reigned over this wilderness, into which I was the first white man to penetrate. But soon it began to grow hot, the dewdrops vanished, the sun disappeared behind heavy storm-clouds and the beauty of the scene vanished with it.

Some two hours later, I entered a little clearing, in which was situated a small Somali boma consisting of ten huts of the usual type. The entire population, male and female, old and young, came out to see the "white man"—and this anxiety to see me led to a somewhat humorous incident. For my mule, which stands nearly fourteen hands, and was very nervous, suddenly shied violently at a little boy who was hiding behind a bush, and then bolted towards a group of Somali standing near the village. I was nearly thrown, but somehow managed to stick on, and by sawing on his bit pulled the mule up short after a most sensational piece of riding through the scattered thorn-scrub. The expression on the faces of the natives, and the chorus of astonished "Allahs!" made me shake with laughter, as they obviously thought I had made the mule do this for their benefit, or else that it was my usual method of travelling! As a matter of fact, I do not know to this day how I managed to stick on.

After filling up the water-tanks, and shooting a couple of guinea-fowl, I went on again, still through the bush, indeed, but a bush quite different from what

## TRACKS IN THE WILDS

I had seen so far ; all kinds of cacti now covered the ground beneath the thorn trees, and the latter were different in shape and more attractive. The road twisted and turned in a most fantastic manner, rendering my mapping a very tedious affair, so that we averaged scarcely more than a mile and a half in the hour. I was here obliged to resort to a plan first put into practice, I believe, by Mr. G. F. Archer, during his valuable surveys of the Northern Frontier District. In order to get the bearing of the general direction of the road, I sent on a couple of camels with bells attached, and the rest followed behind. In this way I was able to get both forward and back bearings of the track by pointing my compass in the direction from which the sound of the camel bells proceeded, for it was impossible to see them.

At one time we passed through a series of little open places covered with short green grass, and surrounded by dense bush on all sides, at another through a real tunnel formed by the interlacing of the thorn trees above our heads. Continually I caught sight of a dainty little form bounding across the path, and heard the frightened whistle of a dikdik as it vanished in the jungle, or the loud whirr of wings as a covey of guinea-fowl rose in alarm. To the lover of nature there is unending pleasure in noting all the innumerable signs and tracks that abound in the wilds, and in reconstructing the story they can tell to those whose experience and bush-craft are sufficient to enable them to read them.

In this way the hours passed pleasantly and quickly till we reached Jara, which consists of three small water-holes and a shallow swamp. In the latter water can generally be obtained by digging, and there

## FISH

were traces of three old wells overgrown with reeds and fallen into disuse. In the centre was a little water, fast disappearing, yet in the mud I discovered several small fish about 4 inches long. Two of these I caught and brought back for identification, and presented, with other specimens, to the British Museum. How strange it seemed to find them so far from any permanent stream or lake! I think there can be no doubt that there is an underground flow of water here, as, according to native information from various sources, water is always to be found at a depth of about 10 feet. But whether these fish are able to burrow down through the mud until they reach it, when the surface water evaporates, I am unable to say.

While the camels were feeding here, I interviewed the headman of the village which was situated near by. He told me that they were on the point of moving, but had been delayed by illness, which proved on investigation to be malaria. I gave him some quinine, for which he was very grateful, and some tobacco, which was eagerly accepted.

Later I moved on again; the weather had now grown most oppressive and a couple of showers fell, but so slight that they did no good, and only increased the humidity. We had now entered the district of Kurde and the densest bush I had yet encountered. Travelling became monotonous in the extreme, and for four hours there was no opening of any kind in the bush where I could camp, but at last, towards sunset, we emerged into a little clearing where I decided to halt. After the camels had been unloaded and the fires lit, there was not a piece of ground as large as a shilling that was not covered with loads,

## ELEPHANTS

tents, ropes, etc. It was an interesting scene I saw from my tent, the little camp fires burning brightly in the dark night, the half-seen forms of men moving about or crouching over their cooking-pots, the dim outlines of the resting camels and piled saddles and loads. Near at hand the harsh voices of the Somali sounded in endless talk, or snatches of Swahili conversation drifted over from the cook's fire. In the distance came the low rumble of thunder and the multitudinous noises of the jungle.

All the following morning we made our way through similar country to that which we had passed the day before, the sky was again covered with huge black clouds, and there was obviously a heavy storm coming. It was obvious, too, that there had been plenty of rain, and yet the thorn was extremely dry and arid looking, and the only green plants were the cacti and aloes. Soon I saw the fresh spoor of two cow-elephants and a small calf; they must have passed but a few hours before. I could not resist getting off my mule to have a nearer look at those monster footprints, silent witnesses of the near presence of the biggest game alive to-day. Elephants, dik-dik and giraffes are the sole inhabitants of the East African desert jungle, especially the two former.

In Southern Jubaland elephants do not need protection, for they will continue to live for centuries unmolested in these vast tracks of desolate and waterless thorn-scrub which can never be inhabited by Europeans. It is true that they are much sought after by native hunters, but it is only the white man with his modern rifle who can upset the balance of nature.

About noon we passed across a small, open plain, where I saw a herd of oryx beisa feeding, and then

## DISCOMFORTS

reached a beautiful little stretch of open bush, plentifully shaded by giant umbrella trees. It is here that the Lak Guran has its source; at least it is towards this point that all the surrounding country gradually and gently slopes, but there is not sufficient water to make a real river-bed until a point a little farther is reached; this district is called Goniah-iddu, which means the "sandy lonely place." It will be seen, therefore, that the Lak Guran rises in Kurde and flows almost due east until Shimbirleh is reached, which is a very different course to that marked on existing maps.

I remained here for some time, the storm was approaching and the heat was indescribably oppressive; no breath of air stirred, and the poor camels, instead of feeding as usual, lay down in the shade of the trees. It was with some reluctance that I got on my mule again and started off towards Gulola. The march was extremely tedious, and there was nothing to be seen except an occasional bird or even more rarely a dik-dik bounding through the bush. At three o'clock the storm which had been threatening for days broke in earnest; the rain fell in solid sheets of water and we were immediately drenched to the skin. It is impossible to describe all the discomforts of this kind of weather as you have to face it when marching in a tropical country, but it is too unpleasant for words. Clothes become wet and sticky, the road degenerates into a kind of bog, the mud from which clings to one's boots and makes walking a nightmare; nothing is dry, while the heat does not grow less, but rather more oppressive than before. At 5.30 we camped in another little clearing, my tent was soon pitched and the fires

## DISCOMFORTS

lighted ; everything was steaming ; although the rain had stopped, the heavy clouds hung low, and lightning flickered now and then to the northward. All through the evening the distant rumbling of thunder foretold rain for the morrow. My bedding was wet, my clothes wet, and I had no more meat, so after a frugal dinner of rice and tea, I went to bed.

The following day I started off before dawn, still going to the north-north-west. I walked, as my saddle was sodden with water and my mule could not stand up in the mud. It soon began to drizzle, half mist half rain, and it was rather a depressed caravan that marched on through the bush. The trail too was growing worse and worse, the wait-a-bit thorn thicker and thicker, and I soon saw the guide had lost his way. Although considerably annoyed I could not do anything, but, calling up my men and setting an example myself, I started to cut a way through the bush for the camels. This was slow and painful work, hands, arms and face getting badly scratched by the thorn, but in two hours we reached a huge swamp, across which I led the way by an old elephant path. The grass rose high above our heads, and the water came up to our knees as we sank in the mud. Great difficulty was experienced in getting the camels across ; each had to be unloaded and the things carried by the porters, who then returned to lead the camels over to the other side. Once we were all across, the guide knew where he was, but I decided to camp while he went on to find out where the Sultan's village was, for I depended on him for a guide to take me to the Lorian.

There were some beautiful umbrella trees here, so I chose a nice spot, and my tent was soon up.



A MARABOU STORK

These hideous birds are very useful as scavengers. They possess a very valuable small bunch of feathers under the tail. In order to procure one ounce of these feathers it would be necessary to kill at least three birds.



LOADING A CAMEL WITH THE WATER TANKS

These tanks, of which two can be seen in the right-hand corner, and one on the camel, are indispensable to the traveller in the interior of Jubaland. They are made of copper, and contain from 10 to 12 gallons.





## THE WEAVER BIRD

While the guide was away I spent my time examining this important water-hole which is known to the natives by the name of Gama Gar. It is about five miles in circumference, roughly circular in shape, and is situated in a shallow depression. It is filled with elephant grass and surrounded by dense acacia bush, spiny euphorbias and a few large conifers (*Juniperus procera*). A small stream runs into it from the west; the water within the swamp was about 3 inches deep, and the ground beneath very soft and boggy.

While here I obtained a few doves, a francolin and some good specimens of the weaver bird's nest. These nests are rather curious in shape, and are generally to be found in small colonies, hanging down from the branches of some thorn tree, having their entrance at the bottom. In shape they resemble a large pipe or chemist's retort, for attached to the entrance, and forming a kind of tunnel, is a tube about 18 inches long and 2 inches in diameter, made out of grass. Owing to the cloudy skies of the last few days it had been impossible to take any observations for latitude, but on the evening previous to my departure from Gama Gar I had an unobstructed view of the sky for a couple of hours, and I was therefore able to fix the position of the place with fair accuracy. When the guide came back he said that the village was an hour's march away, and that the Sultan had not yet arrived, but was expected on the morrow. I therefore broke camp without any regret, as the flies, mosquitoes and small red ticks made life a perfect burden. The swamp, however, was important geographically, and I was glad to have had this opportunity of studying it.

## A BUSY VILLAGE

The country between Gama Gar and Gulola village slopes gradually upwards towards the north ; but the rains of the last few days had left pools of water everywhere and made the going very heavy. After an hour's march, however, we reached the village itself, a little cluster of beehive-shaped huts nestling under some large acacia trees. While my orderly was looking for a good place to pitch camp, I sat and watched the scene of great activity that was going on, for some more families had but just arrived and the Sultan himself was expected in the afternoon. All around the cattle were moving about herded by little naked boys, while the women, nearly all with the black cloth denoting marriage tied round their heads, began to build the houses they had brought with them on the gentle, cream-coloured oxen. The men, their white cloths thrown round them, were either standing on one leg, resting on their spears and watching us, or were beginning to cut branches and bushes to make the thorn fence around the village. There were camels too, with little children slung in sacks, and balanced on the other side by tiny lambs or kids, and in between, on the backs of animals, were every kind of household goods to complete the load.

The sun very luckily came out a little later, so I was able to take an observation for latitude, but almost immediately after it began to rain, and the storm continued all the afternoon, only clearing up again at 4 p.m., when I immediately took further observations for time.

I had hardly finished when I saw coming down the trail a long line of laden oxen and camels, led by old women and Galla slaves ; and soon, surrounded by a dozen young warriors, a few elders and a priest,

## THE SULTAN MOHAMMED ALI

the Sultan Mohammed Ali entered my boma and advanced towards my tent. I went out to meet him and, as we shook hands, my four askaris each fired one shot in the air and presented arms, while everybody cheered. I could see that he was much gratified with his reception, but as it is not etiquette for a chief to talk to a stranger before he has given the latter a present, he only said that he was very glad to see me, and then excusing himself went off to his village, saying that he would return later, with my permission. Standing about 5 foot 8, he was a short, thick-set man with rather a fine head and strong, clean-cut features; he was dressed in the characteristic white robe and carried the usual warrior spear, which was noticeable for its splendid black shaft. At dusk he returned together with about twenty-three of his followers, and sat down in front of my tent on some blankets I had provided for them. While "buni" was being prepared for them, I made a long speech, in which I told him that I had been very pleased with the welcome I had received from his subjects farther south, and I went on to explain my plans and to ask them for help. To all this they listened very patiently, and while he was thinking of an answer and drank his coffee, I went into my tent and had supper. But while I was waiting for it they told me that it was time for them to pray, so taking off their sandals and sprinkling their hands, face and feet, they stood up, the priest in front, and with rather a splendid lack of self-consciousness began their prayers. All through supper, I saw their dim forms bending down and prostrating themselves, following the example of the priest, whose low droning voice rose and fell in a monotonous undertone in the darkness without.

## COMPLIMENTS AND PRESENTS

When I had finished I went out again, and Mohammed Ali, having presented me with a really magnificent ox, spoke for a long time. He began with the usual flowery compliments of the East, and spoke of the friendship he professed for the Government, of which he had hitherto been unable to offer tangible proof, since no officer had previously visited his country ; he hoped, however, that I should carry away with me pleasant memories of my stay there. He told me that little was known about the roads from here to Lorian, since it was a country that was reputed waterless and inhospitable, and had therefore been avoided by his tribes ; he would return, he said, the following morning, and if he could find two men who knew the road he would see that they should guide me thither.

His news was not very satisfactory, but I had perforce to be contented.

## CHAPTER XII

### SOME NOTES ON THE SOMALI

I HAD now reached the heart of the country I was exploring, and found myself amongst a tribe whose customs and character have been influenced by contact with Europeans, and who have not yet come into contact with Western civilisation. It would therefore seem not inappropriate that I should give some account of the Jubaland Somali; I do not propose to deal at any length with their history, for such matters are fully dealt with in certain books on British Somaliland,<sup>1</sup> and my own stay in Jubaland was not sufficiently extended to qualify me to speak with authority on the subject.

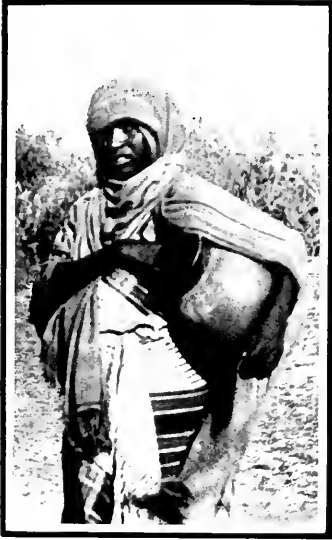
In East Africa there are only two main branches of the true Somali, namely, the Ishaak and the Darud, and it is only the latter that is represented in Jubaland. According to the native account, in the 75th year of Hejira (692 A.D.) an Arab Sheik, Ismail Juberti by name, was outlawed in his own country and fled from Arabia by night in a dhow. After many vicissitudes of fortune, he landed on the Benadir coast near Hobia (or Obbia), but the inhabitants of that country, the Haweyah, refused to shelter him and drove him out; he was compelled therefore

<sup>1</sup> *La vallée du Darror*, G. Revoil; *British Somaliland*, R. E. Drake-Brockman.

## BRANCHES OF SOMALI

to flee southwards, but eventually was received by the Dirr, another aboriginal tribe of the Benadir coast. With them he settled down, and married Dubarra, daughter of Dogolla, by whom he had five sons, from one of whom, namely, Darud Juberti, all the Darud Somali are descended. Of the tribes now represented in Jubaland, the Marehan claim descent from Esa, and the Ogadan and Herti from Kablala Darud, both sons of the above-mentioned Darud Juberti. The Marehan are again subdivided into three important branches, the Hassan, the Isak and the Galti. It is only within the last six years that the latter have entered Jubaland. They possess a quantity of horses and camels, but few cattle. They inhabit the country near Dolo and Sarrenleh, and at the present time are giving some trouble to the Government, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter. Their numbers may be estimated at about 5000.

In the immediate vicinity of Kismayu, and as far south as Biskayia, are the Herti. Their head chief is Mohammed Shirwa, but he is still a young man, and the affairs of the tribe are in the hands of Mohammed Aden. The Herti are divided into three important sub-tribes — the Dolbahanta, the Wasengeleh and the Midjertein. The first-named still remain east of the Juba, and there are but few of the Wasengeleh in British territory. The Midjertein are, however, fairly strongly represented, about 3000 inhabiting the country between Gobwein and Port Durnford. The Herti, being traders as well as cattle-owners, have confined themselves to the coast, where they have kept in close touch with the Arabs, and were amongst the first to submit to British rule.



A SOMALI WOMAN  
She is carrying an earthenware water jar.



A SOMALI GIRL



AN OGADEN WAR-DANCE  
For a description of these dances, see Chapters VII and XIII.





## ABDULLA SOMALI

They are very different from the real nomads of the interior, and from personal experience I did not form a very favourable opinion of those I met in Jubaland. They are avaricious and money-loving, a fault I am afraid common to all Somali, but in their case intensified to an almost incredible extent; they have been spoiled by too frequent contact with European influences, and seem to possess the vices of two civilisations without the redeeming qualities of either.

Very different to the Herti are the true Somali of the bush, of which the Ogaden tribe is chiefly composed. The most important sub-tribes of the latter are the Mohammed Zubheir, the Aulehan, the Abdulla, the Abd Wak and the Maghabul, while the Rer Mohammed and the Habr Suliman are two minor subdivisions.

The Abdulla inhabit the country to the south-west of Biskayia as far as the Tana River. Westwards again from them are the Abd Wak and the Rer Mohammed, known collectively as Talamuga. The latter occasionally wander into the hills north of Lorian, but there is a constant feud between them and the Mohammed Zubheir, whose headquarters are at Wajheir, and many are the fierce fights waged between them. Shortly before I reached Melka Waja, the Mohammed Zubheir, led by their chief, Ahmed Mugan, had inflicted a terrible defeat on the Talamuga, after a fight lasting thirty-six hours, in which, according to native reports, there was great loss of life on both sides. The victors then returned northwards, taking with them some four hundred head of cattle. I am unable to say in what way the spoils are divided amongst the victorious army, since the

## A STEADY MIGRATION

answers to my questions varied considerably. It is likely, however, that each tribe has its own methods, although all are probably based on the same general principles.

The Aulehan inhabit the country between Lorian and Sarrenleh; but they are generally to be found in the northern parts of that region, and it is only an occasional family, or a band of young warriors, that makes its way south to Tur Guda and Haryel.

The Maghabul, although not numerically strong, possess immense herds of cattle; they wander in search of grass and water through the districts of Joreh and Gulola, according to the season; and it was with them that I remained the longest.

There was, and there is still, a steady migration of Somali from the north towards the south and west; I have already referred to the fact that the Marehan have but lately crossed the Juba, while it is only the Tana that temporarily prevented the Abdulla and the Abd Wak from driving the Galla still farther south. Some seventy-five years ago the latter tribe enjoyed undisputed possession of the country between the Juba and the Tana. At the same time the Ogaden Somali were migrating southwards in the vicinity of the Webbe Shebeyli. Here they were met by the Rahn-Wen and the Bimaal, who severely defeated them and drove them westwards across the Juba River. They now came into collision with the Galla, locally known to-day in Jubaland as the Werdey, by whom they were again defeated with great loss; the fighting, however, was continued for nearly two years, when they made peace, and obtained the consent of the Galla to settle side by side with them in Jubaland. For five years this state of things continued; in the

## GALLA AND SOMALI

meanwhile the Somali were recuperating from their exhausting conflicts with the Rahn-Wen and Bimaal, their numbers were increasing, and they were finally joined by the Herti, who had come down by sea in dhows. Finally they seized a favourable opportunity, broke their agreement, and rose simultaneously against the Galla, whom they utterly routed and drove southwards and westwards. This movement is, as I have said, still progressing; the Somali, although they are submissive to British rule along the coast, are, in the interior, still a conquering race, and whether they defeat the Borana or the Galla, they will be unconsciously carrying out the curious impulse that for the last eighty years has been pushing them southwards and westwards.

In Jubaland proper there is only one Galla settlement, but there are several individuals of that tribe serving the Ogaden in the interior either as herdsmen or as slaves. Physically they are smaller, but more sturdily built than the Somali, to whom they are much inferior in intelligence. It would seem probable, from a comparison of their respective languages, that the Somali and the Galla come from a common parent stock; but this is a particularly difficult question, and requires for its elucidation a more complete knowledge of both languages than we possess at present. The Galla are Pagans, although many of them now profess Islam; but in any case, according to Western ideas, their morality is very lax, and at marriage it is not their custom to give a dowry. Having had but a slight acquaintance with them, I prefer to refer the reader to books such as *Travels in S. Abyssinia*, by C. Johnston, for further information concerning them, and will now pass on to the consideration of

## GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS

some of the most characteristic habits of the Somali. But since climatic and physical conditions are so intimately connected with, and have so profound an influence on, the character and habits of the natives, I must first briefly recapitulate the main geographical aspects of the country.

In the whole of Jubaland there are no permanent rivers or streams except the Juba and the Tana, and no permanent water-holes except the wells at Wajheir, Eil Wak, Afmadu and Fungal in the north, and a few fresh-water springs along the coast. A glance at the map will immediately show the large tract of country where desert conditions must therefore of necessity prevail. At all times sparsely inhabited, the interior is completely deserted during the dry season, the Somali with their cattle, goats and camels, moving south to the Tana, west to the Lorian and north and east to the permanent wells and the Juba. The word "desert," which is applied to this waterless region, immediately conjures up a picture of waste stretches of rolling sanddunes, such as are found in parts of the Sahara, or the wide open plains with bare volcanic ridges so characteristic of the great desert areas of Western America and North-West Mexico; but very different conditions prevail in Jubaland.

The whole of the region with which I am now concerned is clothed with a low, dense thorn-scrub which from time to time opens out into little park-like spaces, covered during the rainy season with a temporary growth of luxuriant grass. In the centre and north-west, the belts of bush become denser and more difficult to penetrate, but towards the Tana the open plains become larger and more numerous. If these facts are remembered, much that is otherwise

## NOMADIC HABITS

incomprehensible in the habits of the Somali is explained, and it will be obvious how much the country they inhabit has moulded their characters and influenced their way of living. They themselves have a saying, which illustrates my point, "God made Somaliland: then He laughed and made the Somali."

Since there is no permanent water-supply, agriculture is rendered impossible. Their wealth therefore consists in live stock, and in order to keep them in good condition the natives are obliged to wander from place to place, according to the season, in endless search of good pasture and of water. Years of such wanderings have developed their nomadic instincts to the full, and have moulded their physique into a form almost ideally suited to such a life. Resembling an Arab in appearance, the Somali is slightly built, small boned, and very lithe and active. Accustomed to hardships of every kind, and exposed to danger from his earliest years, he is content with a minimum of physical comfort and becomes a tireless marcher, a wonderful scout and a courageous warrior. In endless conflict with the natural difficulties of his country and the vicissitudes of his climate, perpetually defending himself from the dangers that beset his life and his belongings, he finds rest only in his wanderings, peace and contentment of heart only in fighting and in adding to his stock by raiding that of his neighbour.

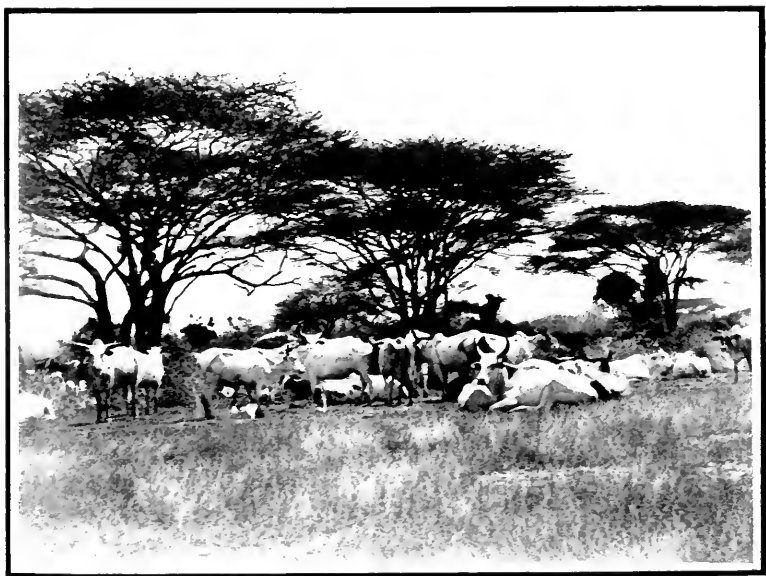
In his heart he considers himself perfect and far superior to the tribes by which he is surrounded. He holds in subjection the Waboni, and despises the Galla, refusing to believe for a moment in the possibility of a common origin. But this narrow and

## ADAPTABILITY OF THE SOMALI

bigoted outlook on life, inevitable to a people whose ideals are made up of a fancied superiority, is not incompatible with an acute intelligence, and this they possess without a doubt. No native is more adaptable than the Somali. They may be found as stokers on big liners, as miners in South Africa, as servants, soldiers, interpreters and clerks, and they do their work well; but as soon as they return to their homes they cast off the conventional dress of civilisation, and become once more true nomads, for in such a life only can they find their full measure of happiness.

Like the Arabs, they may well be called true Children of the Desert. Essentially lazy in times of peace, their dignity does not allow them to do any manual work, which is therefore left to the women. Their sole preoccupation is to see to the welfare of their stock and to add to their possessions by raiding the cattle of their enemies. When not thus occupied, they will lie for hours outside their village, in the shade of some convenient tree, sleeping, droning songs about their past deeds of prowess, or chatting with their companions. In character they are proud and quick to resent some fancied wrong or injury; they are generally cheerful, talkative and true to their code of honesty; but in the latter respect it must be remembered that what would be binding between two Mohammedans is by no means a trustworthy contract between a Mohammedan and an infidel. Although in many cases they appear to be insolent to a stranger, I believe this to be more of a mannerism than a deliberate act.

If a Somali thinks he is being wronged or unfairly treated, he changes from a light-hearted,



SOMALI CATTLE

All the cattle belonging to the Somali are of the native shorthorn breed common throughout East Africa. The meat is excellent, and the cows give plenty of milk, when the grazing is good. The general colour is pale brown or cream.



SOMALI WARRIORS, PREPARING FOR A DANCE

Notice the bright striped cloths worn by the young warriors, the long thrusting spears and the turbans.





## THE WEALTH OF THE SOMALI

willing and obedient native into a sullen, dangerous and treacherous enemy, and his undoubted intelligence and courage, coupled with his powers of endurance and knowledge of the bush, render him a truly formidable antagonist.

As I have already mentioned, the wealth of a Somali is estimated by the amount of live stock he possesses. The latter consists of camels, cattle, goats and sheep. Camels are not bred much south of the Lak Dera, but round Wajheir and Eil Wak there are enormous herds. I shall deal with them in another chapter; and so, therefore, I need not refer to them at greater length here. Nor is there much to be said of the cattle, for they belong to the well-known shorthorn breed of native cattle common throughout East Africa. While the grazing is good the cows give plenty of milk, but the necessity of continually moving according to the water-supply is a serious drawback and keeps the animals from getting really fat.

The sheep, however, are interesting; they belong to a black-headed fat-rumped group, for which Dr. Fitzinger proposed the name *Ovis pachycerca*, believing them to be descended from a distinct stock. There does not seem to be sufficient justification for such an opinion, since their peculiarities may well be the results of long domestication. As special characteristics of this breed, Mr. R. Lydekker gives "the absence or rudimentary condition of the horns of the rams; the excess in length of the lower over the upper jaw; the strongly developed dewlap which often extends downwards to the chest: . . . the short stumpy tail, which appears as a kind of knob between the fatty cushions on the rump; the short sleek coat

## GOATS

of hair, which is shortest on the face, ears and tail, and longest on the underparts. No less distinctive is the blackness of the head and the white with a tinge of yellow of the body and limbs. . . . The rudimentary tail is about a couple of inches in length, and the fat masses on the rump weigh about 25 lb.”<sup>1</sup>

The goats are of the usual breed found elsewhere in East Africa. In colour they are white, or white and brown ; occasionally a black and tan or a complete brown individual may be seen ; the hair is short, and in size and weight they usually exceed the sheep with which they are generally herded ; the horns are well developed, and the skins valuable for various purposes.

<sup>1</sup> *The Sheep and its Cousins*, R. Lydekker, pp. 204-5.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FURTHER NOTES ON THE SOMALI

A SOMALI village, or "rer," as it is called, is composed of a number of huts shaped like a beehive (gurgi), surrounded by a thorn fence, or "zariba." The centre of the enclosed space is usually divided into a number of divisions or pens, in which the sheep and goats are kept during the night. The huts, which are wretchedly poor and squalid in appearance, are carried from place to place on the backs of camels or bullocks, and are erected and taken down by the women, while the zariba is erected by the men. The gurgi are built by placing six or more curved posts in the ground; the tops are tied tightly together, and supported by a heavy central pole, and the framework is strengthened by cross-pieces tied horizontally; a small space is left for the doorway, to the right of which a shallow trench is made for the fire. This is the only means of entrance and exit for the inhabitants; it is the sole method of ventilation, and of enabling the smoke to escape. The shell of the hut being thus securely erected, the whole is covered by a number of mats skilfully woven out of grass and the fibre made from the smooth outer bark of the "araru" tree, while sometimes the hide of a bullock is stretched over the top and tightly lashed down, in order to make everything completely rain- and storm-proof.

The interior is generally divided into two apart-

## THE "TOBE"

ments by hanging up another mat, the left-hand side forming the sleeping apartment, while the right, which contains the fire, is used as the living room. Such, at any rate, was my impression of the huts, which I had the opportunity of inspecting. The Somali are somewhat chary of allowing strangers to enter their gurgi, and I therefore offer these observations with the utmost diffidence, knowing how easy it is to carry away an erroneous idea of the habits and doings of natives with whom one has had but a brief acquaintance.

The Somali, when at home in his village, wears the white "tobe," which completely covers his person. This is merely a piece of calico (Bufta) of double width, and about 8 yards in length. In Jubaland a "piece" of cloth is 40 yards, which is cut into 5 full "lengths," or 8 "half-lengths"; this is the recognised standard of exchange, and is the basis of all trading. There are three qualities of cloth, Bufta, Murduf and Americani, in their respective order of value corresponding to what I should call in English, calico, twill and common cotton cloth. A list of these and other trade goods, together with their values in the interior as a medium of exchange and what can be obtained in return for them, will be found in Appendix C.

The "tobe" is draped much as the old Romans wore their toga; its appearance, when clean, is very graceful and picturesque, and must be extremely comfortable. But when the Somali is travelling, or is on the warpath, he modifies his dress accordingly. A loin-cloth, either plain or brightly coloured, is then worn round the waist, which is supported by a wide belt of tanned leather, in which his broad-bladed knife is carried. The upper part of his body is covered with



#### A SOMALI HUT

These huts, called "gurgi," are always carried from camping ground to camping ground. The grass mats which form the outer covering are used as pack-saddles for the camels on the march. Occasionally an ox-hide is fastened over all to make the hut completely storm-proof.



## COIFFURES

a half-tobe, which is often draped in such a way as to conceal his weapons. On his feet he wears sandals, made, if possible, from the hide of a giraffe.

A Somali always prefers to travel at night, when practicable, and to rest and sleep during the day. But when compelled to march in the heat, he often wears his half-tobe as a turban and covering for his face combined, and will leave his body from the waist upwards uncovered. I often noticed my own men doing this, and when we were exposed to the tremendous heat experienced in the arid sun-scorched wilderness of Arroga and Rama Gudi, they would in addition cut branches from a bush, and covering these with an old rag or odd piece of sacking, would use them as a kind of sunshade.

The true bush Somali wears his hair long. They are not in the habit of bleaching it, as is the fashion in northern Somaliland; they keep it carefully anointed with ghee, and generally wear one or two hair-combs stuck in it. These are shaped like a skewer, but chiefs often wear more elaborate ones handsomely carved. The young women wear their hair loose, plaited for about half its length and then fluffed out. After marriage, however, it is tied into a kind of bag of black or blue gauze. Among the Aulehan I saw married women with a red cloth tied tightly over their hair, although I do not think this is a habit confined to that tribe; but, at any rate, it is less common than the usual black cloth.

The warriors on the march carry, in addition to their knife, a round shield made of giraffe hide about 14 inches in diameter strapped to their left arm, a short broad-bladed spear, a wooden pillow on their left wrist, a small water-bottle and a "tooth-stick."

## ARMS

The hunters carry in addition a bow and arrow if they have no rifle, a light stick to which is attached a bunch of marabou feathers for testing the wind, and a hollow stick about 2 feet long by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in diameter for drinking water, when it is situated deep down amongst the rocks, or in the hollow of a tree trunk. Fastened to the quiver in which they carry their arrows are two small bags; one contains the iron arrow-heads, which only fit loosely in the shafts, some poison for smearing on them, manufactured from an evergreen, locally known as the Wabayu, little bits of gut for tying on the feathers, and various odds and ends; the other smaller one contains charms of all kinds, some of which may consist of verses of the Koran, while others may be merely little bits of cloth, a lion's tooth, a rusty nail or similar small objects, which they believe will bring them success.

Very curious was a hook, strangely twisted and ornamented, about 3 inches long, made of soft iron, which I noticed was carried by most of these hunters. I was able to obtain one specimen, but could not elicit any information from its owner as to its use. I am at a loss to understand what purpose it may serve, unless they employ it for roasting meat above the fire, in which case it would seem that the natives would have had no objection to tell me.

All implements of iron are made by a certain class of dependant known as the Tomal. These men are Somali who have married a woman of the Midgan, an outcast tribe, whose origin is wrapped in obscurity. The Tomal are despised by the Somali, and are treated as inferiors, but why they are not allowed to possess cattle, with very rare exceptions, and why they are compelled to become iron-workers, is a mystery



## LEATHER—SPEARS

that has not yet been solved. The iron required is obtained from the coast through Arab traders, and payment is made for it with cattle, hides or ghee.

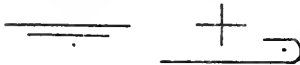
The Midgan men themselves tan the leather that is required for the manufacture of shields, sandals, belts and water-bottles. The skins most prized in Jubaland are those of the giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*), the rhinoceros, which is very rare, and the oryx beisa. In the bulls of the latter species the skin over the withers and lower part of the neck is extraordinarily thick and tough. This peculiarity in the oryx beisa may have been developed as a protection against their sharp spear-like horns when they are fighting one another.

The spears carried by the warriors, of which there are a considerable variety, are usually fitted with thin strong shafts made from a variety of wood. Some are quite ornamental, cut from trees especially selected for their fine even grain, and highly polished by rubbing in ghee, which imparts a rich dark yellow gloss to the surface; others are fashioned from a kind of wood that resembles hickory; others, again, are made of ebony, which is also treated with ghee. The latter kind are only carried by those warriors who have killed an enemy; this distinction, which confers upon a man the privilege of wearing the "Bal," or feathered head-dress, is eagerly sought after, and the young men are always on the look-out for the opportunity of gaining it. Among certain tribes I have been told that a man cannot marry until he has thus proved his metal.

The wooden sleeping-pillows are of a variety of shapes, ranging from the pattern with the single leg, as carried by the poor man, to that cut out of a solid piece of wood, 15 inches in diameter, with six legs, which are very rare and only used by men of import-

## DIET

ance. Mohammed Ali, the chief of the Maghabul Somali, gave me one of the latter, which was most elaborately carved; it had been treated with ghee, and was of a rich red brown colour. The wooden ghee spoons are ornamented in a similar fashion; it is usual, though by no means always the case, for a rich man to have his cattle brand cut on the back of the handle, for a similar reason, I suppose, that a man in Europe will have his coat of arms engraved on his silver ware. Thus, amongst others, I have in my possession spoons which have the following marks on the back

 which are respectively the cattle

brands of Mohammed Ali and Abdi Aden.

The Somali in the interior are by force of circumstances abstemious in their habits. Their sole habitual diet is milk and ghee: no fruit, no vegetables, seldom any rice and rarely flesh, for they will not, if possible, kill any of their own stock for food. Yet they are inordinately fond of meat, and if a camel falls sick and can no longer work, they will cut his throat and cook and eat every scrap of flesh. They also boil down all the fat, thus making a kind of lard to which they are extremely partial. Being strict Mussulmans they will not touch alcohol of any kind, not even when ill. But they have another kind of drink, peculiar, I believe, to Jubaland Somali, called "Buni." It is prepared in the following way. The coffee, consisting of the entire berry, is first roasted, or, as a matter of fact, fried in ghee; the latter is then poured off into a dish, which is handed round to each man, beginning with the eldest. In turn they dip their hands in, and solemnly rub their faces, head or limbs with the ghee, according to their individual taste; meanwhile, the

## “BUNI”

berries are boiled in a little water, with which a good deal of sugar, if they have any, or honey, has been mixed, and more ghee is added. This mixture is allowed to simmer over the fire for a few minutes ; it is then poured out into one large or several small cups, which are handed round, and the sickly mess is then sipped with the greatest relish, and the berries are eaten. They claim that it possesses marvellous properties, that it relieves fatigue and pains of all sorts, clears the brain and makes “the heart glad.” The drinking of buni, involving though it does an unbending formality, is invariably observed before anything can be discussed, before any dance can be begun or any important decision can be taken.

With discontented Somali it is a good plan to provide a quantity of buni ; they will invariably drink it, and thus comforted, they will talk their fancied wrongs over for hours, perhaps with one of your own trusted men, until very often their anger cools, and everything can be settled in an amicable manner satisfactory to both sides. This coffee therefore formed one of the principal and most important items of my trade goods, and no traveller should attempt a journey into the interior without a plentiful supply of it.

The Jubaland Somali are very fond of singing and dancing, but they neither use nor possess musical instruments of any kind, not even the tom-tom, of which the Arabs are very fond. They have songs suitable for almost every occasion, many of them being of a religious nature. Of the latter type perhaps the most interesting is the “ Song of Thanksgiving,” which consists of a solo and chorus, rendering praise to Allah when water has at last been reached after a long and dangerous march.

## THE CAMEL

The stern faces of the men, upon which the hardships and poverty of their daily life and the ever-present dangers to which they are exposed have imprinted an indelible mark, the real gratitude to Allah, the All Powerful, Who Alone knows what is best for His children, expressed in their voices, and the circumstances in which it is sung, all combine to form a picture that is at once solemn and impressive.

Somewhat cruel by nature, the Somali is lavish of kindness and affection to his camel; it forms the subject of innumerable songs, in which one man addresses the camel, while the rest answer for him, thus carrying on a kind of running conversation. As soon as I would give the order to halt and unload, the syces would begin singing, "Aurki dalai!" ("My camel is tired!"), to which the men who were helping would cry out in answer for the camel, "Dika so dig!" ("Then place it (*i.e.* the load) on the ground!"). And this would be repeated in endless iteration until the camels were unloaded. In the same way in the mornings I have often eaten my breakfast to the sound of my head syce singing, "Wa fa liligo!" ("Pick up the load!"), to which the men would roar out in chorus a line, which I never quite caught, meaning, "Then tie it on tight!" And there are a number of variations on the same theme. It was always pleasant to listen, as I knew my men were happy and contented. I never forbade them to sing, unless circumstances demanded it, as, for instance, when we were in the Aulehan country, and were expecting an attack. And I tried to allow them as much liberty and freedom as when travelling by themselves, so long as this was compatible with obedience and discipline, for there must be much

## A WAR DANCE

that is irksome and trying in a long journey. And I think they appreciated my attitude towards them, for they showed unquestioning obedience to my slightest command, and helped me in every way to the best of their ability, by combining to help each other in their respective work. I will give one illustration of the kind feeling and thoughtfulness they will show if well treated. Smoking is one of their few luxuries. Yet when I had finished my tobacco, and the men heard of it, one of my syces, whom I had recently lightly punished for some trivial offence, went round and collected a little of the precious weed from each, and then came up and presented it to me, in such a way that it was impossible to refuse.

Their favourite dance is the war dance. Ten or twelve men, fully armed with spear, shield and knife, and wearing their sandals, gather together round an ox-hide, which is stretched in the centre of the dancing-place. The rest of the spectators form a hollow square around them, while farther back the women stand on the outermost edge of the ring. At a given signal the warriors begin singing and then dancing in a circle, at first slowly, but gradually faster and faster. From time to time one of them will rush towards their chief, leaping high in the air, brandishing his spear and saluting, while the others all stamp together upon the ox-hide. They gradually work themselves into a perfect frenzy of excitement; the spectators join in the songs, keeping time by stamping on the hard ground, while above the uproar can be heard the thin shrill cries of the women, voicing their approval.

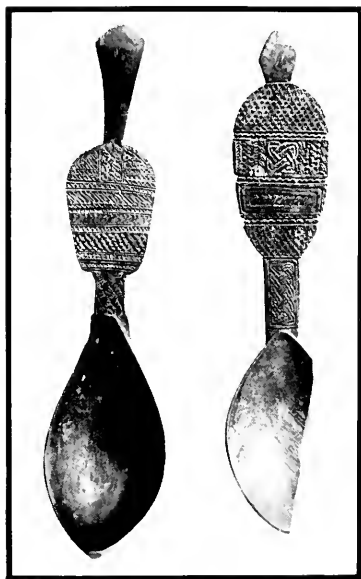
Chiefs of tribes are buried with some ceremony.

## THE BONI

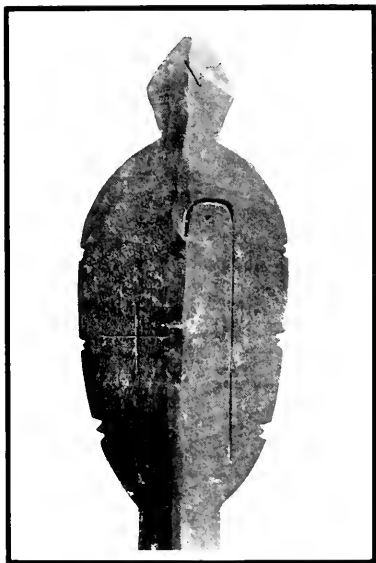
Their followers build huge mounds of earth about 20 feet high above their graves, and they then surround it with a strongly built fence, made of logs of wood placed horizontally between heavy upright posts.

No account of the inhabitants of Jubaland would be complete without a reference to that interesting and little-known tribe, the Boni. These strange people originally inhabited the southern regions of Abyssinia, whence they have made their way southwest into the district of Arnoleh in Jubaland. They are hardly a thousand in all, and their numbers are fast diminishing, so that in a few years they will probably have disappeared completely, or have become merged among the Somali. They live in subjection to the latter, unmolested so long as they pay a tribute of one tusk from every elephant killed. Under this agreement they are allowed to hunt where they wish. By some the Waboni are believed to be the original inhabitants of this part of British East Africa. At any rate, they depend entirely on hunting for their food, as do the Wandorobo of the Kenya country. Their knowledge of bush-craft is perfectly astonishing, and as hunters and trackers I have never seen their equals. They have been much harassed and persecuted by the young Somali, and are consequently very shy and suspicious of strangers, preferring to make their homes in the most impenetrable bush, in which they immediately take refuge at the slightest sign of danger.

According to Captain R. E. Salkeld, who has spent twelve years in Jubaland, many of the Waboni are the property of a private individual of a Somali tribe, and I was warned that should I engage a



SOMALI GHEE SPOONS



THE BACK OF THE HANDLE OF A  
GHEE SPOON  
Showing the owner's cattle brand carved in the  
wood.



THREE DIFFERENT STYLES OF HAIR  
COMBS

As used by the Ogaden Somali.



A REMARKABLE WOODEN SLEEPING  
PILLOW

Cut from a single block of wood. It was made especially for Mohammed Ali, the Sultan of the Maghabul tribe, and was given to me by him.





## ADMINISTRATION

Boni guide it would be inadvisable to take him out of the tribal district. Their marriage customs are simple, and depend upon whether the man can provide sufficient cloth to satisfy the girl's father. If he can, she immediately becomes his wife. The Boni language, according to Mr. F. Elliott, is at present unwritten, but resembles Somali to a certain degree, though the differences are too great for mutual understanding.

The administration of the natives in Jubaland represents an extremely difficult problem. The chiefs of the tribes naturally profess friendship, since the Government pays them a monthly salary of from Rs. 65 to Rs. 75, and supplies them with a few rifles and cartridges. Whenever their followers openly disobey, and the chiefs' pay is stopped temporarily in consequence, they put all the blame on the young men, saying the latter have acted without their knowledge, and so the affair is smoothed over. The interior of the country, especially in the south, is unknown and unsafe, and will be for some time no doubt.

This state of affairs is, of course, very unsatisfactory, but no blame can be attached to the officials, for they are handicapped by lack of men and money, and are hampered by red tape. There are two main difficulties that face the administration. When it is necessary to punish offenders it is exceedingly difficult to find them, inasmuch as being nomads, the natives wander widely through an unknown country; secondly, since there are no roads, and the bush is generally very dense, it is far too risky to send out a small expedition, while the expense of a large one is too heavy. Therefore the offenders,

## TRADE

as in the case of the murderers of the late Mr. A. C. W. Jenner, go generally unpunished. It must be remembered that one thing the Government cannot afford is a reverse, for anything that would tend to lower our prestige further would be absolutely disastrous. It has been brought too low already by the way we have acted in the Somaliland Protectorate.

Now I believe there is only one factor that will solve the problem which the administration of Jubaland presents, and that is trade. The Somali are quite intelligent enough to realise the value of trade, indeed, they are beginning to do so, and have already grasped the value of money. They possess enormous herds of cattle, goats and sheep, and they need rice, maize, cloth and iron. But before this trade can be developed the country must be opened out, and, if possible, the natives must settle down in their respective districts. In other chapters I have indicated all the main water-holes and swamps, which are at present semi-permanent, and which if cleared, and in some cases deepened, could be made into permanent reservoirs at a low cost. If this were done and the native trails cleared and broadened into roads, the natives would settle down permanently round the reservoirs, only too glad to be rid of the constant anxiety as regards a sufficient water-supply for themselves and their cattle. At these points police posts could gradually be instituted, and the roads would not only be invaluable for police patrols and for enabling the officials to move from one place to another, but would give a very real impetus to trade, the value of which, for purposes of civilisation, cannot be overestimated.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE DISCOVERY OF GULOLO SWAMP

MOHAMMED ALI paid me another visit on the morning after our last interview. In addition to the presents he had already given me, he brought more milk, and on this occasion a sheep also. It is, of course, customary to give, in return, trade goods that somewhat exceed in value the presents received; these gifts become sometimes rather embarrassing if one's stock of trade goods is limited. In this case, however, I was rather pleased than otherwise, as my men were delighted with the milk, and mutton was a pleasant change from the tough, stringy meat of the wild animals I had shot.

He did not, however, bring me very encouraging news. Nobody in his village knew the country between Gulola and Lorian, and the best, therefore, that he could do was to provide me with two men who would take me as far as Jeldez, a well-known water-hole on the old Galla trail that led between Afmadu and the Lorian to the south of the Lak Dera. I was most disappointed, as, from what Abdi Aden led me to believe, I had been counting on Mohammed Ali to provide me with guides, and I did not at all relish the thought of leading my men through an unknown country with no idea of the number or position of the water-holes. Existing maps were useless, the country hereabouts being only

## VARIOUS PROBLEMS

represented on them by blank spaces, and the position of the Lorian Swamp varied on the different sheets by nearly one degree!

For the benefit of those who have not had the privilege, shall I say, of travelling through such a country as Jubaland, I will point out the various problems that face the leader of an expedition. The country is generally unknown, pathless and, in many districts, waterless. Frequently it is so thick with bush that it appears almost impossible to cut a way through. It is a well-known fact that in the interior the natives are unfriendly towards the white man and are notoriously treacherous. The only possible method of progress is to travel from water-hole to water-hole, which lie perhaps sixty or even a hundred miles apart. After a series of exhausting and trying marches, beset with every kind of difficulty and hardship, a water-hole is reached, and found perhaps to be dry. By this time the water-tanks are three-parts empty, and the men are almost certainly discouraged and discontented, owing to the enormous amount of work they have had to perform in cutting a path through the bush; moreover, they are probably ill at ease and nervous, for there is always the possibility of an attack by a party of young Somali warriors, anxious to qualify for the privilege of wearing the "Bal," and carrying the black-shafted spear, the special insignia of those who have killed an enemy. The next water-hole is perhaps another fifty or sixty miles ahead. Only two courses are now open, either to retrace one's steps or to go on in the hope of finding water at the next place. If the latter plan is followed, and the water-hole again proves to be dry, both the traveller and his men



A LOADED BULLOCK

The bullock is carrying on his back the "jerios" or grass mats used for making the huts. In front are the fibre water-bottles or "hans." These patient animals are often used when there are not enough camels.



## A MARKET

must inevitably die of thirst. In deciding which course to pursue, the leader cannot help remembering that his men trust in him with implicit confidence to bring them back safely home.

Such are the problems that face the traveller every day in Jubaland; and at Gulola I was confronted with them in a particularly aggravated form. For as I have said I could obtain no guides, I was ignorant of the position and number of the water-holes, or even if there were any at all, and I knew that the Mohammed Zubheir and the Talamuga Somali were at war. At all times turbulent and insubordinate, a party of their warriors would be now even more dangerous to encounter than at other times, whether they were elated by victory or embittered by defeat. But I had set my heart on reaching the Lorian, so after considering the question of success very carefully, I decided to go on.

After Mohammed Ali had left me I sent word down to the "rer" (village) to say that I wished to hold a market that afternoon, at which I desired chiefly to buy ghee for my men, that I would pay in the form of trade goods preferred by the seller, and that my stock would be exposed to view before my tent. At first no one would come, but at length a very aged woman, wrinkled and bent beyond belief, came in carrying a little ghee in a pot. After naming her price, the headman gave her the choice of a corresponding value of cloth, coffee, beads, "tusbah" (rosaries), perfumes or tobacco. She hesitated for a long time, muttering to herself the while, but finally chose a brightly coloured loin-cloth, of the kind worn by young warriors, and amidst shouts of laughter from my men, retired to the village clutching it to

## A PICTURESQUE SCENE

her shrivelled breast. Then others came, some young, some old, with their little babies tied in bags upon their back or clinging to their skirts (such as they had!), and soon I had bought all the ghee I needed.

It was a scene of bustle and activity. Trading went on briskly and I bought amongst other things wooden pillows, ghee spoons, hair combs and other small objects that are commonly used by the Somali. Everyone was in the best of tempers, jokes were bandied about, and peals of laughter rang out continuously. Old men and women were moving slowly through the crowd, the traces left by the hardships and poverty of their daily lives showing clearly in their bent forms and wrinkled faces; young girls, with curiously dressed hair, clothed in the loose white robes which emphasised rather than concealed the lithe beauty of their graceful forms, held by the hand tiny little boys with shaven heads, whose small brown bodies were innocent of clothes; they wandered round together, gazing with awe and wonder at my tent and my belongings within. Having satisfied their curiosity, they began to return to their village, and when the sun was sinking and the time for prayer was at hand, they were all gone, and my camp resumed its normal aspect.

Mahommed Ali visited me after supper on the evening previous to my departure and said he would accompany me himself to Jeldez, so that no one might say afterwards that he had not done his best to help the first white man who had been willing to visit his country. I took this opportunity of giving him my present, consisting of cloths, silks, perfumes and buni, with which he seemed very pleased. When



## FAME AS A DOCTOR

thanking me he said, with the charming exaggeration of the Oriental, that he would have been equally gratified with much less, for a gift is soon forgotten, but that the pleasure his acquaintance with me had given him, and the pride he felt in having entertained me, would never fade from his memory!

Although my relations with the natives had made my stay at Gulola a very pleasant one, the camp itself was an unhealthy one, owing to the swampy nature of the soil and its low-lying situation. I had a great deal of malaria to deal with among my men, and I was also suffering myself from a slight return of dysentery. Having been rather successful in dealing with the ailments of my own men, my fame as a doctor was spread abroad in the village and daily many cases were brought to me for treatment! On one occasion a man, whom I had cured of a very mild form of ophthalmia, came up and asked me for some medicine for his mother. In reply to my questions as to the symptoms of her illness, he answered that she was growing very old, and he seemed very disappointed when I told him that this was a malady beyond my power to cure!

At last however, one morning, I left Gulola at sunrise, leading the way with one guide, while Mahommed Ali followed with the camels, accompanied by his "body-guard." The latter was an extremely minute individual, not five feet in height, but very sturdily built; he was a Galla slave captured in war, but was now a freeman, though he still worked for Mahommed Ali in return for his food. He carried an ancient French rifle (a Fusil Gras model 1873) and two cartridges. During the three days that he accompanied my caravan he was

## SWAMPY LAND

never parted from those cartridges ; they were always somewhere about his person—in his hair, behind his ears or in his mouth.

We marched to the north-east at first through the open bush. There was no trail, and we were often up to our knees in the mud ; for the whole place is like a swamp, for there is not sufficient slope to carry the water off. But I was told that for the last two years there had been no rain, and as the country is chiefly sandy and the feed poor, it is generally uninhabited, except after a good rainy season. As regards the Bisahu Hamu, marked on almost every map as an important swamp, its name is unknown to the natives, but north of Bussa Berora, about twenty-five miles north-east of Gulola, there is a large plain covered with coarse grass that no doubt becomes swampy during the rains, but it cannot be relied on even as a temporary water-hole. We soon reached a good trail running east and west. This is the native trail that runs between Hadamamel Dabassá and Gulola Swamp. The former place is an important water-hole situated immediately to the south of the Lak Guran, twenty-three miles due east of Gonia-iddu. We followed this path going westwards, though not without difficulty, for the camels were continually slipping in the mud, and were compelled to walk very slowly. The country, however, was lovely ; giant acacias stretched out their spreading branches towards each other, enshrouding the undergrowth in perpetual shade, while dense tropical vegetation overran everything, dripping in airy festoons from the trees above, and running riot over the earth beneath. A profound silence reigned, unbroken save for the occasional "tap-tap" of a

## GULOLA SWAMP

woodpecker, or the whistle of some frightened dik-dik.

Two hours later I reached Gulola Swamp. This important water-hole is situated just south of the Equator, some seven miles north-west of Gulola village. It is roughly circular in shape, and about twelve miles in circumference; and, although surrounded by almost impenetrable jungle, the centre is open and I should imagine very deep, for the bottom slopes sharply down from the edge of the swamp. After a plentiful rainy season, this pool lasts throughout the year, and would amply suffice to water several thousand head of cattle during that time. But it has been known to dry up, with disastrous results to the Somali and their cattle, who were dependent on it.

Two years previously it had failed, and the heaps of dried and whitening bones that lay in its immediate vicinity bore eloquent testimony to the tragedy that ensued. I do not think that it would be either a difficult or costly enterprise to clear and deepen the pool sufficiently to make it a permanent reservoir. If this were done it would prove an inestimable boon to the natives. As I was examining the swamp, the camels overtook me and passed on to the northwards. I followed them an hour afterwards, marching at a good pace along the trail which they had made.

On leaving Gulola Swamp the whole aspect of the country changed with startling abruptness, and became arid in the extreme. The ground was sandy, and the bush seemed to grow denser and more impenetrable as we proceeded. The overhanging branches, though they clung to my clothes and tore them, afforded no shade, while the loose nature of the

## A SURPRISE

soil made walking slow and exhausting. At ten o'clock, according to my observations, I crossed the Equator. From that time until I passed again to the south, near Meru, I remained on the north side of it, but at no time during my journey was I more than a degree of latitude from it, except for a brief period in the Lorian district. At noon I came up with my "safari" resting in a little clearing; my chair and table were in the scanty shade of a mimosa tree and my lunch was ready not long after. After I finished it I told my headman to start with the camels at 1.30 and not to disturb me. Then lying down on my saddle blankets with my head on the saddle, I was soon fast asleep and did not wake again till nearly three o'clock. We were quickly off again, and I caught up and passed the camels two hours later.

Towards sunset I reached a small pool, much to our general surprise, and I decided to camp near by, having covered about eighteen miles since leaving Gulola village. A warm bath greatly refreshed me, and after dinner I plotted the day's work on my plane table sheet. By marching due north from Gulola to Jeldez and thence to the Lak Dera, I hoped to traverse a country that would be interesting geographically. I had questioned the natives carefully about the district lying in a direct line between Lorian and Gulola, and they all agreed in saying that it was a "bad" country, waterless and uninhabited, and the bush so dense that it would be impossible to take camels through it. It is known to them under the name of Rama Gudi, which means "wilderness."

We were on our way very early the next morning; the air was terribly oppressive although the sky was

## HUNTING-DOGS

clear, and the bush grew even more arid, if possible, as we advanced. It was darker in colour and entirely leafless as though it had been killed by a hard frost! It gave the country a most curious aspect, while to add interest to the scene, there was evidence everywhere of a large herd of elephants having passed but a few days ago; in fact the trail we were following was but an old elephant track. The ground was strewn with chewed bark and leaves, great branches had been broken off, small trees had been uprooted, while on every side the imprints of their huge feet could be seen in the sand.

I was deeply absorbed in noticing these things and in unravelling the story they told, when suddenly in front of me I heard the loud barking of dogs. I was so surprised I could not imagine what it could be, but, jumping off my mule, I took my rifle, and kneeling down, peered through the bush in the direction from which the sounds were coming. So dense was the undergrowth I could not make out anything at first, but suddenly saw three dark forms moving through the scrub. Before I could raise my rifle they had disappeared, and though I found and followed their spoor, they easily made their escape. Their barking gradually grew fainter and then died away in the distance, and silence fell once more upon the trackless jungle. From the glimpse I had of them, I knew that they were hunting-dogs, but what they were doing in a country so destitute of game as this I am quite unable to say. These interesting but unattractive animals stand about 20 to 23 inches at the shoulder, and resemble vaguely the spotted hyæna in coloration and general appearance. They differ from wolves and foxes in having only four toes

## TERRIBLE HEAT

on the front as well as on the hind feet, and their coat irregularly spotted with tan or white patches.

Naturalists recognise six races based on the apparently constant variation of colour in the different localities in which they are found, and those I saw probably belonged to the race known as *Lycaon pictus lupinus*, a name proposed by Mr. O. Thomas for the hunting-dogs inhabiting East Africa, whose special characteristics are their dark colouring and the small number of yellow spots. The race inhabiting Somaliland is known as *L. pictus somalicus*, and is a smaller animal, with shorter coat and less powerful teeth. Packs of hunting-dogs soon clear the game out of any locality, and since they depend on antelope for their food, they do not long remain in one spot. They are generally to be found in the bush and are rarely seen on the open plains. It has been stated that they will readily attack a human being, but I have never heard of any authentic instance. I was sorry I was unable to obtain a specimen, but I saw that it was useless to pursue them further, and so returned to the trail and continued the march.

The sun was now blazing down from a cloudless sky, everything was burning to the touch, and the glare exceedingly trying to the eyes. At noon I called a halt, and lay down beneath a thorn bush, over which I spread my saddle blankets to keep off the sun which was pouring through the leafless branches, and soon, in spite of countless small ants, I went fast to sleep. When I awoke an hour later the cook had ready the wing of a guinea-fowl, which I had shot that morning near Gulola Swamp. After an excellent meal I gave the order to load up, and



#### A TYPICAL CAMP SCENE

Notice the thorn "zariha" or fence always built round a camp. During the day an opening is left, which can be seen in the photograph, but after the camels have been driven in at night it is closed. The zariha is generally 3 feet high, and is sufficiently broad to check a rush of the enemy in case of a night attack.





## JELDEZ

just before two o'clock we were on our way once more. As I stepped out from my little patch of shade the sun almost seemed to strike me a physical blow, and the ground was so hot that it was really painful to the feet even through thick boots; moreover, the sand rose in little clouds as we walked, hanging above us like a copper-coloured mist, stirred now and again by gusts of wind which, instead of bringing freshness to the burning air, only seemed to intensify the dreadful heat. The bush clutched at my clothes as though it had a thousand hands, or tripped me up as I walked, for the trail was so obstructed that it was impossible to ride. Faintly behind me I heard the chop, chop of the axes, as the men cleared the worst places for the camels, or the swish and breaking of the branches as the poor brutes forced their way through. We walked on in silence, save once, when I saw some guinea-fowl, and brought one down as they rose above the bush.

A little later, very unexpectedly, we came upon a little pool of rain-water—very stagnant and green, it is true, but still water. While I was waiting here for the camels to overtake us, the clouds gathered, and there was a short shower, followed later by two more. This only served to accentuate our discomforts, and, rather depressed and in silence, we went on again still to the north, towards Jeldez; the men were exhausted by the hard work, and cursed the climate and the country to which I had brought them. At last, when I had almost given up hope of reaching our destination before dark, we arrived at a clearing in the bush in which Jeldez lay, but to our dismay found it dry. I had plenty of water with me for a couple of days, but I decided to camp here tem-

## A HONEY-BIRD

porarily, and send back the camels in the morning to fill up at the last pool, for it would have been madness to go into the unknown country that lay beyond without the ten water-tanks being full of water.

While I was waiting for the arrival of the rest of the "Safari," I noticed a little bird sitting on a bush close by and twittering incessantly. The guide whistled in answer and off it fluttered a little way, looking back at us all the time. This manœuvre was repeated, until it led us to a dead stump of a tree in which I found some honey. Taking the greater part of it for myself, I left the rest for this intelligent little creature. It was the well-known honey-bird, and several times on my journey I was able to procure honey in this way. The Somali are very fond of this bird, and will not molest it under any circumstances. They assert that it also leads them occasionally to an elephant who has died in the bush, but, personally, I have never had this experience. When I got back to camp, I found that the camels had already arrived, and were being unloaded to the accompaniment of the usual songs.

## CHAPTER XV

### INTO THE UNKNOWN

As it turned out I was delayed at Jeldez for three days, because I thought it advisable to send men forward to see if they could find water ahead, for I was now about to enter an absolutely unknown stretch of country without a single guide. Mahomed Ali, his slave and his companion, returned to their village, for they said, in an interview which I had with them the day before, that although they were willing and anxious to help me in every way, they did not know the country which lay to the west at all well, and they were afraid that if the next two marches should prove waterless, they would be unable to return, unless I gave them camels, on which they could carry water. These I could not spare, for of the eighteen with which I started, one had died at Jana Nyeri, one had been left at Gulola with an abscess in his foot, and another was very ill with what the natives called "camel sickness," so that I had only sufficient for my own needs.

Jeldez is a well-known water-hole situated on the old Galla trail between Afmadu and Lorian. This bush-path has been completely abandoned by the Somali, who prefer to travel along the north bank of the Lak Dera, where water-holes are more numerous and the country less inhospitable. As I have said, it was dry when I arrived, so I had to

## A DOUBLE RAINBOW

send back to a rain-pool I had passed some fifteen miles to the south, which a local thunderstorm had luckily filled, in order to obtain any water at all. It was small in quantity and unpleasant in quality, but we were glad enough to get any. This rendered it imperative that we should leave Jeldez as soon as possible, in order to reach a more plentiful water-supply.

Jeldez itself is a circular depression, about 300 yards in diameter, surrounded on all sides by very dense bush, and on the north also by some large acacia trees. The soil is sandy, and in the centre a well has been dug, now fallen into disuse, about 12 feet deep. The floor of the well was damp, but though I dug 3 feet deeper no water could be obtained. In spite of the sandy covering the ground below was extremely hard, so hard indeed that it was impossible to drive the tent-pegs in, so that in order to pitch my tent I was compelled to tie the guy-ropes to the water-tanks, which were placed in line, three on each side.

On the day after my arrival there was a heavy storm in the north, and as it drew to a close there was a most beautiful double rainbow, so vivid in colouring that I was able to take a photograph of it. In the evening the men I had sent forward returned, bringing bad news, for although they had walked for six hours along the trail they had found no water. This was indeed serious, especially as it was too hot to march during the day. So on the following morning I decided to send back five camels to fill up the water-tanks at the last rain-pool, since it was not safe to proceed without a maximum supply of water. While they were away, I was busily engaged

## AN ANNOYING OCCURRENCE

in fixing the position of Jeldez on my map, and in exploring the country around. Some twenty-five miles to the N.E. there is a large and semi-permanent water-hole known as Tubtu, but otherwise the country is arid in the extreme and covered for the most part with "wait-a-bit" thorn and similar scrub. According to the map the Lak Dera was about fifty miles away to the N.W., and I hoped to find water there, as during the last week I had noticed thunderstorms almost every evening in that direction. My plan was to start in the afternoon from Jeldez and march all through the night, and longer if necessary, unless we reached water before.

A most annoying occurrence prevented me from starting on the following day, as I had arranged. The syce, whom I had sent back in charge of the camels, returned without water, saying that the little pool, where they had filled up on the previous day, was dry. He had not had the sense, or rather he had been too lazy, to go on and search further. So I was compelled to send them back again, as it was essential that the tanks should be full before we started. This time the syces went in charge of an askari, and I forbade them to come back without water, even if it was necessary for them to march all through the night.

The rest of the day passed pleasantly enough, although I did not leave camp; but I was very busy writing up my notes, and, having taken a whole series of observations, I worked them out, including some taken at Gulola which I had not finished. I was very much gratified with the results, and carefully locked the papers away in my box, in order that they might be checked when I returned to civilisation.

## THE THERMOMETER

Having completed this work I inspected the trophies, both horns and skins, and found them in excellent condition. All this took up the larger part of the day, but after a cup of tea at four o'clock, I took my pipe and a book of Oscar Wilde's poems and went out in search of a shady bush. Having found one I lay down on the soft, warm sand, and read and smoked in luxurious comfort until dark. It was delightfully refreshing to turn one's thoughts to something so essentially different, so totally unlike and so far removed from the life which I had been leading, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading "Humanitad," "Panthea" and some of the charming short poems over again.

The heat had been very great, and all through that day the mercury in my thermometer stood well over 100°, and in the early afternoon reached its maximum height of 116°. I should not like to say what the temperature was in the sun, but at noon, when I went out to take an observation for latitude, the barrel of the telescope on my theodolite was so hot that it was almost impossible to touch it. Just before nightfall I went out in the bush and shot a couple of doves, very luckily for me, since I had nothing for supper, but what they were doing so far from water I cannot imagine.

The camels returned just before midnight with all the tins full. The following morning was occupied in getting everything in order. All that was not absolutely necessary was thrown away, ropes, girths and saddles were tested and overhauled, while the loads were carefully tied up into bundles of approximately equal weight. During my stay at Jeldez the camels had fed well and seemed rested and in good

## A BAD PATCH OF SCRUB

form. It is essential, if one wishes to travel far with a minimum of discomfort, that everything should be done to lighten their work, and now, by a careful distribution of the weights, and by discarding all but essentials, I managed to reduce their loads to something under 250 lb. each. And I believe it was owing to this careful preparation, and consideration for the welfare of the camels, that I was enabled to accomplish successfully the journey between Jeldez and Lorian, in the face of difficulties and dangers which no one can realise unless he has had some experience of travelling in the interior of Jubaland.

We left Jeldez shortly after three o'clock, in spite of the terrific heat, marching along an old trail which led directly towards the west. Almost immediately we entered the worst patch of scrub it had yet been my misfortune to encounter. Riding was out of the question, so I walked, and shuddered as I thought of what was going to happen to the loads on the camels, for the scrub consisted almost entirely of wait-a-bit, whose small crooked thorns cut through my clothes like knives, and I foresaw that they would tear the gunny sack coverings of the loads to pieces. As the sun sank behind heavy storm-clouds, we reached a rather more open country, the two hurricane lamps were lighted, and we proceeded at a good pace. It would be impossible to imagine a more hopeless and desolate piece of country than that through which I had been travelling for these last few days; the soft, sandy soil, the low, leafless scrub, and the stunted, blackened mimosa, with which it is covered, only serve to emphasise the aridity of the country and represent another kind of desert common in East Africa, but having but little charm either of colour or of outline.

## A CURIOUS MARCH

It was a curious march. The men were depressed, the going heavy, and the night air hot and oppressive, so that we were all perspiring freely. There was hardly a sound to break the silence, save when we brushed past some bush, or when a frightened bird rose in alarm at our feet. All other sounds were muffled by the soft sand through which we walked and which rose in little clouds that looked like mist in the lamplight as we hurried along. Twice we passed what I imagine to have been small plains where there had been surface water; and here the tracks of elephants were very numerous, all going westward, which seemed to show that they travelled from Guranlagga to the Lorian during the rains. Hour after hour passed by, until at midnight I took a short rest, drank some of the tea in my water-bottle, and ate some bread which I had brought with me. The chill I had caught at Gulola had not yet left me, and the dull pains on my right side and back made this march particularly trying.

After half an hour thus spent I marched on again, the camels having by now caught us up. On and on we went, and I think I must have been dozing on my mule, as I do not remember much more until a sharp exclamation from my headman woke me with a start. Curious sounds were coming from my left. What they were, at first I could not make out, then it dawned upon me. Frogs! And therefore water! We all rushed forward, and sure enough found a large pool surrounded by trees. Everybody was hugely delighted; the news that I had found water revived everybody, and spread down the line like wildfire. Even the camels seemed to be imbued with the excitement and came in at a fine pace, their syces



## CAMEL SICKNESS

whistling and singing in a most cheerful manner. Here I decided to camp and, when light broke, to send on two men to find the road which led westwards towards the Lak Dera. We had marched since leaving Jeldez for ten and a half hours and had covered twenty miles, which was not bad considering the character of the country we had traversed. My tent was soon pitched and a hot bath was prepared for me, which I thoroughly enjoyed before turning in.

The camel which was so ill at Jeldez, had been gradually growing worse, and on reaching this water-hole, which is known to the natives by the name of Robleh ("containing rain-water"), he lay down and refused to move, although he had carried no load during the night. As he was obviously dying and in agony, I had him killed. Shortly afterwards I saw the Somali lining up before my tent, and on asking what they wanted they asked me if I would let them eat the camel! I was so disgusted at first that I refused, but when they said that they would accept it instead of four days' rations (120 lb. of rice), I could say no more, especially as I had lost a quarter of a load of rice through one of the sacks giving way during the night. They immediately set about cutting the camel up and smoking the flesh, and boiling down the fat into a kind of lard, which they use in their cooking in the same way as ghee. An absolute orgy ensued; the men stuffed themselves with half-cooked meat, gnawed the bones till they were clean, and then chopping them open, sucked the marrow out. It was a most revolting sight, but I had no choice but to let it go on. Only the Swahili refused to touch it, which was rather a surprise after the filth I have seen them eat.

## A LEOPARD AND GIRAFFE

I spent two days here working and hunting, but all game was very scarce, and I saw nothing but dik-dik. Of these I shot two, which provided me with food for two days. While hunting them I came across a young giraffe only a few days old that had been killed by a leopard a few minutes before. The tracks and marks of the struggle told the story very plainly. The leopard had jumped out from a bush and chased the giraffe for about 20 yards, when, springing forward, it had caught the helpless animal by the neck and choked it to death. It had then either gone off to call its family to join in the meal, or more probably had heard me coming and made its escape. The giraffe proved to be a young bull, very pale in colour, buff rather than chocolate, and in the centre of the dark patches there were numerous white hairs. I had noticed that the cows are always lighter in colour than the bulls, but I did not see a sufficient number of calves to be able to say whether this pale tint is usual, and characteristic of young animals. I had it carried back into camp and skinned. On examining the skull I found that the two horns on the forehead were just noticeable, but otherwise it presented no unusual features of interest.

My headman, who was born in Jubaland, said that he thought there was another water-hole called Liboyi some 20 miles to the westward, and it was in the hope of finding it that we started shortly after midnight on the third day after my arrival at Robleh. We marched along a very dim trail by lamplight in silence, for we were all beginning to feel the effects of hard work and bad food. But as the light grew I noticed that we had entered a more open bush country, and a little later we found a



#### LIBOVI SWAMP

This is the place, according to native report, where Mr. A. C. W. Jenner was murdered, together with his followers, on his ill-fated journey into the interior of Jubaland. With that exception, no white man, until my advent, had ever seen the swamp. Notice the colony of weaver birds' nests hanging to the upper branches. The opening is an old elephant trail.



## GIRAFFES' SPOOR

good trail leading almost due westward. It was obvious that rain had fallen hereabouts, and the scene was most attractive; there were shady trees, green grass, and even the ubiquitous thorn bushes were just beginning to show some leaves. Somehow the scenery gave me the impression of early spring, though in reality it was midsummer in that latitude. This was too pleasant to continue, and I was not surprised when we soon entered once more the endless wait-a-bit thorn-scrub.

Throughout this country giraffes and giraffes' spoor are to be seen in astonishing numbers, yet it is hard for those who have not experienced it to believe how difficult they are to see. Their liver-coloured bodies netted with white seem to blend perfectly with the bush in which they live. This shows how easily Nature surpasses any efforts of ours, for who would have thought that so conspicuously marked an animal would be almost invisible under certain circumstances?

As we trudged on, the heat grew and travelling became most tedious, owing to the thickness of the bush and the soft sand under foot. So that it was with genuine relief that we saw the scrub thinning out into a little plain which really formed a plateau of low elevation, although it was scarcely perceptible to the eye. In its centre was the typical Jubaland rain-pool—that is to say, a large circular depression filled with dense jungle. There is a very curious but general tradition among the Somali, that these pools were made by the prehistoric inhabitants of the country. The only foundation for this belief is the curious similarity of these natural reservoirs, and the strange fact that they are often situated at

## MURDER OF JENNER

approximately equal distances from each other along a trail, but it would have been an impossible work for any uncivilised native to have completed. But to continue. We were much disappointed to find Liboyi stone-dry, but I decided to take our midday rest here, and proceed again in the afternoon. This I did, and while waiting for lunch, went down into the swamp and took some photographs. The interior was filled with dry bush and dead trees, forming a jungle which was honeycombed with elephant paths from side to side. It was here that the late Mr. A. C. W. Jenner was murdered in 1905. He was attempting the same journey as I was now carrying out, and his object was to explore the Lak Dera and the Lorian. He passed through Afmadu and followed the old trail that leads past Tubtu to Robleh and Liboyi. He camped here during a thunderstorm, and unwisely collected the rifles of his escort and placed them in his tent in order to keep them from the wet. A party of Mohammed Zubheir warriors, who had been following him, attacked him suddenly during the night and murdered him together with his followers, of whom only three escaped in the bush and returned to tell the tale.

I was therefore not sorry to leave this ill-omened place the same afternoon. At first I followed what seemed to be a well-marked trail, but, after going about one hour due west, I saw it was used only by giraffes and elephants, and fearing lest I should find no water I determined to march due north; so leaving the trail I struck out through the bush in a direction at right angles to that from which we had come. I felt the responsibility of taking my men thus through an unknown country, especially since

## INTO AN UNKNOWN LAND

they placed in me a complete confidence that I would bring them back safely to their homes at last.

I knew nothing of what lay in front of me ; the maps I had of this part of the country were mere blanks, and I was obliged to trust only to the accuracy of my last latitude observations and compass-bearings to enable me to reach the river. Some of the Swahili porters were already wavering and talking of going back, so I had to be firm, and in this my headman and my interpreter, Hassan, helped me immensely, or else Juma and the malcontents for whom he spoke might have won over to their side the rest of my men, and I should have had to return. I believe some kind fate was looking after me, for after making my way slowly for over an hour through the wait-a-bit thorn, I found a game trail, and following this, came upon two small pools of rain-water, one of which was beautifully clear and sweet. I was very much relieved, and so were my men ; they pitched camp and built the zariba in a very short time. Meanwhile I had gone out in search of food, and though I saw no big game, I luckily shot a couple of doves for dinner. Later on, as the night was clear, I seized the opportunity to take a series of observations for time and latitude, which kept me up till nearly eleven o'clock.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE LAK DERA

As the first streaks of light were showing in the east I climbed on to my mule, and, leading the way, marched towards the N.N.W. After half an hour's march we crossed some alluvial mud-flats and then reached what was evidently a dry river bed of some importance. It was filled with rank grass and reeds and was quite dry. Its general course was towards the north-east, and the bottom of the bed was some 15 feet below the level of the surrounding country. My first idea was that it was the Lak Dera. But I was mistaken, as I found later in the day that it was only a tributary. I took some photographs here and observations for altitude, and then marched on through dense acacia scrub up a slight incline till I reached a kind of plateau. There was a quantity of surface water everywhere, so filling up the tanks I proceeded with a much lighter heart. The bush had been and was so thick, that I had to walk all the time, riding being out of the question. The country was entirely overgrown with a low jungle composed of camel thorn and mimosa scrub in full leaf. There was no trail of any sort, and the trees grew in such close proximity one to another that it was often necessary to clear the way for the camels, as otherwise the loads would have suffered severely.

I soon began to go downhill again, and at eleven



## LAK DERA

o'clock, much to my joy and surprise, reached another river bed, also dry, and a well-travelled native path leading along it towards the north-west. This, I was certain, was the Lak Dera; so I gave orders for the camels to be unloaded and went on to investigate. A river bed, such as this, has just the appearance of a crooked line drawn by some gigantic finger in the sand, only, of course, on a gigantic scale. Fill this with dense green scrub, and you have the Lak Dera as I first saw it. Some two hours later I started again under a blazing sun along its southern bank, and marched for half an hour up the trail, when to our mutual surprise I saw two Somali resting under a tree. They jumped for their spears, but as soon as they saw we were friends they came forward and a long conversation ensued. They told me that they were of the Aulehan tribe, and were in search of good pasture and water. This, they said, was the trail which led along the Lak Dera to Lorian, that the river I had crossed early in the day was the Lak Aboloni, and that their village was about four hours up the trail, whither they volunteered to escort us. So off we went again, still marching through the endless green scrub over a country that gradually rose as we advanced.

From time to time I got a more open view of the river bed, now filled with reeds and tall rank grass, now bare and scarred by innumerable nullahs, and the hours passed like magic until at length we reached their little village, which lay beside two large pools to the north of the river; but the camels did not arrive until two hours later. The inhabitants were not very obliging, refusing to provide guides for our next march, and though they possessed a

## VILLAGE OF SHIMBIRLEH

large herd of cattle, they brought in nothing except a little milk. I noticed that the married women wore a vivid crimson head-dress instead of the usual black cloth, but I do not think that this custom is confined to the Aulehan. The country from here to the Lorian is unknown, except to a few native hunters, but the western extremity has been the scene of many a bloodthirsty conflict between the Mohammed Zubheir and the Abd Wak, two of the most truculent and least civilised sub-tribes of the whole of the Ogaden. It was therefore a heavy responsibility to take my men forward into this unexplored, waterless and dangerous region.

Early the following morning I left the village, which is known, by the way, as Tur Guda (which means "a clump of Guda<sup>1</sup> thorn trees"), and marched along an excellent trail, until some eleven miles to the westward I came to the little village of Shimbirleh, where there was a large rainpool, a hundred yards broad by two hundred long. The country between these two villages is fairly open, and contains many shallow sandy depressions to the north of the river. There were many guinea-fowl in the bush, of which I shot two, and I also obtained a young dik-dik, which were a valuable contribution to my larder. As I knew nothing of what lay before me, I let the men cook their food here, and then, filling up the ten water-cans, I started off westwards.

Before leaving Shimbirleh, I had offered the fabulous sum of Rs.50 for a guide, but nothing would induce the headman of the village to provide one. He told me, however, that I should cross the river and follow its southern bank until I reached two

<sup>1</sup> Guda (or Guhra) is the *Acacia Isyol*. DEL.



A LARGE ANT-HEAP, NEAR THE LAK DERA

The mongoose is very fond of making a home for itself in a disused ant-heap, and their shrill little cries are a very familiar sound in the lonely stretches of thorn scrub, so characteristic of the district of Bhoji.



## DENSE BUSH

large pools near some low hills, and should then follow an old trail which led onwards to the Lorian. With this meagre information I had to be content. The bush soon became exceedingly dense, once more keeping out every breath of air and rendering the atmosphere terribly oppressive. We crossed the river, which was here shallow and much overgrown, and then made our way at a good pace along the right bank, as I had been directed. I was exceedingly grateful when the sun gradually sank lower; at the same time the bush opened out a little, trees grew more plentiful, and at sunset I had a glimpse of the river bed again—white sand this time, and much deeper than I had previously seen it. The trail which had been growing more and more indistinct now gave out altogether, but I had the river to guide me, so I kept on, though the pace was now reduced to a crawl, for the country was very rough, full of holes and little steep valleys and nullahs. Except for the humidity of the atmosphere it was quite pleasant, the temperature being about 86°. A glorious moon was shining in a clear sky, and its beautiful soft light transformed a desolate and arid scene into one of beauty and of peace. My orderly walked in front carrying a lantern, and I followed him, my mind full of speculations as to what lay before me, and of pleasure because I was the first white man to penetrate this wilderness.

The hours passed quickly, but towards eleven o'clock I decided to camp in a small open space, as my camels were very tired. My bed was got out, and after a cup of tea I lay down, and it seemed to me that I had hardly gone to sleep before I was awakened once more. After a hurried breakfast of minced

## ARID COUNTRY

guinea-fowl, I started off once more shortly before 3 a.m. We were all somewhat tired and stiff, and it seemed ages before the first signs of dawn were apparent in the east; but soon after the sun rose—a disc of deepest red seen through the heavy pall of mist that hung low over the bush. The dry river bed was on my right, and on each side of it the ground rose slightly, forming a kind of valley, while ahead I could see a low line of rounded hills just visible above the jungle through which I was threading my way. Dense thorn covered the land in all directions, forming a vast sea of verdure, but in spite of this the general aspect of the country was arid and inhospitable beyond words. These endless stretches of thorn-scrub are very depressing, and the brilliant sun, which had already dispersed the morning mist, failed to dispel the gloomy impression the scene had left on me.

I continued marching steadily, keeping close to the river bank, and shortly before eight o'clock reached the low hills I had seen in front of me at daybreak. Here the river takes a bend to the north, and as the trail had by now quite disappeared, I decided to go straight on to the north-west, since it was most important that we should reach the swamp as early as possible, both on account of water and of food. So I skirted the spur of the hills, where I found traces of an old Somali boma, leaving the river on my right-hand side. Close at hand were two large pools, then quite empty, and surrounded as usual by dense woods; round one of them was a thorn hedge about 2 feet high with only one small opening where an old elephant trail led down to the pool. Not many yards away was a small shelter built in the bush. This was probably the work of some Somali hunters who had

## SMALL ANNOYANCES

lain in wait for their prey, and on several other occasions I have seen similar bush shelters built on river banks or near some favourite water-hole.

On leaving this place, known, as I discovered later, by the name of Sereda, I again entered a most appalling stretch of bush, through which we had to hack our way with axes and slashers. It was terribly trying work, and we were all truly glad a couple of hours later when the scrub got thinner and progress became easier. Just before eleven we entered a small plain with a dry water-hole in the centre, and I decided to rest here.

All around the thorn bush had given place to low stunted trees packed close together, leafless and blackened as though they had been burned. The heat was terrific, and in the sun one felt as though one were standing close to some huge bonfire. Two of my men suddenly collapsed from the heat, one of whom was a Somali. He became delirious and had to be tied down, but he recovered in the evening. After I had eaten a little lunch, I tried to sleep, but a multitude of ants and small flies kept me awake, and the time dragged heavily on, until at two o'clock I gave the signal to begin loading. Very wearily the caravan started once more, shortly after 3 p.m. Four of the water-tanks were now empty, so the sick men were tied on to the lightly loaded camels, but I could not help feeling sorry for them as I walked out once more into that blinding sun. I marched on steadily through fairly open bush; no water was to be found, and the country seemed very parched and barren. Words fail me to describe the utter dreariness of that desert scene.

Just before sunset, however, I had a great slice of

## A SLICE OF LUCK

luck. I had noticed a good many doves flying overhead in the same direction as we were going, and now I saw several sitting on a bush a few hundred yards to the right. Leaving my men and my mule I walked in their direction, full of excitement, and sure enough I found a small pool of very muddy water, perhaps 3 yards broad, hidden under some bushes. I was immensely thankful, and my men delighted beyond words at this unexpected find. Having put my orderly on guard, I sat down to wait for my caravan to arrive. Presently the sun turned blood-red as it neared the horizon, and then soon sank from view behind the stunted thorn trees that stretched away interminably towards the west, whilst almost simultaneously the full moon rose in the east, a deep copper-coloured disc. I lay back luxuriously in the sand and dozed for a time until I heard in the distance the faint sound of bells and the snapping of branches as the camels made their way through the bush. The men began calling and whistling, and presently I saw the long line of camels, looking very strange now in the moonlight with their huge loads swaying and creaking as they walked, led by their native syces. The news that there was water immediately revived everyone, and they sang and joked as they unloaded the camels. I served out dates, instead of rice, for their evening meal, and these were soon eaten. Within an hour, silence reigned once more, and I turned in after a good look round to see that all was well.

Much refreshed, I woke next morning at 2.30 and we were soon off. The bush was again appallingly dense and our progress slow. When the sun rose it revealed the same apparently limitless expanse of low wait-a-bit thorn; there is but little charm in the dull





#### A WATER-PAN IN THE DESERT

This was the water-hole that proved so invaluable to the expedition on the difficult march between Tur Guda and Lorian ; but it is typical of the shallow rainpools on which the traveller has to depend in the interior of Jubaland. The water is generally fouled by game, and is very unpleasant to drink. Such water-pans are about six inches deep, and the temperature of the water about 84° Fahr. Without such rainpools it would be impossible to cross Jubaland.



## INCORRECT INFORMATION

monotony of these silent sun-scorched wastes, where the view is perpetually bounded by the jungle. A little later on a troop of eight giraffes crossed my path some 300 yards ahead, stood for a moment gazing at me, and then went on, first one, then another, breaking into their curious heavy gallop, their long black tails screwed up over their backs.

About nine I suddenly came upon the river again, which had at this place cut a deep channel for itself in the soft sand, but it was still quite dry, its general direction being from S.W. to N.E. After crossing it I marched on a compass-bearing of  $320^{\circ}$ . According to the latest map this would lead me by the shortest route to the Lorian, which I then thought was not very far ahead. This was all the information I had to guide me, and, as it proved, it was quite incorrect, but I am glad I did not know it then. Two miles farther on I came upon two large water-holes which were also quite dry; nearly due north of them was a solitary low hill covered with bush. I determined to climb this, and on reaching the summit obtained a fairly extensive view over the surrounding country from the top of a tree. An unbroken expanse of thorn-scrub met my eye in every direction. No single landmark of any description broke the monotony of that absolutely level stretch of desert jungle which hid even the course of the Lak Dera from view. The harsh call of some guinea-fowl only served to intensify the silence that reigned over the bush. As I was making my way down the hill to the place where I left my mule, I shot one of these birds, at which I was very pleased, for I had practically no food left of any kind except rice and tea. A few yards farther, much to my astonishment, I suddenly

## SUNSTROKE AND DYSENTERY

came upon fresh cattle spoor, which could only mean that there was water ahead and that I was going in the right direction ; so taking up the trail I marched on with renewed hope, wondering who owned the cattle and whether they would prove friends or foes.

The heat had been gradually increasing and was now so terrific that I called a halt just before noon. Unfortunately the thorn bush afforded no shade, and so exhausted were the men that it was with difficulty I persuaded them to light fires and cook their food. I had at that time two men down with dysentery, two with fever and one with sunstroke (the porter who collapsed the day before). The latter was in a pitiable condition, moaning and sobbing continuously ; he revived somewhat after I had thrown a little of the precious water over him, and an injection of morphine seemed to ease the pain. Natives have very little pluck when they are ill, and very quickly give in, which makes it very hard to cure them.

At three we were on our way again, still following the cattle tracks which led steadily through the bush towards the north-west. My thermometer at noon showed 114° in the shade, but even that does not convey an adequate idea of the dreadful heat ; no breath of wind stirred the leafless branches of the bush, and the dust caused by our passage hung suspended in the air like some thin copper-coloured mist. I was feeling far from well myself, having another slight attack of dysentery, brought on probably by heat and fatigue, and I do not suppose I shall ever forget the weary hours that followed. Towards sunset the bush opened out ; we were gradually ascending, and on reaching the top of a

## A HARD TIME

low shallow valley we emerged on to a level plain covered with scattered scrub. For three hours more I marched on in the moonlight and then camped. My bed was soon made, and I went to bed too tired to eat. The cooler night air soon sent me to sleep; but at 2.30 I arose once more and started off shortly after 3, confident that I was now approaching Lorian. Dawn showed me a perfectly level plain devoid of all grass, but dotted here and there with thorn trees. In the distance a low green line showed where the bush began again. Suddenly, however, I saw some cattle, and then right in front of me a large rain-pool round which were gathered the rest of the herd, guarded by some forty Somali.

Since leaving Jeldez it had been indeed a hard time. We had marched continuously, resting only occasionally on the way, often without taking the trouble to pitch the tents. During the latter part of the journey, out of the twenty-four hours, sixteen were spent actually marching, with two halts each day from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. During that time our rate of marching scarcely ever exceeded a mile and a half per hour; for many hours were spent searching for a way, cutting a passage for the camels, rearranging their loads and attending to those who gave in on the march. Of the twenty-four men with me, one of the best and strongest of my porters was very seriously ill, and five others came in tied to the backs of camels.

## CHAPTER XVII

### FROM HARYEL TO THE LORIAN SWAMP

THESE Somali proved to be from the Maghabul tribe : they were astonished at seeing a white man, and not without reason, for none had passed that way before. But as soon as they had recovered from their first feelings of surprise, they warmly greeted me, and on learning that I was bound for the Lorian, they asked me to camp, in order that they might provide me with guides. They were travelling in the same direction, and several of their party had gone on ahead to find the best and quickest way, but they were shortly expected back, and the headman told me he would be glad to send one with me. I was only too glad to camp by the big pool, and rest both my men and my camels, so I readily fell in with his suggestion. It was not long before my tent was up ; soon I was enjoying the luxury of a hot bath, after which I lay down for a quiet and pleasant sleep. From this I was awakened by the sound of many voices outside, so I got up to see what was the matter. I found the headman of the cattle safari, with all his followers, waiting to speak to me. So I dressed, and, sitting down in front of my tent, I called them up. The headman then presented me with a nice fat calf, for which I was indeed most grateful, as I was very hungry and it would provide me with the best meal I had had for some time. He then went on to make

## AN INTERESTING OLD MAN

a long and eloquent speech. He referred to his feelings, when he first saw me that morning, in terms of true Oriental exaggeration. "We felt," he said, "like little children who with wondering gladness behold the return home of their long-lost father, and shame fell upon us that we had nothing to offer him worthy of his acceptance. We have brought you this calf, and if it find favour in your sight, we shall be more than glad, more than recompensed."

He proceeded to say that they were intending to march to Nairobi, where they expected to sell their cattle, but as they had never been there before, he hoped I would give them letters to help them. I thanked him as well as I could, through the interpreter, and gave orders for "buni" to be prepared and served to them. This was a lengthy proceeding, as there were some thirty Somali present, but in the meantime I had a long conversation with their leader, who proved to be a delightful old man, as interesting as he was friendly. He made me realise most vividly the hardships and discomforts of travelling with cattle; his simple narrative of their march from Gulola, by a more northerly route than I had taken, abounded in quaint phrases and picturesque similes, and many of the essential features of their journey recalled to my mind the days when I had herded cattle on the Arizona plains.

Most of his followers were quite young men; the majority had never seen a town before, and some had not previously met a European. It was amusing to watch them examining my things and peering into my tent, but their curiosity had no trace of vulgarity in it, and their interest was wholly genuine. Although the greater number of these young warriors wore the

## A VARIETY OF COSTUMES

usual white "tobe," a few had departed far from the conventional dress worn by the Somali on trek. I noticed that some had draped themselves with two "half-lengths" of coloured cloth, as striking as any Scotch tartan, while one young "blood" wore above his white loin-cloth a lady's brown jacket, made in the days when "leg of mutton" sleeves were fashionable! How he had ever got hold of it, and how he had managed to keep it in such excellent condition, in spite of the bush through which he had travelled, will always remain a mystery. As is the custom in the interior of Jubaland, all wore their hair long, well oiled and fluffed out, and in it many carried combs, shaped like a long wooden skewer. The habit of bleaching the hair is not regarded with much favour by these tribes of the Ogaden, though it is very general in northern Somaliland: nor will they shave their heads, as many of the Herti do on the coast, or the more civilised Somali in Nairobi or Kismayu. They were all fully armed, however, with spear, shield and knife: some carried in addition the curious hatchet (gudimo) of native manufacture, and the forked and hooked stick, both of which are used for making or pulling apart the zariba.

When they had finished their "buni," but while I was still talking to them, one of the syces, who was on guard while the camels fed, came running in and reported that he had been accosted by four armed Somali, who asked who I was, how many rifles I had, and how many askaris. On hearing his answer they left him and disappeared in the bush. Thinking their behaviour very suspicious, he had told the other syce to drive in the camels, and had run on ahead himself to report. Before he had



## SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR

finished speaking, my headman pointed to a couple of Somali, who could just be seen at the edge of the bush, watching us. He called to them to come into camp, instead of doing which they immediately ran away. These strange Somali skulking in the bush, their suspicious behaviour and the drift of their questions to the syce, seemed to indicate the probability of an attack, and my position would have been very ugly had I not fortunately met the friendly Maghabul Somali that morning. Even so, it was highly unpleasant, situated as I was in a small clearing surrounded by bush which afforded ample cover for the enemy, and which would prevent effective rifle fire until they were so close that they could rush us.

My own men were very nervous and were exhausted by the hard work of the last few days, but the chief of the friendlies offered to send out a small scouting-party of his men to reconnoitre, an offer which I accepted. For the next few hours my men worked feverishly to make our position as strong as possible. I had a small but very strong zariba erected in the shape of a hollow square. At one corner I posted two askaris, three syces and my gun-bearer, and at the opposite corner the other two askaris, three more syces and my headman. The loads formed another smaller square in the centre, and the spare ammunition was spread out in charge of Campi Mbaya, the skinner; the camels were made to lie down, and were securely tied by a rope running from knee to knee over their necks, a method which would absolutely prevent them from getting up and stampeding should they become alarmed. The cattle were led down to the edge of the pool and a zariba erected round them. Half the friendly Somali

## A TRYING WAIT

kept guard over them, and the rest came in to help me. Thorn branches were cut down and spread freely over the open ground between the zariba and the bush in order to check the anticipated attack.

When all was completed, a long and trying wait ensued. The sun beat down mercilessly upon the camp; there was no sign of life or movement, save when some little cloud of dust stirred in a sudden gust of wind, which died away almost before it could be felt, or when a vulture sailed overhead in slow and solemn flight. An oppressive silence brooded over the bush—there was no sound to betray the presence of the enemy or to herald the return of the scouts. At length a little group of men came into sight: they were the young Maghabul, and they brought with them two prisoners, both of the Aulehan tribe, fully armed with rifles and plenty of ammunition, in addition to their customary equipment. The rifles had been taken from them, and they were brought up to me unarmed. I questioned them at length with regard to their suspicious behaviour, but their answers were unsatisfactory. They said that they were merely travelling through the country to see if there was water and pasture, that there were nine of them, all armed, and that they had run away because they thought I was the District Commissioner from Moyale and would take away their rifles. They denied that they had spoken to my syce, although they were confronted with him, but acknowledged that they had followed our trail for the last two days. As I had been travelling very hard myself I suppose they had started too late to catch me up before I had overtaken the friendly Maghabul.

As it was now growing dark I determined to hold them prisoners until next day, when I would release

## PRISONERS

them at the same time as I moved westwards towards the Lorian. Of course I did not know whether they had spoken the truth as regards their number, so I took every precaution that night to guard against an attack. All the cooking was done before seven. At eight o'clock the fires were put out and the sentries doubled. I then went ostensibly into my tent, as though to go to bed, but after a short interval I turned down the light of the hurricane lamp very low, and then crept out and lay down fully dressed in the centre of the boma, near the load, with my rifle beside me. For I knew that should we be attacked, their first object would be to reach the tent. It was a beautiful starlit night, and I regretted that I could not take a latitude observation to confirm those I had taken at midday.

Anxious though I felt, I was too tired not to sleep: the hours of darkness passed without incident, and it was only when the chilly breeze that precedes dawn was ruffling the smooth surface of the pool that I awoke and rose to stretch my cramped limbs. I could see the men beginning to move about—shadowy figures in the dim grey light, wrapped up to the eyes in their white tobes; fires sprang up, around which gathered little groups, my breakfast was cooked, and as I ate it, dawn came the tent, and the loads were sorted and tied up. Just as the sun rose we all started; I let the two young Aulehan go, and they returned eastwards through the bush in the direction of their village, a suspicious circumstance if they had really come to see the country. My opinion is that a party of young warriors had crossed and then followed our trail, in the hope perhaps of being able to catch us unawares and obtain either my rifles or camels or both; but having been discovered, and seeing that I

## WAIT-A-BIT THORN

was on my guard, they gave up the idea, not being sufficiently strong to carry it out.

I had arranged with the headman of the Maghabul that we should march independently of each other, as they had to allow the cattle to graze, which would have kept me back. But he provided me with two men, who thought they knew the way. Although we were likely to meet again at the Lorian Swamp, I gave him before I left a handsome gift of cloth, silk, "buni," tobacco and perfume, to show my appreciation of his behaviour on the previous day, and he seemed delighted with the present.

It was not long before Haryel Plains were left, for after passing through several thin belts of bush, we entered once more the familiar wait-a-bit thorn-scrub. Our progress became more and more slow, and it was soon obvious that my two guides had lost their way, and it became a typical case of the blind leading the blind. They had a vague notion of where the Lorian lay, and so had I, so we crept on slowly but patiently towards the west. Six hours passed thus, and then I decided to let the camels have their midday rest here, while some of my men went on in different directions in search of a trail. The thorn-scrub here was covered with leaves; the camels seemed to appreciate this unusual state of things, and fed with avidity on the young and tender shoots in spite of the hot sun. They would roll their long and horrid-looking tongues round the thick end of a small branch, and then, with a single steady pull, would strip it clean—after which they would chew contentedly for some time before repeating the performance. The thorns did not seem to worry them at all, and not one of them showed signs of having been scratched.

## A PLATEAU

While I was eating my own lunch, and watching them at the same time, one of the sentries who was on guard came up and reported that one of the guides had returned, having found the faint trail he was looking for. By two o'clock the others had also arrived, so we were able to proceed not long after. The morning had, however, been wasted, so it was improbable that we should reach the Lorian Swamp that night. As soon as we came to the long-disused track which we were to follow, we were able to mend our pace. The ground rose steadily as we advanced, and at length we reached a plateau only thinly covered with bush. We were now some 800 feet above sea-level, and, on looking back, Haryel Plains could just be seen through the thick heat haze that hung low over the land. It was barely visible and appeared as a thin yellow line almost lost in the vast expanse of green bush that surrounded it. Old rhinoceros spoor was plentiful on this table-land, and there were many giraffe about but very little game of any other sort.

Five miles farther on we crossed a narrow valley 150 feet deep, in which was situated a large water-hole ; when we passed, it was quite dry, so we climbed up the other side on to another plateau 180 feet higher than the last. The bush, however, became very dense, the track disappeared, and we were compelled to follow an old elephant trail. While I was examining the pool we had just passed, I noticed that some elephants had come down from the north, but on finding no water had turned south-west along the trail, and had proceeded at a fast walk in the direction of the Lorian Swamp. We followed their tracks easily enough, and it was apparent that they were very thirsty, as they had not halted anywhere to

## TREMENDOUS THUNDERSTORM

feed, but had continued in single file up the trail. Just before sunset I noticed that the elephants had left the path and turned off to the left. Following in their footsteps I found a small pool about half a mile away. After drinking, they apparently had stayed near it for some time, for the water was very muddy and filthy; they then had begun to feed, moving slowly away towards the east.

I decided to camp in the vicinity, as it was not safe to travel in the dark after yesterday's experience. The camels were a long way behind, so we sat down under a bush to await their arrival. Huge storm-clouds had been quietly gathering all afternoon, and now a tremendous thunderstorm broke, wetting us to the skin in an instant. The rain fell in solid sheets of water, the track became a raging torrent, and pools were formed in every hollow. To add to the discomfort a strong wind rose, chilling us to the bone. It was absolutely impossible to light a fire—not only were the matches damp, but the few dead branches lying about were thoroughly wet. So we stood and shivered in the meagre shelter of a thorn bush and tried to summon what patience we could until the rest of the caravan turned up.

Just as darkness was falling, and the storm was abating, the camels came in; the wet wood was immediately collected in a huge heap, a few sheets torn from my notebook were placed underneath, and some paraffin poured over the lot, so that a few minutes after applying the first match we were all warming ourselves before a huge bonfire. It was delightful to feel the heat, and although the rain had rendered the ground very wet and muddy, and everything was disagreeably sticky, yet the pleasure at



MY HEADMAN—DAHIR OMAR

He was an Ogaden Somali of the Mohammed Zubheir tribe. Notice the knife, spear, pillow, and shield. On the latter will be seen several dark scratches. These were caused by a lion, which killed the former owner of the shield (see Chapter IV). He was a capable and intelligent man, and rendered splendid service while he was with me.





## FIRST VIEW OF THE LORIAN

feeling warmth and comfort stealing over one's body again, almost wiped out the recollection of all the previous discomforts. At last my tent was pitched, a strong zariba built, and I was able to sit down to a good supper.

As soon as it was sufficiently light, we broke camp, and continued our march across the plateau. Except for being somewhat stiff I was none the worse for the experience of the night before, and I felt very happy and contented to think that my goal was so close at hand. For days and weeks I had been thinking of the Lorian Swamp, for months it had been my one desire to reach it; at times it had seemed as though I should never attain it, and now I knew it lay close by and might see it at any moment. On and on we marched, until at length we reached the edge of the plateau, and here I obtained my first view of Lorian. At my feet stretched an immense shallow valley which lay across our path and disappeared on either side in the blue mist of the far horizon. In the distance, a great way ahead, I could see a thin, white streak amidst the bush, which I knew must be the plains on either side of the Lorian, while still farther a low line of rounded hills showed indistinctly in the early morning haze. To right and left, between the plains and the plateau on which we were, the desert scrub stretched away interminably. It was a lonely and desolate scene; but the vastness of the view, the mystery that for ever broods over an unknown land, and the faint blue mist in the south where the low hills rose against the sky, gave solemnity and a melancholy charm to a landscape that was otherwise monotonous and tedious.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PLAIN AND SWAMP

ONLY those who have travelled in a desert country will realise my feelings as I gazed at that insignificant white line in the distance, and knew that permanent water was close at hand. With this knowledge a heavy load of anxiety and of responsibility was lifted from my shoulders. In that moment I was filled with true thankfulness, and it seemed as if at last my troubles were over and that the rest of my journey would be easy and pleasant, though many a long mile lay between me and civilisation.

Eagerly I called on my men to start, and, leading the way, I climbed down the side of the plateau into the valley. On all sides the bush rose like a solid wall, shutting out the view, but the game trail led onwards, marked by broken branches, where giant bodies had forced their way. In our eagerness to reach the swamp, the road seemed interminable, and wound in and out in a most confusing manner, until at length abruptly, without any warning, the bush ceased and we emerged into an open plain. The ground, sandy and bare save for a thin covering of short grass, sloped gently down for a couple of miles until it met the darker green of the reed beds, which stretched in an apparently unbroken line to right and left, as far as the eye could reach. Above the tangled vegetation of the swamps a thin line of thorn-trees

## ORYX

rose, delicately outlined against the blue of the sky. A herd of Grant's gazelle, a couple of oryx beisa and a solitary Grevy's zebra were feeding peacefully at the edge of the reeds, while egrets in astonishing numbers were resting on the thorn trees or flying over the swamp, their white feathers flashing in the sun. The abrupt cessation of the bush, which had become so detestably familiar to me, and the narrow strip of bare and arid plain, in striking contrast to the tropical fertility of the swamp, combined to form a scene that was strange, even dramatic, in its contrast.

I decided to camp half-way between the bush and the reed bed in the open plain, and I set the porters who were with me to build a zariba, while waiting for the camels to arrive. In the meantime I made my way towards where the oryx were feeding, as it was very necessary to obtain some meat for myself and my men.

Stalking them was a difficult and slow proceeding, for there was no cover; I wanted to be sure of my shot so as not to frighten unduly other game that might be in the vicinity. I soon discovered that there were three oryx, for I had not seen one that was lying down close to the others. When I was still 300 yards away they began to move around, obviously uneasy, though they had not made me out. I lay quite motionless stretched on the ground; in another five minutes they had begun to graze again. In this way I gradually got closer, and finally I took a shot at just under 200 yards at the largest of the three as he was facing me. From the sound of the bullet I thought I had made a good shot; he fell like a log, then got up, ran forward for about a couple of hundred yards and lay down again. One of the

## A FINE BULL

others remained with him, moving round and round and trying to make him get up, but the other one galloped off and disappeared in the bush. As I thought the oryx was hit in the shoulder, I sat down for about ten minutes, and then got up and walked towards him to finish him off. But as he caught sight of me, he rose, and with the cow dashed off madly towards the bush.

Although running on three legs only he went at a great pace. I was very much disappointed, and could not make out where I had hit, but I decided to follow him and try to put him out of his misery. So I took up the blood spoor, which was very clear, at a trot, and soon I reached and entered the bush once more. I proceeded more cautiously, and presently, on looking through the undergrowth, I made him out under a tree not 40 yards away. It was an easy shot, and I brought him down with a broken neck. He proved to be a fine bull in the height of condition, with a symmetrical and massive pair of horns measuring a shade under 34 inches in length. This is a good average length for a herd bull, but the horns of cows and old bulls leading a solitary life attain a much greater size; my bullet had hit him just above the hoof, breaking the bone completely—a bad shot indeed, but one that proved effective, luckily for me. Leaving my gun-bearer and skinner with him, I walked back to camp with my orderly, and found my tent up and the camels grazing. The men were delighted with the news that I had killed, and all the meat was soon brought back.

The next four days were spent in examining the eastern portion of the swamp; every moment was precious, for my supply of rice had now given out

## SCANTY SUPPLIES

completely and I had nothing left but a couple of sacks of badly ground maize that I had bought at Kismayu, which was almost uneatable, consisting chiefly of dried husks, dust and pebbles. I had been badly cheated, of course, but it is impossible to go through every sack at the time of purchase. Fortunately game was fairly plentiful, so that I was able to provide sufficient meat. But in spite of the wretched food, there was very little grumbling among my followers. With but few exceptions they were really a splendid set of men, especially the Somali, and I owe them a real debt of gratitude for the willingness with which they carried out their work, and for the silent patience with which they endured the hardships and sufferings to which I was compelled to expose them daily.

The place where I first reached the swamp is known as Melka Waja; Melka is a Somali word meaning a "place" and "waja" is the name of a graceful thorn tree, with pale green bark and delicate feathery branches. It is much prized by the natives, owing to a kind of gum that exudes from it, which is apparently very sustaining, if eaten. But before going on to describe my journey between Melka Waja and Marti mountain, I will give a brief summary of the Lorian district in order that the reader may have a clearer picture of that part of the country.

First of all I should like to emphasise the fact that the river bed is continuous from the source of the Uaso Nyiro to Afmadu, since this was not known previously. Once past the remarkable volcanic plateau, called by the natives Marti, the Uaso Nyiro is known to the Borana and Somali as Lorian, and

## THE LORIAN DISTRICT

this name is extended to the district through which it flows until permanent water ceases at Madoleh ("place of darkness"). From that place to Afmadu the stream bed is known as the Lak Dera ("the long water-course"). But although in the latter stages of its wanderings the river is generally dry, and its channel often ill-defined and overgrown with dense jungle, yet to the careful observer, who has patiently followed its course, the main stream bed is always distinguishable. A glance at the map will show that the district of Lorian is contained between the 39th and 40th meridians of E. longitude along the 1st parallel of N. latitude. It may be considered as a shallow valley sloping gently to the south-east, whose floor consists of an alluvial plain of great extent, divided unequally into two parts by the river and the swamps through which it flows.

There are three swamps in the Lorian district. The first is situated about sixty miles to the east of Marti ( $1^{\circ} 09' 59''$  N.,  $39^{\circ} 15' 47''$  E.), and is called by the Borana and Somali Melka Gela ("watering-place of camels"). It consists of a large shallow depression about ten miles long by two broad, lying close to the south bank of the river, where the latter turns from its north-eastern course to east, and then south-east. It is covered during the rainy season with tall, coarse grass, ten or twelve feet high, and the ground becomes very saturated and swampy, and if the rains have been particularly abundant these conditions may extend to the north bank. In the dry season, however, the grass withers and the ground grows hard, and cracks, leaving large gaps in its surface. There are also one or two tiny little stream beds that wander across this swamp; but they cannot

## THE LORIAN SWAMP

be mistaken for the real river, which is at least 60 feet across at this place, and 6 to 8 feet deep.

Thirty miles farther east is the main Lorian Swamp, an enormous bed of dark green reeds. Before entering it the river flows for three miles through a bare alluvial plain, and is about 45 feet broad by 4 deep; but, once within, it divides into three channels, the centre one being the largest. The northern branch, which was practically dry when I was there, rejoins the river lower down, but the southern branch, as far as I was able actually to ascertain, finally disappears in the mud to the south-east. A small stream, known as the Lak Arro Dima, runs down from the hills to the north and joins the main river bed. In the eastern portion of this swamp the reeds give place to coarse grass 9 to 10 feet high, and equally dense. Finally, in long.  $39^{\circ} 45' 6''$  E. and lat.  $1^{\circ} 0' 615''$  N., the river emerges once more into an open plain. At this point the bush which covers the Lorian hills comes down to within half a mile of the river and then recedes far back until it is met with once again at Madoleh.

It is impossible to say exactly how big this swamp really is, since it varies greatly with the seasons, but to give fifty miles as its circumference would be a conservative estimate. Its northern bank is called Arro Dima; its southern, Jaffa Wein. Much water is lost by evaporation, but in my opinion the greater part sinks underground. At any rate, the river emerges as a narrow shallow stream flowing between high banks, whose course is marked by a thin line of waja trees. Six miles farther east it enters yet a third swamp near Melka Waja, consisting of tall grass and a few acacia trees, and being in extent five

## ARDUOUS EXPLORATION

miles long by two broad, but its size may be increased during the rainy season. Underfoot, in both the second and third swamps, the ground was very soft and saturated, and in February, when I visited them, there were about 6 inches of surface water. In a still further attenuated form the stream emerges once more and flows eastwards for eleven miles through flat alluvial plains, gradually diminishing in size until permanent water ends in a series of shallow pools surrounded by trees and bush, and this spot is called Madoleh. In exceptional years of rain, water may be found farther east, but the Somali and Borana I met assured me that a traveller could always depend on getting water at Madoleh, if not on the surface, at any rate only a few inches below, and it is towards this place that they always direct their steps when travelling across the thorn-covered desert that lies between the Tana and Lorian.

Having indicated the main features of the Lorian district, I will continue the narrative of my journey. As I mentioned above, I remained four days investigating the country between Melka Waja and Arro Dima. The small swamp, near which I camped at first, was very interesting to me, but the work of exploring it proved extremely arduous. Once the coarse grass was entered, progress was terribly trying. At every step thousands of mosquitoes and biting insects of every kind were roused, while I sank continually to my knees in the soft clinging mud. Time and time again I stumbled over tangled roots, and it was only after persistent efforts that I reached the river bank.

As I was following it westwards, I came upon a little island of solid ground about 200 yards from the





IN THE LORIAN SWAMP

This is a photograph of the river, two miles before emerging, from the east end of the main Lorian Swamp. The grass on either side is about ten feet high.



## BUSH SHELTERS

stream. It was covered with waja trees and a few large acacias all growing close together. In the middle I found two small bush shelters, where three or four men had obviously been hiding. To say the least, it was exceedingly curious; what they were doing there I cannot imagine, for no one would live in such dismal surroundings unless he were forced to do so. They may have been Borana trying to escape from their Somali oppressors, the Abd Wak, or perhaps fugitives of the latter tribe in hiding after the disastrous defeat they had suffered at the hands of the Mohammed Zubheir. Whoever they were, the signs of human habitation in the midst of the tangled confusion of that desolate swamp seemed almost incredible, and struck a strange, even a sinister note.

At last I emerged once more into the open, having followed the course of the river from end to end of the swamp; but, in addition, I had to fix the general outline of the hills and their heights, and to ascertain the lie of the land to the east of Melka Waja swamp. While working I also had to shoot for the pot, and take various astronomical observations, so I had no time to spare. Grant's gazelle (*G. granti brighti*) and Grevy's zebra were fairly numerous, but I saw no more oryx or any other game until I reached Arro Dima.

When I broke camp at Melka Waja, I sent my camels a long way outside the swamp in case there should be any tsetse fly, and my mule went with them. Meanwhile, I followed the course of the river on foot, and a very trying and exhausting march it proved. I took several photographs of the river, and by climbing a thorn tree managed to get a view of

## ZEBRA

the swamp from within, but no picture can convey any idea of the true character of the place. At length I reached the junction of the Lak Arro Dima, and following that, came out on to the plains, where I found my headman had made camp some two miles away. In the distance, to the north-east, the Lorian hills rose gently from the plain, their outline softened by the shimmering heat waves; to the south the dark green of the reed bed could be seen stretching away in an unbroken line to the horizon, and in between lay the interminable alluvial flats, bare and desolate, save for an occasional stunted bush or a small herd of game, made fantastic and unreal by the shifting and ever present mirage.

Lack of food, however, rendered it imperative that I should go out in search of meat. I soon spotted a couple of zebra; they were rather suspicious, and would gallop off for two or three hundred yards every time I thought I was getting within shooting distance. There being no cover, it was useless to try a stalk, so I got up and walked slowly but steadily diagonally towards them. This ruse succeeded at last, after a couple of attempts, and I managed to approach fairly close. I then sat down quickly, took rapid aim and fired at the stallion. The bullet hit him just below the shoulder, breaking the leg, but not wounding him fatally. As he went off I fired twice again, but missed. I had had nothing to eat that day, except a cup of tea and some toast, and I determined I would not lose him, so I got on my mule and, with my rifle in my hand, galloped after him. It was not very long before I overtook him, handicapped as he was by his broken leg.

My mule's blood was up and she became almost

## AN EXCITING RIDE

unmanageable, so that I could not get off, especially as I only had one hand free. At last we entered the bush, going at full gallop, and matters became really exciting. It was a mad rush, but my only chance was to catch the zebra and shoot it as I passed, and this I managed to do very luckily almost at once, for the zebra stumbled and fell, and I killed it before it rose again; but it took me quite a time to quieten the mule. The men came up shortly after, and I left them to bring in the meat, while I rode back to camp, and enjoyed the luxury of a shave and a warm bath while dinner was being prepared. I rather disliked the idea of eating zebra, but I was spared the ordeal, for my skinner, who had been out collecting, had killed a francolin—a change in my menu that was very welcome. My men, however, were glad enough to have the zebra, especially as they are among the few wild animals on which there is any fat, of which they are, almost without exception, inordinately fond.

All through my stay at the Lorian, especially when working in the swamps, I was much troubled by a variety of biting flies and insects, but chiefly by swarms of mosquitoes (*Stegomyia*). They are found in incredible numbers near the river, becoming more and more scarce as one leaves it, until they disappear at a distance of about five miles away. Along the water's edge and in the reed beds their attentions become almost unbearable, attacking one in a perfect swarm all day long, and, although a mosquito curtain kept them off at night, the irritation caused by their bites made sleep impossible. Though numerous in Jubaland, I had never met them in sufficient numbers to cause much annoyance, but in the Lorian, hunger,

## PLAGUE OF MOSQUITOES

thirst and fatigue, and all the other minor inconveniences which a traveller in the far corners of the world must of necessity endure, sank into insignificance compared to the irritation and real pain caused by these abominable insects.

## CHAPTER XIX

### A LAND OF MIRAGE

ON leaving Arro Dima, I first crossed the stream bed that bears that name, and then marched N.W., skirting the edge of the swamp, sometimes within the reeds, sometimes on the bare alluvial flats just outside. But the camels made a wide detour in order to avoid the possibility of infection from "fly." I did not see any tsetse, however, although there may have been a few amongst the countless biting insects that attacked me, and it was not until Melka Gela was reached that they were met with in any numbers. But whether they are infected or not, it is difficult to say; I should think it was improbable, for the Borana own enormous herds of cattle in the western portion of the Lorian, and they told me that they were very little troubled by "fly." On the other hand, there have been several suspected cases amongst the cattle brought down from Lorian to Rumuruti and Naivashi by Somali traders.

During this march I found and followed the northern branch of the river, which was then dry, save for a few shallow pools. That a considerable amount of water flows down it at certain seasons is obvious, for the bed is 12 feet deep and about 30 feet broad. Tall grass and reeds grow right up to the edge of the bank in such profusion as to completely hide the stream from view; in fact, I had no idea of its close proximity, until, in forcing my way through

## ELEPHANT SKULLS

the grass, which rose above my head, I suddenly fell and found myself, on getting up, in the soft mud that forms the river bed. At length I emerged from the swamp; in front of me stretched a perfectly level expanse of plain, devoid of all vegetation, through which the river ran sluggishly in a very winding channel. I could trace its course until it was lost to sight in a narrow belt of bush some three or four miles ahead. Still farther away some big trees apparently grew along its banks, but everything was distorted into curious and fantastic shapes by the shifting mirage, and it was impossible to make anything out distinctly.

In the distance, to my right, I could see my camels making their way towards the bush, where I had told the headman to make camp, but they appeared unreal and enormously magnified, and seemed to be floating in the air, so strange was the effect of the shimmering heat waves that rose from the baked brown earth. I started across the plain in order to join my safari, when my attention was attracted by what looked like three enormous white stones. They proved to be the skulls of elephants from which the tusks had been extracted. They were probably victims of Borana hunters, who, during the dry season, come down to the Lorian in search of game. I had been much surprised that I had not seen, during my work in Melka Waja and Arro Dima Swamps, any fresh signs of elephant, buffalo, rhino or hippo. Old spoor was plentiful, especially of elephant, but except for a few zebra and gazelle and an occasional oryx, game was conspicuous by its absence between Madoleh and Melka Dera ("the long watering-place"), which is the native name for the small district I was now in.



## MIRAGE

Later on I was given a very probable explanation of this state of affairs by two Haweyah hunters that I met near Marti, and who accompanied me for some time as guides. They said that whenever there was any surface water in the bush or in the hills the game left the Lorian and scattered over the country, where feed was good and plentiful, only returning to the river when the "worrtta" or rain-pans dried up. At such times enormous herds of elephant, buffalo and other smaller species of game collected on the plains round the swamps. This would explain the conflicting accounts of big-game hunters who have from time to time found their way in the western portions of the Lorian district.

Having examined these remains, I proceeded slowly onwards, for the heat was now very great, and the mirage, if possible, even more accentuated. Suddenly to my left, about a mile away, I saw a herd of animals moving about. I was accompanied by my orderly and skinner, both men born in the wilds and accustomed from their earliest days to seeing game of every kind, yet none of us could decide what they were, so unreal and fantastic was their appearance in the strange atmospheric conditions that prevailed. What struck us as particularly odd was that they seemed to be bathing in a shallow lake, for now and again we saw a silver streak, as though they were splashing in the water. So large did they look, that I mistook them at first for buffalo, but on approaching closer, I saw that they were only waterbuck, and that the white we had observed was caused by a number of egret, whose snowy plumage flashed like silver as they rose, although they were inconspicuous enough on the ground.

## WHITE WATERBUCK

There were about twenty antelope in all, with the unmistakable white elliptical ring on the rump from which these waterbuck obtain their specific title (*Cobus ellipsiprymnus*). In this group there were but three young bucks, the rest being does, and none of them was worth shooting. One of the latter, however, was feeding apart, and her appearance was so unusual that she immediately caught my attention. Instead of the grizzled grey-roan coat so characteristic of the waterbuck, she was of a uniform yellow-white colour, and the hair long and more or less shaggy, and the muzzle dark. This was an albino, a few specimens of which have been obtained in the Lorian district. Being a doe, I did not attempt to shoot her, but I was very disappointed at not seeing a buck, as I should very much have liked to obtain one of these so-called white waterbucks. According to Colonel Broun the eyes are of normal colour, and the nose and feet dark. They are some freak of nature, and are unlikely to form a separate species, being probably descendants from the same parents. It is at least a curious coincidence that Mr. A. B. Percival obtained an albino zebra in the Lorian district to the south-west of the main swamp, and I believe one or two more were shot later in the same region.

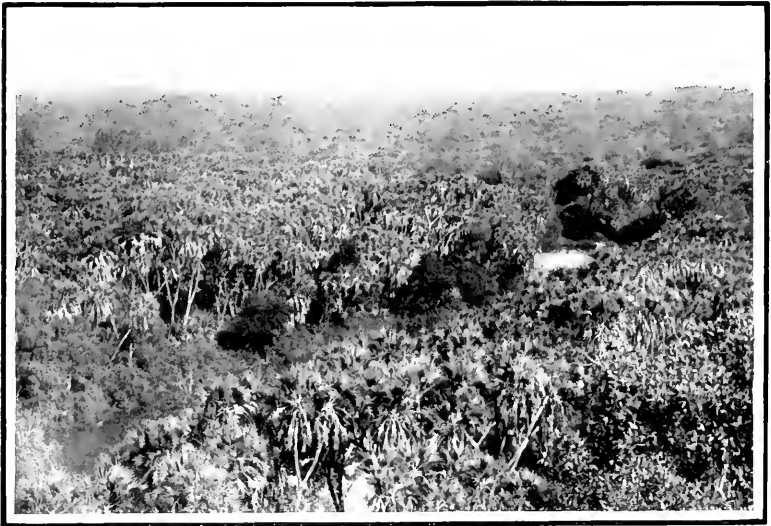
On reaching the bush, I found my tent pitched in the shade of a large acacia. The scenery was most lovely and picturesque, while the trees afforded pleasant shade in which relief could be obtained from the trying glare of the open plains. I spent a day at this camp, wandering through the bush that covers the banks of the river; I found traces of a Borana boma, and more remains of dead elephants. Old





#### THE SECOND LORIAN SWAMP

The line of trees in the distance denotes the actual river-bed; they are thornless acacia trees called "Waja" by the natives, and they give their name to the surrounding district (Melka Waja). The photograph was taken from a tree, and shows the tall reeds and grass that render it almost impossible to penetrate into the swamp.



#### THE UASO NYIRO, ABOVE MARTI PLATEAU

Notice the groves of dom palms on both banks. They are a conspicuous feature of the country between Archer's Post and Marti.

## FISH

spoor of the latter was exceedingly plentiful, and in one spot on the plains the surface was cut up to an extraordinary extent by their huge footprints, clearly proving that during the rains these mud-flats become very swampy.

Through the enterprise of one of my Swahili porters, who had bought some fish-hooks at Kismayu, a quantity of fish were caught in the river, and they proved a highly acceptable addition to my larder. They were of three kinds, a large and a small species of barbel and a fish resembling a perch. The latter was almost uneatable, as it contained an incredible quantity of bones; but the two former were delicious, and when fried or grilled made a most tasty dish. They were artless creatures. A hook baited with a grasshopper or piece of meat and tied to a thick piece of string was all that was needed to haul them in one after the other. My porters, after catching the first one, would cut him up and use him as a bait to entrap others, and they seemed as eager to take the hook thus disguised as when it was covered by a more dainty morsel. One hungry fish actually swallowed the bare hook, from which the grasshopper had been removed by a more artful companion, and was quickly hauled to the shore.

After leaving Melka Dera I continued marching in a north-westerly direction, following the left bank of the river, while the camels kept well outside the bush. I crossed a large plain covered with coarse grass and then entered more open country, where only a narrow fringe of bush separated the river from the alluvial flats. The grass had been burned, and now the fresh green shoots were just springing up, giving to the scene a fertile and pleasant aspect.

## A LARGE HERD OF ORYX

I was not surprised, therefore, to see a certain quantity of game feeding; there was an enormous herd of oryx, more than I had ever seen gathered together before. As far as I could ascertain there were at least one hundred and fifty, but it is difficult to count animals who are moving about. This is a most unusual sight, for, as a rule, oryx are found in little herds very rarely exceeding twenty individuals in each. It was a lovely scene and they appeared very handsome, their sleek brown bodies, their boldly marked faces and long sharp horns glistening in the sunlight.

I did not molest them, as I wished to shoot a gazelle, a herd of which I saw in the distance, for the flesh of the latter is far preferable. This I was able to do, and while it was being skinned I rode on to look for a suitable camping-ground. I found a cool and shady spot in the bush near the river, not far from a likely-looking ford. Although I had myself passed over to the southern side many times, I had not yet succeeded in finding a place where the camels could wade across, for they are helpless in the mud, owing to the peculiar form of their feet, which are especially adapted for walking on the sand or hard ground of an arid country. At this place the river was shallow and broad, with a sandy bed, so that I hoped I might be able to get them safely over in the afternoon. This ford is known to the Borana as Melka Adi (white place), owing to the unusually light colouring of the soil.

While my tent was being pitched, two natives were seen approaching. They were carrying enormous spears and were clothed in a loose cotton cloth, once white, but now of a neutral brown tint. They

## CONVERSATIONAL DIFFICULTIES

were brought up to me by my headman and orderly, and I questioned them as to who they were and where they came from. They said they were Borana, and that their village lay fourteen miles to the west near Melka Gela (watering-place of camels). I obtained quite a lot of information from them about the country, but our conversation was carried on under difficulties, for my headman was the only one who could understand their language. When I asked a question in English, it was turned into Somali by my interpreter Hassan, and from Somali into Borana by Dahir, the headman, and their answer came back to me in a similar way. Moreover, it is customary among the Borana for the listener to repeat in a loud tone the last word of the question addressed to him, a habit which not only lengthens a conversation interminably, but also sounds very comic if one is not accustomed to it. The following is the sort of thing that goes on:—

*Question:* How far is your village?

*Answer:* VILLAGE? Our village is not very far.

*Question:* FAR? How many hours?

*Answer:* HOURS? Perhaps five.

*Question:* FIVE? five hours?

*Answer:* A—AH!

To which you reply, A—AH! A—AH! if you are satisfied and wish to ask another question.

However, they agreed to act as guides until I could get others from the next village; they advised me to cross the river that evening, so that an early start could be made the following morning. So I gave orders to my headman to start at once, while I went down to the river to do a little fishing before

## A PRAIRIE FIRE

supper. While I was thus occupied, and was enjoying the peaceful scene that lay before me, I noticed a thin blue haze growing in the east: this increased in volume very quickly, and soon great clouds of smoke began to pass overhead, driven by a light breeze. At the same time I became aware of a continuous crackling noise which gradually grew louder, while the heat became very oppressive. I walked back to camp and found everybody working feverishly to get the last few loads across the river: the camels were already feeding on the other side, and it was not long before we too had gained the comparative safety of the southern bank and were free to gaze at the awe-inspiring sight of the prairie fire that raged to the north; huge red flames could be seen rising above the bush, above which hung enormous clouds of black smoke. As darkness fell the beauty of the scene increased, but the fire gradually died away to the north-west, and on the following morning the black and smoking plain was all that was left to mark its passage.

We were lucky to have been able to cross the river, as otherwise we might have been very awkwardly situated. How it started I have not the faintest idea, unless one of my porters had thrown away a cigarette into a dry patch of grass during the morning's march: the country through which we had come was uninhabited, so it could not have been caused by the natives.

My Borana guides were very anxious to have some meat, as they had not tasted any for some considerable time. So I set out that evening in search of game. It was good policy to treat them well, as I wished to exchange many of my trade



## IN SEARCH OF GAME

goods at the next village for sheep, in order to give my men some better food. I saw nothing for a while until I emerged into a small open plain covered with coarse yellow grass; a small herd of waterbuck were feeding on the far side, and I determined to approach them through the bush: the wind was favourable, and I was able to get to within 150 yards without alarming them. There were seven in all, one buck and six does, two of which were white. It was another bitter disappointment, but I refrained from shooting either of the white does, and aimed instead at the buck. My first shot was a disgraceful one, passing just over his shoulder; the whole herd sprang round in alarm, first running a little way forward and then back again, quite at a loss to know in what direction safety lay, for they could not make me out lying quietly under a bush. I soon had another opportunity, of which I took better advantage, and brought the buck down with shoulders broken.

Waterbuck are indeed handsome animals, and, common though they are, each time I see one I am struck afresh by their beauty of form and colouring. This one proved very big and heavy in bodily size, but his horns were not particularly good, being just under 27 inches. In a herd bull it is rare to find them much longer than this; in fact, in British East Africa the record is  $31\frac{1}{4}$  inches, which compares very unfavourably with such gigantic horns as those obtained by Mr. F. A. Knowles in Uganda, whose length exceed a yard by nearly 2 inches. Although waterbuck feed almost entirely on grass, their flesh has the reputation of being about the worst of all antelopes, and it is most unpleasant to eat, as I have

## THE MSUAKI BUSH

found many times to my cost. The meat is particularly tough and stringy, and has in addition a very offensive taste. My two Borana, however, were only too pleased, and attempted to show me, by rubbing their bellies and by other gestures, their delight at the thought of the coming meal.

The following morning I left Melka Adi as the first streak of dawn was showing in the east, and following the right-hand bank of the river marched at first south and then west.

The typical alluvial flats so characteristic of the country between Melka Dera and Melka Waja had given place to grass-covered plains, dotted plentifully with little islands of thorn-scrub. A few dom palms were conspicuous amidst the acacia trees that hid the river from view, and below, in the undergrowth, the "msuaki" bush could occasionally be seen. This shrub is eagerly sought by the Somali, for from its soft and fibrous branches they make their "tooth-sticks." No other tribe I have met take greater care of their teeth than they, and whenever suitable twigs are to be found they will cut small pieces and chew the end until it is soft and frayed, which thus forms a rough tooth-brush. They will then spend hours rubbing and rubbing, until they are satisfied that their teeth are clean.

There were a considerable number of Grevy's zebra, waterbuck, Grant's gazelle, oryx and a few gerenuk, but I did not wish to shoot until I was nearer the village for which I was making. At length we left the river, and skirting the edge of a large grass-covered plain soon reached the Borana boma to which my guides belonged. It was still quite early, so while my tent was being pitched I

## GRANT'S GAZELLE

sent my headman off to the village to interview the chief and to inform him that I wished to see him in the afternoon, and went off myself in search of game. There was a quantity about, and my quest resolved itself into the question of choosing a good head. I finally obtained two excellent specimens of Grant's gazelle with two well-placed shots. Both carried fine horns, so I had them skinned and brought back to camp together with all the meat. But since I wished to give some to the Borana as well as feed my own twenty-four hungry men, I was compelled to shoot something else.

As I was prowling through the bush I caught sight of a Grevy's zebra, and I decided to try and bag him, as I wanted another complete skin of that species. It took me some time to approach sufficiently close, but at length I sat down, and was about to pull the trigger when he turned round and faced me. Although it was a difficult shot, I managed to bring it off, much to my delight. On receiving the bullet, the zebra made a frantic spurt of about 200 yards, then halted, obviously in great distress; suddenly his legs seemed to give way under him, and he fell, never to rise again. On examining him I found the bullet had entered the left-hand side of the chest, and passing through the heart had lodged near the tail, inflicting a terrible wound.

Grevy's zebra are very large animals, standing about 58 or 59 inches at the shoulder, and are the most highly striped of the whole family. The mane is very full, and extends on to the withers, while the tail tuft is also large. The ears, too, are peculiar, being broad and thickly haired, and thus differ essentially from all other zebras. It has been suggested that the

## GREVY'S ZEBRA

narrowness of the stripes and the large size of the ears are adapted to a life partially spent in thin scrub, which is their favourite habitat ; but, personally, I have always found it very easy to detect them, and especially so when in the sunlight, for then their glossy coat looks quite white, or if only the shadow side is seen, quite black.

My men were compelled to skin him and cut him up on the spot, as he was too awkward a load to put on one camel. While this was being done I returned to camp, ate a hasty lunch, and then summoned the Borana headman, as I wished to know whether he was willing to trade, and whether he would supply me with guides to take me on to Marti.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE BORANA

IN due course I was visited by the headman of the village, accompanied by four elders, bringing with them a sheep as a gift to me. After a few words of welcome, he began a long and bitter complaint against the Abd Wak, who had lately murdered three men of his village, and against the Samburu, who were continually oppressing them. He said that when the British Government undertook to administer this part of East Africa, they had been amongst the first to submit and to be promised protection. They had then moved southward from the Abyssinian border to avoid the incessant plundering and raiding to which they were continually exposed, but they found their present plight even more distressing. Although they had laid their case before the officer in charge at Wajheir, who had promised to redress their wrongs, they had received neither help nor protection. In reply, I told him I was exceedingly sorry to learn of their difficulties, but as I was not a Government official I could do nothing, but I suggested they should apply to the Commissioner at Meru. It appeared, however, that he had attempted to do that, but that on the way he had been stopped by a party of Samburu warriors who had threatened to kill him and his followers unless he returned at once, and further promised to exterminate his whole village if

## OPEN BUSH COUNTRY

he ever attempted to pass that way again. I could offer him little consolation, but it is to be hoped, for the credit of our reputation, that some other outlet may be found for the energies of the Samburu and the Abd Wak. So obsessed was he with his troubles that I could get little or no information from him, nor was he particularly anxious to trade, and since nearly all the male population of the village was away at the time, I decided it would be useless to spend much time at that place. So I left the following afternoon with two guides to take me to the next boma, after I had satisfied myself as to the lie of the land and character of the surrounding country.

On the march I saw several herds of waterbuck, but though I scanned them carefully through my glasses I could not detect any albinos. There were a few gazelle and zebra, and a solitary wart-hog (*Phacachœrus æthiopicus africanus*), which, however, carried very poor tusks. The vegetation on the plains became more profuse, forming what I should call "open bush country," while amongst the various kinds of acacia trees that lined the banks of the river, dom palms and a species of willow were conspicuous. In fact, the landscape presented a much more fertile appearance than it had previously. The dreary mud-flats, which contributed so largely to the desolate and forbidding aspect of the country surrounding the main swamp, had disappeared, giving place to extensive stretches of land eminently suitable for agriculture. The rich alluvial soil seemed admirably adapted to the cultivation of cotton, rice and maize, while the formation of the country and the character of the river would enable irrigation to be carried out without any difficulty and at a trifling cost. Who knows but that

## THE TUFİ BORANA

in the years to come Lorian may not be the centre of a teeming population engaged in tilling the soil, instead of a lonely swamp, the haunt of the mosquito and tsetse fly, seldom visited except by a few nomadic tribes?

The next Borana boma was reached after a short but pleasant march. It proved larger than the one I had left, and was the scene of much life and animation when I arrived, for the cattle, goats and sheep were being driven in to the zariba for the night. While my tent was being pitched, I walked down to the village, inspected the huts and spent a pleasant hour watching the inhabitants at their daily tasks. They were very friendly and willing to oblige and to show me everything I wished to see, but my ignorance of their language proved a great difficulty in the way of obtaining all the information I sought—a difficulty only partially overcome by the efforts of my headman and interpreter.

Both these villages appeared to belong to the Tufi Borana, a tribe that may be found in scattered communities throughout the country from the Lorian to Wajheir and Eil Wak ("the wells of God"). They came originally from Abyssinia, their headquarters being the fertile district round Moyale, from which they have been driven by their enemies. They are a peaceful pastoral people, but faint-hearted, although when hard pressed they will show fight. Consequently they are continually being plundered and harassed by the surrounding tribes. In physique they resemble the Somali and the Galla rather than the negro. They are light coloured, with not unpleasing features, and of a strong but somewhat clumsy build. The women, when they are young,

## BORANA CUSTOMS AND LANGUAGE

are particularly handsome, and their lithe and graceful figures are especially noticeable.

The Borana are, as a general rule, pagans, although many of them have been converted to Mohammedanism by the Somali. They believe, however, in the existence of a Supreme Being (Wak), to whom they sacrifice a goat or sheep before undertaking any important expedition and going out to war. As far as I could gather, they have no conception of, or belief in, life after death. Their marriage customs are very primitive and rarely include the giving of a dowry: they are polygamists, and their conjugal morality is very lax. Unlike the Somali, they do not practise the rites of circumcision or clitoridectomy; marriage takes place at a very early age (ten or eleven) and the girls undergo no initiation ceremony on reaching the age of puberty, as is the custom among many uncivilised tribes.

Their language is unwritten, but it resembles the Galla and is not unlike the Somali. In proof of this may be adduced the fact that the Somali are able to converse easily with both the Galla and Borana after a very brief acquaintance—which would be impossible were there not a certain similarity between their languages. This, in conjunction with several customs common to all three tribes, would appear to indicate a common origin, and this is very probably the case.

The Somali look with contempt on the Borana and on the Galla, and will not for a moment consider this possibility—a narrow and prejudiced view not unnatural to a tribe whose ideals consist in a fancied superiority over their neighbours. Nothing definite can be said on this point, for it requires for its



## BORANA DWELLINGS

elucidation a far more intimate knowledge of their respective languages than we possess at present. It is always a very difficult matter for a European to converse with such natives, for, unless the words are correctly pronounced, they will not try to understand. This may be explained perhaps by the fact that, their language being unwritten, they can only recognise one unvarying pronunciation of a word, and if this is departed from, they are not able to recognise it, believing it to be in a foreign tongue. This is not unnatural, but at the same time it is very irritating.

Like the Somali, the Tufi Borana are a nomadic people; but they inhabit a less arid region than the former and therefore they are not compelled to wander so far afield in search of pasture. Moreover, they are more sedentary by inclination, and the range of their movements is as restricted as the exigencies of the water-supply permit. They will often therefore remain in the same locality for weeks and even months, so long as there is a sufficiency of feed for their cattle, but in spite of this, their huts are of a primitive and non-permanent type.

These dwellings are of a beehive shape, and are built by placing over a light framework of branches tied together with fibre a thick thatching of dried grass, reeds and bush, above which a goat's skin or ox-hide is securely lashed. They are not more than 6 or 7 feet high, and are much more flimsy and insecure than the Somali "gurgi." In those that I inspected, the fire was on the left-hand side of the entrance, and the right-hand portion of the interior was reserved for the sleeping apartment; in the daytime, at any rate, there was no division between the two parts of the hut. Round each boma there is

## BORANA DRESS

a high thorn zariba ; just within it these primitive shelters are built with the entrance facing inwards, while the centre of the boma is divided into a number of small pens communicating with each other by a flimsy doorway of branches tied at right angles to three horizontal posts, which are themselves lashed to the walls of the pen by leathern thongs.

In one corner a heavy stake is driven into the ground, to which the cows are tied at milking-time, and near by is a diminutive additional enclosure in which the lambs and kids are kept. These very curious and interesting structures resemble nothing so much as an enormous bird's nest. They are circular in shape, approximately 15 feet in diameter, built of logs of wood and branches, and lined with dry grass and reeds. In them the tiny animals are placed, and are taken out every morning and evening, one by one, when they are allowed in turn to go to their mothers for a short time, after which the latter are milked.

The Borana have adopted a simple but distinctive dress. The men wear a loose kind of trouser made of white cotton, cut off above the knee, while the upper part of the body is covered by a half "tobe" of Americani. This may be replaced when resting in their village by a single cloth 8 yards in length, draped loosely round them. Men of importance and heads of families sometimes wear in addition a turban made of similar material.

The Borana are exceedingly fond of bracelets, necklaces and similar ornaments. Bracelets are simple circular rings, round or triangular in section, made of brass or white metal. One man possessed one of ivory, carved out from an elephant's tusk,

## BORANA ORNAMENTS

about half an inch in thickness, but this type does not appear to be common. Necklaces vary greatly in length and material. Very popular are those composed of cowrie shells, strung on a piece of fibre or gut, often 30 inches in length, which is worn round the neck or even carried in the hand. Another form, which is highly valued, consists of a series of white metal cubes, alternating with crimson or yellow glass beads, strung on the hairs taken from the tail of an elephant or giraffe. Rings cut from the horn of a rhinoceros are also regarded with great favour. All these ornaments, and many others of a similar nature, are worn by both men and women. The dress of the latter is slightly more elaborate than that used by the men. I am not quite clear as to the shape and number of garments, but they appear to wear a short skirt or kilt of white cotton, and a loose bodice of the same material draped over the right shoulder and under the left arm. In cold weather a long cloth is worn like a cape, covering the figure from head to foot. The ends of the cloth are worked loose by hand, and twisted into a kind of fringe. Being, unlike the Somali, indescribably filthy in their personal habits, the white cotton they wear soon becomes a dirty and unpleasing brown.

The weapons carried by the men consist of a spear, 8 or 9 feet long, with a broad-leafed iron blade, with high median ridge, but blunt and clumsily forged, and also of a bow and arrows in a quiver, and a short knife. The general appearance of the bow and quiver is very similar to that used by the Somali hunter, except that the latter has no cap. Attached to the quiver is a bag of beautifully dressed goatskin (8 inches long by 6 inches deep), deep red in colour

## BORANA WEAPONS

owing to the bark they employ for tanning, and containing a miscellaneous collection of small articles. In the one I examined were the following objects :—

1. Tip of an ox-horn, hollowed out and containing a small piece of coloured trading cloth—probably a charm.
2. A small lump of hard black gum, said to be poison for their arrows, obtained at Moyale.
3. A few feathers.
4. Some fibre and gut for mending bow or arrow.
5. Two long rusty nails.
6. Two fire-sticks (attached outside).

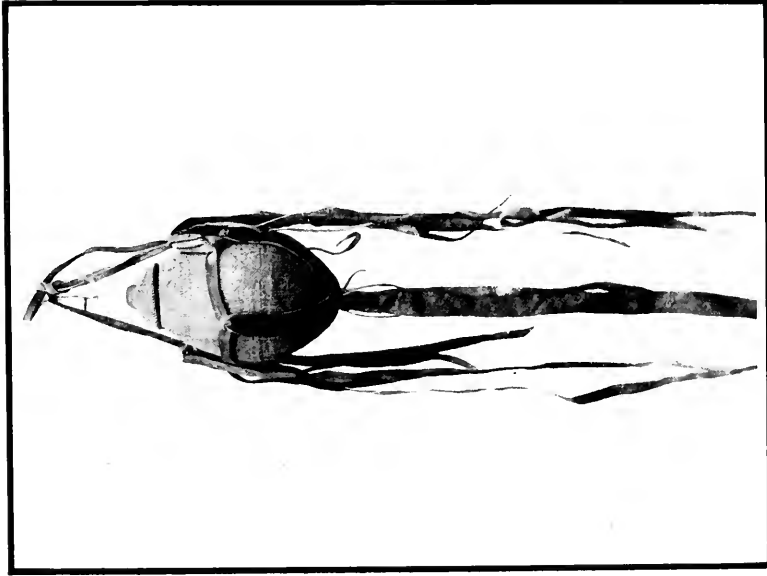
The quiver itself was a hollow wooden tube, expanding symmetrically from the middle to either end, with a cap of ox-hide shrunk on to one extremity, and impressed with a simple linear pattern. The middle was wrapped round with a broad piece of tanned goatskin fastened securely by two thongs. To it was attached a band for carrying, and a rough sheath for a slender knife. In the quiver were two unfinished and four finished arrows complete with loose iron heads thickly smeared with poison. I did not see any shields. The Borana use their weak bow with great skill; moreover, they keep innumerable native dogs for hunting purposes, and it is remarkable how quickly these animals will bring an antelope down or hold a large beast at bay until their masters can dispatch it.

Their household utensils are few in number, and in many respects resemble those used by the Somali. One of the most striking is the “han,” or water vessel, which is ovoid in shape, and constructed of tightly woven fibre with a deep and neatly fitting cap. The inside is well smoked, and the outside is usually decorated with rows of cowrie shells strung on fibre.



A BORANA MILK-PAIL

It is made out of a single piece of giraffe hide cleverly sewn together, and well smoked until it is black. It holds 7 pints.



A BORANA WATER-BOTTLE

These water-bottles are made out of fibre, and are called "hans." They are very similar to those made by the Somali. They are usually decorated with rows of cowrie shells. The leather straps are merely ornamental.



## HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS

It is carried in an elaborate network of leather thongs. Another interesting utensil is the milk-pail, made from a single piece of giraffe skin cleverly sewn together with a loop of the same leather on one side. This is also thoroughly well smoked and greased, so that it becomes quite watertight, and will last a lifetime. When full to the brim, it holds seven pints of milk, all but a few ounces. Their "herios" or camel mats compare unfavourably with those made by the Somali in quality, as also do their knives, spears and sandals and the forked stick they use for making or pulling apart the zariba. They do not appear to be in the habit of wearing hair combs, and I did not see any ghee spoons. They often carry about with them, when near their village, a piece of undressed ox-hide (which is therefore stiff and hard), and this they use as a kind of screen or shelter from the wind, which is often cold and damp at night. I have never observed this among the Somali.

The Borana are amongst the richest cattle-owners in British East Africa, being second only to the Masai; they possess a few camels and donkeys, upon which they pack their belongings when moving from one locality to another. In addition, they own vast flocks of fat-rumped sheep and large herds of goats. But they will rarely kill any of their stock for food, their principal diet being milk. I was told by my headman that when one of their cattle is ill and likely to die, they will cut its throat and eagerly drink the blood as it pours forth, but as I never saw it done I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement. They are, however, extremely fond of "buni" when they can get it, which is seldom: they told me that there was a certain berry that grew in abundance in the Moyale

## AGRICULTURE AND TRADING

district, which, when cooked in the same way as coffee, gives them almost equal satisfaction.

Of labour, then, around a Borana boma there is but little—no tilling of the soil, no searching for roots or wild plants and seldom any cooking. While the men spend their days in hunting or idling, the women keep guard over the cattle when they are grazing, and the boys and girls tend the sheep and goats. From what I could gather, I am of opinion that these Tufi Borana are an inferior race to, or perhaps even an outcast tribe of, the true Borana, who inhabit southern Abyssinia. I am unable to speak with authority on the subject, as I have not had the opportunity of studying the latter, but such at least is my impression. When the habits and customs of both these people have been further investigated by future travellers, it will be of extreme interest to learn their relationship and to know more of their primitive customs, which are fast dying out before the spread of Islam.

I spent two days at this village, and during the whole of that time trading went on continually. As a result of this incessant bargaining, I found myself the possessor of fifteen sheep, which would provide my men with food, I hoped, until I reached Archer's Post or even Meru. Had I had a few more of the white metal bracelets and cubes, I should have done better; for so anxious were they to obtain them, that for 250 cubes (value at the coast about 50 cents), they would give me a nice fat sheep, and my little stock of 2000 went almost immediately. The glass beads I had were not regarded with much favour, a new shade having become all the fashion, but cowrie shells and Americani sold fairly steadily, and I was



## AMUSEMENT AND SURPRISE

able to buy seven more sheep and various objects of ethnological interest with them.

Before I left I gave the chief men presents, consisting of tobacco and "buni," with which they were delighted, and the women perfume, beads and shells. The whole village collected outside my tent in the best of humour, and roars of laughter broke out at the slightest provocation. Great amusement was caused by my camera, and especially by my clothes, which must have seemed to them particularly absurd in comparison with their loose, flowing garments. They crowded round me when I showed them a book containing photographs of elephants, giraffes and other game with which they were familiar, and as they recognised each animal as I turned the pages, they pointed excitedly at it with their fingers, and broke out into cries of astonishment and surprise. It was an animated and entertaining scene, but there was nothing vulgar in their curiosity, only a naïve interest and a childlike simplicity which completely disarms criticism. There is always much that is sympathetic, much that is attractive in the primitive savages who people the remote corners of the earth. But how quickly these qualities disappear on the advent of the missionary and the civilisation he brings with him!

I dismissed them at last, having made arrangements with the headman of the village to provide a guide who was to lead me as far as Marti Plateau; and I went to bed that night relieved of a great anxiety with regard to the food supply for my men. For now, even if I did not meet any other natives, I should have sufficient for myself and my followers until I reached the outskirts of civilisation.

## CHAPTER XXI

### MARTI PLATEAU

IT was still pitch dark as the last camel was loaded, and the long string of patient animals moved slowly away from the warm light of the camp fires into the night beyond. Countless stars shone from a clear sky, and the Southern Cross was clearly visible above the horizon. The guide led the way at a smart pace through the open bush, for a chilly wind was blowing from the north over the river, and the dampness of the atmosphere made it difficult to keep warm. When dawn broke, and the surrounding country took shape, I found myself on an open plain bounded on the right-hand side by a tall line of trees that grew along the river bank ; it was covered with a luxurious growth of grass and small broad-leaved plants, bearing a quantity of yellow flowers. There was but little bush, and the ground seemed very rich and even more fertile than at Melka Gela. I was told that during the rains it becomes somewhat swampy, and impassable for camels, who are helpless in the mud.

As the light grew stronger, it revealed in the distance the striking outlines of Marti Plateau, whose sides rose precipitously from the bush that surrounded its base up to its broad and perfectly level summit. Its dark colour, due to the volcanic rock of which it is composed, formed a sombre background against which the vivid greens of the bush and the grove of

## A RELUCTANT GUIDE

dom palms showed very brilliantly. While I was looking round with my glasses, I caught sight of a half-grown rhinoceros about a quarter of a mile away ; he had, however, got our wind, and after staring fixedly in our direction for some seconds, he turned away, and breaking into a fast trot, he soon disappeared. My guide now declared that he did not wish to proceed any farther. He said that since Marti was in sight we did not need a guide, but, as I wished to explore the plateau and should be therefore obliged to cross the river, I insisted that he should keep to the promise he made the night before, and accompany me at any rate to a ford I had been told of some three miles to the east of the mountain. He seemed very ill at ease, but at length agreed to do so in return for a considerable sum in cloth and tobacco, which I naturally refused to give him until our arrival.

We went on again after this discussion, but as we were passing through a narrow belt of bush the guide suddenly bolted in the direction of the river. Though much annoyed I decided not to send any one after him, as I did not wish to waste any more time than I could help, for Marti lay a good twelve miles ahead. I have no idea why he was so anxious to return—so anxious indeed that he was willing to forfeit what must have appeared to him a large sum of money, which he would have earned had he accompanied me but a few miles farther. It is often impossible to follow the working of a native's mind : his life is so bound up with convention and superstition, that his actions are often incomprehensible to us.

However, I went on again, leading the way over the soft brown earth due west towards Marti. Rain

## A MONOTONOUS MARCH

must have fallen a short time before, for the ground was slippery with mud; the sun poured down, the wind had dropped and the heat became terribly oppressive. Moreover, I was now approaching the river again and had entered a patch of dense bush, which not only rendered progress slow and exhausting, but deprived the scene of its previous interest, leaving it monotonous and wearisome beyond expression. Hour followed hour without any incident to enliven the march; I ate a hurried lunch of bread and meat, which I had in my saddle-bags, without stopping to rest, and I began to despair of ever reaching my destination, when suddenly I emerged from the bush into a little plain, which lay in a bend of the river, and beyond the tall fringe of dom palms the dark mass of Marti Plateau loomed impressive and close at hand.

My tent was soon pitched, and while everything was being put in order I walked down to the river. As I crossed the plain I noticed some old buffalo spoor, and a small herd of waterbuck feeding on its farther edge, but I had plenty of meat, so I did not disturb them. As soon as I entered the grove of palms I found a steep bank in front of me, down which I climbed. After the brilliant sunlight outside, it seemed quite dark and deliciously cool within, but as my eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, I was struck with the beauty of the scene. The tall smooth trunks of the dom palms rose in serried ranks, crowned with tufts of feathery branches which grew in such profusion that they enclosed the undergrowth below in perpetual shade. Near the river bank a few mimosas and some small shrubs filled in the spaces between the palms, and through their delicate foliage

## THE UASO NYIRO—BABOONS

appeared the rich brown of the slowly moving water below, and above the pale blue of the tropical sky. The incessant hum of mosquitoes and other insects sounded not unpleasantly, and only seemed to intensify the drowsy stillness of that enchanting spot. Coming as it did after months of travel through an arid and jungle-covered country, across desert plain and unhealthy swamp under a burning sun, this scene of beauty and of peace made a deep impression on me, and I was loth to leave it. At length, however, I made my way alone down to the edge of the river, and there lay down in comfort and enjoyed a pleasant hour of rest after the hard march we had accomplished that morning.

The Uaso Nyiro, which is about 150 feet broad at this point, flowed calmly and slowly between low banks. The deep mud-coloured water showed scarcely a ripple on its surface, except where a few tiny sand-bars and patches of reeds broke the smooth monotony of its course.

I had fallen almost asleep, soothed by the silence and peace of the surrounding scene, when I was startled by a loud chattering and barking a few yards up-stream. I got up quietly, and on peering through the bushes caught sight of a troop of baboons making their way down to the water's edge. They had been jumping from tree-top to tree-top, but now had come down and were walking through the undergrowth, led by an old male. Some were playing or quarrelling, others searching for food, but all were heading for the river. The little wind there was was blowing up towards them, so they soon became aware of my presence. Immediately a babel of alarmed cries broke out, and they leaped back into the bush and

## HAWEYAH HUNTERS

up into the branches. But recovering from their momentary panic, they climbed down as low as they dared, and crowding together, they growled and barked at me; each time I approached they disappeared into the topmost branches or hurled themselves with extraordinary recklessness and skill from tree to tree, but as soon as they saw I was not following them their curiosity got the better of their fear, and they returned, chattering and screaming, to growl defiance at the intruder. They looked formidable enough, especially the old males with their enormous teeth bared in impotent fury, but at last they made off, jumping from tree-top to tree-top until their frightened chattering died away in the distance, and silence fell once more upon the bush.

It was time too that I should return to camp, and so, regretfully, I turned my back on the river, and walked slowly through the grove of dom palms out into the little plain. The shadows were lengthening as I reached my tent, and the sun was sinking below Marti, softening its outline with its golden light and tinging with opalescent hues the low-lying mist that hung above the river. While I was having supper, my headman came up to inform me that the syces, who had been on guard over the camels, had met and brought into camp two Haweyah hunters. I told him to bring them before me, as I thought that they might be very useful as guides if I could persuade them to go with me. They appeared at length—one well on in years, the other about thirty—and stood in front of my table in the dim circle of light cast by my lamp.

They seemed very nervous and ill at ease, and glanced first at the uniform of my askaris and then at me with evident apprehension. So I ordered "buni"

## THE HAWEYAH

to be prepared for them, and while waiting for it I began questioning them about the country and so on. By their answers I soon discovered the cause of their uneasiness. They took me for the Game Ranger, and were afraid I was going to punish them, although they declared they had not killed anything for months. They were obviously very much relieved when they found out their mistake, and agreed willingly enough to act as my guides during the next few days, although they said they had never worked for a white man before. They refused to name any price for their services, preferring to trust to my generosity when we parted. After they had drunk the "buni," I had a most interesting talk with them through my interpreter.

The Haweyah, though not true Somali, resemble them very closely, and it would be difficult for a stranger to detect any difference. They are inhabitants of the Benadir coast, and the northern parts of the interior of Italian Somaliland. It was to them that Ismail Juberti, the ancestor of the Somali, first applied for shelter and protection, according to native accounts, when he was wrecked along their inhospitable coast, and, his requests being refused, he was obliged to wander southwards until he met the Dirr, another tribe inhabiting those regions. This may partly account for the contempt displayed towards the Haweyah by the Somali. Many of them have been driven westwards from the Benadir coast and have taken refuge among the Borana and the Gabra, but whatever their present position is, it is almost certain that Somali and Haweyah are descended from a common stock.

I questioned them about the Maanthinle, that mysterious tribe known by hearsay to all the dwellers

## A MYSTERIOUS TRIBE

in the Horn of Africa, but which have now completely disappeared, leaving no trace except their name, and a few cairns of stone. They told me there were still many legends concerning them, but they had disappeared long before the present inhabitants had entered the country. They said that there were many graves and many pools cut into the rock, which were made by the Maanthinle, in northern Jubaland, and that they thought that they had been a race of giants. To my question as to what they imagined had happened to them, they replied that it was believed that these people had done evil and had ceased to sacrifice to their god, at which the latter was so displeased that he sent a plague of bees which killed some and drove the rest out of the country.

They had by now quite forgotten the uneasiness they had shown at the beginning of our interview, and, stimulated perhaps by the "buni," they revealed to me much that was interesting, and described their daily life in detail, telling the story in their own way with many a picturesque simile and many a quaint but illuminating phrase. The sole weapon of these hunters is a small bow, shooting arrows of which the tips are covered with a powerful vegetable poison. They will search for days, perhaps for weeks, until they have discovered a water-hole or salt lick, where their quarry comes regularly. Then with infinite precaution on some moonlit night they make their way to within a few feet of the trail by which the elephant or rhinoceros is expected to approach the water. Crouched under a bush they wait in breathless silence until some faint noise, inaudible perhaps except to them, is heard above the whispering of



## A PICTURE OF NATIVE LIFE

the trees and the myriad indefinable sounds that together make up the stillness of a tropical night. So noiseless is his approach that the giant form of their quarry looms up almost before they are prepared for him, but as he passes by, a few feet, maybe only a few inches, away, they fire their arrows into his side and then seem to melt into the bush as if by magic. The stricken animal halts and then, turning, dashes back, crashing through the jungle. Gradually the sounds die away and silence once more reigns supreme. But dawn rarely fails to reveal to the eager searchers the dead body of the animal not far away. A brush shelter is erected near by, their few possessions are transferred from their last camping place, and here they will remain as long as the meat lasts. If they fail to kill they are compelled to subsist entirely on roots and berries until success again crowns their efforts.

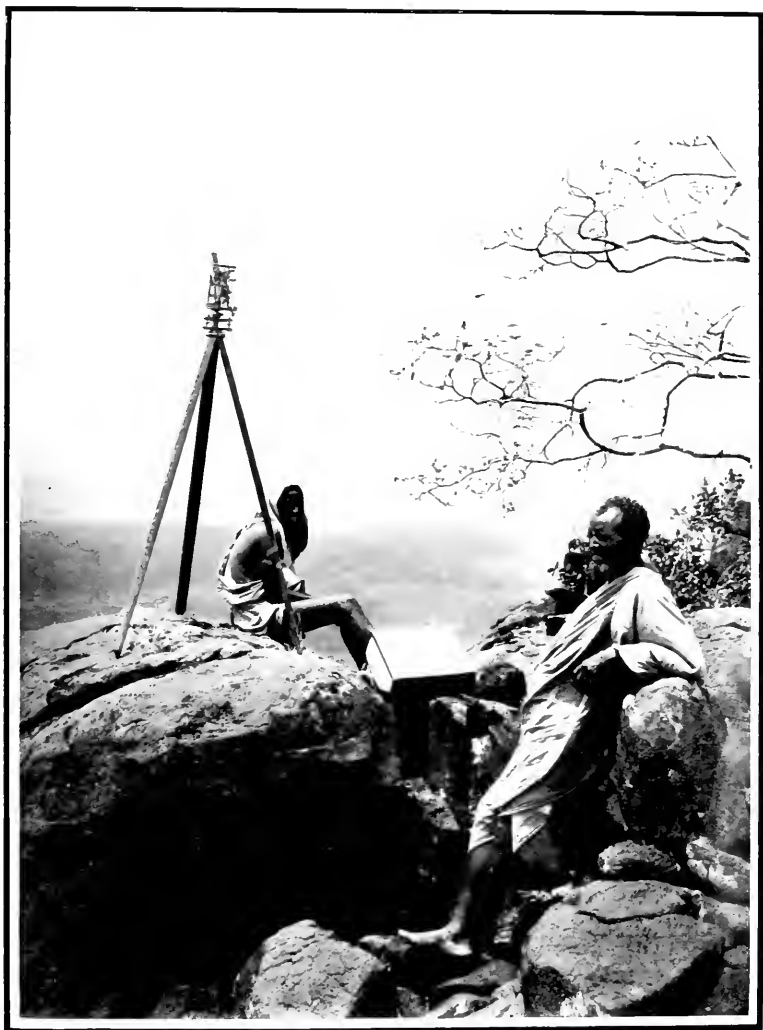
It is difficult for us to realise what such a life means, surrounded as we are by all those things which they lack and which civilisation has made so easy of attainment; but on that occasion, helped no doubt by the picturesque surroundings in which the tale was told, they drew such a vivid picture of their life, revealing, unintentionally no doubt, all its hardships, its excitements, and its primitive simplicity, that I seemed to understand and appreciate it in all its completeness. I was sorry when our conversation ended and it was time to go to bed, but I determined to renew it, if I could, on another occasion.

All the following day was spent in examining and mapping the country to the south of Marti, accompanied by the elder of the hunters, while the other guide led the caravan to the nearest ford,

## MAPPING OUT THE COUNTRY

where camp was made. This would enable me to reach the summit of Marti, explore the plateau and return on the same day. Meanwhile I worked hard, and covered a considerable amount of country. By climbing a few isolated little hills, which rose some 150 feet above the plains, I was able to sketch in the main landmarks on my plane table, but it was not possible to fix the course of the river with any accuracy from the south, as it was hidden by bush and palm trees. I reached camp very late, and, while waiting for supper, shot an old male baboon with enormous canine teeth. It appeared that a large troop had come down at midday, but on seeing my men had fled in alarm, but this particular baboon had remained behind, and had sat round camp, always within 100 yards or so, and had barked and roared defiance incessantly all through the afternoon. He was quite the largest specimen I have seen, so I was glad to add him to my collection.

I was awakened the next morning by the grunting of a lion, but by the time I was up and dressed, it had ceased. I soon came upon its spoor not 200 yards from camp, and easily followed the pug marks for about a mile, until I lost them completely on a somewhat stony piece of ground. As the river was left, the surface became gradually harder, so that it was useless to continue the search. I turned back again, and marched along the southern bank for nearly an hour, when the guide told me that we had reached a good ford where we could cross with ease. So I turned to my right and, passing through a thick belt of bush, entered the dom palms, following a little path that led down to the river's edge. I was again vividly impressed with the beauty of the scene, which



AN OBSERVATION STATION ON MARTI PLATEAU

The two natives were Haweyah hunters who were my companions during my exploration of the Lorian and Marti Plateau.



## CROSSING THE UASO NYIRO

resembled that which I had so enjoyed two days before. The early morning sun was casting long shadows across the rather muddy waters, a wonderful variety of trees overhung the banks, while towering above them the giant mimosa and slender dom palms showed wonderfully green and delicate against the pale blue sky.

Taking off my boots and putties, I got on to my mule, and plunged down the slippery bank into the river, after taking the precaution of firing a couple of shots into the water to scare away any possible crocodiles. The Uaso Nyiro, near Marti, attains its greatest development, being just under 200 feet in breadth, but at the point where I crossed it, it was barely two feet deep. It did not therefore take me long to reach the northern bank, up which I clambered, and found myself immediately in another grove of dom palms. Through this I made my way, and emerged on to a flat and muddy plain scarcely a mile across, which divides the river from the mountain. Having reached the foot of the latter, I left the mule and started on the steep climb that lay before me.

The sides of Marti are clothed with small stunted trees, and many varieties of euphorbia, while the ground is composed of loose volcanic rock. Every step therefore requires care, for a fall would be attended with unpleasant consequences from the thorns and sharp pointed rocks. After three-quarters of an hour, however, I reached the edge of the plateau, which is formed by a ring of bare volcanic rock, and sat down with my glasses to have a look round. The view was disappointing, for there was a thick mist in spite of the strong wind that was blowing, which rendered the course of the river and the distant hills

## THE MARTI PLATEAU

hazy and indistinct. The Uaso Nyiro, I discovered, flows through a broad, shallow valley of which Marti forms the northern edge, and which is bounded on the south by a low line of hills. About twenty miles to the west I could just make out some more hills, which, the guide informed me, we should pass on our way to Archer's Post. At this corner of the plateau, which forms the summit of the most easterly spur of Marti, I took observations for local time and latitude, and completed the sketch that I had been working on; I then went on and rapidly explored the tableland to the north-west. Kilima-ya-Mesa,<sup>1</sup> as Marti is called by Swahili-speaking natives, is the only mountain deserving the name between this place and the Indian Ocean, and forms an unmistakable landmark.

The river which flows towards it from the south-east, turns east, closely following its base, and then, having left it behind, north-east. It is volcanic in origin and rises abruptly from the river bank to a height of 1607 feet, or 603 above the surrounding country. The summit, as I have mentioned before, consists of a plateau higher on the eastern edge and roughly oval in shape, the long axis of which runs due east and west, and is about eighteen miles in diameter. The whole is covered with dense scrub growing from a rich, soft soil, and there were many small pools of rain-water hidden away in the bush. I noticed the spoor of greater and lesser kudu and rhino while crossing the plateau, but saw no game. It was late before I had finished my work and reached the ford once more. The river was crossed without incident, and camp was safely reached shortly after dark.

<sup>1</sup> Table Mountain.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE GAME ANIMALS OF JUBALAND

BEFORE leaving Jubaland and the Lorian, and entering on the narrative of the closing stages of my journey, it would seem appropriate to give some account of the game animals to be found between the coast and Marti plateau, to examine briefly any differences or peculiarities that may distinguish them from those found in other parts of the Protectorate, to notice how far they are influenced by climate and physical conditions, and incidentally to glance at their distribution throughout that large area.

If the dense character of the bush that covers the greater part of southern Jubaland and the lack of water are remembered, it will readily be seen that only those bush-loving animals which are more or less independent of a plentiful supply of water, will be found inhabiting the regions where such conditions prevail. In addition, on the open stretches near the coast, and on the alluvial plains near the Lorian Swamps, zebra, Grant's gazelle and a few other of the more characteristic plain-dwellers will be seen.

Of the larger game, buffalo, rhinoceros and lion are very scarce, but there is a small herd of buffalo in the tsetse-infested jungle in the south-east of the Biskayia district, which is known to the natives under the name of Wama Iddu (sandy swamp), and from time to time I came across the pug marks of a lion in Joreh, where game is more or less plentiful. Leopards

## LARGE HERDS OF ELEPHANTS

are exceedingly common in the bush near the coast. They are, as any one who has hunted them knows, very hard to see, and in Jubaland this is especially so, owing to the dense undergrowth. They appear to live chiefly on dik-dik, which are very numerous everywhere.

Elephants are by no means uncommon in certain districts during the rainy season. In Guranlagga I saw a great deal of spoor. Some large herds had trekked through, going westward during the last rains; they had probably been disturbed in the jungle near the Juba River, and were travelling across country to the Tana River, by way of the Deshek Wama. In Joreh and Kurde they are rare, but in the dense tropical forests near the Arnoleh River, and throughout the almost limitless stretches of acacia scrub and wait-a-bit thorn, they are to be found in considerable numbers, so long as the water-supply has not given out completely. They appear to trek eastwards from the Lorian and the Tana when the rains begin, and to return westwards when they cease. Judging from careful observations and accurate measurements of a considerable number of footprints, I am led to the belief that the bodily size of the bulls is slightly smaller than that of the average East African elephant; but it must be remembered that bodily size is by no means a certain indication of the weight of the tusks. The tusks are notoriously small in the case of elephants found near the coast, but farther west, in the interior, and near the middle Tana, they are much larger.

The giraffe which inhabits Jubaland has been regarded as a distinct species, and is generally referred to as the Somali or "netted" giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*), although its colour pattern is merely an extreme





#### TELEPHOTOGRAPH OF SOME VULTURES

These useful but hideous birds are the scavengers of the desert. Nothing escapes their eye, and a few minutes after an animal has been killed they will be seen circling high overhead, waiting for the hunter to be gone, before coming down to eat everything that is left.



## NETTED GIRAFFE

development of that of the Nubian race of the ordinary species. It is found as far north as Somaliland and inhabits the Lake Rudolf district and the northern parts of British East Africa. The bulls have a dark liver-coloured coat, divided into irregularly shaped, but generally quadrangular patches, by a network of coarse white lines. On the head itself the marking changes to round chestnut spots on a yellow ground, but the back of the ears and the lower part of the legs below the knees are white. In some cases the sides of the face are also white. The cows, however, are of a paler hue, the general colour being more of a creamy brown. The centres of the dark liver-coloured patches are often almost black, but in a few animals the centres are white or yellowish white. I have in my possession the skin of a very young Somali giraffe that had been killed by a leopard, which shows very clearly this peculiarity, the centres of the dark patches, especially round the withers, being white and star-shaped. In young animals of both sexes the colour is a pale fawn. The unpaired horn on the forehead is moderately developed and the two anterior are very small. The young have dark tufts of hair where the horns subsequently grow. Although somewhat narrow, the ears are moderately large; the muzzle is broad and hairy with long slit-like nostrils, while the tongue is long and extensile. The neck and withers are maned, and the tail is long and covered with coarse black hairs. When giraffes are running they nearly always carry their tails twisted up above their backs, a habit that adds to their somewhat quaint and ungainly appearance. In spite of their enormous length of neck, they are unable to drink without straddling their front legs wide apart,

## HAUNTS OF THE SOMALI GIRAFFE

and to see them satisfying their thirst at a water-hole is a curious sight.

The Somali giraffe is found in astonishing numbers throughout Jubaland, for the character of the country in the interior is especially adapted to their habits. They prefer, as a rule, those regions that are only thinly covered with scrub. Occasionally, however, they may be found in very dense bush, and on these occasions it is astonishing how difficult they are to see. I saw about 280 in all, of which the greater number were in the districts of Joreh, Arroga and Rama Gudi; and in the thorn country to the west of Marti Mountain they were also exceedingly plentiful.

Of the antelopes found in Jubaland there is none that yields a finer trophy than the arrola, or Hunter's hartebeeste. A full description of this interesting animal will be found in Chapter X, so it is unnecessary for me to refer to them here at greater length.

An almost equal interest attaches to the race of Grant's gazelle inhabiting the coastal region of Jubaland north of the Arnoleh River. In *The Game Animals of Africa*, by Mr. R. Lydekker, F.R.S., it is stated on the authority of Mr. O. Neumann that Grant's gazelle is not found within 150 miles of the sea, its place there being taken by the closely allied form, Peter's gazelle. I was therefore much pleased at obtaining, near Eyladera, a specimen of Grant's gazelle that differed in certain essential points both from *G. petersi* and from *G. g. brighti*. In size it approximates closely to Peter's gazelle, being about 50 lb. lighter than Bright's, while the horns are short and straight as in the former. The white rump patch, however, is extremely large, intruding deeply into the fawn colour of the back and completely surrounding

## GRANT'S GAZELLE

the tail, which is white. The lower part of the rump patch is edged with broad and conspicuous black markings, while the dark black band is absent both in the young and in the fully adult, and the body colour is much paler than in either of the two other forms.

These points are important as showing the difference between it and *Petersi*, in which the fawn colour of the back extends down the tail, thus dividing the rump patch into two parts. In my opinion the latter animal is not found much further north than the Tana, and does not extend into the district of Biskayia. At the Lorian, however, *Brighti* were found in considerable numbers, and I was able to obtain three good specimens from that region. In the following table I have given the essential characteristics of three out of the eight races of Grant's gazelle found in East Africa. The *Petersi* were originally described in 1884 as a distinct species, but now it is generally regarded merely as a race of the true Grant.

Grant's gazelle are found on open plains in deserts, and on stony hills, even where one would imagine there was not enough feed to keep a mouse alive. They appear to be almost independent of water, and it is certain that for months at a time the only moisture they can obtain is the little that is contained in the grasses on which they feed, but they are usually more plentiful near a permanent water-supply. They are often seen in company with Coke's hartebeeste, or topi, and not infrequently with zebra. They may be found in herds varying in size from three or four to twenty and upwards.

Of antelopes in Jubaland the most important are the lesser kudu, the topi, the oryx beisa and the gerenuk. The lesser kudu (*Strepsiceros imberbis*) is

## ANTELOPES

quite common in the districts of Joreh and Kurde. It is found in fairly dense bush where there is a certain quantity of aloes, of which it is particularly fond. But they are by no means easy animals to bag,

TABLE SHOWING THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FOUR RACES OF GRANT'S GAZELLE

	No. 1. <i>Granti typica.</i>	No. 2. <i>G. g. brighti.</i>	No. 3. <i>G. g. Petersi.</i>	No. 4. New Race on the Coast of Juba- land.
Bodily size .	Large	Medium	Small (32")	Small (30")
Flank bands	Faint	Absent	Faint	Absent
Body colour	Rich fawn	Pale fawn	Rich fawn with reddish tints	Very pale buff
Horns . . .	Lyrate, long and slender (30½")	Shorter and straighter than in No. 1	Almost straight and short	Short and straight, similar to No. 3
Rump patch	The white includes practically all the tail; only a short spur of the fawn extending on to its base	White intrudes deeply into fawn of back, completely surrounding tail; dark band to this patch well-nigh obsolete	Rump patch divided into two parts by the extension of the fawn on the back, which continues a long upper surface of tail	Similar to No. 2, but white intrudes even more into fawn of back. Black bands to this patch broad and well marked
Tail . . .	Fawn above, white below	White	Fawn above, white below	White

as it is almost impossible to avoid making a noise when walking through the jungle. In fact, to bring them to bag often requires many days of hard and continuous tracking.

The topi (*Damaliscus corrugum jimela*), typically from the Juba district, but ranging as far south as the Sabaki River, appears to differ from the true topi, or

## TOPI AND ORYX

korrigum, by its browner colour, the absence of the dark-eye stripe and the smaller tuft. It is of a dark reddish-brown colour with a silk-like slate-grey gloss ; on the shoulders and thighs there are blue-black patches, with a dark brown glaze on the face. The under parts are bright chestnut and the tail tuft black. They stand about 4 feet at the shoulder and are of a heavy, clumsy build. The muzzle is broad and the skull of medium length without the horn pedicle characteristic of the true hartebeeste. The horns are of a simple lyrate shape, with their tips inclined backwards and inwards. Neither the topi nor Grant's gazelle are found in the interior of Jubaland.

As regards the oryx, I found them plentiful near the coast and again near the Lorian Swamp. They have been separated from the typical oryx beisa of the Red Sea littoral and Somaliland on account of the deeper and more reddish colour of the upper parts, and the presence of a brownish tinge on the white of the limbs, and are known to naturalists under the name of *Oryx beisa annectans*. They are found throughout the northern part of East Africa, their place being taken near Kilimanjaro and in the country south of the Tana by an allied form known as the fringed-eared oryx (*O. b. callotis*). In this race the ears, which are narrow and pointed, are surmounted by conspicuous tufts of long black hairs, while the face markings are of a deep fawn colour instead of black, and there are no black bands on the front of the forelegs below the knee. The skin of these animals is much prized by the natives on account of its extraordinary thickness on the neck and shoulders. This peculiarity, however, is confined to the males, and may have been developed as a protection against

## GERENUK AND DIK-DIK

their sharp, spear-like horns when they are fighting one another. It is interesting to note that their Somali name is "biid" (plural, "biida"), and not, as it is given in most books, "beid," or "beida."

Gerenuk (*Lithocranius walleri*) are, with the dik-dik, the most common animals in Jubaland. Wherever strictly desert conditions prevail, gerenuk are found in twos and threes, feeding like goats on the leaves or young shoots of the acacia scrub, or wait-a-bit thorn. I have seen them in places at least eighty miles from water, and they are apparently unaffected by the sun, as they may be observed feeding and moving about at all times of the day regardless of the heat. They often associate with oryx and sometimes with topi. On the whole I did not find them shy, and it was generally easy to bag one, when meat was required.

As I mentioned above, dik-dik (*Madoqua kirkii*) are extremely numerous throughout Jubaland, and this is especially the case in the sandhills near the coast. I was able to bring back six specimens of these little animals, and compared them carefully with the type-specimens at the British Museum, but though they all exhibited slight differences in size of skull, there was no marked deviation from the type of Kirk's dik-dik, even in those I shot in the interior of Jubaland. From a sporting point of view they are somewhat uninteresting, but the study of their habits and the sight of their dainty forms, and exquisite grace of movement, was a never-failing source of pleasure to me. In all the larger animals the effects of scanty grazing and the severe physical conditions of the country they inhabit are shown in their small bodily size and horn measurement, and this is



## GREVY'S ZEBRA

especially noticeable in the topi. I shot several specimens of the latter, but although the length of horns in some cases reached over 19 inches, their basal girth was insignificant compared with those I had seen from the Loita Plains farther west.

The southern form of Grevy's zebra (*E. grevyi*) is met with throughout the Lorian district and northern Jubaland, the stripes being pure black on a white ground. It would be interesting to know where this race changes into the Somaliland Grevy's zebra (*E. grevyi berberensis*), of which there is an excellent specimen in the British Museum, whose stripes are a deep rich brown on a cream ground. I was very much surprised to see it stated, the other day, in an article on northern Jubaland, that these zebra are generally to be found in waterless regions. This is the opposite of what my observations had led me to believe, and I think that the majority of those who have had the opportunity of closely observing its habits will agree with me in saying that though it is sometimes met with in semi-arid districts, there is generally water somewhere near, and that it drinks, if not every day, at any rate every second or third day. In the interior of southern Jubaland, where desert conditions attain their maximum development, zebra are totally absent, but on the Dibayu Plain, and southwards through Joreh, there are a certain number of a much smaller species of zebra closely akin to those found on the Athi Plains (*E. burchelli granti*). There are, however, important differences between these two races, which I have attempted to set forth in the following table, since the specimen I obtained appears to be a new race, and its comparison with Grant's zebra may therefore be of interest.

## VULTURINE GUINEA-FOWL

The description of the Grant's zebra was taken from a specimen shot by myself on the Athi Plains, on a former visit to British East Africa.

	No. 1. <i>E. b. Granti.</i>	New Race from Jubaland.
Stripes . . .	Black stripes, broader than intervening spaces	Deep black ; intervening spaces white. More numerous than in No. 1 and narrower
Dorsal stripe .	Broad in the centre, narrowing towards tail and withers	Very narrow, connected by two short black patches with the nearest obliquely longitudinal body stripe
Ventral stripe .	Medium	Narrow
Nose stripes .	Ten	Eleven
Nose . . .	Black	Black
Ears . . .	Striped	White, edged with black
Pasterns . . .	Stripes fused into black patch	Fully striped (not fused) to hoof
Tail . . .	White, with black blotches, detached from median black stripe	Fully striped. Tail tuft very full
Mane . . .	Medium, chiefly black. A few white hairs with black tops	Absent, as though clipped

Of the game-birds which I saw, none is more handsome than the vulturine guinea-fowl, and throughout my journey it formed the *pièce de résistance* of my daily menu. Scarcely less handsome, and equally numerous in the western part of Jubaland, was a species of francolin (*Pternistes infuscatus*). The head and upper part of the neck is devoid of feathers. The bare skin of face and throat is of a brilliant red,



**THE IMPALA (*AEPYCEROS MELAMPUS*)**

Some of the most graceful antelopes in East Africa. They are not found in Jubaland, but are plentiful along the Uaso Nyiro as far as Marti. The Somali call them "arrola" because their horns bear a certain likeness to those of Hunter's Hartebeest.



**GREVY'S ZEBRA (*EQUUS GREVII*)**

The largest and handsomest of all zebras. They inhabit a country sparsely covered with bush which may account for the large size of the ears, so characteristic of bush-dwelling animals.



## A WARNING

abruptly changing to yellow on the neck. This colouring in life is very striking and beautiful, but in the dry skin it fades into a uniform dull yellow, and gives no idea of the gradation of the rich red of the upper portion into the clear lemon yellow of the lower parts of the neck. The harsh chattering cry of the francolin is most characteristic, and cannot be mistaken, and it soon becomes one of the most familiar sounds to the traveller in Jubaland. Of other birds I obtained specimens of ducks, teal, pigeons, doves, spurfowl, egret, marabou, hornbill (*Lophoceros medianus*), and many others, too numerous to mention here.

In conclusion, let me add one word of warning. Jubaland is no country for the sportsman who wants comfort with his shooting and measures his success by the number of trophies he secures. For him there are the Highlands of East Africa, where every luxury will be provided for him, and where hundreds of heads can still be got without much more risk or trouble than a walk down Piccadilly would entail. But in Jubaland a knowledge of spoor and tracking is essential to success. Many of the animals are extremely rare, and worth dozens of the common animals found on the plains. Every trophy obtained means hours, probably days, of hard work through the most difficult country, where heat, thirst and fatigue are experienced daily, and fever and dysentery are a continual menace. The sportsman's success will, therefore, be in proportion to his knowledge of bushcraft, his energy and his skill in hunting; and every trophy, besides being a valuable addition to any collection, may be regarded with legitimate pride as a token of difficulties overcome and dangers surmounted.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE UASO NYIRO

HAD circumstances permitted, I should like to have spent a much longer time in exploring Marti and the surrounding country, but it was essential that I should proceed without delay, for, should game be scarce, starvation both for my men and myself would stare me in the face. Meru, the nearest food supply, was nearly 150 miles away, and I had no provisions left except the sheep I had bought from the Borana, a little tea, sugar and a few pounds of flour full of weevils. It was therefore imperative that I should waste no time, and so I turned my back on Marti, not without regret, and marched westwards, following the southern bank of the Uaso Nyiro. Although my men were aware of the shortage of our food supply, they showed no anxiety, and would have been perfectly willing to remain near Marti for a week or more, so implicit is the trust shown by natives in the foresight and wisdom of their white masters.

On the banks of the Uaso Nyiro dom palms and a few mimosas form a narrow but picturesque belt of tropical vegetation. Within a mile of the river they disappear, giving place to a dense and almost impenetrable tangle of bush and tall grass, which in turn gradually changes into more open country as the Uaso Nyiro is left behind. It was across the latter that I sent my camels, having arranged to meet near some

## A FIGHT—RHINOCEROS

small hills known to both guides, while I entered the jungle on foot in search of buffalo or rhinoceros. I had not gone very far when I saw two gazelle fighting ; they would run and butt each other, and then with horns interlocked would push their hardest in strenuous endeavour to overthrow their adversary. So pre-occupied were they that they allowed me to approach within 30 yards, when, having apparently heard me, they broke apart, turned round and stared fixedly in my direction. As I needed meat, I seized the opportunity and fired, killing the larger of the two. All the meat was sent back to the camels, which were not far off, while I went northwards into the bush, which had now become extremely dense.

In all directions it was crossed by buffalo and rhinoceros paths, but there was little fresh spoor of the latter and none of the former. The guide led the way with his bow and arrow in readiness, while I followed, holding my .450 Express rifle. The grass met high over our heads, forming, as it were, a tunnel, and down this we crept along the game trail which twisted and turned as it approached the river. At length the grass gave place to dense bush and acacia trees, and at the bottom of a bank we came upon a small and shallow pool where some rhinoceros had just been wallowing. For on the trees that surrounded it fresh mud was still clinging where they had rubbed themselves after their bath. On the plains or in open, park-like country, rhinoceros are neither very dangerous nor difficult to bag, but in the bush he becomes a truly formidable antagonist, for it is almost impossible to detect him when he is lying down. Then circumstances are much more in his favour, for, owing to his acute senses of hearing and of smell, he has every

## A NEED FOR CAUTION

chance of locating his adversary long before he himself has been seen. Being subject to fits of unreasoning rage, he will often charge the hunter blindly when disturbed, either from fear, pure viciousness, or in a wild attempt to escape. On such occasions there is only time for a single shot, and unless this is well placed, the rhinoceros is more likely to bag the hunter than to be bagged himself.

Before setting out on the spoor, the guide, in order to encourage us, said that he and his companion had tried to enter that patch of bush some two months previously, but having been charged twice by rhinoceros and three times by buffalo they had had to retire! With redoubled caution I went on, but the wind was very fickle, and I was afraid it would betray our presence before I could get a shot. Nor was I mistaken, for very soon there was a tremendous commotion in the bush ahead, and out dashed two rhinoceros, followed by a small calf. They stood for a moment peering, first this way and then that, and I was able to get a good view of them. None carried long horns, so I decided not to shoot unless they charged. Suddenly they dashed off, emitting loud snorts, and carrying their tails high in the air, looking like nothing so much as huge pigs. At the same moment, just as they were disappearing in the bush, a gun went off close to my head; turning round, I saw that my interpreter, Hassan, had pulled the trigger of his gun by mistake in the excitement of the moment. I was naturally much annoyed, and threatened to take his rifle from him, as it was quite enough to keep a look-out in front without having to think of being shot from behind!

Nothing further was seen for a long time. We



## A RHINO BATHING-PLACE

marched for hours through the bush, and then beneath the dom palms, until I suddenly came upon another rhino bathing-place, but the appearance of the tracks proved clearly that the pool had not been visited for several days. My guide pointed out, near by, a tiny little hiding-place he had built, and he told me that his companion and himself had shot a rhinoceros there not very long before on its way down to drink ; in order to prove his words, he took me some 500 yards down the game trail, and there, sure enough, I saw its remains, the white bones cleaned and bleached, showing up in striking contrast to the gloom of the palm-grove. Amid the quiet and lovely surroundings in which they lay, they were a harsh reminder of the tragedy, for ever lurking in the shadow of the bush, that threatens the lives of all wild animals—tragedies so quickly consummated and as quickly forgotten.

The camp, whither the camels were going, was still a long way on, so I did not rest here, but marched on again through the dense undergrowth. It was now oppressively hot ; no breath of air stirred below, although above I could see the tops of the palm trees swaying in the wind. We were all wet to the waist from the tall grass ; hidden holes in the ground and concealed dead branches made walking a slow and trying business. A tremendous crashing, and the sound of flying hoofs came with startling suddenness to break the silence, as a herd of waterbuck rose at our very feet, and galloped off through the bush ; I saw no more rhino, and no buffalo, nor any fresh tracks of either, but as I emerged again into more open country I caught a glimpse of a small herd of impalla, already in full flight, bounding over the bushes with astonishing grace and facility. These

## IMPALLA—A TIRING MARCH

beautiful antelopes are always a joy to watch, with their foxy red coat, white throat, and long lyrate horns, and they form a very desirable trophy. Along the Uaso Nyiro, especially along its upper reaches and between it and Ngabotok, the horns of the impalla attain a much greater length than they do elsewhere. I saw two magnificent specimens in Nairobi, both well over 30 inches, that had been shot by an officer in the K.A.R. near Ngabotok, but near the Tana River they are much smaller, and I have never seen any in that locality that could compare with those found near the Uaso Nyiro, although, as far as I know, there is no reason for this increase of size.

At one o'clock the guide, in answer to my question, said that "Camp was not too far"—a characteristically vague expression; but it was not until after three o'clock that I caught sight of the camels feeding, and soon my tent appeared under a large tree. It had been a tiring march of some ten hours, so some food was very welcome, and the Grant's gazelle I had killed in the morning provided some excellent meat. On the following day I had decided, on the advice of my guides, to cross the river and join the trail that leads along the northern bank. In order to minimise the risk of the camels being bitten by tsetse fly, I determined to start well after sunrise, as the camp was but three miles from the ford.

The sun had already dispersed the morning mist as the caravan started out, and it was eight o'clock by the time we had crossed the thick belt of bush and palm, and had reached the low shelving bank which marked the ford. The river was very broad, but quite shallow, and the scenery particularly lovely and

## FORDING THE RIVER

picturesque. Although we were in the deepest shadow, the farther bank, with its covering of tropical vegetation, of delicate acacia trees and feathery dom palms, was bathed in the golden light of the morning sun, while above the brown and muddy waters sailed innumerable aquatic birds in slow and stately flight.

The crossing was effected without incident, and the caravan emerged from the bush into an open plain only sparsely covered with scrub. The river takes a bend to the south at this point, so I left it behind temporarily and took a short cut across the plain. We passed across a low volcanic ridge which formed the last and lowest spur of the Marti *massif*, and reached a clump of dom palms and the river once more shortly before noon. While the camels were feeding and resting, I paid off my two guides, who were anxious to return eastwards; moreover, I had now reached a part of the Protectorate that is comparatively well known, and two of my men (the gun-bearer and the cook) had previously travelled as far down the Uaso Nyiro as this on a former "safari," and they declared that they would be able to lead me to Meru.

Before we parted, the guides gave me some very interesting information about the country. They said that there was a swamp, almost as large as the Lorian at Arro Dima, situated almost due south of Marti, near what I should imagine is the Mackenzie River. This swamp, they told me, was fed by a river issuing from the base of a stony hill or ridge, but the water disappeared into this large bed of reeds and did not emerge again. They said that, whenever game was scarce at Lorian, they were sure to find it in abundance at this swamp, and *vice versa*. I was very dis-

## INTERESTING LEGEND

appointed that I was unable to visit it, but lack of food rendered any delay out of the question, and I was reluctantly compelled to press onward. I do not know how much truth there was in their statement, but I cannot see what object they could have had in lying about it, and their story, which was told me with much detail, sounded not only possible but quite probable. Very curious in this connection is the fable, commonly told and believed by native hunters in Jubaland and the Lorian, that elephants, when they know they are about to die, always trek to a large swamp lying between the Uaso Nyiro and the Tana River and end their days there. If this swamp really exists, and is a favourite haunt of elephants, it may have given rise to this interesting legend.

In payment for their services I gave them some beads, coffee and tobacco, in addition to a full "tobe" of cotton cloth. They were delighted with their present, and thanked me effusively, saying that I had been a father to them, and that this, their first acquaintance with the "ferinji" (white man), had been indeed a pleasant experience, and in future, instead of avoiding them, they would offer themselves as guides to every "safari" that came that way!

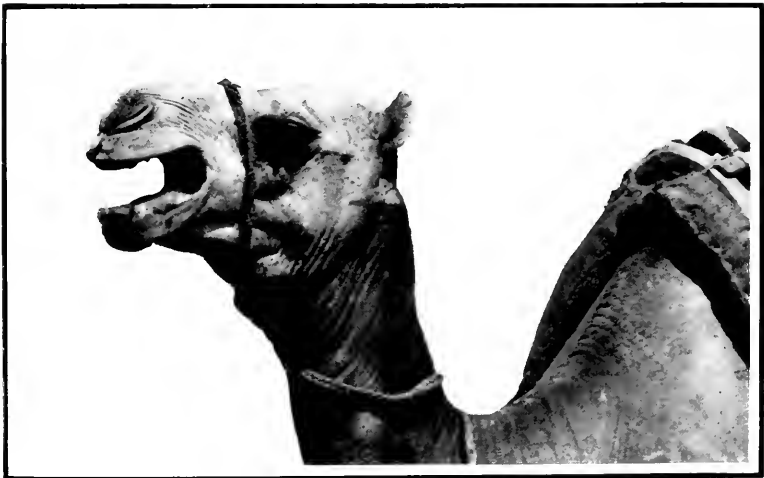
In the afternoon I went on again, and at dusk pitched camp at the foot of a heap of volcanic rock not far from the river. There was an abundance of grass and water, but little or no game, nor any fresh spoor.

On leaving this camp, the whole aspect of the country changed with startling abruptness. The bush ceased, and gave place to stony hills of volcanic formation, covered with stunted thorn trees, while the river narrowed and ran between high banks along



### CAMELS RESTING AT MIDDAY

All along the Uaso Nyiro, pleasant camping places were afforded by the dom palms, in whose shade the camels would rest and feed during the midday halt.



### A STUDY IN DISCONTENT

"The camel," says an Oriental proverb, "curses its parents when it has to go uphill, and its Maker when it goes down," and this admirably sums up the invincible discontent which is perhaps its most marked characteristic.



## AN ABRUPT CHANGE

which dom palms were still the most conspicuous feature. On looking eastwards from the crest of the first hill, this sudden change from rocky and undulating country to dense tropical vegetation was very noticeable. Marti could be seen in the far distance wrapt in haze, and this was the last point from which it was visible. The march was continued through hilly country, at times along the river banks, at others across ridges and valleys, in order to avoid a detour. In the middle of the morning I saw a tent, and coming up and questioning the few men that were lounging round, I discovered that it belonged to two white men, and was their base camp, from which they had started for a short trip on the north side of the river, but that they were expected back shortly. The headboy said his masters were expecting me, as they had heard at Nairobi that a man was trying to cross Jubaland to reach the Lorian. After asking a few more questions, I went on again, and did not halt till noon, when I reached a delightful spot right on the bank of the Uaso Nyiro, which at this point was only sparsely covered with vegetation.

For two hours the camels were allowed to feed, while I rested under the shade of some huge palm trees, and then the march was continued once more. I now followed the course of the river, for the bush was much thinner, and a faint trail made walking easier. The sun, though hot, seemed only pleasantly warm after the climate of Jubaland, and a cool breeze now and then rustled through the palms, and lent invigorating freshness to the air.

Just before dusk I decided to camp, having covered nearly thirty miles, and while waiting for the camels I wandered round to see if I could shoot anything for

## A MISTAKE

supper. The scarcity of game along the Uaso Nyiro had been very surprising, though it was true I had not looked for it very much, so I was delighted to cut the fresh spoor of a small herd of impalla. I soon caught sight of them quietly feeding after their evening drink, and when I saw the buck raise his head, I fired, and heard the bullet clap. He vanished behind some low acacia scrub, and when he reappeared, as I thought, between two bushes, I fired again, and down it fell. But, much to my disgust, I saw the buck I had first shot galloping off, and the one I had killed turned out to be a doe. Such mistakes will sometimes happen in the bush, especially when the light is bad and it is difficult to make out things distinctly, but they are very annoying. However, it could not be helped, and at any rate it provided meat for the men.

When we started once more the following morning, we marched along a narrow trail which at first led westward and then turned north-west, so I decided to cut back again through the bush to the river, in spite of my headman's assurance that we were going in the right direction. And although at first I thought I had done rather a foolish thing, I soon struck a good trail leading westwards once more, which was the way I knew I ought to go. I believe the other road was a native track leading to Marsabit! On we went, over loose lava and through rather dense thorn, until the summit of a little hill was reached, on the other side of which lay an open plain bounded on the west by a solitary mountain rising to a considerable height. The trail had at this point completely disappeared, so I made straight for the south side of the mountain, round whose base I saw the river



## A CROCODILE

flowing. But the plain proved far larger than I had at first anticipated, and noon was already passed by the time that the foothills were reached. Here I rested, although the thorn trees afforded but scanty shade. After a hurried and uninviting lunch of dried dates, I started off again, climbed over the outlying spur that stretched between me and the Uaso Nyiro, and clambered down the other side, reaching a beautiful clump of palms where the river ran between low red sandbanks.

On a minute island in the centre of the stream I saw a large crocodile ; so, sitting down, I took a long shot at him as he lay sleeping in the sun. He never moved except for a few quick movements of the tail, but I saw the blood streaming from his mouth. While waiting for the camels, the porters soon dragged him to shore. He proved to be of a fair size, some 12 feet long, but small compared to the monsters that haunt the Tana River. The bullet had entered through the right shoulder, and passing diagonally through and slightly upwards, had torn an enormous hole in the neck and throat, and had finally lodged in the brain. He was soon tied on to a camel, and the skin was later taken off and preserved.

Although this spot would have made an ideal camp, I decided to continue, much to the disgust of my men, who disliked such hard marching. Having entered a well-mapped region, I was no longer in the hands of my guides, and led the way myself. I was thus able to cover much more ground than I had done before. I intended to reach the river again where it flowed between two low hills, but night fell as I was crossing the plain that lay between, so I

## ARCHER'S POST

camped where I was, having plenty of water in the tanks with me.

It would be tedious to follow in detail the two days that followed before Archer's Post was reached. The country grew more hilly as we advanced, and this tried the camels severely ; they were born and bred in the sandy semi-arid and level country so characteristic of southern Italian Somaliland, so that they were quite unfitted to the new conditions in which they found themselves. A few developed sore backs, and many limped slightly from bruises or cuts, caused by the loose and sharp volcanic rock. But at length the Post was reached, and I found there two Englishmen and a little store ; but, unfortunately, there was little in the way of food to be bought, and so it was impossible to remain there and allow the weary men and camels to rest before proceeding to Meru and entering on the last stage of my journey.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### SOME NOTES ON THE CAMEL

WITHOUT my camels it would have been impossible for me ever to have accomplished my journey from the coast. If only as an act of justice to them, I must give a short account of the character and habits of these patient and useful animals, before proceeding to describe the final incidents of my expedition and my return to civilisation.

About no other domesticated animal than the camel is there so much popular misinformation, not only as regards its habits, but also its physical peculiarities. The Arabian or desert camel (*Camelus dromedarius*) is a member of the family Tylopoda, to which also belong the llamas (that is, the common llama,<sup>1</sup> the guanaco,<sup>2</sup> the vicuna<sup>3</sup> and the alpaca<sup>4</sup>) which inhabit South America. It is widely distributed throughout northern Africa, Arabia and the lowlands of Asia. It is distinguished by its larger size and single hump from the Bactrian camel (*C. bactrianus*) characteristic of the desert highlands of Central Asia. The latter, owing to the colder climate of the country it inhabits, develops an enormously thick coat, which in summer is shed in large blanket-like patches. This peculiarity renders them especially valuable to their owners, for a camel thus provides them not only with meat and milk, but

<sup>1</sup> *L. lama.*    <sup>2</sup> *Lamaguan acus.*    <sup>3</sup> *L. vicunia.*    <sup>4</sup> *L. pacos.*

## WILD CAMELS

also with clothing. The common or Arabian camel never grows so thick a coat as does his Asiatic cousin, for it would prove worse than useless to him under the burning sun of the arid deserts where he is most at home; but even so, its hair at times attains sufficient length to enable the natives to make garments from it. Thus, it was dressed in one of these that John the Baptist went out into the desert.

Camels, it has been stated, are now unknown as wild animals, but this is not the case, according to Dr. Sven Hedin, who saw large herds of them during his many journeys of exploration in Central Asia. Mr. R. Lydekker,<sup>1</sup> who refers to these animals as "*C. bactrianus feras*," has examined several skulls, and has found that they differ essentially from either of the two domesticated species. The dentition of the wild camel appears to approximate much more closely to that of fossil species, and this, combined with several minor variations, appears to indicate that the living wild camel is more nearly related to the extinct than to either of the existing domesticated species.

The camel (Arab. *djemal*; Heb. *gamel*) is one of the most curious and specialised animals among ruminants. The head, placed at the end of a long curved neck, is ridiculously small, as also are the ears, while the eyes are large, and the nostrils peculiar, being narrow and slit-like and capable of being closed at will. This power is very useful to them during a sandstorm, for on such occasions they will lie down with their backs to the wind, and with their necks stretched out along the ground, will lie motionless with closed nostrils until the storm is passed. Behind the head on the upper part of the neck are two large

<sup>1</sup> *Ency. Brit.*, article on Camels, by R. Lydekker.

## FORMATION OF CAMEL'S FOOT

sweat glands, the upper lip is split and the dentition remarkable, having incisors in the upper jaw and well-developed canines both above and below. The limbs are elongated, and each of them terminates in two toes only, while the hoofs are replaced by pad-like swellings on the under side of the foot. Further characteristics are the callosities on chest and knees, upon which the camel rests when lying down, the unusual structure and formation of the hind-legs, the fatty reserve in the hump, upon which it draws on the march when other food is scarce, and the internal water-cells.

All these anatomical peculiarities have probably been developed by Nature by slow degrees to meet the requirements of a life spent in the most arid and inhospitable regions of the world, and there can be no question but that the camel is the most suitable of all domestic animals to serve the needs of man in such surroundings. Such an adaptation to its mode of life is most strikingly illustrated by the formation of the leg and foot of the camel mentioned above. This is characterised by the entire loss of the two smaller outer digits which persist more or less in all ruminants, except the giraffe. The two bones which form the cannon-bone in the camel diverge below, an arrangement which gives a large surface of attachment for the pad on the under side of the foot. This enables the camel to obtain a purchase on the yielding surface of the sand on which it walks, and at the same time prevents undue heating on account of its large surface. A very similar arrangement is to be seen in the African ostrich (*Struthio camelus*), where only the third and fourth toe are present, this reduction in the number of the digits being compensated for by

## MODE OF PROGRESSION

the increased size of those remaining. But, unlike the camel, one toe is much larger than the other, and they are widely separated. In both cases the structure of the foot is designed to prevent the animals from sinking into the sand.<sup>1</sup>

In this connection it is interesting to note that the natural walk of the camel is an "amble," in which two feet on the same side are brought forward and set down together at the same time. This is a method of progression very rarely seen, and though sometimes used by a horse, it is an artificial pace and has to be taught to him. Since the two feet are set down together the weight of the body is more evenly distributed, and this fact again tends to prevent the animal from sinking too deep into the yielding surface on which it walks.

The female carries her young for eleven months, and produces only one at a birth. These young camels attain a height of 3 feet within eight days, but are not full grown until the fifteenth or sixteenth year. They are covered with soft silky hair, which is most profuse along the back, and in appearance are extremely ungainly.

Before going on to describe the general characteristics of the camel, it may be of interest to note how camels were introduced into the United States in an attempt to overcome the difficulties of crossing the arid and waterless plains of Arizona and parts of California, previous to the building of the railways. In 1855 the War Department of the United States imported from Asia Minor a number of camels.

<sup>1</sup> For further particulars regarding the structure of the camel, see *The Natural History of Animals*, by J. R. A. Davis, vol. iii. 169, vol. v. 152, and vol. vii. 231.

## CAMELS IN THE UNITED STATES

They were landed at Galveston and from there taken overland to Los Angeles, for the purpose of transporting military supplies from that point to various places in Arizona and California. *En route*, however, a number of these camels were lost or strayed near Agua Caliente, about seventy-five miles east of the Colorado River. The remainder were delivered at their destination, but their use was found impracticable, the rocks and gravel being too sharp for their feet. Considerable hostility also was excited amongst the teamsters and freighters, who went so far as to shoot the camels, on the ground that their presence caused the horses and mules to stampede.

Of the camels taken to Los Angeles, a number were sent back to Arizona in 1876, for the purpose of transporting ores from the then rich Silver King mine. Here, again, their presence was resented by the freighters, and the band was eventually turned loose between the Gila and Colorado Rivers. In 1883, nine of them were captured by Papago Indians and turned over to a circus, there being at that time twenty in the herd, eleven of which were between two and three years old. In the beginning of 1912, when I was last in Arizona, there were approximately one hundred of them in the hills east of the Yuma and Harqua Hala wagon road, away from the haunts of white men and Indians. They run mostly in the Eagle Tail Mountains where but few, if any, human beings ever go.

“The camel,” says Dr. R. E. Drake-Brockman,<sup>1</sup> “is to the Somali what the cow is to the Masai; either race will, without hesitation, lay down their lives in their defence, and each in its turn is the

<sup>1</sup> *British Somaliland*, R. E. Drake-Brockman, p. 190.

## A VALUABLE ASSET

cause of two-thirds of the inter-tribal feuds and tribal troubles, the cause of the remaining third being woman."

And this love for them is not surprising, when it is remembered what an important rôle camels play in the lives of the Somali. The wealth of a native is estimated by the number he possesses, although in southern Jubaland cattle are an almost equally valuable asset. The reason for this is that the country is not nearly so suitable for camels as is Somaliland, for south of the Lak Dera the ground often becomes very swampy during the rains, and under such conditions camels are almost useless for transport. But in the drier and more sandy country round Wajheir and Eil Wak, the Somali possess enormous herds. That part of Jubaland which I crossed does not seem to suit them, and the natives were unanimous in declaring that it was extremely difficult to keep them in condition.

Although I only lost three on the way, I always had one or two sick, in spite of the fact that I was especially solicitous for their welfare and took care that they were lightly loaded, and were allowed to graze and rest on every possible occasion. I can give no adequate reason for this, but the fact remains. They seem also to be particularly susceptible to a variety of obscure diseases, of which the "camel sickness" seems to be the most fatal. The general symptoms of this illness are an increasing disinclination to feed, so that the animal gradually wastes away, the loss of sight and violent colic. There is also a foul discharge from the nostrils, and generally some swelling about the head. One of my camels died from this disease, and after death I made a brief



## BAGGAGE AND RIDING CAMELS

examination. I found the bowels ulcerated and the liver obviously diseased. This sickness is said to attack chiefly the camels brought from the interior to the coast, and is almost invariably fatal.

Most of the common ailments of camels and cattle are treated by "firing," or cauterisation.

The Somali recognise a variety of breeds, for each of which they have a special name. But the camels bred in Jubaland are only taught to carry loads, and I did not see any riding camels, except those that had been imported from Aden by the Government. Experts say that there is as much difference between the two as there is between a cart horse and a thoroughbred. The baggage animal is certainly much heavier, and although some have been taught to trot for use in the Camel Corps, I know from personal experience that their gait is exceedingly uncomfortable, and can never compare with that of the swifter and more lightly built riding camel from Arabia. Moreover, the difference in value is enormous. A good baggage camel can be bought in the interior for £2 to £3—at Kismayu the price is increased to £5 or £6,—but a well-trained riding camel will never fetch less than £15, and generally much more.

Camels vary in colour enormously. Those from Wajheir and the upper Juba are dark reddish, while those from the Benadir coast and the country near Brava and from southern Italian Somaliland are almost white. I regret to say that I omitted to ascertain the different names applied to these camels. "Aurki," which, strictly speaking, means a stallion, is generally used to indicate baggage camels, while "Gol" refers to one which has been gelded, or "beef camel."

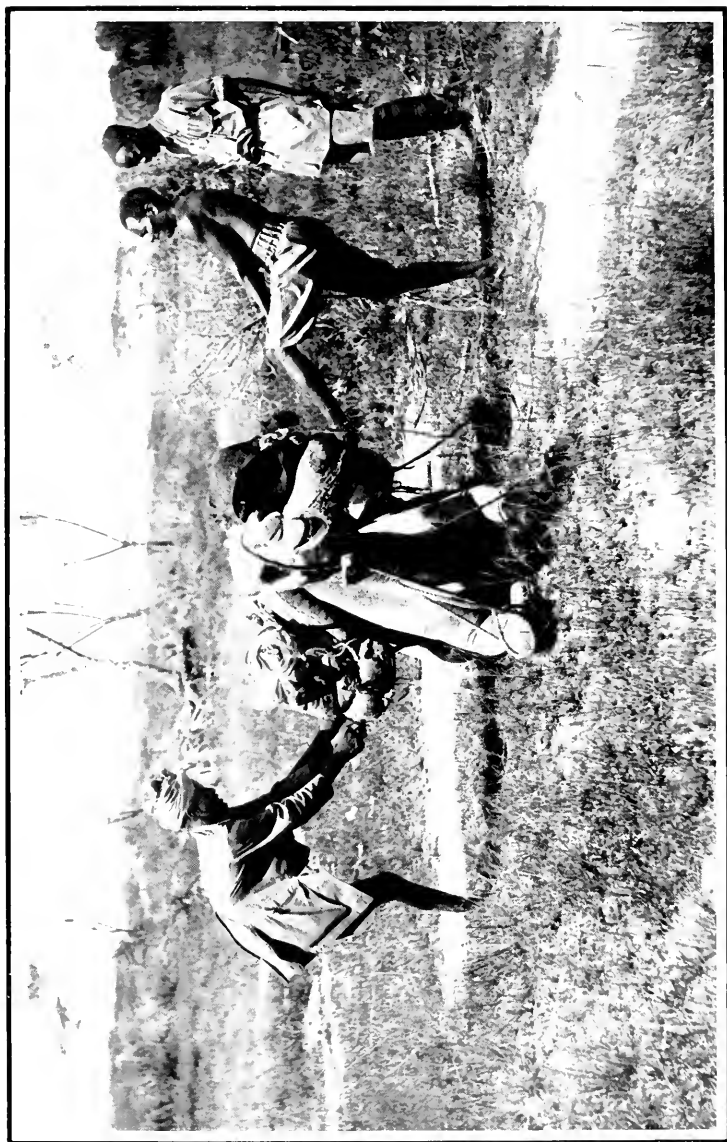
## DEFECTS

When buying them, the Somali first look at the hump to see if it is large and firm. If this is the case, the camel is in good condition. They next examine the back and the withers to see if there are any old saddle sores. If so, they are generally rejected, as, unless they are completely healed, they soon ulcerate when the camel is worked, and cause endless trouble. They also look at the inside of the front leg. If there is any swelling there, between the shoulder and the pectoral callosity, they will also reject the animal, for, when hard worked, such a camel will develop a large wound which is incurable, and renders the animal useless. This defect is said to be caused by improper training and by the use of heavy loads when the camel is young and inexperienced. Few Europeans, however, have sufficient knowledge to be good judges of a camel, and their purchase is generally best left to a trusted native. I found it a good plan to give my headman a commission (in inverse proportion to the price he paid) for each animal bought; that is to say, the cheaper he procured them the higher was his commission, and this method answered admirably.

I have already referred to the kindness and consideration shown by the Somali to their camels, and also to the songs and refrains employed when loading and unloading them.<sup>1</sup>

But to us the camel appears to be an unsympathetic and ungracious beast. There is an Arab proverb which says, "The camel curses its parents when it has to go uphill, and its Maker when it goes down," and this admirably sums up their invincible discontent, which is one of their most marked characteristics.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIII, p. 154.



#### LOADING A CAMEL

This camel was still rather wild. Notice the rope tied round his knees and over his head and neck to prevent him from getting up and upsetting the load before it was securely lashed. The two syces are pulling on the ropes as hard as possible in order that the camel may not shake off his burden when he rises.



## DOCILITY

Whenever they are made to lie down or get up, whenever they are loaded or unloaded, or whenever approached, they gurgle and snarl and bare their formidable-looking teeth in a vain protest against being made to work ; and yet, once they are on the march, they will continue without further objection until they are exhausted, when they will lie down and die. They are a curious mixture of patience and obstinacy. Although easily handled by natives, such as the Arab or Somali, they will often become unmanageable with Europeans, and are subject to unreasoning fits of sulkiness, when neither blows nor abuse will move them. The Somali rarely use violence towards them, finding them far more responsive to kindness, words of endearment, or song ; I have often been astonished to notice how camels seem to understand the wishes of their syces, a fact which seems to give the lie to the generally accepted belief in their stupidity.

Camels are decidedly ugly if measured by our standard of good looks, nor do they make up in amiability what they lack in beauty. In fact, during the rutting season, the stallions become extremely dangerous, and many instances have been recorded of their savage behaviour, when they have even killed their masters without any provocation. But, happily, they are for the most part fairly docile, and though they often present a truly formidable appearance, their "bark is generally much worse than their bite." Ungainly and clumsy they certainly are, but there is something extraordinarily picturesque in the sight of a long line of laden camels toiling slowly and solemnly across the desert, to the sound of their wooden bells and the songs of their syces who plod along at their side.

## A USEFUL ANIMAL

Camels are not only valued by the Somali as beasts of burden, but also because they provide him with meat and clothing, and also milk. The flesh, though generally not much appreciated by Europeans, is much liked by them, and resembles veal. From the hump they obtain a considerable quantity of lard, which they use both in cooking rice, when they have any, and in preparing "buni" when "ghee" is unobtainable. The females yield a considerable quantity of milk over and above that required to feed their young, and this takes the place of water, and often of food, when the camel herders are far out in the desert. Although the milk is rich, no butter can be made from it.

The average length of a camel's life is forty to fifty years.

The females begin breeding in their fourth year, and a foal is born every alternate year, the period of gestation being eleven months, according to Mr. R. Lydekker, or one year and twenty days according to Dr. R. E. Drake-Brockman.

## CHAPTER XXV

### BACK TO CIVILISATION

ARCHER'S POST is a little group of huts surrounded by a wire fence, situated on an eminence on the north side of the river. A small body of police is stationed there, for it is quite an important little place in its way ; it was founded by Mr. G. F. Archer (after whom it was named) in 1909 while on his journey to Marsabit, and is the starting-point for travellers going to Abyssinia, Wajheir and the Northern Frontier District generally. Close to the Post there is an excellent ford across the Uaso Nyiro with a flat-bottomed boat (for use when the river is in flood) and an overhead cable to which it is attached, and on the southern bank there are a few huts and a small store kept by two young Englishmen. It is the outskirts of civilisation, on the frontier, as it were, of a fertile and well-watered land, beyond which lie the arid and sun-scorched wastes of a great desert. Round the Post gather together the Somali traders from the north and east for a well-earned rest after the labours and anxieties of their waterless journey, followed, as they come, by long files of laden camels or herds of cattle, sheep, goats, or ponies, forming a scene at once animated and picturesque.

I decided to leave my water-tanks, and proceed immediately to Meru with some of my camels, and to pay off my syces and send them back to Kismayu

## A WANT OF FORESIGHT

with the rest of my camels and the equipment lent me by Captain Salkeld, when I had reached the former place. I had arrived at Archer's Post early in the morning, after a march of some twelve miles, and I allowed my men and animals to rest during the day. I passed some very pleasant hours talking to the two Europeans in the store, and enjoyed an excellent meal followed by a Turkish cigarette—two luxuries I had not tasted since I had left Shimbirleh and the Lak Guran almost three months previously. I was also able to sell four of my camels at a good price.

The Government have lately constructed a good road from Meru to Archer's Post, and thence to Marsabit, over which there is a regular monthly service of wagon transport for carrying the mail and food supplies. There is an alternative route between the Post and Meru, also made by the Protectorate authorities in 1910, I believe, but since practically abandoned because it is waterless. To construct such a road at no insignificant expense, without taking into consideration such an important point as the water-supply, seemed to me to argue an extraordinary want of foresight in those who were responsible for it.

However, as time pressed, I decided to march to Meru by this route, since it was some few miles shorter, although the absence of water would compel me to march throughout the night.

At seven o'clock, therefore, on the evening of the same day as my arrival, I left Archer's Post and headed south towards Kenya. No cloud dimmed the brilliance of the stars, which shone with redoubled splendour in the absence of the moon, and all through



## A SILENT MARCH

the weary hours that followed, as we climbed ever upwards towards Meru, I watched them wheel across the heavens and set in all the incomparable grandeur of a tropical night. The air grew colder as we advanced, and towards one o'clock I was glad enough to put on my heavy overcoat, as I was unable to keep warm, although walking at a good pace. In the early morning hours my gun-bearer declared he could not go any farther, so taking the rifle I left him behind; but he soon rejoined us, having been scared almost to death by the grunting of a lion. During the rest of the march, fear alone prevented him from collapsing, and he kept moaning and sobbing to himself in utter exhaustion.

By five o'clock I was myself desperately weary, for we had not halted a moment, but my Somali marched on tirelessly, although they too had grown silent and had ceased their chattering and singing. Dawn broke at last with rare loveliness, and for a brief space the summit of Kenya, snow-clad and imposing, was visible, before it disappeared once more behind a heavy pall of mist and cloud. We passed through a dense belt of forest, and then up and down the steep slopes of the foothills, until at last, just before ten o'clock, we entered the prosperous and fertile little station of Meru. It had taken us fourteen and three-quarter hours to cover the forty-three miles from Archer's Post,<sup>1</sup> and this was by no means a bad performance, coming as it did on the top of the hard and continuous marching we had accomplished since leaving Marti Plateau.

That evening I paid off my syces, giving them

<sup>1</sup> I had no means of measuring the distance myself, but that was the figure given me by the District Commissioner.

## THE RESULT OF HARDSHIPS

two months' pay in advance, so as to enable them to reach Kismayu, and have one month's pay as a present. They started back the following morning with my camels, under the command of Farar Ali, my head syce. They were a fine lot of men, who had served me well and faithfully, and I was sorry to part with them.

There still remained with me my four native police, my headman, interpreter, gun-bearer, skinner, cook, personal servant, syce and six porters. Of these seventeen men, seven were total wrecks and had to be left behind to rejoin me later in Nairobi, while the other ten were all suffering in a lesser or greater degree from the hardships to which they had been exposed. All were cheerful, however, and delighted to reach civilisation once more. As I wished to reach Nairobi at the earliest possible opportunity, I decided to engage more Meru porters than was absolutely necessary, in order that they might be only lightly loaded and be able therefore to travel faster.

Meru is the centre of a populous and thriving district. Agriculture is carried out on a large scale, and there are also considerable herds of cattle, goats and sheep. It was once famous for its ivory, and was constantly visited in the early days by Arab and Swahili caravans, who penetrated everywhere in their search for that valuable commodity. Honey too is remarkably plentiful and therefore very cheap, as are plantains, yams and millet. Meru lies on the northern slopes of Kenya, one of the most striking mountains in Equatorial Africa. Although situated only a few miles south of the Equator, its summit is covered with everlasting snow, and attains

## WHITE SETTLERS

a height of 17,040 feet. The shortest route to Nyeri and Nairobi lies along the eastern slopes, but the country is so undulating, and scarred by such deep and precipitous ravines, that, personally, I much prefer to cross the western spur of Kenya, and thence south-west to Nyeri, a distance of eighty-seven miles from Meru and perhaps seventeen miles longer than the eastern route.

The country on either side is too well known to need description, and it would be tedious to follow in detail the incidents of the journey. Suffice it to say that on the seventh morning after my departure from Meru my men reached Nairobi, having averaged just over twenty-five miles a day through a hilly country, a fact which speaks well for the raw Meru porters. At Nyeri the Kikuyu were making great preparations for the coming circumcision ceremony, which was to take place in a month's time, and I saw several boys in the extraordinary costume that tradition has ordained for such occasions. I was amazed at the greatly increased European and white population, and at the amount of land that has been taken up by settlers since I had last visited the country in 1909. It is not for me to criticise the resources of East Africa, or to speak of its commercial prosperity; I leave that to those far better fitted than myself. But at the same time I confess that I have been much amused by the glowing and often exaggerated accounts of the Protectorate that I have read in books and magazines, and have often wondered at the perverted ingenuity with which those, who had an axe to grind, enlarged upon its manifold advantages, and glossed over its somewhat obvious drawbacks.

With my arrival at Nairobi, my journey ended.

## MORE EXPLORATORY WORK

I was very hospitably entertained by the officers of the King's African Rifles, and spent a very pleasant week with them. There was a lot of work to be accomplished before I could leave ; my men were paid off, my trophies poisoned and packed, and five months' mail opened and read. At length, everything was finished, and I was free to return home at last.

There is much exploratory work still to be accomplished in British East Africa. On both sides of the Tana River are large stretches of unknown country. The region to the south of my route has never been traversed by a white man, and between it and the Tana a small range of hills has been shown on all maps from native information only. It would be of great interest to know whether they really exist, and, if so, what is their extent and height. West of Mr. Haywood's route, between the Lorian and Sankuri and east of the Jombeni Mountains, there is a large tract of almost wholly unknown country. The course of such rivers as the Mackenzie is acknowledged to be very doubtful, and the hydrography of the whole of this region should prove of the utmost interest. I have been told by natives, with how much truth I cannot say, that there exists a large swamp south of Marti and between the Uaso Nyiro and the Tana.<sup>1</sup> This is by no means impossible, and the exploration of this part of the country might open up new hunting fields, for, as far as is known, the climate is healthy and there is a certain amount of water.

The regions lying between Kitui and the Tana are also unexplored, but they are believed to be uninhabited and waterless, and their investigation would

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXIII., pp. 263-264.

## UNKNOWN LAND

probably be attended with considerable difficulty. Little is known of the country to the north of the Sabaki River and east of the Yata Plateau. Good sport might be expected in any of these parts. Farther north there is a large tract of unexplored country due east of Marsabit, and between that place and Wajheir and even farther to the Juba River. However, a considerable amount of work is being accomplished in those regions by officers in the K.A.R., and by officials. But probably the most important work still remaining to be done is the thorough exploration of the country between Lake Rudolf and the Nile, although, strictly speaking, this is not included in the East African Protectorate at all; it would prove an exceedingly interesting journey, no doubt, but the waterless and arid nature of the country might prove a very serious difficulty.

Now that the highlands are so over-crowded with tourist-sportsmen and amateur travellers, it is pleasing to remember that there are still large areas in East Africa where it is possible for a brief space to pass out of the limits of civilisation and enter a land as yet untouched, and mix with natives as yet unspoiled. It is devoutly to be hoped that this state of things may continue, and it is probable that the nature of these regions will forbid their immediate settlement, and their inaccessibility and the hardships entailed by a near acquaintance with them will, at any rate, temporarily frighten away the big-game shooter.

In looking back on an expedition, the recollections of the discomforts, that every traveller in the remoter parts of the world must of necessity endure, seem inevitably to sink into insignificance compared with

## RETROSPECTION

the memories of the pleasant incidents and small triumphs, of which the journey has almost invariably been full, and with the elation of achievement when all is over.

As I sit and write these lines, the remembrance of pain and illness has faded, leaving in my mind a picture of a succession of happy days crowded with absorbing work and picturesque or thrilling incidents. I seem to see again, as though it were only yesterday, the Arrola, free and undisturbed, amidst its wild surroundings; or Mahommed Ali and his followers crowding round my tent in unaffected friendship and good-will, or bowed in prayer to the All-Powerful in simple and unquestioning belief. I can see again the long line of laden camels, the swarthy guides and the limitless expanse of bush and sand through which they toiled. And I can still feel the exhilaration of success that filled me when first I looked upon the Lorian Swamp and knew that the most difficult part of my journey was safely over.

Such recollections, to me at any rate, are more than a sufficient reward for any sacrifices or privations I had to endure in order to accomplish my purpose.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### HINTS ON OUTFIT

IN the following pages I propose to deal briefly with the important question of outfit, for it is on the careful and judicious selection of equipment that the success of a trip largely depends. No sum of money expended on buying an outfit will counterbalance a lack of knowledge as to what is essential and what is not. Experience is the only guide which enables the traveller to reduce his baggage to a minimum, without appreciable loss of comfort. The desire to "rough it" unnecessarily is rather puerile and marks the inexperienced novice; it inevitably tends not only to weaken a man's power of resistance, and to render him less fit to overcome illness and danger, but also, if continued long enough, ends in a loss of self-respect. I shall confine myself to mentioning what my experience has proved most useful during my wanderings in the more remote corners of Mexico and Africa far from civilisation. I do not wish to dogmatise, only to suggest, for every traveller has his own whims and fancies. For instance, it would be as foolish to give a list of clothing as to state what I consider to be the correct number and bore of the rifles necessary for big-game shooting. Men of much greater experience than I fail to agree on these subjects, and they must be left to the individual choice of the traveller. Personally I have always

## THE TENT

tried, before going anywhere, to learn what has been proved by experience to be suitable to that particular country, and I hope therefore that some of the suggestions put forward in this chapter may be of value to those intending to visit the more remote and desert regions of East Africa.

One of the essential points to bear in mind, when buying necessary equipment, is the method of transport that is to be utilised, and the weight, shape and nature of the articles must be adapted to it. If the traveller wishes to leave the well-known and populated highlands of the Protectorate, and to enter the unexplored, and to me, at least, far more fascinating regions, he will have to provide himself with camels in order to cross the arid and often waterless country that he will encounter. And I shall base my suggestions on this hypothesis.

For a journey of over six weeks, a large tent is almost a necessity, and it should be protected from sun and rain by a separate outer covering or "fly," extended in front to form a kind of verandah. The back of the tent proper should be semicircular in shape, thus providing a kind of second compartment or chamber in which "chop" boxes and personal belongings may be stored in comparative safety, while it leaves the body of the tent unencumbered, with ample room for bed and chair. A ground sheet of the same material as the tent (*i.e.* rot-proof canvas) should be provided, which, if laced tightly to the walls of the tent, will prevent snakes from entering, and will help to exclude the damp. When camp is pitched, see that the men *always*, wet or fine, dig a small trench round the tent just within the overhanging edge of the outer "fly," so that in case of a sudden



## THE BED

storm the water will be carried away, and will not flood the tent, with disastrous consequences to food, clothes and rifles. Even if the weather is fine, it is foolish to omit this precaution, for in the tropics a storm will burst with startling rapidity and violence.

In the healthy climates of Canada, Australia and parts of Mexico, a man may live with a minimum amount of equipment for months in the wilds without any inconvenience; but in tropical Africa there is so much to contend with, that it is imperative to increase the size of the outfit, and what would be luxuries in one country become necessities in the other. A strong folding bedstead (for instance, the "Compactum") and a comfortable chair should be taken. The best form of the latter is the "Rhoorkee," which has an adjustable back. It weighs 4 lb. and packs into a very small compass. Canvas deck-chairs are extremely comfortable, but they are bulky, and make an awkward load. After a hard day's march these articles will be much appreciated. A mosquito net is, of course, essential, and since an efficient one naturally excludes a certain amount of air, it should be large, made to hang from the roof of the tent, and weighted at the bottom. This is preferable to tucking it under the bedclothes, for if this is done and any part of the sleeper's person become uncovered and touch the net, it immediately forms the object of a venomous attack. A non-inflammable net can now be obtained, and it certainly possesses many advantages over the old form.

It is hardly necessary to point out that, in tropical and unhealthy countries, strict personal cleanliness is of the utmost importance in the preservation of health. The most convenient form of bath is made

## CLEANLINESS

of green rot-proof canvas, which is supported, when in use, by a wooden framework. A cold bath should never be taken in Africa, but a hot one with a small amount of mustard thrown in has a most invigorating effect, and relieves stiffness, aches and pains in a way that would hardly be believed until it is tried. This bath folds up in a very small space, and weighs 8 lb. The japanned steel bath that is often used by travellers and officials in Africa, though more comfortable, is impracticable for transport by camels, for it is too bulky and would soon be smashed, or at any rate be so badly damaged by contact with the branches of trees as to be rendered completely useless.

If some kind of antiseptic soap be used, such as Izal soap, the risk of contracting skin diseases, and even prickly heat, will be diminished, while it also alleviates the irritation caused by the bites of various insects. Great care should be taken of the teeth, and a good mouthwash should be included among toilet requisites; for the teeth quickly decay in hot climates, and the gums often become sore from eating the tough and stringy meat of wild animals, and from lack of fresh fruit or vegetables. The traveller cannot fail to notice the care bestowed on their teeth by the Somali, and in this particular they may well be imitated.

Scrupulous cleanliness should also be observed with regard to the canteen and to cooking appliances generally. I cannot do better than to quote the advice given in the Royal Geographical Society's *Hints on Outfit*. Dr. Harford says in that invaluable little book :<sup>1</sup> "A food box should be carried, consisting

<sup>1</sup> R.G.S.'s *Hints on Outfit*, by C. F. Harford, M.D., p. 25.

## THE CANTEEN

of a wooden box (size 2 feet 6 inches  $\times$  1 foot  $\times$  1 foot) with a well-fitting lid. . . . This box should be regarded as a travelling larder and should contain several jars with fixed covers and a few screw-top wide-mouthed bottles. . . . Condensed milk, after opening a tin, butter and jam should be kept in bottles, as also sardines when removed from the tin. . . . It has been suggested that aluminium utensils should be employed instead of jars, and we think they are well worthy of a trial, as they are lighter, will not break and do not act on the food. The greatest care should be taken as to the arrangement of this box. No food should be allowed to remain in it from day to day, and it need hardly be said that the box and every receptacle in it should be kept scrupulously clean. Slovenliness in this respect is unpardonable. There are quite sufficient risks to life in Central Africa without running the risk of poisoning by putrefying food."

Another box should also be taken and kept separate from the other "chop" boxes. In it a small selection of invalid foods should be placed, to be used only in case of illness. I would suggest that cocoa, Bovril, Eggo (a powdered and highly nutritious form of eggs) and Brand's Essence of Chicken should be amongst its contents.

I do not propose to give a list of food stuffs. This must depend on the personal likes and dislikes of the traveller. But whatever is taken should be simple and nourishing. Tin foods, as also fruits in syrup, should be avoided as much as possible, owing to their weight. On my last journey across Jubaland, one box weighing 60 lb. contained sufficient food for myself for one month, supplemented, of course, by what

## WATER

I shot. It should be noted that biscuits are very useful on the march, when there is no time to have a proper meal, and the most nourishing are what are known as "Polar Kjeks," invented by Amundsen and recommended to me by my friend, Dr. Carl Lumholtz, the well-known explorer. All provisions for transport on camels should be packed in wooden boxes of about 60 lb. in weight. Four of these make a light and convenient load, on the top of which may be added such articles as porters' tents, cooking-pots, etc.

Of the utmost importance are the means adopted for transporting water. In the Northern Frontier District of British East Africa and in Jubaland water-holes are sometimes 100 miles apart and even more. A minimum of 120 gallons of water should be carried for one European and twenty-four natives, preferably 160 gallons. The best method is that adopted by the officials, who are supplied by the Government with a number of copper tanks, each containing from 10 to 12 gallons. Two of these form a light load, easily fastened to a pack-saddle and of convenient shape. It is an advantage to have a padlock fastened to the circular lid. In addition, the men should be supplied with a canvas water-bottle containing one gallon each. These are preferable to and less expensive than those made of block tin, which almost inevitably develop a leak after some months of hard usage. It is hardly necessary to say that all water should be boiled, and, if possible, filtered.

An even better plan, when practicable, is to distil it. But the shallow pans, which form the only water-supply in southern Jubaland, are almost invariably polluted by the urine of cattle or game who have drunk there; while weeds, slime and dung may be eliminated

## WATER

by the above-mentioned processes, no method yet invented will completely purify water contaminated by urine, and its chief danger lies in the fact that it provides an admirable breeding-ground for the germs of all forms of disease. The traveller should therefore always try to keep for himself, at any rate, a small reserve of fresh rain-water, if possible, in one of the tanks, in case of meeting such a pool. But it often happens that it is absolutely necessary to drink such water, and when this is the case, the only course left open to him is to boil it thoroughly, filter it just before use and then partake of it as sparingly as possible. I am strongly against the use of alcohol in any form on safari. The habit of taking copious draughts of water is also to be avoided, since it weakens muscular energy and induces to violent perspiration, which increases the feeling of exhaustion and tends to produce "prickly heat." In my own case, I drink nothing but weak tea without milk and with but little sugar. I find that it not only quenches thirst very quickly, but is also very refreshing.

Little need be said about the saddles and equipment of the beasts of burden, since they will be dictated by the customs prevalent in the country. In this, as in regard to the hours of marching, and in the care and management of the animals, the habits of the natives are not to be lightly condemned.

The following general principles should be borne in mind when dealing with the Somali. It would be a fundamental mistake to treat them with that contempt, which is so often shown to the black races by Europeans. It must be remembered that the Somali is far superior in intelligence, and therefore far more dangerous than, for instance, the Masai or Kikuyu ;

## TREATMENT OF NATIVES

nor must it be forgotten that, according to their own ideas, they are strict Mussulmans. In a recent article on big-game shooting in East Africa that appeared in a magazine, the writer states that four Somali came into camp and presented him with a sheep, but he gave them nothing in return, for, he says, "they would be frightfully offended if we offered them anything for it, even a drink" (!). The last three words especially show such an astounding ignorance that they alone justify the Government's action in making the Northern Frontier District and Jubaland a closed territory, forbidden to the casual big-game shooter.

It is, of course, essential never to lose one's temper, although the Somali frequently but unconsciously appear insolent, but this, as a rule, is a mannerism rather than a deliberate act. Chiefs should always have a present, and all communications should go through them. The nature of the gift varies with the importance of the recipient. Coloured silk handkerchiefs, silk cloths, razors and looking-glasses all form appropriate presents to big chiefs, in addition to the value in trade goods of the gift he has made you (probably an ox or a couple of sheep or a camel). With discontented Somali it is advisable to allow plenty of talk, and to provide coffee, while they are discussing. In this way a solution agreeable to both sides may often be reached. Should any chief or men prefer a complaint against any of the explorer's followers, with regard to any matter previous to that journey, he should point out that while working under him his men are neutral, and they cannot be interfered with, until they have been discharged. If he has any complaint to make against a native, the traveller

## RULES OF CONDUCT

should in the first instance report it to the chief, and all disputes should be settled locally.

The following points should be remembered if the traveller has not had any previous acquaintance with Mohammedans :—

1. Never hit or beat a Somali.
2. Never point at a man with your finger.
3. Never stare or attempt to photograph a Mussulman at his prayers.
4. Do not ask unnecessary questions, and do not inquire after a man's family.
5. Do not be contemptuous or patronising with the Somali, nor familiar. There is a happy mean, which he is quick to recognise and welcome with respect.
6. Do not laugh or sneer at his hut or his habits. He is quick to resent this, and rightly so.
7. Do not promise or threaten anything, unless you know you can carry it out immediately. Delay will be regarded as a confession of weakness, with a consequent loss of authority.

There is still much exploratory work to be accomplished in the remoter parts of East Africa, and I should like to urge very strongly on travellers who intend to visit those regions, that they should fit themselves in a scientific sense of the word, in order that they may fully profit by the opportunities afforded them on such an expedition. I cannot do better than quote a passage by Mr. E. A. Reeves in the Introduction to the ninth edition of the Royal Geographical Society's *Hints to Travellers*. "The days of rough route surveying," he says, "are practically past. A man who only makes a hurried journey through some imperfectly known district without proper instruments or previous training, and who is able consequently only to bring back with him a rough prismatic com-

## SCIENTIFIC OUTFIT

pass sketch of the route he has taken, unchecked by astronomically determined or triangulated positions, will, at the present time, find that he has not rendered any great service to geography. That sort of work might be all very well in the early days of exploration, but what is wanted now is something better and more reliable . . . which, if not possessing the extreme accuracy of a complete trigonometrical survey, shall at least have some scientific basis. . . ." I should strongly advise intending travellers to pay a visit to the Geographical Society before leaving England, where they may obtain not only advice in the selection, but also instruction in the use of scientific instruments. Nor can there be any question but that the enjoyment of an expedition is much increased, if the traveller has a wide range of interests and some scientific training.

Photography is a delightful recreation at any time, but to the explorer it not only becomes a means of recording the scenes and impressions of his journey, but is the best method for obtaining correct records for geographical or ethnological reference. It is somewhat difficult to make any suggestions as to the type of camera that should be taken without knowing what kind of photographs are required. Travellers may be roughly divided into two classes as regards photography, those who are interested only in its pictorial possibilities, and desire only to obtain pictures of beautiful landscapes and native scenes for their own enjoyment, and those who want, in addition, to bring back the best results of the natural history, botany and archæology of the country they traverse for scientific purposes. To the former I would recommend a reflex camera, if they have had some photographic experience, and of the many forms on



## PHOTOGRAPHY

the market there are none more suitable for work in tropical countries than the N.S. Reflex with metal shutter. No rubber blind shutter will resist the effects of heat and damp for any length of time. But to those travellers who dislike a bulky camera, or one which involves changing the plates in the dark, the Kodak, fitted with a high-class anastigmat, is eminently suitable. These cameras are simple and convenient and are capable of excellent results, but it would be unreasonable to expect them to produce the same class of work as a more perfect instrument would do. The latter are fitted with a wide range of movements, which have to be sacrificed in the Kodak to size and weight, and they are therefore necessarily more complex.

But to the traveller who wishes to do more serious work, I should recommend, in addition to a reflex, either a universal hand or stand camera, such as the Sanderson, or Sinclair "Una," or, even better, a square bellows type of stand camera using whole or, at any rate, half-plates. With such a combination and a series of two or three lenses, practically any photographic difficulty may be overcome. This outfit may sound complicated and troublesome, but it must be remembered that there is no single camera suitable for all types of subject, and that good results are not obtained without the expenditure of much time and labour. A point to be noticed in buying a reflex camera is that it should have a reversing back, and that the hood should be capable of being turned round, in order that natives may be photographed at right angles to the direction in which the camera is pointing. In some cases this is most desirable, as certain tribes have a strong superstitious fear of the

## LENSES

camera, and would make things extremely unpleasant for the photographer if they found themselves the subject of his attention.

As far as telephoto lenses go, I have not had a great deal of experience, but the one I have used during the last two years has given me complete satisfaction. It is a Dalmeyer No. 1 Grandac. With a camera extension of 12 inches, and working at the large aperture of  $F/12$ , it gives the equivalent of a lens of 30 inches focal length; that is to say, that at 60 yards it gives the same sized image as an ordinary quarter-plate camera and usual lens (5 inches) gives at 10 yards. A greater number of magnifications can be obtained by increasing the extension of the camera, but this, of course, decreases the amount of light transmitted. The positive of this telephoto combination is of 10 inches focal length, and works at  $F/4$ , so that it is admirably adapted for very high-speed work, and also for photography when the light is very poor. Its one disadvantage is its great bulk and weight.

Plates or films can be taken, but the former are far more reliable, and although much heavier and more inconvenient, the finer results obtained far outweigh these objections. The Paget Prize Plate Co. now supply their plates especially hardened for the tropics if desired, so that they may be developed at a temperature of  $90^{\circ}$  Fahr. without any danger to the gelatine. Plates should always be dusted carefully before being inserted in the slides and on removing them; they should not be left in the camera longer than twenty-four hours. Development should be done in the field and as soon as possible, after exposure. I always make a rough proof on P.O.P. paper, so that in case

## PLATES, FILMS, ETC.

of the negative being broken in transport or lost, a copy of the subject would still be left. Development presents no difficulties, if tanks be used and tabloid chemicals taken. The Agfa Acid Fixing Salts are convenient, as they are sold in tins containing sufficient hypo. to make 35 oz.—approximately a tankful.

A spare mirror and ground-glass should be carried, *cut to fit*, as without them a reflex camera is practically useless. The use of an actinometer will save a great wastage of plates; but it must be noted that the sensitive paper darkens more slowly in a dry and more quickly in a damp climate, and an allowance must be made in calculating the exposure. An invaluable rule, not often mentioned, is that the actinometer gives the correct exposure for *normal* subjects only; for near objects, double the exposure should be given, for distant objects, one quarter of what is indicated by the actinometer.

One word of warning is needed before I finish. To penetrate into the little-known regions of Jubaland requires a great deal of hard travelling; many a weary hour must be faced. Hunger, heat, fatigue, illness and especially thirst must be endured almost daily, and in the far interior there is always the danger of an attack by the natives. But, on the other hand, Jubaland contains a variety of game unobtainable elsewhere, and the melancholy of its scenery cannot but attract those who appreciate Nature in her sterner moods.

## APPENDIX A

### A SUMMARY OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL RESULTS OF THE EXPEDITION

IN order to set forth the topographical features with the greatest lucidity, the country traversed by the expedition may be conveniently divided into three parts, namely:—

1. *Jubaland*<sup>1</sup> (comprising the districts of Guranlagga, Joreh, Kurde, Gulola and Arroga).
2. *Lak Dera* (comprising the districts of Rama Gudi and Bojhi).
3. *The Lorian* (*i.e.* the country between Marti Plateau and Madoleh).

1. *Jubaland*.—The general slope of the land is from the north-west towards the south-east. The country consists of a series of broad shallow valleys almost imperceptible to the eye, for the most part overgrown with dense bush and forest and generally running from the north-west to the south-east. Down their centre there are usually dry stream beds, mostly sandy and filled with almost impenetrable jungle. Many of them are connected with the numerous small creeks found along the coast, and they form practically the only drainage system of the country. But generally in the north these valleys and low rounded ridges disappear as they draw near the sea, giving place to a level arid plain, known as Dibayu, which is only separated from the Indian Ocean by a line of sandhills. These sanddunes, which rarely exceed 200 feet in height, stretch from Gobwein in the north to Port Durnford (Birkau) in the south, and are parallel to the coast. They are covered with dense scrub and flat-topped conifers (*Juniperus procera*).

<sup>1</sup> Southern Jubaland properly includes Nos. 1 and 2. They are only divided here for convenience, in order to emphasise their different characteristics.

## APPENDIX A

To the south-east of Joreh is a belt of forest country known as Biskayia. Near the coast are a large number of mangrove swamps, infested by the tsetse fly and known collectively under the name of Wama Iddu. The greater part of the water that falls during the rainy season in this district drains into these swamps and into the rivers Arnoleh and Durnford, and thence into the sea.

The interior of the country is characterised by thick belts of dense acacia scrub, alternating with small park-like glades with a luxuriant growth of grass and dotted with mimosa and occasionally with camel thorn trees (*Acacia giraffæ*). These plains often become swampy during the rainy season, the slope of the land being insufficient to drain the country.

There are two main watersheds; the first being that which divides the valley of the Guranlagga (see map) from that of the Lak Dera. The second divides the country draining into the Guranlagga from that draining southwards towards Wama Iddu and the Tana. It must here be noted that the Guranlagga rises at a place called Gonia Iddu in the district of Kurde in latitude  $0^{\circ} 22' 28''$  S. and longitude  $41^{\circ} 10' 20''$  E., and flows almost due east, a very different course to that marked on existing maps. The average fall of the river is very slight, being 1 foot in 1849. When I visited it, water was not running, although there were several large pools in the stream bed: but the natives state that after the rains it is often impassable for weeks. The channel varies from 10 to 150 yards in breadth and is filled with the densest jungle, through which in most places it is often impossible to find a way.

There are no permanent streams and no perennial rain-pools or water-holes in southern Jubaland, but Gulola and Gama Gar Swamps and the pools at Shimbirleh and perhaps at Jara may be considered as semi-permanent, as with an average rainfall they last throughout the year; but they have been known to dry up, with disastrous results to the Somali and their cattle, who were dependent on them. At Jara water may be obtained by digging from 3 to 9 feet, and I found traces of three old wells, now fallen into

## APPENDIX A

disuse and almost concealed by reeds. The largest and most important water-holes are: Eil-ad, Gombé-Barsa, Jara, Gama Gar, Gulola and Tubtu. I saw many others, but they were small and not to be relied on except immediately after a plentiful rainy season.

As regards the Bisahu-Hamu, marked on every map as an important swamp, its name is unknown to the natives, but north of Bussa Berora there is a large plain covered with coarse grass that no doubt becomes swampy in the rainy season, a peculiarity not confined only to that locality.

During the rains and shortly after there is surface water almost everywhere in the bush in little shallow pans. Although containing little water, and that highly unpleasant in quality, these rain-pools are often invaluable to the traveller.

2. *Lak Dera* ("Lak," Galla word for a non-permanent stream; "Dera," Somali for Long).—The Lak Dera is a continuation of the river Uaso Nyiro. I followed the course of the river (with the exception of about thirty miles between Sereda and Madoleh) from longitude  $40^{\circ} 43'$  E. to Marti Mountain, where the Uaso Nyiro is well known, and I can positively state that the river bed is continuous all the way without a break, even in the two Lorian Swamps, and that the name is changed, only where permanent water ceases and the Uaso Nyiro, which grows narrower and shallower from Marti Mountain eastwards, finally and very gradually sinks underground at Madoleh, some eleven miles below the second swamp. Eastwards from the latter place the Lak Dera varies in breadth from 10 yards to 300 yards, the bed being generally sandy and much overgrown with bush and jungle. The fall is very slight, especially at first, and averages about 1 in 600, though just below Toor Guda there is a stretch of 1 in 200. It runs in a very broad shallow valley, bounded on north and south above Sereda by low rounded hills which send down spurs towards the river; but the only important feeder, if a dry stream may be called such, is the Lak Aboloni, which rises in a series of small swamps, almost due north of Liboyi. On each side of the Aboloni and

## APPENDIX A

between it and the Lak Dera the country is extremely fertile, and the soil is probably alluvial and undoubtedly very rich, resembling the plains on each side of the Lorian Swamps. With this exception the district is arid in the extreme, covered with dense thorn, and in my opinion it will never be of any great value either for cattle or for farming. The only possibility of improving it and making it inhabitable, as far as I can see, would be to sink a series of wells in the bed of the Lak Dera and perhaps at Jara, where I am convinced there is a copious underground flow of water. In this connection it is interesting to note that the natives say that two days before water flows down the Lak Dera the bed of the river becomes noticeably wet, and when they see this they know they can take their cattle farther west.

3. *Lorian*.<sup>1</sup>—The district known under this name to the natives extends from Madoleh to Marti Mountain, or roughly from longitude 40° E. to 39° E. Throughout this section there is permanent water, and it possesses, in my opinion, great agricultural possibilities. It may be considered as a shallow valley, sloping gently to the south-east, whose floor consists of an alluvial plain of great extent, divided unequally into two parts by the Uso Nyiro and Lorian Swamps. The valley, which is narrow at its western extremity, and somewhat thickly covered with bush near the river, broadens out till it reaches its maximum width near Arro-Dima. Here there would be no clearing to do, and the whole plain could easily be irrigated from the river. I am sure that rice, cotton, sugar-cane and Indian corn would do extremely well on both banks. Below Madoleh the country again becomes arid and waterless. Twelve miles above the latter place there is a small swamp some five miles in length and about two miles broad when I saw it, but its breadth may be increased some two miles during the rains. A thin line of thorn trees runs through the middle denoting the actual river bed. On each side is a bed of tall grass and reeds. Underfoot it is very swampy, and there were about 6 inches

<sup>1</sup> A full description of the Lorian is given in Chapters XVIII. and XIX.

## APPENDIX A

of surface water there in February. Between this and the main Lorian Swamp the river flows through an open plain for about six miles (approximately), though the bush comes very near to its northern bank just west of Melka Waja. The main Lorian Swamp, whose long axis runs N.W. and S.E., consists, on its eastern extremity, of grass some 12 feet high. There are a few trees along both banks of the river, but the grass soon gives place to a dense bed of reeds, narrow on the northern bank, but about twelve miles broad on the southern bank. The Uaso Nyiro enters these reeds near Melka Dera,<sup>1</sup> and on its entrance divides into three channels, of which the northern one was dry, as was the southern one. The main branch, however, winds its way through in a distinct channel some 10 yards broad at first and 2 feet deep, but gradually grows narrower until, when it emerges from the swamp near Melka Waja, it is scarcely 6 yards broad and 12 inches deep. Some three miles westwards of this swamp it flows between high banks covered with dense jungle and tall trees, which in turn give place to groups of dom palms and large mimosa trees near Marti Mountain, where it makes a large bend to the north.

As to the existing resources of the country, they are somewhat meagre. I saw no traces of valuable minerals, but there was some fine timber in the forests of Guranlagga. There are two species of trees used by the Somali for making their spear-shafts. These might prove valuable for ornamental purposes, one being a rich black when worked, and the other having a very beautiful grain. These trees were also plentiful near the Lak Dera.

If the water-supply could be improved, either by sinking wells or building reservoirs, there is no doubt that many crops could be grown with ease, for there are large tracts in Guranlagga, Joreh, Kurde, Arroga, Gulola and Lorian, where the soil is very rich. There are two plants which may be of commercial value, as they are much used by natives for their medicinal properties. One acts as a purge, the other seems to possess much the same value as quinine.

The map is from plane table and prismatic compass

<sup>1</sup> Latitude  $1^{\circ} 12' 58''$  N., longitude  $39^{\circ} 34' 37''$  E.



## APPENDIX A

traverses, adjusted to the astronomically determined positions of Eil-ad, Seyera, Shimbirleh, Wangema Mogal, Guratti, Jara, Gonia Iddu, Gulola, Jeldez, Robleh, Liboyi, Tur Guda, Sereda, Eil-adi, Haryel, Melka Waja, Melka Dera, Melka Gela (Boran boma) and Marti Plateau. The latitudes for these places were obtained from north and south stars, or sun circum-meridian observations, and, in the case of Haryel, by double altitudes of the sun (Ivory's formula).

Longitudes are from chronometric differences by east and west stars, or by the mean of observations to the sun east and west of the meridian, and depend on the position of Kismayu Island (Observation Point), which is given by the B.E.A. Survey Office as in latitude  $0^{\circ} 23' 6''$  S., and longitude  $42^{\circ} 33' 31''$  E.

Azimuth observations were taken from time to time when any distant object could be seen, and the magnetic variation was found to vary between  $9^{\circ}$  W. and  $5^{\circ} 45'$  E., the latter being the deflection of the needle at Marti Plateau.

All these observations were taken with a 4-inch theodolite fitted with Reeves' tangent micrometers, which, in spite of the rough usage to which it was unavoidably exposed, rendered every satisfaction.

Heights are from boiling-point and aneroid observations, depending on the altitude of Mark Hill, Kismayu (140 feet), as given on the Admiralty Chart.

Two short lines of levels were run, one near Seyera in order to prove the impossibility of the Guranlagga rising there and flowing southwards, and the other to the east of Melka Waja to satisfy myself of the possibility of an outflow from the Lorian Swamps during the rainy season. The method adopted was that described on page 180 of the ninth edition of the *Hints to Travellers*. But owing to the levelling staff being very primitive, the results could only be approximations, though they sufficed to show that my theories were correct.

The forms lines are extremely rough, and were put in by the help of an aneroid and hypsometer merely to show the approximate relief of the country.

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The following is a list of the instruments used:—

- 1 4-inch tangent micrometer theodolite.
- 1 Plane table with folding telescopic alidade.
- 1 Hypsometer.
- 2 Aneroids (R.G.S. pattern).
- 1 Prismatic compass.
- 1 Astronomical compass.
- 2 Half-chronometer watches (R.G.S. pattern).
- Maximum, minimum, wet and dry bulb thermometers ; 100 feet steel tape and levelling staff, etc.

The wooded nature of the country and its extreme flatness rendered any other method than that which I adopted impossible with the time at my disposal. A more rigorous survey would take years to accomplish, and would cost an enormous sum.

## APPENDIX B

### CLIMATE

ON the whole I consider the climate of Jubaland distinctly unhealthy. Of the twenty-six men in my safari only three escaped an attack of malarial fever. In addition, I had nine cases of dysentery and one of heat prostration. The *average* number of cases treated per day throughout the journey was three—a very high percentage. I used over 2000 grains of quinine for my men alone. The water throughout Jubaland is very bad, stagnant, and contains much matter in suspension—as is only to be expected when the water-supply is purely surface water and where no springs or permanent rivers exist. Mosquitoes (*Anopheles*) abound round these pools, but I saw no tsetse fly. The heat was very great during the day, and the nights were not much cooler, the mean daily maximum being  $96^{\circ}$ , and the mean daily minimum  $83^{\circ}$  (Kurde, Gulola and Arroga). The moisture was at all times very great, rendering the air heavy and oppressive. Whenever I was in camp for more than one day, I took hourly readings of the barometer, which showed a very regular diurnal variation of about 0.09 inch between the maximum and minimum readings. After leaving Joreh, I no longer felt the monsoon, instead of which there was a fairly constant wind from the south-east during the middle of the day during the early part of January, but later in Kurde and westwards it became very faint, scarcely a breath of air being felt in the bush. The maximum temperature recorded was  $116^{\circ}$  in the shade at Jeldez. I noticed no daily recurring form of clouds or other exceptional meteorological phenomena.

## APPENDIX C

### LIST OF TRADE GOODS, WITH THEIR PURCHASING POWER IN THE INTERIOR

	Trade value.
1 Cloth <sup>1</sup> "Bufta" (calico) . . . .	Rs. 4.
1 Cloth "Murduf" (twill) . . . .	Rs. 3.25.
1 Cloth "Americani" . . . .	Rs. 2.75.
Coloured cloths (cheap) . . . .	Rs. 4.
Coloured cloths (special) . . . .	Rs. 7.
Women's cloths (black) . . . .	Rs. 0.20c.
Silk squares, according to size . . . .	Rs. 3-Rs. 30.
Buni—1½ lb. . . . .	Rs. 1.

There was a steady demand for "buni" everywhere, as there was for "bufta," coloured cloths of the kind common in Kismayu and black cloths for the women. The Somali would not purchase "murduf" or "Americani," but were glad to accept them as part of a present. There was no demand for rice in the interior, but Indian corn (unground) is always sought after. In payment the Somali have to offer cattle and ghee, the latter being very expensive in Jubaland, averaging Rs. 22 for 36 lb. The following is the average trade price of cattle in the interior:—

Yearling calf or heifer . . . .	Rs. 20.
Three-year-old ox . . . .	Rs. 30-Rs. 40.
Three-year-old cow . . . .	Rs. 30-Rs. 35.
Cow with calf . . . .	Rs. 40-Rs. 45.
Sheep and goats . . . .	Rs. 4-Rs. 6.

The traveller should carry, in addition to the above trade goods, a quantity of various kinds of perfume (consisting of wooden chips and gum), tobacco in twists for the Waboni, and a few looking-glasses and razors (not knives), all of

<sup>1</sup> One cloth equals 8 yards.

## APPENDIX C

which would be suitable to form part of a present to a chief.

Among the Borana the goods most in demand are "murduf" and "Americani" (not bufta), white metal bracelets and cubes (only to be obtained in Kismayu), various coloured beads, cowrie shells, "buni" and common chewing tobacco. The prices of cattle are somewhat lower than among the Somali. Before starting out, the traveller should try and find out from a native trader what form and colour of beads are in favour at the time, as the Borana vary frequently in their tastes.

APPENDIX D  
NAMES OF ANIMALS

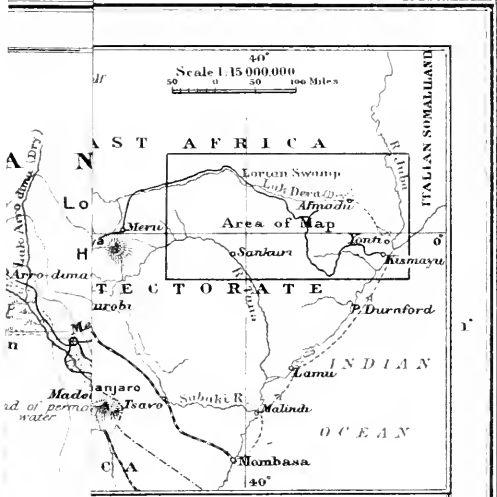
English.	Somali.	Swahili.
1. Buffalo	Gisi	Mbogo.
2. Bushbuck	—	Pongo.
3. Crocodile	—	Mamba.
4. Dik-dik	Sakaro	Paa.
5. Elephant	Marodi	Tembo.
6. Nearly all gazelles	Aoul	Swala.
7. Gerenuk	Gerenuk	Gerenuk.
8. Giraffe	Gir'ri	Twiga.
9. Hippo	Jir	Kiboko.
10. Hunter's hartebeeste	Arrola	Arrola.
11. Hyæna	Didar (striped) Woroba (spotted)	Fisi.
12. Impalla	Arrola	Swala, or Palla.
13. Kudu (greater) „ (lesser)	Godir Dir-dir	Marua. Kungu.
14. Leopard	Shebeil	Chui.
15. Lion	Lib'bah	Simba.
16. Oryx	Biid (plural, Biida)	Cheroa.
17. Rhino	Wiil	Faru.

## APPENDIX D

English.	Somali.	Swahili.
18. Topi	Sig	Topi.
19. Waterbuck	—	Kuru.
20. Zebra	Far'ro	Punda milia.
21. Grevy's zebra	Far'ro	Kangani.
22. Guinea-fowl	Diguir're	Kanga.







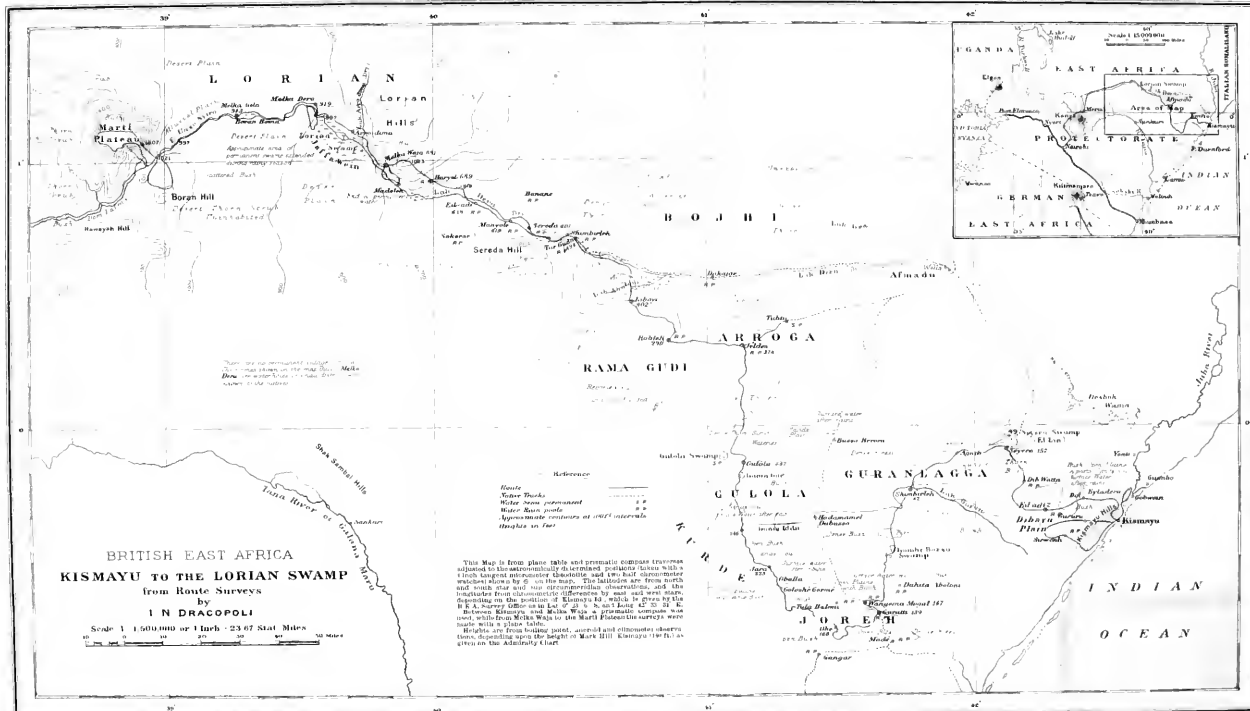
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Deshek



# THROUGH JUBALAND TO THE LORIAN SWAMP



### LIST OF POSITIONS.

Name of Station	Latitude	Longitude
Eti ad	0° 15' 45" N	42° 10' 20" E
Seyera	0° 8' 12"	42° 50' 00" E
Numbirich	0° 14' 41"	43° 45' 20" E
Wangema Mogal	0° 39' 55"	43° 15' 20" E
Guretti	0° 42' 00"	43° 20' 15" E
Jara	0° 12' 17"	43° 15' 10" E
Gomelidu Camp near	0° 1' 00"	43° 05' 00" E
Gulota	0° 5' 11"	43° 00' 11" E
Jelder	0° 27' 15" N	43° 00' 12" E
Bobich	0° 19' 21" N	43° 11' 30" E
Liboyi	0° 27' 11" N	43° 41' 00" E
Tur Guda	0° 42' 11" N	43° 41' 00" E
Sereda	0° 44' 26" N	43° 29' 27" E
Lil ad	0° 42' 11" N	43° 02' 40" E
Haryel	0° 51' 41" N	43° 59' 30" E
Moku Waga	0° 55' 00" N	39° 10' 00" E
Dera	1° 12' 58" N	39° 18' 12" E
Boran Boma	1° 19' 59" N	39° 15' 17" E
Marti Plateau	1° 15' 17" N	43° 14' 19" E
Observation Point		

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