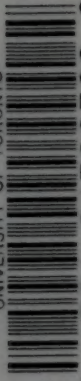



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ETHNOLOGY
OF
A-KAMBA AND OTHER
EAST AFRICAN TRIBES

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ETHNOLOGY
OF
A-KAMBA AND OTHER
EAST AFRICAN TRIBES

BY

Charles William
C. W. HOBLEY, C.M.G., A.M.Inst.C.E.

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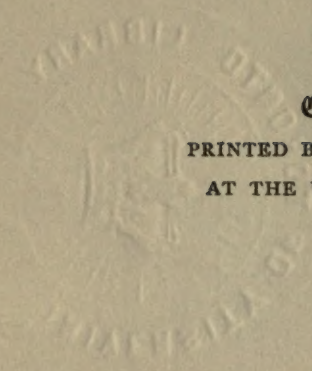
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ETHNOLOGY
OF
A-KAMBA AND OTHER
EAST AFRICAN TRIBES

C. W. HODGKINSON, F.R.S.E.
F. C. HODGKINSON, F.R.S.E.



Cambridge :
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Cambridge
at the University Press
1919

PREFACE

IN the face of the monumental monographs of Haddon, Rivers and others, it is with great reluctance that the observations contained in this work are being published, and I am only persuaded to do so by the assurance of various scientific advisers who are of opinion that any first-hand observations of this kind should be made accessible to those who are working at these subjects.

Part I is an attempt at a systematic survey of the A-Kamba tribe of British East Africa. Although one of the first up-country tribes to be administered, I believe that very little has up to now been known about their customs and beliefs. Dr Krapf travelled among them over 40 years ago and their country has been traversed by many travellers, who hurriedly passed through, anxious to push on to the great lakes, to Kenya or some other place which possessed a fascination for the explorer. A certain amount of information about them is buried away in blue books and official reports, but, as far as I know, no effort has been made to carry out a systematic study of the tribe. Being for the last year and a half responsible for their administration I thought it desirable that some such attempt should be made, and this work is the result of several short journeys in their country; my only regret is that I have not been able to personally witness many of their important ceremonies, but the descriptions have been obtained at first-hand from some of the more important chiefs and checked as far as possible. Unless one resides for a long time in the particular locality, and is at hand when each ceremony takes place, it is very difficult to be actually present when they occur, especially when the more interesting ceremonies are not

usually held in the vicinity of Government stations. It is only after working at the internal affairs of a tribe for some time that one begins to realize how much more must remain to be learnt.

The points of greatest interest about the A-Kamba, and to which the attention of the anthropologist is especially called, are:—Their circumcision ceremonies, the account of which was only obtained with some difficulty, and in connection with this, the carving of pictographic riddles on the *Musai* stick is especially curious. Some six months after these facts were collected I discovered some pictographic sticks in Sir H. H. Johnston's *George Grenfell and the Congo*, p. 807. It does not, however, mention if they are used in connection with any rites of a similar character.

In the description of the Kamba ordeals mention is made of the ordeal by the insertion of a bead under the eyelid and, on p. 672 of *Grenfell and the Congo*, I now see that the same ordeal is used by Bateke and Eshi Kongo of Western Congo-land; thus affording one more instance of the extraordinary way in which the human mind works in circles, and does exactly the same thing in a dozen places on the earth, all equally remote from each other.

Turning to the folk lore chapter we find a Kamba version of the hare and the tortoise, but in this case the eagle replaces the hare.

The account of the *Aiimu* beliefs may prove of some interest to psychologists.

PART II.

This portion of the work will probably appear very fragmentary and disjointed until I explain that it is really the amplification of jottings made upon the occasion of journeys among the various tribes touched upon. In some cases, however, the district could not be visited but the information was obtained first-hand from members of the tribe referred to. An official life does not always afford the best opportunities for research of this nature, and one should be able to follow wherever clues might lead and have no ties but those of re-

search ; in practice, however, it will be readily seen that this is impossible, and the only hope is to so multiply the workers in the field that every avenue of investigation will be examined, and every district in the country contain a resident investigator.

Investigation is, however, not likely to be very productive of result unless it is trained, and it is a curious fact that although many men will be found in every newly settled country, who are keen on observing facts in connection with the natural history of mammals, birds, or insects, it is very rare to find anyone who is interested in the study of the highest order in the animate world, viz.:—man. This I believe is due to omissions in our scheme of education in which the study of man has up to now held no recognized place. Ordinary natural history has been written up in popular form by scores of authors, hardly a month passes without some handbook to the study of British birds, butterflies, or wild flowers being published, and the book-stalls are flooded with guides to Nature Study. Training in the study of man is, however, not nearly so accessible, unless the student is able to sit at the feet of the great teachers in one of the old universities: without such opportunity competent instruction in scientific method as applied to ethnological research is almost impossible to obtain.

Public opinion is however, I think, awakening, and there appears to be a chance of that struggling body "The Royal Anthropological Institute" receiving some official recognition, and it is hoped that the enormous importance of this line of research will presently be generally recognised.

The native races in British colonies and protectorates are one of our greatest assets, both for the production of products necessary for the European world and for labour supply. This is the utilitarian point of view and apart from this there is the question of our duty to the races subject to our rule. Their future is in our hands, and let us see to it that the verdict of posterity be that we have guided their destiny wisely. In Africa, for instance, owing to the introduction of many new factors, white colonization, improved communications, missionary efforts, etc., the situation yearly becomes more complex, and greater control and development on sound lines will not be

arrived at by armed force and expeditions, which are merely destructive in effect, but by complete knowledge and more scientific treatment.

The practical need at the present day is for some means by which travellers, colonial officials, missionaries and others, can easily receive competent instruction in the methods of ethnological research, in the same way as the Royal Geographical Society trains the would-be explorer in surveying, etc. The interest once awakened, and the aims made clear, there is little doubt that the results would be proportionately great and valuable.

To return after this digression to Part II of this work, the attention of the student is called to the section dealing with the social organization of the Masai tribe, which it is hoped will throw a certain amount of new light upon those interesting people.

An attempt has also been made to rebuild to some extent the past history of the East Africa highlands by the help of information obtained from many native sources.

The discovery of the Mogogodo tribe of aboriginals with their curious and rather unique language may prove to be a clue of considerable value. An examination of the photograph of their chief Matungi, will at once demonstrate that we have here a very different human type to that of the surrounding tribes, the profile reminding one of classical representations of ancient Egyptian types.

I wish to record my thanks to Prof. Ridgeway and other scientific friends, who have given me much valuable advice, and to Mr R. W. Humphry who has helped me in obtaining particulars about the A-Kamba, and would also mention the chief Nthiwa wa Tama who entered into the spirit of my investigations and gave me much information concerning his people.

C. W. HOBLEY.

SUTTON COLDFIELD,
October 1909.

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PREFATORY NOTE

IN his own preface Mr Hobley has set forth so admirably, albeit most modestly, the scope of his work, that there seems little need for any further preliminary remarks. However I cannot refuse the request of a valued friend to write a few lines on one or two general questions. Mr Hobley's long experience amongst the various tribes of British East Africa gives him the right to speak with an authority to which few others can lay claim. His earlier collections when laid before the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute a good many years ago were regarded as of such importance that the Institute determined to devote to them a separate publication, and his very valuable series of facts were thus embodied in his now well-known monograph—*Eastern Uganda: an Ethnological Survey*. There can be no better warrant than this for believing that the fruits of his close observation and of his intimate and sympathetic knowledge of the races of East Africa must always have a permanent value. His own frank statement in his preface respecting the difficulties under which one who, like himself, occupies a prominent administrative post, labours in carrying out systematic researches, at once inspires the reader with the fullest confidence that whatever Mr Hobley commits to writing is a well-ascertained fact.

His present contribution to our knowledge of the peoples of East Africa is a striking example of what can be done even in the pressure of official work by one who has wisely seen for himself the importance of a minute and careful study of the

organisation and the institutions, as well as of the physical characteristics of our native races, not only from the standpoint of science, but also, what is after all still more important, for the purposes of enlightened and successful government, and thereby for the permanent benefit and credit of the Empire.

Mr Hobley has given us an excellent presentation of all that appertains to the life, and indeed also the death, of the A-Kamba. It is needless to reiterate the importance of such collections of well-attested facts, made not by a traveller during a hasty journey or, at the most a short stay, but by one who has long been familiar with the natives and their modes of life and thought. It is only when such systematic inquiries and observations shall have been made over the whole range of primitive races, not yet too corrupted by civilisation, that we shall be in a position to apply properly the inductive method to the study of Man and draw from the data sound and irrefragible conclusions. This is not the place to dilate upon the many valuable details contained in his work, but I may call attention to the most interesting example of the use of pictographs given on p. 71, which seems to suggest that these people have reached the first stage in that picture-writing from which, as we now know, all our civilised scripts have come, as in Egypt and Greece. I would, however, venture to say a few words upon a very important question raised in Mr Hobley's preface—the imperative need of a training in Ethnology and Primitive Religion for those whose life task is to be the direction and control of native races in our colonies and dependencies. Public opinion is certainly beginning to awaken not only to a sense of our moral duty towards those whom we have taken under our dominion, but also to the utilitarian aspect of the question. But public opinion works slowly, and before our rulers can be induced to take practical steps, strenuous and continuous efforts will still have to be made.

In 1908 the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute formulated a scheme for the establishment of an Imperial Bureau of Anthropology within the Institute and drew up a memorial pointing out that almost all the mistakes made by our officials

in dealing with natives were due to ignorance of their customs and institutions, and praying the Government to make a training in the elements of Anthropology compulsory on probationers for the Indian, Colonial, and Consular services. This memorial was signed by a large number of our leading Indian and Colonial administration and also by prominent ship-owners, manufacturers and traders. It was presented to the Prime Minister by an influential deputation of members of Parliament and others. The Institute also asked for the modest grant of £500 per annum for the working expenses, in return for which the State would have at its command a well-equipped Bureau of Anthropology, where civil servants, merchants, and missionaries could obtain reliable information about the various races within, and even without, the Empire. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer remained obdurate. Nevertheless, the words used by Mr Asquith in his reply are of permanent value: "He was entirely with the deputation in their proposition that Anthropology had become and was becoming more and more every year not only an important but an indispensable branch of knowledge, not merely for scholars, but for persons who in an empire like ours were going to undertake—whether in the Consular service, in India, or in the Crown Colonies—the work of administration. A young man at a University was now compelled to equip himself with a mass of knowledge from this science which was once unknown. Much more was this the case when they came to deal with an enormous variety of tribes, customs, and usages of a more or less imperfectly developed civilisation. On that point there was no dispute."

But though this first attempt was for the moment a failure, as far as any subvention was concerned, the impression made on great officials seems to have been not inconsiderable. Sir Reginald Wingate had already taken the lead by requesting the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to give systematic instruction in Ethnology and Primitive Religion to the probationers for the Soudan Civil Service, and there are now not wanting signs that the Colonial Office is taking steps in the same direction; it is even possible that eventually the India

Office may also awake to a sense of this most important duty to the millions over which it exercises control. We may therefore hope that before long the aspirations of Mr Hobley and others like him who have had long administrative experience in the field and who can thus speak with an undeniable authority, may be realised, and that the probationers for our Indian, Colonial and Consular services will receive a training in the elements of Anthropology sufficient to prevent them from making those mistakes which keep alive that friction that lies at the root of the "native question."

WILLIAM RIDGEWAY.

September 1910.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE A-KAMBA.

THE habitat of the A-Kamba tribe is a triangular stretch of country in the East Africa Protectorate about 90 miles from E. to W. by 150 miles from N. to S. and this area is roughly bounded on the W. by the Uganda Railway from Mtito Andei to Kiu Stations; from Kiu the boundary runs N. as far as the east slopes of Donyo Sapuk or "Chianzabi" as the A-Kamba call it, on the north the area may be said to be bounded by the Tana River and from the junction of the Thika and Tana as far E. as the northern extremity of the Mumoni range, from that point their boundary runs E. to the $38^{\circ} . 30'$ meridian of longitude and as far south along that meridian as latitude $2^{\circ} . 30' S$. There are a few villages on the W. side of the Railway near Kibwezi in the district called Kikumbuliu which extends to the eastern slopes of the Chyulu or Kyulu and Ongolea ranges, but these are very few and scattered. Then a few isolated colonies of the tribe are found on Kilimanjaro and there is a definite patch of Kamba settlement some miles N. and N.W. of Rabai and bordering on Giriama country.

There is a small settlement of hunters allied to the A-Kamba in the Ongolea Hills, they are called A-Noka and owing to their timidity and their living in a little known portion of the country have no communication with traders or Europeans. Possibly this section is not of Kamba origin but they speak a dialect of Ki-Kamba.

There is also another small section living in dense bush at Kiangini near where the Mkindu River joins the Athi, it is said that the rhino and buffalo are very troublesome there and so many of these people sleep at night in shelters built in trees.

The tribe can be conveniently divided into three sections each of which presents some differences :

- (1) The A-Kamba of Ulu or Ibeti (Ulu means highlands).
- (2) The A-Kamba of Kibwezi or Kikumbuliu. Both of these are administered from Machakos Station.
- (3) The A-Kamba of Kitui.
- (4) The A-Kamba of Mumoni.

The Kitui and Mumoni people were formerly administered from Kitui Station, but it is hoped that Mumoni will presently have an administrative centre of its own.

The Kibwezi and Kitui people are closely allied.

The A-Kamba of Ulu have a legend that they originally came from a country to the south of Kilimanjaro, but the Mumoni people say they believe they came from near Giriama country, that the pioneers swam across the Athi supported on empty beehives, and that they brought some fire with them sealed up in a bee-hive to prevent the water of the river from extinguishing it.

The A-Kamba are probably the purest Bantu race in British East Africa.

It was at one time considered that the Tharaka tribe was closely allied to the A-Kamba, but further enquiry does not seem to bear out this idea ; this tribe appears to have come up the R. Tana from Pokomo land and some of the elders say they are an off-shoot of a tribe N. and N.W. of Malindi. It is rather curious to note that one of the common devices on the Tharaka shields is a cross and if, as they say, they came from the region near Malindi it is quite possible that they copied this from the same device displayed on the flags of the early Portuguese conquistadors.

The population of Ulu and Kibwezi districts is estimated at 115,000, Kitui 95,000, Mumoni 25,000 ; which gives an approximate total of 235,000.

This estimate is based on the hut tax returns.

The physical configuration of the Kamba country is one that is characteristic of a well-marked zone of the eastern portion of the African continent between Latitude 1° N. and about 8° S.

One finds a series of granitic gneissose mountain ridges all running approximately north and south, having an altitude varying from 5000 to 7000 ft., and rising about 2000 to 3000 ft. above the normal level of the country¹. These ranges are the crests of ancient earth folds, and great thrust faults are nearly always traceable on either the east or west side of the ranges. Numerous springs are found on the hills and around their bases, and the colonies of the tribe are found settled on and near each mountain chain. Between the ranges great areas of flat country occur, sometimes parklike, but more often covered with thick thorn bush; these areas are traversed by great watercourses only containing running water in the height of the rains, but in which water can generally be obtained by digging holes in the clean white sand. The district of Ulu is the most fertile and best watered portion of their country, it is also the least subject to drought. The eastern portion of Kitui has a very fluctuating rainfall, and at intervals of about seven or ten years severe famines have occurred: there was one about 1888, another 1898-9, and a trying scarcity in 1907-8.

On the eastern borders of Kitui the mountains cease and there is a flat, bush covered, waterless desert, which runs continuously without a break to the Tana valley; it is a northern extension of the Taru desert. The fertility of its soil is extraordinary, but unless it can at some future time be irrigated by water from the Tana river it is quite useless to man.

Name of tribes, etc.

The people call themselves A-Kamba.

One person is called a Mu-Kamba.

The A-Kamba of Ulu call the Kitui A-Kamba—A-Thaishu.

The A-Kamba of Ulu call the A-Kamba near Rabai, A-Tumwa and Ma-Pihilambua.

The A-Kamba of Kilungu call other A-Kamba—Evaao.

The Masai call the A-Kamba—Lungñu.

¹ See Plate XII.

The A-Kamba call the Masai—A-Kabi, which is a corruption of Wa-Kuavi.

The A-Kamba call the Wa-Taita—A-Ndi and A-Ntha.

The A-Kamba call the A-Kikuyu—S. MwiKikuyu, P. A-Kikuyu.

The A-Kamba call the Wa-Langulu¹—Muyangulu.

The A-Kamba call Gallas—S. Mutwa, P. Atwa.

List of Mbai or clans of Mumoni district.

Ba-Mbua

Ba-Kithumba

Ba-Mutongoi (half of this clan not allowed to eat the meat of pig)

Ba-Mbola

Ba-Kilu

Ba-Kivao

Ba-Nzi (not allowed to eat the lungs of an animal)

Ba-Makongutu

Ba-Mwaki

Ba-Ango

Ba-Ithalu

Ba-Ngoki (half of this clan not allowed to eat meat of bush-buck)

Ba-Kathengi

Ba-Nzao

Ba-Nguma

Ba-Kiluti

Ba-Muvai (this clan not allowed to eat meat of bush-buck)

Ba-Mita

Ba-Chambi

Ba-Kukia

Ba-Mwathi

Ba-Lema (this clan not allowed to eat the liver of an animal)

Ba-Muli

Ba-Ikandi

¹ Mr Hollis tells me that the word Langulu is really Ki-Nyika and means "the people who eat the pig." They are a hunting tribe living in the Taro desert and are allied to the Wa-Sania; they are nominally tributary to the Gallas.

Ba-Matha
 Ba-Katui
 Ba-Kimuyu
 Ba-Kia
 Ba-Kasilu
 Ba-Nyangi
 Ba-Kisia
 Ba-Ngaluko
 Ba-Mutwoki (this clan not allowed to eat meat of bush-buck)

List of Clans of the Kitui Section.

<i>Mbai or Mbaya of Kitui</i>	<i>totem or Uthuku</i>	<i>Ancestor</i>
Mbaa-Miumbu ¹		Anzaoni
Mutei		Atangwa
Ngutu	liver	Asii
Ndui		Amuti
Makila		Kitondo
Kithusi		Anzaoni
Ngo		A-Kitondo
Nthunga		Awani
Mutia linga		A-Kitondo
Kitulu		Auini
Mbua		A-Kimei
Anzio		Kilui
Mundzundzu		
Ndewa	(cannot kill a bird called Mbungu (kite))	Kitutu
Muthiani		Uwani
Kimu		Aumoni
Katui		
Kangnao		Aombi

¹ The prefixes Mbaa, Ba and Mbaya are synonymous and mean "the people of," but it only refers to the clan, the expression Ba-Kamba would not be correct.

CHAPTER II.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A-KAMBA.

THE A-Kamba are as a whole a sturdy race and probably in bulk and height rank next in East Africa to the Nilotic Kavirondo¹, they do not strike one as being as tall as Masai but the Masai are a thin and rather lanky people and of course they are not as tall as the Turkana who are also very spare folk.

The average height of 10 promiscuously chosen male adults worked out at about 5' 6".

Craniologically they would be classed as Mesoticephalic, the cephalic index of the above mentioned male adults being 78·6. See Plate I.

The cephalic index derived from the average of the measurements of two skulls worked out at about 74·6.

The results of the nasal measurement place them among the Platyrhine-group, the nasal index being 88·5.

No opportunity was obtained of measuring any of the female sex.

There are two general types of head noticeable, one with very wide massive jaw curved sides and tapering towards the forehead, a very coarse negroid type, and the other is, comparatively speaking, a more intellectual type with a wider forehead and narrower in the region of the jaws, the chiefs generally belong to the latter type. It appears to be impossible to discover any reason for this variation. The chiefs and elders are, generally speaking, taller than the rank and file of the population and the men one sees employed as porters and labourers. They are not a steatopygous race to any marked extent. Their sight is usually

¹ Mr Hollis tells me that he considers some of the Giriama people to be physically the finest specimens of *Homo sapiens* in East Africa.

very keen, especially for distant objects. The hearing of most is very acute and they have the faculty of talking to one another at distances of 100 yards and over without apparently greatly elevating their voices. Some of the Mumoni people are distinctly oblique-eyed, i.e. the horizontal axis of the eye slopes downwards to the nose.

Their habitual carriage is easy and erect, but many of the young men wear a multitude of wire necklaces etc., which gives them a rather stiff-necked appearance. Loads of any kind are always carried on the back supported by a strap (Kik. Mukwa) across the forehead, this gives the women (who are daily carrying big loads of field produce, etc.) a rather bent appearance, their heads are apt to lean forward to some extent.

They swing their arms when walking and the arm hangs down with the palms facing the body.

When asleep they usually lie on one side with the knees doubled up towards the chin.

Ten men were tested as to their control over their eyes, that is to say their ability to shut and open either at will, with the following result :

4 men not able to open and shut either eye independently of the other.

4 men able to open and shut either at will.

2 were only able to open and shut the left eye while the right was closed.

The whole of the ten men were able to pick up a stone with the bare foot, the stone was grasped between the big toe and first toe, the two toes were however not opposable to any extent.

They were also tested as to their power of opening each finger independently in succession from the shut hand, but this faculty appeared to be somewhat undeveloped, about three could open the first and second finger but the others failed in varying degrees.

None of the subjects appeared to possess the faculty of moving their ears or the skin of the scalp. They all micturate in a standing position.

They could all climb trees with exceptional agility, they did not grip the tree with the ankles and knees as a European

MEASUREMENTS OF A-KAMBA SKULLS¹.

	No. 1 ♂	No. 2 ♀? (Imperfect)	No. 3 ♀? (Imperfect)
Length ...	181	Missing	168
Breadth ...	136	132	125
Minimum frontal breadth ...	99	101	88
Height ...	136	—	119
Horizontal circumference ...	514	—	487
Anterior-posterior curve ...	394	—	375
Basio-nasal ...	104	—	93
Basio alveolar ...	103	—	—
Byzomatic width ...	135	111	—
Nasio alveolar length ...	61	64	—
Nasal height ...	46	46	—
Nasal breadth ...	30	23	—
Orbital breadth ...	39	38	38
Orbital height ...	35	35	—
Muscular ridges ...	Well marked	Feeble	Feeble
Chief sutures ...	Moderately closed	Open	Open
Complexity ...	Moderate	Complicated	Complicated
Wormean ossicles in sutures ...	Small	None	Small
Outlines on curves, anterior pos- terior ...	{ Regular and elevated in the frontal, parietal and occipital regions	{ Irregular and elevated in frontal, depressed in parietal regions	{ Regular and elevated in fron- tal, flat in parietal, and ele- vated in occipital regions
Horizontal curves ...	Regular, flattened in temporal region	Regular, prominent in temporal region	Regular and elevated in temporal region
Transverse arch ...	Medium	Flat	Flat
Facial portion ...	Square	Short and broad	—
Glabella and super axillary region ...	Flat	Flat	Flat
Orbits ...	Broad and rectangular	Broad and rectangular	—
Axis of orbits ...	Approximately horizontal	Drooping externally	—
Inter-orbital region ...	Broad	Broad	—
Profile of nose ...	Concave	Concave	—
Nose, lower margin of opening ...	Rounded	Rounded	—
Direction of incisors ...	Projecting	Projecting	—
Teeth ...	Somewhat worn	Worn	—
Form of Palate ...	Horseshoe	Horseshoe	—

¹ The writer is indebted to Dr J. T. C. Johnson, M.D., for assistance in these cranial measurements.

probably would, but placed the sole of the foot flat against the trunk and practically walked up the tree. They have great practice at tree climbing in their search for honey as the beehives are always slung from trees. If a tree is too large to climb in the way just described they drive pegs into the bark at intervals of about 2 feet.

In pointing out an object, they usually hold the hand horizontal with the back uppermost and the first, or the first and third finger extended, if they desire to emphasize the distance of the object, they snap the thumb and first finger, the first finger then remaining extended in the direction of the object. A medicine man points at a person or an object with the fingers extended but with the first and second joint doubled, if he pointed at a person with his finger he would be liable to an accusation of designs on the life of the person pointed at.

Deformities are rarely seen, with regard to diseases but little information is available as medical men have not resided much among these people. Although however a great portion of their country is malarious one hears very rarely of the people suffering from this disease ; no traces of filariasis were observed and except in the immediate vicinity of alien settlements venereal diseases appear to be absent.

“Chesu” Mania.

Periodically in Ukamba numbers of the younger people are seized by a peculiar form of infectious mania. One of these epidemics occurred about the end of 1906 in Ulu, and it attacked the victims in the following way: the sight of a hat or cap threw the person into a kind of fit. The whole body but particularly the upper portion—the shoulders, neck and head—would be violently convulsed and the patient would eventually fall down in a semi-insensible state and this condition would continue until the hat was removed. The convulsions appear to be involuntary and often when a person felt he was seized he would shut his eyes or cover his head with a blanket until he was assured that the hat had been removed. When questioned the victims of the seizure would state that they were otherwise in good health but that they had lost their appetite.



(1) A-Kamba skulls.



(2) A-Kamba skulls.

PHYSICAL MEASUREMENTS OF A-KAMBA.

	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5	No. 6	No. 7	No. 8	No. 9	No. 10	Average	
Name ...	Mumo wa Maingi male	Simba wa Mutia male	Ndana wa Kioko male	Kachamba wa MBinga male	Kingendi wa Moindu male	Mugula wa Nzuili male	Kitonga wa Ngau male	Muchin- do wa Mwane male	Mazee wa Muli male	Makau wa Nguchu male		
Sex ...	20	25	35	35	45	40	40	35	40	30		
Approximate age ...	medium	medium	well made	slight	well built	good	mod.	mod.	mod.	sturdy		
General condition ...	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		
Colour of skin ...	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		
" eyes ...	black	black	black	black	black	black	black	black	black	black		
" hair ...	203	178	187	192	190	194	187	192	200	197	192	
Length of head ...	152	140	146	152	146	152	152	152	155	165	151	
Breadth of head ...	222	241	222	189	221	219	228	209	227	222	220	
Head vertex to chin ...	51	44	46	42	55	51	54	47	51	46	49	
Length of nose ...	38	39	44	38	52	46	44	43	41	46	44	
Breadth of nose ...	136	127	143	130	133	133	149	132	136	141	136	
Bizygomatic breadth of face ...	711	730	755	725	787	813	787	762	819	762	765	
Length, upper limb ...	241	279	282	273	267	311	292	286	305	292	283	
" cubit ...	165	177	192	170	184	190	184	178	184	181	180	
" hand ...	235	254	257	247	270	265	273	254	270	247	257	
" foot ...	812	806	866	835	930	1006	870	844	876	835	867	
Height, sitting ...	1549	1629	1663	1651	1759	1752	1717	1632	1787	1616	1675	
" standing ...	1168	1203	1236	1235	1305	1302	1270	1200	1330	1194	1244	
" kneeling ...	1575	1702	1679	1644	1800	1886	1752	1770	1871	1733	1741	
Span of arms ...	349	393	419	362	410	406	393	393	406	381	391	
Breadth across shoulders ...	279	306	295	298	305	292	307	273	308	301	296	
" " hips ...												

NOTE.—The measurements are in millimetres, the subjects were all natives of Kitui.

It appeared to be immaterial whether the hat was a European helmet or a fez cap such as is worn by civilized natives.

Cases of this curious mental condition first appeared in Mukaa which is in the southern part of Ulu district and it then spread north to Machakos. Very often it is said that the sight of a dog will induce a seizure. The Administrative Officer at Machakos himself saw cases and one of the local missionaries confirmed the account and said he had seen natives fall down in a fit at the sight of his wife's hat, he has also heard the natives say that some kinds of European vegetables produce the same effect.

No one seems to have died owing to these seizures and the chiefs recently told me that it had died out for the time being. It is called "Chesu" or "Ki-jesu" and some persons are of opinion that this name is derived from the Kamba pronunciation of Jesus, but this is very doubtful. It is said that someone will hear people talking about the seizures and next time he sees a hat or dog he will be seized¹; it was principally confined to youths and girls.

Numerical Proportions of the sexes.

The statistics of the 38 families have been kindly obtained for me by Mr Humphry in the Ulu district of Ukamba and according to these the female children born are only two in excess of the male children. In my paper on the Kavirondo and Nandi published in 1903, Vol. XXXIII. *Journal Anthropological Institute*, from the statistics there given it would appear that among the Bantu tribes male births were in excess and among the Nilotic races female births were in excess. In the present case the births of the two sexes are practically equal in number and it is difficult to see how polygamy can exist under these circumstances and some people are of opinion that it is only kept up at the present day by the men marrying women of two generations, viz.: women of their own generation and as they grow older marrying girls of a younger generation, but this can in no way be taken as an explanation. In times past intertribal fighting swept out a large number of male lives annually and

¹ Auto-suggestion?

also homicide was far more common than at present. Moreover among European races infantile mortality is greater among the

STATISTICS SHEWING THE CONSTITUTION OF FAMILIES.

	Wives	Male children born	Female children born	Males married	Females married
Nthiwa wa Makwaba ...	8	15	9	4	3
Mwangi wa Nzuki ...	3	6	6	—	2
Mathendu wa Mwatu ...	6	10	15	2	4
Gongo wa Katui ...	3	7	6	5	3
Mbunja wa Muthiaawi ...	3	4	3	1	2
Nthiwa wa Mwathia ...	2	5	1	1	—
Malandi wa Mathendu ...	2	7	6	—	1
Nthiwa wa Mbu ...	2	2	2	—	2
Ntho wa Kabui ...	3	7	5	2	1
Kiali wa Katho ...	2	1	2	—	—
Nzau wa Ngunzu ...	2	4	4	—	—
Wanka wa Kiema ...	2	7	5	1	—
Nzoka wa Mule ...	2	2	2	—	—
Nzuki wa Ngolo ...	1	3	2	—	—
Maiendi wa Kathuma ...	1	2	1	1	1
Mohindwa Nthali ...	4	6	5	—	—
Nzau wa Kini ...	1	1	1	—	—
Ndolo wa Kituta ...	1	1	3	—	—
Kioko wa Kuku ...	1	2	2	—	—
Kilonso wa Mweo ...	1	2	1	—	—
Kalombi wa Kathio ...	1	—	3	—	—
Nthiwa wa Tama ...	15	10	14	3	4
Ngumo wa Ithalan... ..	7	11	8	4	2
Mwathia wa Nthuku ...	4	12	4	1	1
Mthota wa Machako ...	3	2	1	—	—
Nguma wa Kinwatho ¹ ...	4	17	12	—	—
Chalo wa Machako... ..	2	5	4	1	1
Mutuotwi wa Machako ...	3	3	9	2	9
Ngulu wa Kituku ...	4	8	9	—	1
Nzau wa Nduta ...	6	6	7	—	—
Mobindu wa Nduta ...	4	8	13	1	1
Chuli wa Nthuli ...	1	1	3	—	1
Ndeti wa Kibai ...	3	1	3	—	—
Ndeti wa Nzobi ...	5	7	16	2	5
Nguku wa Nzuki ...	1	2	4	—	1
Ndeketha wa Malalomi ...	1	2	5	—	1
Ndiko wa Mwatha ...	1	2	1	—	—
Mtuteti wa Ngau ...	2	4	—	—	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	117	195	197	31	46

¹ All except two of them died in the famine.

male sex than among the female and the same may apply in Africa.

Some of the missionaries are of opinion however that in a generation or so polygamy will practically cease to exist among the A-Kamba owing to the shortage of women, but this will really be due to the greater percentage of survivals of male lives.

There is another factor which may have some importance and that is that, it is said death during confinement is very common among Kamba women.

CHAPTER III.

FOOD, MEALS, ETC.

THE A-Kamba generally eat about three times a day :

At 7.0 a.m.

12.0 noon.

7.0 to 8.0 p.m. or even later.

At 7.0 a.m. they cook meal and make gruel or they warm up food, generally "mbaazi," or *Nzu* (*cajanus indicus*) left over from the night before.

At noon they are generally either in the shambas or away with their cattle and they eat some gruel made of boiled meal and water.

In the evening they eat porridge made with water or gruel which after cooking is mixed with milk, and they cook pieces of meat and eat them with porridge but not mixed with the porridge; of course their dietary varies a good deal with what crops are in season.

Gruel made of mtama, mawele or wimbi meal and water is called *Usuru*, it is stirred with a stick called *Mui*.

Gruel made of meal and water but after cooking mixed with milk is called *Kitheki*.

Porridge made of meal is called *Ngima*.

A favourite dish is honey mixed with *Usuru* or gruel, water is added to the mixture and it is stirred up and drunk.

Sweet potatoes boiled or roasted whole in the ashes are a favourite food.

Green bananas peeled and boiled whole are eaten to some extent. They also put green bananas inside a calabash and ripen them, bananas are said to ripen quicker when not exposed to the open air.

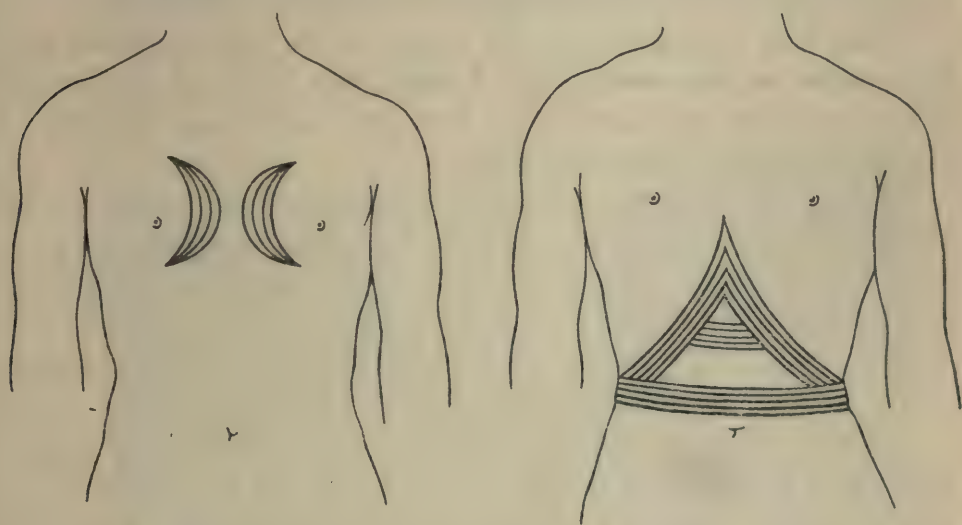
There are two aromatic herbs which they often mix with their food, one called *Lungnuyu* and belonging to the Leguminosae is mixed with thin gruel. The other, *Koho* by name, is a very pleasant smelling herb with an acid flavour, and is cooked with meat and mixed with tobacco, it belongs to the Labiatae and is probably one of the *Ocimum* group.

They eat salt with *Ngima* or porridge also with cooked green bananas, Indian corn, mbaazi and meat, but not with gruel (*Usuru*). The salt is made from saline mud mixed with water and strained, they now-a-days, however, also buy coast salt from the local shops.

CHAPTER IV.

PERSONAL ORNAMENTATION, ETC.

MANY of the A-Kamba scarify patterns on the chest and abdomen, these markings are called *Ndoo* or *Nzomo*, they are said to have no particular significance but to be only for ornament. A favourite device is a couple of crescent shaped patterns between the breasts and another is a triangular shaped pattern on the abdomen rising from a belt which is carried all round the body.



In Kitui and Mumoni the women are often ornamented with a number of parallel cicatrized lines below the breasts and down to the abdomen, and these frequently result in unsightly keloid growths. The cicatrization is performed with a needle and knife used conjointly¹.

The A-Kamba have a custom (elsewhere unknown in East

¹ On the N. side of the Tana R. opposite Mumoni, among the Emberre people, cicatrization is often carried out to an exaggerated extent (see Plate II.).

Africa) of sharpening to a point the incisor teeth in the upper jaw, in Ulu as many as 4 and sometimes 6 (including the two canines) are thus sharpened but at Kitui, Kibwezi and Mumoni they often only chip a triangular shaped space between the two middle incisors of the upper jaw.

This operation is performed by a tiny chisel, the teeth are cleverly chipped in a very regular manner and the points are terribly sharp. Now-a-days these small chisels are generally made from pieces of the steel frame of an old umbrella.

They also knock out the two middle incisors from the lower jaw.

If they lose one of the sharpened incisors they cleverly insert false ones fashioned from the tooth of an ox, now-a-days however, it is said that they prefer to make these false teeth from the tooth of a hartebeest as they do not become discoloured. This shows that this art has been practised for a considerable period.

They first bore a hole in the stump of the original tooth and then drive in the new tooth. I have seen some of these false teeth and they appeared quite firm and were very difficult to distinguish from the natural teeth.

Filing or chipping the teeth is generally supposed to be associated with cannibalism, but as far as can be ascertained no such custom exists among the A-Kamba and they deny having any legend of its former existence.

The teeth are chipped after the first Nzaiko or circumcision ceremony and by the man who operates on that occasion.

In Ulu district particularly the older men have a stupid custom of pulling out the eye-lashes from the upper and lower lids, this often leads to a kind of chronic ophthalmia. They say their women would despise them if they omitted to do this.

Counting.

When a Mu-Kamba counts he extends the 1st finger of the right hand and with it presses down the left little or 4th finger into the palm of the hand for the number one, and then the 3rd finger for two, the 2nd for three, the 1st for four, and when the thumb is reached and bent down, the count has reached



(3) Mu-Kamba playing *Mbebe* or fiddle.



(4) Women of Emberre shewing cicatrization.

five; then to continue he bends the left hand and clasps the little finger of the right hand and that is six, he clasps the right 4th and 3rd finger for seven, the right 4th, 3rd and 2nd fingers for eight, the right 4th, 3rd, 2nd and 1st fingers for nine, and for ten the two fists are put close together and held out, the thumbs are uppermost and folded inside the fists.

The numerals are :—

1 = Imwe	10 = Ekumii
2 = Iili	11 = Ekumi na imwe
3 = Itatu	12 = Ekumi na yeli
4 = Inya	20 = Miongweli
5 = Itano	30 = Miongwe itatu
6 = Thanthatu	50 = Miongwe itano
7 = Muontha	100 = Iana
8 = Inyanya	200 = Mana eli
9 = Kenda	

CHAPTER V.

AGRICULTURE AND CROPS.

ALTHOUGH the A-Kamba grow a varied selection of crops, they are not according to European ideas very skilled agriculturists. They have been in touch with civilization longer than most of the up country tribes, but the iron hoe is still a rarity in the country and the bulk of the work in the fields is done with a pointed digging stick called *Mo*.

In some parts of Kitui they plant sugar cane in pits in the valleys, a plan not seen anywhere else in the country. They have a rough idea of the rotation of crops. Irrigation is used to a considerable extent in the mountains and water is often taken for several hundred yards in furrows along the hill sides to water sugar cane plantations which are especially prized.

CROPS OF THE A-KAMBA.

Kikamba name	Swahili name		Length of time between sowing and reaping
Nzu	Mbaazi	Cajanus indicus	11 months
Mubia	Mtama	Holcus sorghum	4½ months, plant two crops in one year
Bemba	Mohindi	Zea mays	Two crops, 4½ months
Mwe	Maweli	—	Two crops, 3½ months
Wimbi	Wimbi	Eleusine coracana	Two crops, 3½ months
Kiwa	Miwa	Sugar cane	2 years
Makwasi	Viazi	Sweet potatoes (Batata edulis)	3½ months
Kikwa	s. Kikwa p. Vikwa	Yams (Dioscorea)	1 year
Mbosho	Maharagwe	Beans	Two crops, 2 months
Manga	Mohogo	Manioc (Manihot utilissima)	1 year or more
Mbumbu	Fiwi	Beans	Two crops, 3½ months
Malengi	Maboga	Pumpkins	3½ months
Nthoko	Kunde	Big beans	Two crops, 3½ months
Mayu	Ndizi	Bananas	2 years
Mongu	Mumunyi	Veg. marrow	1 month
Matuma	Mayugwa	Colocasia edulis	1 year
Ndulia	Not known	Red beans	Two crops, 3½ months
Ngina	Pojo	Pulse (dhall)	Two crops, 3½ months
Kikuu	Buyu	Calabash	4 months

CHAPTER VI.

CATTLE BRANDS, ETC.

THE A-Kamba brand conventional patterns on the flanks of their cattle and they also sometimes mark the ears. They say that the practice of branding their cattle only dates back a generation or two and was copied from the Masai. Each clan has several brands, a certain family has its own brand but a member of the tribe will know at once which clan the brand belongs to. Curiously enough all the cattle are not branded but usually only those sent away to buy a wife with, or those paid as blood money for a death¹.

Specimens of the brands of most of the clans are given.

Sheep and goats are branded by marks on their ears.

The A-Kamba have no legend as to the origin of cattle and other domesticated animals, they say that there was a time when the tribe possessed no cattle but only hunted game.

Names of principal animals, etc., in Ki-Kamba.

Elephant	Nzoo
Rhino	Mbusia
Waterbuck	Ndo
Eland	Namu
Buffalo	Mbo
Hippo	Nguo
Roan Antelope	Etao
Mpala	Ndate
Coke's Hartebeest	Gondi
Gazella Grantii	Ivowi

¹ The Kamba word for a cattle brand is *Cho* pl. *Vio* or *Ruoro* pl. *Viruoro*.

Gazella Thomsoni	Kilonga
Wildebeest	Ngatata
Giraffe	Ndwia
Greater Kudu	Malu
Lesser Kudu	Nzaii
Oryx	Thongoi
Wart hog	Ngi
Zebra	Njai
Bushbuck	Ndwaya
Lion	Munyambo
Leopard	Ngo
Cheetah	Ekomi
Serval cat	Kikoloma
Duiker	Nthia
Ostrich	Nya
Hyaena	Mbiti
Hunting dog	Nzui
Jackal	Bewa
Dik Dik	Mbii
Small antelope with white tail (reedbuck ?)	Mbulwa
Hare	Mbuku
Rat	Mbia

Reptiles:

Crocodile	Kenġnani
Tortoise	Gu or Ngu
Snake	Njoka
Python	Ita
Puff adder	Kimbuba
Spitting cobra	Kiko
Green mamba	Ndao
Brown grass snake	Siomololi
Monitor	Mialu
Lizard	Telembo—Singa—red necked genus

Birds:

Secretary bird	Ndei
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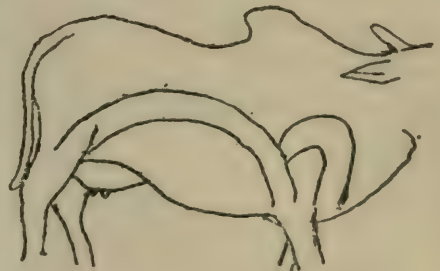
Greater bustard	Nzeken
Lesser bustard	Ngoto
Marabou stork	Isau
Guinea fowl	Ikhanga
Spur fowl	Ngwai
Pigeon (green)	Iyuyu, others Gungu
Swallow	Thungululu
Kite	Bolosia
Crow	Oto
Hagadash Ibis	{ Mangña—in Ulu { Maseo—in Kitui

Insects :

Caterpillar	Kinyo
Hairy caterpillar	Yamu
Butterfly and Moth	Chambulutwa
Locusts	Ngia—in the hopper stage— Kititi
Soldier ants (siafu)	Nthuaku
Black ants (ponera)	Thingii
Boring hornets	Nzio
Hornets with mud nest	Ngulamei
Hornets with paper nest	Marri
Bees	Nzuki, queen bee Mulue
White ants (termites)	Muthwa, queen ant Munthai

Cattle Brands :

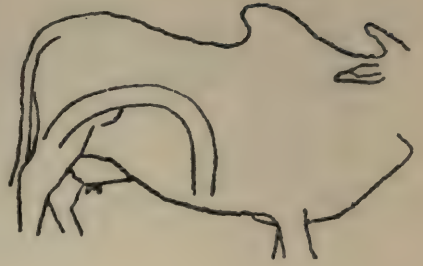
MWA-ITHANGWA



MWA-ITHANGWA

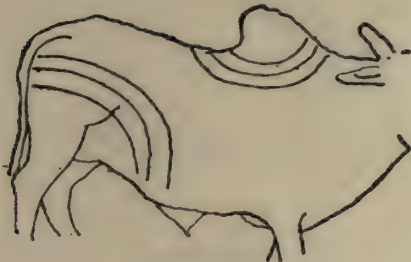


ear mark



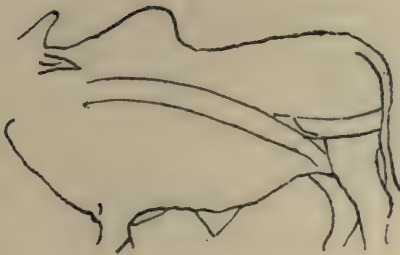
MWA-ITHANGWA

MWA-ITHANGWA



MWA-ITHANGWA

MWA-ITHANGWA



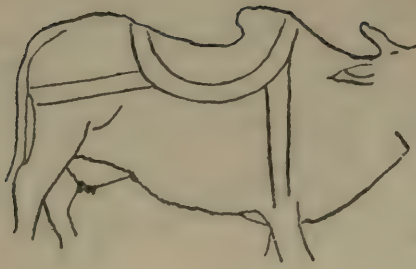
MWA-ITHANGWA
(on both sides of beast ♂ and ♀)

MWA-ITHANGWA
(on both sides)



MWI-THANGA

MWI-THANGA



MU-MUTEI

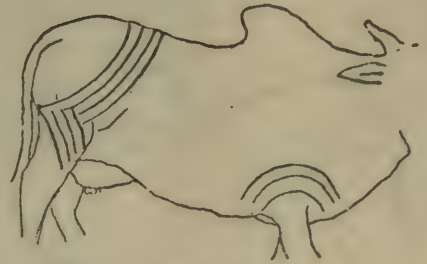


MU-MUTEI



MU-EOMBI

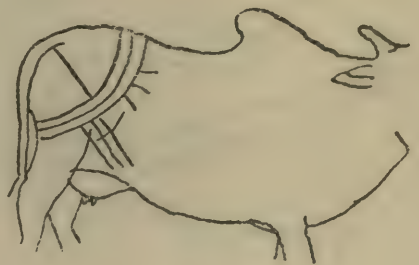
NOTE.—It is doubtful if the oval mark is part of this clan's brand.



MU-EOMBI



MU-EOMBI



MU-EOMBI



MU-EOMBI



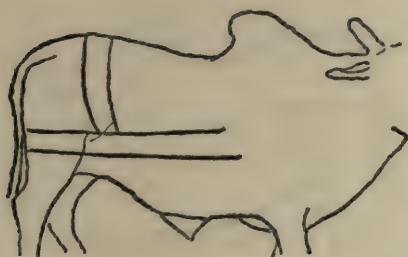
MU-EOMBI



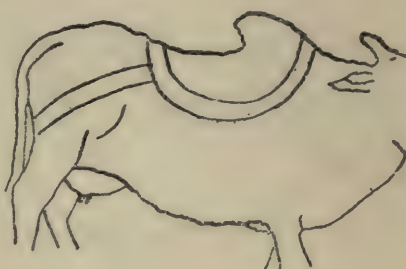
MU-EOMBI



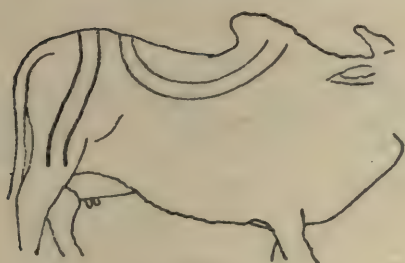
MU-NZAONI



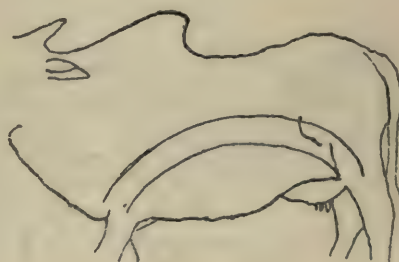
MU-NZAONI



MU-NZAONI



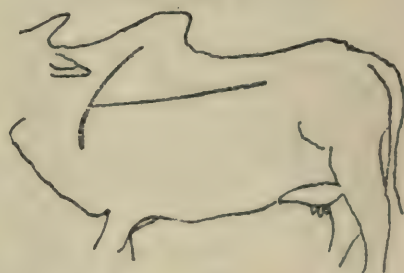
MU-TUI



MU-TUI

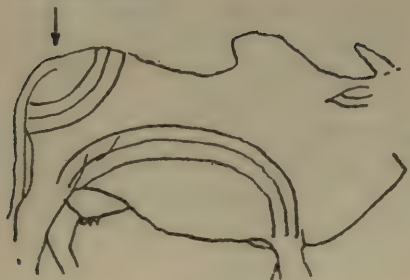


MU-SII

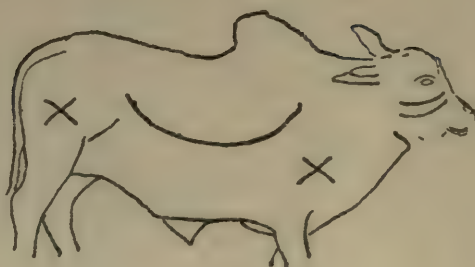


MU-MUNDA

on both sides



MU-KANGA



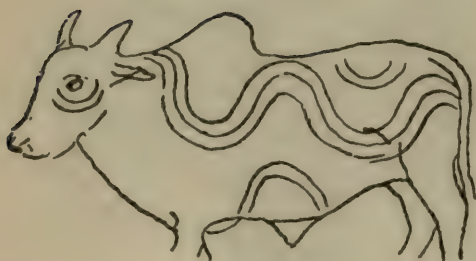
MU-INI



MU-WANZIO



MU-IWANI
(mark continuous round rump ♂ and ♀)



KIMEI
(on both sides of beast)



MU-KUA



MU-MBUA



This is not a tribal brand but what is called "firing" for lung sickness, &c.

CHAPTER VII.

INDUSTRIES AND ARTS.

Baskets. These are finely woven or rather plaited out of the fibre of the baobab and wild fig trees. Called *Chondo*, pl. *Vyondo*.

Corn is ground on a stone called *Ibia* and the grinding is done with a stone called *Nthio*.

Fire is made by friction ; one piece of hard wood is twirled between the hands upon a softer piece and the wood dust so produced becomes ignited and lights some dry leaves.

The hard stick twirled between the hands is called *Uwindi*, made of a tree called *Mulenditi*. The bottom piece is called *Kika* made of a tree called *Choa*. The dry leaves used as tinder are called *Umbuthi*. The apparatus is carried in a leather bag called *Nguso*.

They have no ceremonial renewal of the fire at certain seasons as prevails among some peoples.

Metal work. The Wakamba are very clever at working iron and copper wire into bracelets, necklets, etc., and also often utilize it in ornamenting stools, bows and clubs ; they say they learnt the art from the Wa-Giriama near the Coast. Metal working is not the monopoly of any particular clan or division.

They use imported trade wire largely, but some of the metal workers in Machakos district still go to a small stream near Wathomi to collect iron ore for smelting ; this stream contains a fine grained iron sand and they separate the grains of iron ore from the silica by washing the sand in a dish made of a gourd in the same way as a prospector for gold would do, these are the

only people in East Africa who appear to know this art¹. Some clans do not forge iron at all.

Pottery. They make cooking pots of clay, no wheel is used ; for water pots they use large gourds. Women make the cooking pots, men only make the earthen "tuyéres" used in the forge.

House building. They live in the usual type of circular African hut with walls about 4 feet high and a conical roof, the doors are absurdly small not more than 2 feet 6 inches high. See Plates III. and XI.

Inside there is a partition cutting off about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the circle and the head of the house and his wife sleep in this inner room ; they sleep on rude beds of wicker-work raised about 9 inches above the ground and the bed is covered with an ox hide.

There are two fire-places in a hut, the children cook at the one near the door and their parents at the inner one, the children cannot go and sit at the inner fire-place.

Men build the houses, they go and cut the wood required, the posts are called *Kitui*, the thin sticks *Ngiti*, they then build the frame-work and leave it for the women to thatch.

Traps, etc. They are skilful at trapping game and birds and use several designs for different purposes.

(1) A noose with a springe made of a bent bough and a trigger catch to release the latter, this trap or snare is called *Mukwa*.

(2) A drop trap consisting of a flat slab of stone supported by a twig and baited with grain, the supporting twig is usually pulled away with a string ; this is used to catch birds and monkeys, it is called *Ikehengi*.

(3) A running noose fitted inside a frame-work, there is no spring, two sticks are driven into the ground one on each side of a game track, a horizontal one is fastened to them at some little distance from the ground, the noose is very delicately fitted inside the frame ; a beast comes along, hits the horizontal bar with its head and shakes the frame-work, the result of this is that the noose probably drops on the animal's neck and he rushes forward and unwittingly draws it tight and is strangled, this is called *Mwito*.

¹ Iron smelting is now very rarely seen, they use a rude furnace of the Catalan type with charcoal fuel.



(5) Interior of A-Kamba village—Ulu.



(6) A-Kamba huts.

(4) *Kisungula*—this is a mole-trap consisting of a hollow cylinder of soft wood about $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 4 inches external diameter. This is buried in a mole run and above is fixed a springe from which depends two strings, the one which carries the pull of the bent stick is taken through the diameter of the cylinder and stops the passage of the mole, the other string which is a running noose is carefully laid out round a groove at the end of and inside the cylinder. The mole emerges from his run, enters the cylinder and finds his way blocked by the thin string and proceeds to gnaw it through. At the same time although he does not know it the noose is encircling his body. He gnaws away at the string obstructing his road when suddenly snap it goes, and he finds the noose drawn tight and the trapper comes round and usually finds both the trap and mole dangling in the air from the released springe.

Native Beer. The A-Kamba call beer "Uki" whatever it is made of.

(1) *Ukiya-iwa* (sugar cane beer)—the sugar cane is cut into bits and placed in a mortar called "Ndi" and beaten with a pole or wooden pestle called *Muthi*, the pulp is then placed in water to dissolve out the juice, it is then taken out and the juice wrung out of it by placing it in the centre of a mass of fibre of the wild banana; a man at each end of the roll twists as hard as he can and the juice oozes through the strands of the fibre, the roll is then unwound and the dry pulp thrown away.

The liquor is put in a gourd near a fire and slices of the dried fruit of the *Kigelia Africana* is put into the liquor to start fermentation. This fruit is first boiled for a long time to extract its natural juices which are not palatable—the *Kigelia* fruit is called *Miatini* (the popular European name of the *Kigelia* is the "sausage tree" so called from the shape of its fruit).

(2) Honey beer is also made but it is not in such general use among this tribe as sugar cane beer; it is also fermented by the fruit of the *Kigelia*. The native beer is drunk with a *Njeli* or rough drinking vessel made of half a small calabash, it is not sucked up through a tube as is the custom in the tribes around Lake Victoria. The *Njeli* from which food is eaten is larger and is called *Ua*.

The beer is ladled out from a large gourd called *Kiku*.

Women cannot be present when the men meet to drink beer. The beer is either drunk on what is called the *Thomi* clearing outside the village or in a house where the beer is manufactured.

Outside every village there is an open space called *Thomi*—the boys of the village are sent every morning to sweep it and light a fire there. The old men of the village sit there a great part of the day and eat and drink beer there. No woman is allowed to use the *Thomi* for her domestic pursuits or to sit there; if a woman broke this rule she would be beaten, it is said that this prohibition has existed for many generations and originated in the desire of the old men to have some place where they could talk over affairs without being overheard by the women of the village who could not keep counsel with regard to any business they overheard, but would generally tell their neighbours.

Musical Instruments.

(1) They make a one-stringed harp or fiddle with a piece of a gourd or calabash attached to it to act as a sound box, this instrument is played by a tiny bow (*Uta*), this is the only instrument known of in East Africa which is played by a bow; it is called *Mbebe*. See Plate II.

(2) They make bamboo pipes with a gourd attached to the end to magnify the sound, some are very skilful in the use of this instrument and can imitate bugle calls with great accuracy, it is called (*Soo*). The horns made of Eland or Koodoo horns are also called *Soo*.

(3) Pipes or whistles are made from the horn of a small buck, these are called *Nguli* and *Zomali* if made of wood. They are able to transmit news from one to another at long distances by the *Nguli*, it was formerly used to give warning from hill top to hill top of enemies (generally the Masai) approaching from the plains. Only certain persons however understand the code of signals used in the transmission of news by this instrument.

(4) Drums of various kinds are used:

(a) The ordinary native drum *Kithembi* is open at one end, the dance in which this drum is used is called *Athi*.

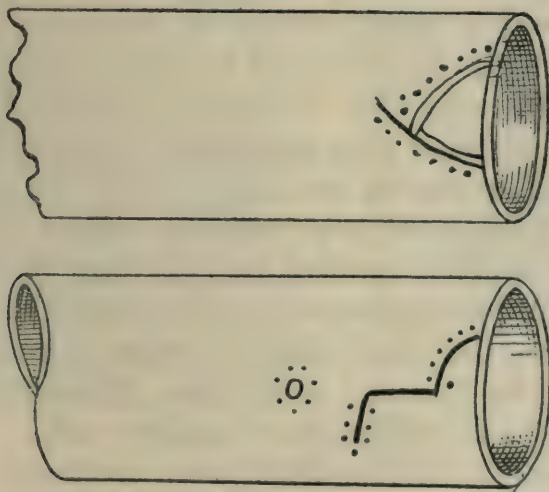
- (b) Small drums beaten by the hands open at one end are called *Ngutha*.
- (c) Small drums held horizontally and beaten by both hands are called *Engoma*, they are only used when anyone is sick, to move the *Aiimu* or spirits.
- (d) Long drums consisting of a hollow wooden cylinder about 4 inches in diameter and 4 feet long with a handle at the top and open at the bottom are made, the drum is beaten on hard ground, this pattern appears to be peculiar to the Wakamba, it is called *Muvungu* or *Cha*, and is only used by the young people.

Bee-Keeping.

The A-Kamba are great bee-keepers and they suspend from the trees hollow cylinders of wood the ends of which are roughly closed by a piece of plank; thousands of these will be seen throughout the country, they are called *Mwatu* and are usually made of a reddish wood called *Mukaati*, it has a sticky leaf and white sap.

Honey is carried in small wooden drums, sealed at both ends by a cap of raw hide, these are called *Kithembi wa Uki*.

The bee-hives are usually marked at one end by the mark of the clan, the following is the bee-hive brand of the *Aitangwa* clan.



Beehive brand, Kitutu clan.

The A-Kamba collect large quantities of beeswax and sell it to the itinerant traders who export it.

Stool Manufacture.

Some of the most artistic articles turned out by the A-Kamba are their stools—*Ibila* or *Ivila*. They are round in shape and have three legs. See Plate IV. They are made of various woods:

- (1) Kiwazi or Muasi,
- (2) Muinga,
- (3) Kivuti,
- (4) Mana,
- (5) Mutungu ;

the first mentioned is the best.

The tree is felled with a small native axe called an *Ithoka* ; the trunk is then cut into lengths and each piece is shaped with an adze (*Ngomo*) and a knife (*Kavio*).

The stool now being carved into its final shape some thin brass and copper wire is bought, this is annealed, drawn out to the proper thickness and then spirally wrapped on a fine wire in a little machine called *Kilingi*, the wire inside the spiral is then withdrawn. The pincers used for drawing the wire to its required thickness are called *Ngolia* and the gauge through which the wire is drawn is called *Uta*.

Symmetrical designs are then drawn on the top of the stool, the centre of the stool being found by rough measurements and a circular pattern is usually started at the centre and segments of circles are drawn by the aid of a piece of wire at intervals in the region of the outer edge of the stool, triangles are drawn by eye. Considering how little measurement is done the patterns are extraordinarily regular and symmetrical, the circular top of the stool is not measured, it is fashioned entirely by eye.

When the design is settled, the craftsman takes a length of the spirally coiled wire, stretches it a little so that the coils are not quite contiguous and then deftly hammers it into the wood of the stool with the butt end of his axe. The wood is, however, first well licked with the tongue to render it soft.

The ornamentation completed, holes are bored through the legs of the stool and a chain passed through, the object of the



(7) A-Kamba stools.



(8) A-Kamba stools.



(9) Kamba ornaments, etc., girl's aprons, adzes.

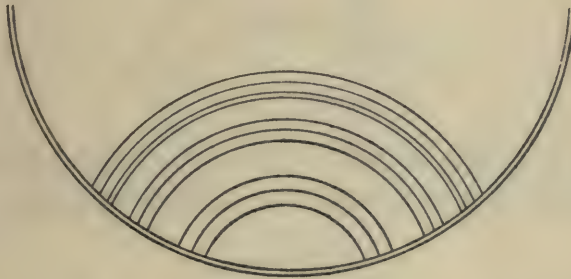
chain being to enable the stool to be slung over the shoulders of the owner.

The stools are then well rubbed with grease and the inlaid metal work polished with the leaves of a kind of sorrel—*Kiungu* or *Kiivi*, the acid juice of which produces the desired effect.

The patterns on the stools are called *Milia* and most of these patterns have some origin. Thus:



This pattern is called *Kithaitha* and is derived from a bead ornament formerly worn by old women, it is supposed to mimic a star.



This pattern is called *Vioo* after a common form of cattle brand.



This pattern is called *Eumu* and is said to represent arrow points.

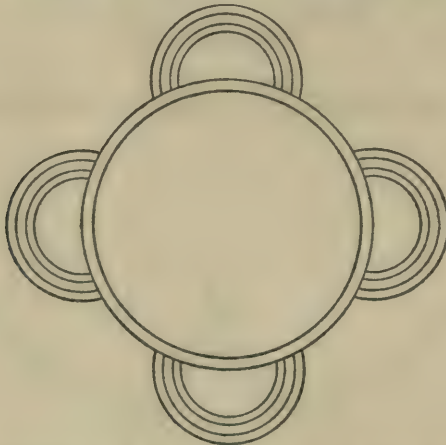


This pattern is called *Kitui* and is supposed to represent the framework of a hut.

The circles in the centre are said to represent the moon.



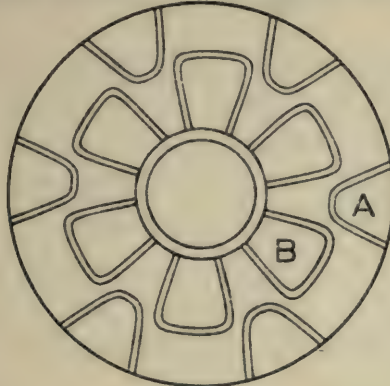
The device in the centre is called *Katungi* and represents an ornament made of beads worn by A-Kamba girls.



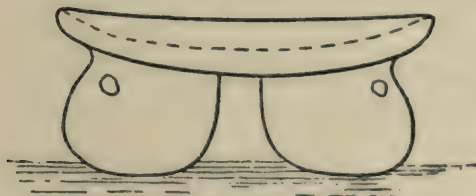
The above pattern is taken from a bead ornament made of red, white and black beads worn by A-Kamba women on the upper arm.



This pattern represents the plan of the framework of a kind of gigantic wicker bottle which are constructed for storing grain in the village granaries—called *Keinga*. The shape of the *Keinga* in elevation is derived from the gourd or calabash.



PLAN.

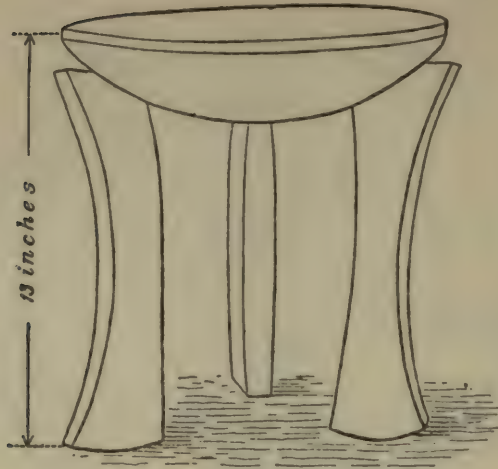


ELEVATION.

Kamba stool pattern called *Kizoro*.

The portion marked A is called *Kisolo* and is a copy of a cicatrization mark.

The portion B is taken from the usual shape of the stool leg seen in elevation.



Woman's stool—Kitui.

This is peculiar to Kitui; only women are allowed to use them, if a man unwittingly sits on one of these stools he has to pay a fine of one goat¹. It is much higher than a man's stool.

¹ The fine is really for the purification of the man who is considered to have become ceremonially unclean through sitting on a woman's stool.

CHAPTER VIII.

DRESS, PERSONAL ORNAMENTS, ETC.

THE young women wear a leather apron studded with beads of hammered brass, this is called a *Kimengo*. See Plate IV.

The older women wear a piece of skin round the loins, it has however now-a-days given place to a piece of cotton cloth—it is called *Kitanu*.

Young girls wear a diminutive apron studded with beads arranged in patterns and called *Katungi* and in some parts, Thaka for instance, made of leather tassels, it is then called a *Muchi*.

Young men and young women often wear a sort of corset made of strings of beads, this is called a *Kikuto*.

Young dandies wear spats on each ankle made of beads and called *Mithanga*. See Plate IX.

The old men and most of the young men now-a-days drape themselves in trade blankets.

The old men carry fly whisks made of the tail of an ox or better still the tail of a wildebeeste, this is called *Muingu*.

They also wear :

Necklets of iron wire on which fine copper wire is closely wrapped, called *Imili*.

Necklets of copper rings, called *Mulia ya Ngingo*.

Necklets of brass or copper beads, called *Ndiki*.

Ear-rings of chain, called *Munyo*.

Ear-rings of copper or brass, called *Mulia va Kutu*.

Armlets of brass or copper, called *Mulinga*.

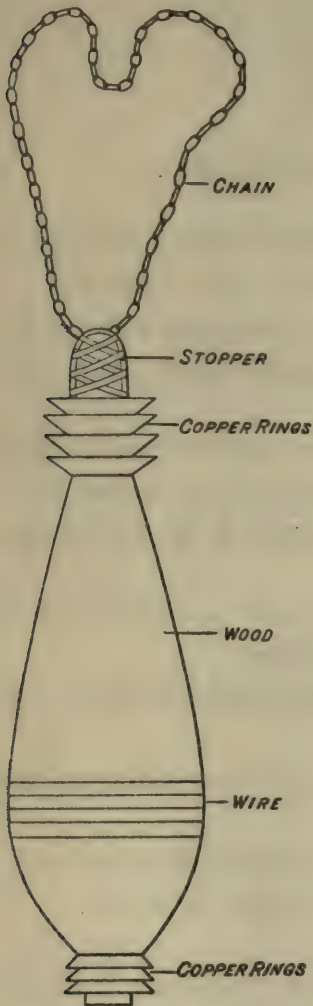
Bracelets of flat pieces of brass or copper, called *Kitanga*.

Rings of iron and brass on the fingers, called *Engomi*.

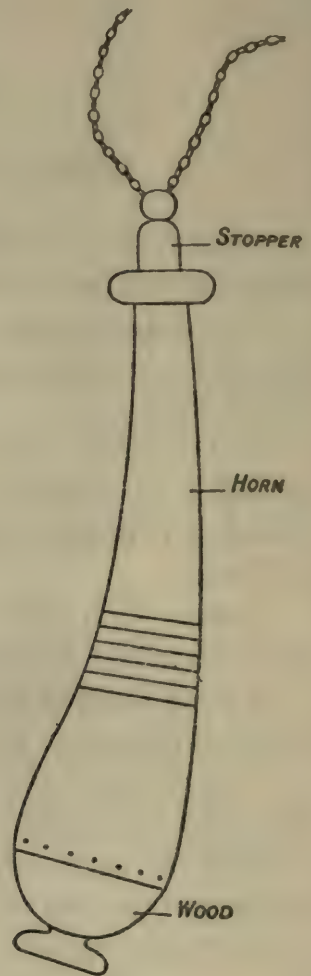
Snuff bottles made of horn or wood, called *Kiangi*.

Flat circular ornaments made out of helicoid shells, worn on the forehead and called *Ibuo*.

Only *Watumia* or elders are allowed to wear a dressed goat skin cloak.



Snuff-bottle—Kitui.



Snuff-bottle—Kitui.

Before the blanket age the *Anake* (warriors) and *Anthele* (married men) wore a piece of ox hide, the garment of an *Anthele* being longer than that of the *Mwanake* and that of a *Mutumia* being longer than either, about six goat skins would be used in making the cloak of a *Mutumia*.

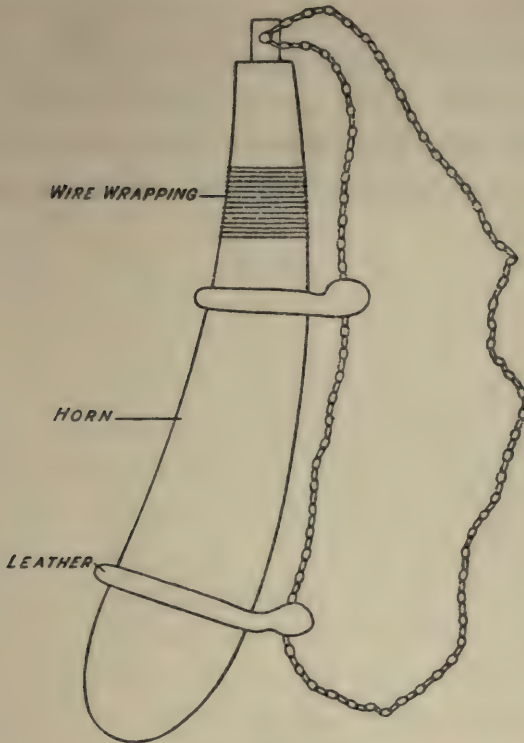
A long time ago the *Anake* were only allowed to wear a



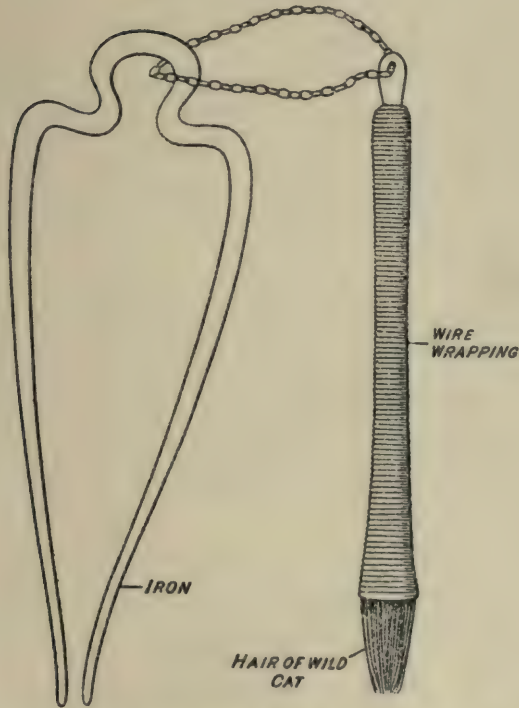
(10) Mu-Kamba woman carrying firewood.



(11) A-Kamba women carrying children.



Snuff-bottle—Kitui.



Tweezers for removing hair and small brush used in snuff-taking from Kitui.

small piece of goat skin slung from the back. Before blankets became common there was a great demand for cotton cloth and the Swahili traders made great profit obtaining a goat for two yards of the common Bombay calico and for ten yards they often bought a cow, this however was before the great rinderpest epidemic of 1891.

CHAPTER IX.

WEAPONS, WARFARE, ETC.

IN war their custom is to attack at night, they would march under cover of darkness to within striking distance of the place of attack and there rest until between 4.0 and 5.0 a.m. so that after the attack was delivered it would be about sunrise and they could see to collect the captured live-stock.

They do not use spears and shields, but only bows and arrows, *simés* (the native sword) and clubs; they explain their use of the bow as being due to the fact that they were originally a tribe of hunters.

Their arrows (*Mize*) are beautifully made and very accurately feathered, the iron point is fitted to a small piece of wood about three to four inches long which fits in a socket in the shaft, the iron point and this tiny shaft stay in the wound, the main portion drops off. The wood of the front portion is usually carved with a distinctive clan mark, which in the chase is taken as evidence of the claim of ownership to a slain animal.

The arrows are of three kinds :

- (1) Those without feathers, called *Moluka*.
- (2) Feathered but with unpoisoned points, the points are often of hard wood, called *Maange*.
- (3) Feathered, with iron points and poisoned, called *Musi*.

The young men have archery competitions, but there are no prizes given.

It is said that with a *Moluka* arrow they can shoot over 200 yards and with a *Musi* arrow can wound a man at 100 yards.

The feathers of the arrows are stuck on to the shaft by the juice of the fig tree called *Mumo*, which contains a certain amount of rubber.

Many of their bows (*Uta*) are bound from end to end by fine copper and iron wire. The quiver in which the arrows are carried is called *Thiaka*; it is made of leather.

The A-Kamba hunters are very good shots with their bows, especially at what may be termed "snap-shooting" at a running animal at fairly close range.

Nearly all their arrows are poisoned and this poison which is called *Ivai* is not made by any particular clan or by medicine men. It is made from the wood of the *Muvai* tree and probably contains the *Strophanthus* alkaloid (the usual tree in other parts of the Protectorate is *Akokanthera Schimperi*). In addition to the *Muvai* the poison gland of the scorpion is used (*Mbua Mbui* it is called). The ingredients are cut up into little bits and cooked in a pot with water, after boiling the mixture for some time the bits of wood, etc., are taken out and the solution remaining is evaporated until a dark treacly mass remains, the poison is then ready for use.

If the poison becomes dry and hard it will not readily dissolve in the wound, so to keep it moist and fresh each arrow head is carefully wrapped in a very thin pliable strip of leather which is specially wound round the iron point and the part of the shaft to which the poison has been applied.

The *simé* or sword is generally over two feet long: it is called *Ubin*, the sheath is called *Ndo*. There is a smaller *simé* called *Nzomo* which can only be worn by a Mutumia and not by Anake or Anthele: it is worn on a belt called *Ndabu*.

Their clubs are long and pointed, they are often beautifully wrapped with fine copper wire. Clubs are called *Ndata*.

The bulk of the A-Kamba formerly lived in great terror of the Masai, who about 25 to 30 years ago dominated the interior of East Africa from the Nyika to near Lake Victoria, and it was only the mountainous nature of their country that enabled the A-Kamba to maintain their independence; in those days the Masai kraals extended eastwards as far as Simba and Mkindu stations on the Uganda railway.

The A-Kamba, however, continually made desultory efforts to recapture cattle from the Masai and carried on a sort of guerilla warfare with them, parties of Anake would hide in the



(12) Girl from Mumoni.



(13) Mumoni women and girls.

bush on the fringe of the open country and occasionally cut off small parties of herdsmen who were herding their cattle too far from the kraals for safety.

If a Mwanake killed a Masai and returned with the spear of his enemy he became quite a personage. He would report the encounter to his father and an ox was killed to celebrate the event; two strips of skin were cut from the hide of the animal, and one of these strips was threaded on the second finger of each hand and each strip was again split into four tails. These strips were called *Ngwalo*. Thus adorned he would make a tour among his relations belonging to the same *Mbai* or clan and boast of his powers, and at each village he would receive four goats; he might with luck collect as many as 100 goats, and he would henceforth be called a *Mutwe tumo*.

If another warrior had helped in the fight he would get the *Simé* or sword of the enemy, he would also receive presents in a less degree and would be called a *Mutwe ubiu*.

In those days no warriors but those who had killed a Masai or helped to kill one were supposed to be able to marry. As however in practice this proved to be an impossible condition, a successful combatant would secretly meet his friends in the woods and would distribute among them portions of the outfit of the dead enemy (say a few ostrich feathers out of the dead Moran's headdress) they would then go back and successfully pretend that they had assisted in the *mêlée* and this would be accepted as qualifying them for a bride.

If a party of hunters killed an elephant the ivory was stored away and sold to a trader for cattle and the one whose arrow was the first to wound the beast received the biggest share of the cattle and so on in order of merit.

In former days the Kilungu section of the A-Kamba, when fighting another section, would take a prisoner and partially flay narrow strips of skin from his body; they would commence at his hips and flay vertical strips of skin a couple of inches wide up to the height of the shoulders and then send the wretched man back to his friends with the pieces of skin flapping about, or failing a male prisoner, they would slit open the breasts of a woman captive and send her back—this was done to impress the other A-Kamba

with their fierceness as there was a long standing feud between the Kilungu people and the rest of the tribe.

In inter-tribal warfare it was a common custom for prisoners

Specimens of A-Kamba arrow marks.



s. MUKITUTU
p. A-KITUTU



s. MUKUA
p. AKUA mark



s. MUINI—AIENI
p. mark



s. MUSII mark
p. ASII



s. MWEOMBI
p. EOMBI
mark only on point



MWIWANI
AIWANI
mark

Note.—The above are from Ulu district, in Kitui there appear to be no particular clan marks.

to be ransomed for 11 cows and one bull which is the price of a man's life.

It is said that in times past a section of the Masai and the A-Kamba of Ulu lived in amity on the Yatta plateau on the east side of the Athi river opposite Kanjalu and Mwala, but a quarrel broke out over some ostrich feathers stolen by an A-Kamba; this led to war between the two tribes and ever since then a feud has existed between the two races.

Peace Ceremony.

Kithito. Peace is made by the oath of the *Kithito* which is the most solemn and binding thing known to the Wakamba. This oath is not only taken upon the occasion of a treaty of peace but when any other especially serious covenant is being entered into.

The *Kithito* is a horn, either an ox horn or the horn of an antelope and occasionally the tusk of a wart hog, and the hollow end of the horn or tusk is filled with samples of various foods, Indian corn, mawele, milk, a piece of skin cut from the nose of a hyaena, a medicine man (*Muooin*) will prepare the horn. These horns are very old and have been handed down from generation to generation by their forefathers; they are looked upon with great awe and mystery, being hidden away in the woods, and they must on no account be kept in houses or their presence would probably prove fatal to the inmates. A *Kithito* must never be handled with the bare hand but can only be safely picked up with a piece of sheep's fat in each hand; it can only be safely carried about suspended from a string called *Musizili* (made from the bark of a tree of that name).

If a *Kithito* is being carried along a road and a person is seen approaching he is told to pass on the right side of the one who is carrying it, if he did not heed the warning and passed on the left side he would surely die.

Well suppose two sections of the tribe have been fighting and wish to make peace, an old man belonging to one of the contracting parties will go and fetch a *Kithito*; every division does not possess one and he may have to make a considerable journey to obtain one—the elder who owns a *Kithito* will not

send it by another person but will bring it himself. The owner who is nearly always a *Muoiin* places the *Kithito* on three stones and alongside lays two or three small sticks, the sticks are from the *Mukulwa* and *Mutatha* bushes. A is the representative of one of the belligerent parties, he is given the *Mukulwa* stick to hold, and he strikes the *Kithito* three times with the stick and swears on behalf of his people, "If I fight again with B may the *Kithito* kill me"; the same stick is then given to B who taps the *Kithito* three times and makes a similar declaration.

If the crops are still standing in the fields then each of the contracting parties brings a sheep and the elders stifle these animals by holding the nose, and the contents of the stomachs of the beasts are sprinkled over and around the *Kithito* and also over the adjacent crops, no harm will then come to them, only the very old men can eat the meat of these animals.

Before the *Kithito* ceremony can be performed for a peace-making, the two conflicting sides must have mutually agreed to compensate for those who have been killed on each side. If, however, the A-Kamba had fought with people who were considered as a separate tribe the ceremony could take place without compensation having been agreed on.

For instance, the people of the Kilungu valley were considered so distinct from the people of Ulu that it was not necessary to arrange about compensation previous to performing the *Kithito* ceremony with that division.

Slavery.

Formerly if they fought the A-Kikuyu and captured prisoners they sold them.

If in a fight a man was overpowered and he seized the breast of his captor with his mouth his life was spared, and he lived in the village of his captor and worked herding cattle, but he could not be sold.

Other prisoners were sold to the Arab and Swahili slave-traders, girl captives were generally sold to another Mkamba. A girl realised two cows and 20 goats, a man would be sold to the Swahili traders for 30 *Amerikani* cloths of four yards each.

CHAPTER X.

SOCIAL AND OTHER GRADES.

Male	Female
Boy Kivisi, sing. Nisi, plur.	Young girl, child ... Muitu, sing. Weitu, plur.
Young man or } Mwanake, s. warrior } Anake, p.	Unmarried girl..... Mundu mukaa
Middle aged man... Nthele, s. Anthele, p.	Married woman } who has borne } Kipeti, s. a child..... } Ipeti, p.
Old man Mutumia	Old woman Mukuu
Old man, headman of } Mutumia his own village only } Mukuu	Childless woman ... Ngungu
A chief..... Mutumia munene	
A hereditary chief } Mutumia mu- over a tract of } nene wa country..... } muthanga	

A *Kivisi* corresponds to a *laioni* among the Masai, he is circumcised when he is about 10 to 12 years old, but after circumcision does not necessarily change his grade; he becomes a *Mwanake* when his father decides that he is big enough, he is then allowed to wear necklets and anklets. A *Mwanake* can only marry when his father allows him. See Plate X.

A *Nthele* can only have one wife, he is frequently the captain of a company or section of a company of warriors. See Plate XIII.

It is only rarely that individual chiefs have any great power and with the exception of presents of beer their people pay them no tribute.

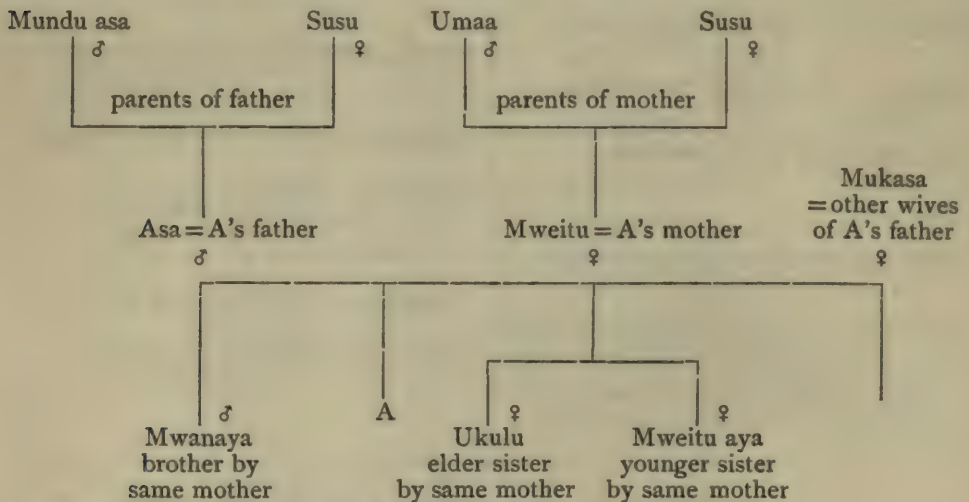
The real power is vested in the council of elders and they generally get their way.

If, for instance, a man refuses to pay some compensation which the elders have adjudged that he is to pay for the injury inflicted on a third party, the elders go in a body, unarmed, to his village and order him to pay and if he still refuses they turn out their young men and attack his village.

When the elders pay a domiciliary visit of this nature the owner of the village is bound by the custom of the tribe to present a goat or bullock to the elders and it is killed and eaten by them.

Kinship.

The following is a genealogical tree shewing the names by which a man designates his various relations:



A ♂ marries B ♀, he calls her—Mukaa akaa.
(wife) (my)

B calls A—Mwe mewa.
(my husband)

They call their child—Mwana akwa, pl. Wana asa.
(child my)

A calls brother of B ♀—Mwanaya.

A calls sister of B ♀—Mwanaya.

A calls uncles and aunts—Ana asa.

A calls children of father's brother—Mwana asa, sing.: Wana asa, pl.

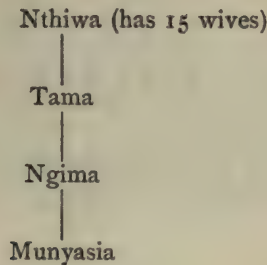
A calls his mother-in-law—Muthonua.

A calls son's wife—Mukaa mwana akwa.

A calls daughter's husband—Muthonua.

A calls grandchild—Njugulu akwa.

They cannot as a rule trace back their genealogy for many generations, vide chief Nthiwa.



He cannot remember any further back and very few of the elders can go back for three generations.

The smiths are a hereditary guild; there is, however, apparently no reason why other people should not be ironworkers except that they cannot do the work. Women never work iron but they sometimes blow the bellows. Unlike, among the Masai, smiths among the A-Kamba can marry anyone they like, subject of course to the ordinary rules in force as to exogamy. No legend with regard to the discovery of ironworking could be traced.

There is a legend that the first human being on earth was half man and half woman, he was called Mukuu and lived in Kikumbuliu district near a hill called I-Kuua, he brought fire with him to this earth and was the father and mother of mankind; his progeny found the various food plants growing wild in the valleys and they did not know at first how to plant or cultivate the soil.

CHAPTER XI.

SALUTATIONS, MEASUREMENT OF TIME, NATURAL PHENOMENA, DANCES, RIDDLES, &c.

Salutations.

A man to a woman will say	Umuvoov.
The woman will reply	Inimuvoo.
An old man to an old man will say	Umuvoov.
The reply will be	Inimuvoo.
A young man (Anake) to another young man will say	Waiya.
The reply will be	Waiya.
A man to a child will say	Nosio.
The reply will be	Ah.
A man to a youth (Anake) will say	Oponiao.
The reply will be	Ah.
A man to a girl (Muitu) will say	Wakia.
The reply will be	Ah.
A woman to a man will say	Umuvoov.
The reply will be	Inimuvoo.

Time.

The A-Kamba state that they reckon eleven months in their year (Anzwa):

- (1) Mwa the planting month.
- (2) Wima the time of the autumn rains.
- (3) Wiu the sprouting month.
- (4) Mweu
- (5) Onkonono
- (6) Thandatu commence reaping.
- (7) Moanza



(14) Kamba chief—Nthiwa wa Tama.



(15) Nthiwa wa Tama.

- (8) Nyanya Nyanya means friend.
 (9) Kenda means nine.
 (10) Ekumi means ten. In 1907 this month began
 about August 10th.
 (11) Mubiu the season for burning the grass.

The year is made up of two rainy seasons with dry spells between each :

Ambua anzwa

Ambua ua.

They state that the month contains 31 days and that on the 32nd day they see the new moon; they say they do not count the first day on which the moon is seen.

They believe that on the day the month is finished no child is born and no domestic animal gives birth.

One of the clans is called the *Mu-Mwei* (plural *Amwei*) and among the people of this clan no house may be swept on the last day of the month (*Mwei* means moon in Kikamba).

Songs and Dances.

They have songs sung by the women alone on the occasion of a wedding: these are called *Mavio*.

Other songs sung by the men alone at a marriage are called *Kwina wathi wa Mavio*.

The songs sung at a gathering upon the occasion of a death are called *Kuia Muntu*.

The songs and dances which take place at the gathering of the crops are called *Kilumi*; the performers are solely old women and only women who have borne more than one child.

The dances which are performed on the occasion of a birth are also called *Kilumi*: they take place four days after the child is born.

If a woman who has only borne one child joins in a *Kilumi* dance, the dance will break up in confusion and the women will rush off to the hut of the woman who has unlawfully broken into the dance and loot it and carry off her property. During a *Kilumi* dance women will often fall down in a cataleptic trance.

Dances in which young men and women both participate are called *Wathi*.

The old men never dance.

The songs sung by women when tilling the fields are called *Kuthia*.

The songs sung by men when travelling or cultivating are called *Kuisia chubi*.

In Mumoni there is a dance called *Cheli*, it is a dance of young men and girls, it is not held at any special time and it is not known that there are any special customs connected with it, but the girls wear a cape made of white beads with a high collar and descending low enough to cover the breasts. The performers jump up and down in a suggestive manner with their cheeks pressed together; it is said that this dance often leads to undue intimacy between the performers. This cape is shown in Plate VI.

Riddles.

These are called *Kweta ndai* and are said to be very numerous. The following are a few examples:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Q. Nduma
(What fastens up the moon?) | A. Muumbi
(Clouds.) |
| 2. Q. O-Selia
(What is it first goes forward
and then back?) | A. Kimbu
(Chameleon.) |
| 3. Q. Mwetu etiki
(My mother is very big.) | A. Kulotoi
(Wild banana, the stem of which
is very thick.) |
| 4. Q. Tuna Kwatana
(We take hold of each other.) | A. Nzia na nzia
(One road crossing another.) |
| 5. Q. Wo wiwa (wo is a corrup-
tion of ngo)
(The heart likes it.) | A. Kinto Kitheo
(A pleasant thing.) |

Natural Phenomena.

Hail (*Mabia*) is believed to be brought by a special *Muimu* who has received orders from *Engai* to bring it. It is said to be a sign of shortness of rainfall. The people go and pray at the clearing under a *Mumbo* tree and sacrifice a goat, or even a bullock, eating half and leaving half there.

Lightning called *Utisi*, thunder *Kitalaliki*, is believed to be

brought by a *Muimu* at the orders of *Engai*, it is the thunder that is believed kills people, not the lightning. If anyone is killed by lightning no one will touch or move the body, the people say the person is killed by God, if anyone does touch a person who has been killed by lightning he or she will also be struck. If a cow or other animal is killed by lightning it is eaten.

A *rainbow* is called *Utahathi*. If seen often it is a sign of shortness of rain: it is a bad sign.

Shooting stars called *Ndata* are supposed to be manifestations of *Engai*.

Comets are called *Ndata mulili*, but they are recognized as distinct from shooting stars, they are bad omens, being portents of the death of people and cattle and also of impending famine.

An *eclipse* is called *Mumbi*; it is not looked upon as being of particular significance.

An *earthquake* is called *Engai*. The people are afraid of the occurrence but it is not considered to have any significance.

The morning star is called *Kithioi*, the evening star *Ngenyandi*. Neither is supposed to have any particular significance.

Nature Myths.

The A-Kamba possess a pretty star myth about a race called the Wa-Isa which lives in the stars, and when the Wa-Isa bathe rain falls, and when they do not bathe the earth suffers from drought. When a meteor falls they say a Mu-Isa has come to visit the earth, and also tell you that no Mu-Isa can stay on earth, and no one has ever been privileged to see one.

They also believe that rain often comes with the new moon and have a pretty explanation to the effect that the new moon must wash her face when she reappears, and the water with which she bathes sometimes falls on the earth as rain.

Games.

The A-Kamba play the African game of *bau* or *Mutingwano* as they call it; instead of three rows of holes they play with one row of ten holes—the pebbles are thrown up and caught, if any are dropped in the process the player loses points.

In the month of *thandatu* when the crops are ripe, the people meet, hold dances and play *Mutingwano*.

They do not know how to play string games (cat's cradle).

No toys in the true sense of the word have been observed among the A-Kamba, they do not make tops.

The children play with stones and the yellow (*Solanum*) fruit. One stone or fruit is taken into the hand and thrown up into the air while another is picked and the one in the air caught in the same hand as the one picked from the ground. This is done till one is dropped when some one else has a try and so on till one does it a greater number of times than the others. No bets seem to take place on it.

Boys walk on their hands with their legs in the air, each trying to walk further than the other.

Boys and girls play at being married. When their parents are in the *shambas* two small children build a small hut and go inside pretending to be man and wife, food of mud is made and a pretence made of eating it.

Children also stand on their heads trying who can stand the longest in an inverted position. They stand for a long time like this before one falls down, even as long as 15—20 minutes.

Children are also very fond when near a sheet of water of putting the head under water and trying to stay longer underneath than their playmates.

Markets.

The A-Kamba hold markets called *Chiathi ya mathoa*. They are, however, not large daily gatherings as in Kavirondo. The assemblies are more or less spontaneous and are not organized by any particular chief and no one takes a percentage on the sales transacted thereat.

CHAPTER XII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

IN former times when some A-Kamba were going on a long journey a small ceremony was performed at the first stream encountered on the road. Each person as he reached the stream would dip the end of his bow in the water and touch his lips with the wetted bow, he would then jump or wade across the stream and drop a stone on the far side, only then could he drink from the stream¹.

Sacrifice.

In pre-administration days at the time of great famine or visitation of cattle disease it was the custom to sacrifice at the *Ithembo* shrine (under the sacred fig tree) a small child and then bury it there. The mother of the child was afterwards compensated for her loss.

Suicide, etc.

If a man's wife refuses to cohabit with her husband, he will sometimes go into the woods, dig up the tuber or bulb of a plant called *Kilia Mbiti*, grind it up with water, and drinking the mixture, poison himself. The antidote to this poison is the fresh blood of a sheep.

Occasionally cattle die of a disease which kills them almost immediately they appear to be stricken with it, and anyone eating the meat of such a beast dies too. This is not looked upon as a disease, but is said to be a device of *Engai* to kill the people who eat the meat and it is called *Kitumuka* and a beast dying like this is called *Ndulo*.

¹ This practice is evidently the survival of a ceremony connected with the propitiation of the river spirits, whether these were believed to be ancestral, like the *Aïmu* is now difficult to discover. *Vide* Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, Vol. II. 210.

Abortion is known among this tribe. It is sometimes practised by young unmarried girls who find themselves pregnant. They drink a cupful of hot butter which is said to produce the desired effect; a person who does this is called *Ekuvuna*.

Thin strings will sometimes be seen fastened across the villages about ten feet above ground. They say this is done to frighten away kites and other birds of prey which seize young chickens.

*Ceremony connected with the foundation of a village
and the building of a hut.*

When a new village is founded a medicine man is generally consulted and he casts his magic stones to find out if the site is a lucky one; a goat is then killed and the rough outline of the village is walked over by the medicine man who sprinkles it with the blood of the goat and the contents of the stomach. The first proceeding is to build the *boma* or fence of branches which form the defences of the village, the head of the village and his family then camp in the open space inside the *boma* for several nights before they commence to build the huts, and they sleep under flimsy shelters of boughs and grass; on the second night and the fourth night of this preliminary occupation, the head of the village must cohabit with his wife. During this period of probation they are cutting poles and grass for their huts, and at its conclusion they commence to build them.

The head of the village builds his house first and some curious ceremonial details have to be observed. The day the house is built, the poles and the framework are erected and it is not properly thatched, but a little grass is laid on the roof and in the evening after sunset the wife will light a fire and cook a little porridge (*Ngima*) in the house; she will first smear a little on the poles that support the erection, and then the husband and wife will each eat a little, and after them all the children will eat a little, a little will then be thrown on to the floor for the *Aimu* or spirits. If the food cooked is porridge, four small pieces are thrown down for the *Aimu*, if the meal is meat seven small pieces will be thrown out. The husband's arms, viz. his bow

and arrows and the leather satchel which he carries on a journey, must be hung up on one of the poles in the house. On the second night of the occupation of the house the husband must cohabit with his wife, but not until the second night.

The A-Kamba of Ulu have a story that coins were formerly found in their country when digging their fields, and when the first pice and rupees appeared from Mombasa the old people said they reminded them of the objects which used to be occasionally turned up in the soil. The old coins were never kept by the finders as they had an idea that they would bring bad luck with perhaps fatal results.

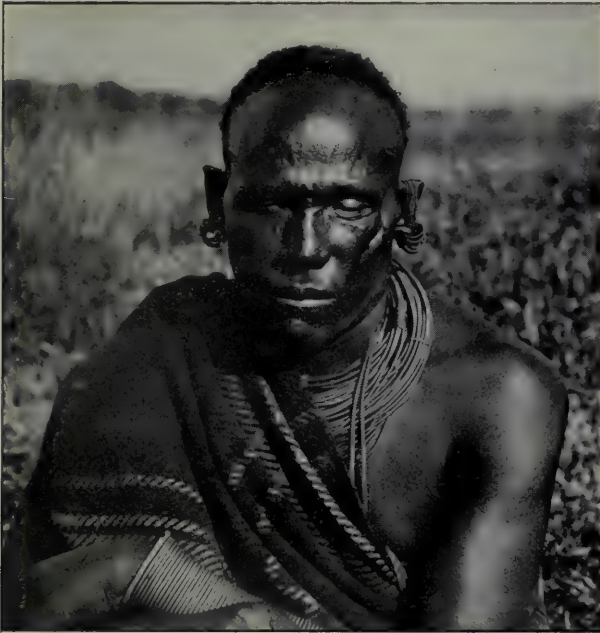
CHAPTER XIII.

BIRTH CUSTOMS.

DURING parturition the mother is held in a squatting position, one woman holds the mother and another receives the child. The umbilical cord and the placenta are buried just outside the hut by the nurse.

After the birth the brothers and sisters of the parents of the newly born child assemble and the men drink *Tembo* or native beer (*Uki*) and the women eat porridge (*Ngima*) and goats are killed or, in the case of a chief, maybe an ox is slaughtered; one side of the beast is given to the men and the other side to the women. Then they chant a prayer to God to the effect that the mother of the child will bear more children.

The beer brewed for the festivities in connection with a birth is made by the people of the village the very day the child is born, and usually of sugar cane; the word *Ndingi* is often used for beer. On the second day the neighbouring elders come and drink this, on the third day a necklet of chain is fastened round the child's neck, this is called *Ithaa* and the old women of the village usually name the child, choosing the name of an ancestor; a feast is given on this occasion by the father of the child, and the people of the village dance. On that night the husband cohabits ceremonially with his wife and during the rite the baby is placed on the woman's breast between the husband and wife; if the child however dies in infancy, this ceremony is omitted in the case of succeeding children. Until the first menstruation of the woman after the birth of the child, the infant is always placed between husband and wife upon the occasion of cohabitation, after this appears it is placed behind the shoulder. All this is however merely ceremonial for if a woman walks about the child is carried on the back in the usual way. If the ceremonial just described is omitted, the child is said to refuse to suckle and to die.



(16) Kamba chief—Mukeku of Mwala.



(17) Mukeku of Mwala.

If a woman commits adultery before her first menstruation after the birth of a child, the child will surely die.

If a child is born feet first it is considered most unlucky, and a boy so born cannot get a wife or a girl so born a husband. At the circumcision ceremony such a person is operated on separately, and is kept separate at the subsequent initiation ceremonies. The idea exists that no child of a person who was born feet first will be born alive.

Both father and mother spit on a new-born baby to bring it luck, a friend seeing the baby will do likewise. It is said that the custom of spitting at people for luck was general, but since the arrival of Europeans they spit in their hands instead, even this modified custom is not at all general. The custom may possibly have been imported from the Masai.

The mother is obliged to stay in her hut with the infant for a period of twenty days and every day her body is massaged with hot water; when she emerges from her hut her husband kills a goat to celebrate the event. A pregnant woman never cohabits with her husband during the last six months of her pregnancy.

If twins are born two goats are killed. The birth of twins is not now-a-days considered as being of either good or bad omen, but it is said that a long time ago, if a woman bore twins of opposite sexes the female child was always buried.

The child is named about three days after birth by the old women of the village and they generally choose the name of one of their ancestors; a feast is given on this occasion by the father of the child and the people of the village dance.

A pregnant woman is not allowed to eat ghee or fat, as the eating of same is supposed to bring about a miscarriage.

The beans called *Maharagwe* are also not allowed to be eaten by a person in this condition as they are said to make the stomach swell and cause pain.

Honey is not allowed as it is believed to retard the day of birth and the woman will have a very severe confinement as the child is supposed to derive great nourishment from the honey, and become so large that a successful confinement is almost impossible.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

IF a young man sees a girl he fancies he will talk to her now and again, and eventually tell her he wants to marry her. If she acquiesces his father goes to her father and asks him if he agrees and if he does then the youth's father returns with a present of two goats; this ratifies the bargain. Four days later the young man's father again visits the girl's father and takes a present of four goats and some native beer and this time they agree about the price to be paid for the bride. The richer the bridegroom the more he will pay: a chief will pay 100 goats or more whereas a poor man would only pay 40 goats or even less for the same girl. Chiefs like to marry their daughters to poor men for if their sons-in-law are poor they can call upon them to work for them. If a son-in-law of a chief refused to work for his father-in-law the latter would call his daughter back to his village, and the husband being a poor man, with probably only one wife, would then have no one to work for him and would soon go and make terms with his father-in-law.

The marriage price is paid by instalments and the girl is married before the payments are complete.

In former days on the day of the marriage the bridegroom went with five or six brothers and friends and seized his prospective bride in the fields near the village, the girl would call out and her brothers would assemble and attack the bridegroom's party; they would fight with sticks and even swords and if the girl's brothers won they would take their sister back to their village.

A palaver would then take place between the two families

and the girl's father would demand more dowry, the suitor would then pay up perhaps another ten goats and the second time the bridegroom would go alone to his father-in-law's village and would receive his bride without any trouble and take her to his father's village. Newly married couples live at first in a hut belonging to the husband's father, but after the birth of their first child the husband builds a separate hut for his wife in his father's village.

The details of the marriage ceremonies are as follows :

The man first sends two she goats to father of girl—*Mbui ya ntheo*.

Then three days after sends four she goats—*Kuatia*.

Then seven days after sends six goats—*Kupikila*.

Then as soon as the stuff can be collected sends 20 to 40 goats—no particular name.

These completed the father says that he now wants cattle—two cows and one bull.

These being delivered he demands some *tembo*—three gourds are sent.

The father then calls his brothers and male relations to drink the *tembo* and announces the proposed marriage to them—*Netaka Ku nengani mweitu*.

About three days after the marriage takes place the mother receives 14 bunches of bananas and one male sheep and one big male goat, the skin of which is used to make her a garment; and one big gourd of gruel (*Ushu*) and one gourd of ghee and one gourd of honey and two baskets of *mbaazi* and two of *marwele* and also *wimbi*.

The bridegroom then kills a bullock and splits it into halves, and gives half to the mother and he and his friends eat the other half; also gives some cloth. He then prepares a pot of *tembo* and gets an old man to accompany him and they go off to the village of the girl; the bridegroom does not speak, but the old man acts as spokesman.

He then leaves and the girl follows; he keeps looking back to see if she follows and when he gets to the gate of the village he takes hold of her and leads her off.

The following day the girls of the village and her clan go off

to his village first thing in the morning—*Ta-Kwenda Ku-ia*, we go to wail.

They cry all day and sleep that night in the bridegroom's hut. They sleep there three days; on the fourth day they return and the bridegroom gives them each a present of beads; they will not leave him alone with his wife until he has paid them to go. The sister of the bride is also given a goat. The bride is then called *Mundu Muka* and is considered a regular married woman.

Sometimes a young man and girl agree to elope. If the father does not approve the girl has to return to her father.

There is a widespread custom which appears among the Masai and other East African tribes and is also recorded as occurring in Arabia, namely that of providing a temporary wife to a guest possessing blood ties with the host. This custom also prevails among the A-Kamba. If a man visits a friend belonging to the same *Mbaya* or clan he is given a temporary wife during his stay, the wife however must of course be of a different clan, e.g. if a Mweombi man visits another Mweombi he will be given one of the wives of his host, who will, say, be of the Mutangwa clan. Sometimes a very intimate friend not belonging to the same clan may also receive this honour while on a visit, but it is a rare occurrence.

There is another point which needs attention in order to obtain a clear idea of the A-Kamba marriage laws. As detailed in another part of this paper, there are two classes of clans, viz. original clans and sub-divisions of those clans.

For instance:

original clan	sub-divisions
Mu Tui.	Mu Sii.
	Mu Mui.
	Mwa-Ithangwa.

Now originally members of these sub-divisions were not allowed to marry but curiously enough they could marry back into the original stock, thus: a Mu Sii could not marry a Mu Mui but either could marry a Mu Tui.

This custom is, however, not rigorously enforced now-a-days, for they say that the numbers of each clan are now becoming so

great that the inter-marriage referred to is no longer regarded as a serious matter.

It is difficult to understand the logic of this reasoning but such was their explanation.

The A-Kamba are allowed to marry more than one wife from one clan or one sub-division of a clan, but they may not marry two sisters as is the custom in Kavirondo for instance.

Menstruation.

A girl's first menstruation is a very critical period of her life according to A-Kamba beliefs. If this condition appears when she is away from the village, say at work in the fields, she returns at once to her village, but is careful to walk through the grass and not on a path, for if she followed a path and a stranger accidentally trod on a spot of blood and then cohabited with a member of the opposite sex before the girl was better again it is believed that she would never bear a child.

As above mentioned, she returns at once to her home and tells her mother, she is kept at home until her period is finished and can only be fed by her mother. The mother tells her husband, and when the girl's period is finished the husband must cohabit with the mother of the girl, or the girl will be doomed to permanent sterility.

According to the Kamba custom, when a married woman menstruates, the husband cohabits with her that night, the idea being that she will probably conceive.

CHAPTER XV.

DEATH AND BURIAL CUSTOMS.

THE bodies of peasants and women are dragged out into the bush after death and left there for the hyaenas to devour.

Chiefs, however, are buried in a deep grave: the grave of a small chief is circular and the grave of a big chief is oblong. The corpse is laid in the grave on its right side and the right hand is placed under the head, the body is extended at full length and is buried so that the head points about south-west. Chiefs are buried in their villages—they are buried nude, no arms, clothes, or cooking utensils are placed in the grave, the corpse is simply covered with earth and then two or three big boulders are placed over the spot.

They never cultivate on the site of a grave and the plants that spring up on it are never cut. At the end of each harvest the people of the district take food of different kinds and pile it on the grave; they also kill a goat there and leave the meat on the grave¹.

They believe that it is necessary to make this offering before eating any of the newly gathered crop.

If anyone cut down the trees which spring up on the site of a chief's grave he would be accursed and would die.

When anyone dies the relations of the deceased wail for about 20 days at intervals during each day, the other people of the village only wail for one day.

If a man dies in a hut the hut is still used, but if a wife dies in a hut it is deserted and the posts that support the roof are cut and the building is allowed to gradually collapse and become a

¹ The procedure is as follows: the villagers assemble near the grave and dance, at a certain stage in the proceedings a very old man and a very old woman leave and go to the grave, offer up prayers and then make the offerings above mentioned and the rest of the people watch the proceedings from a little distance. When the ceremony is over the old couple order everyone to leave the place at once.



(18) Kamba dandies—Ulu district.



(19) Kamba dandy—Ulu district.

ruin, if it is far enough from other houses it is burnt. Such a hut is called *Mbia*. The point of the custom is this, the women thatch the huts and when a hut is built the husband builds it but the wife thatches it, and they say it is when the woman dies who thatched the hut when it was built that is the occasion of its being abandoned. If the woman had moved away to another part of the country and died no notice would probably be taken.

A man does not cut his hair for about seven days after the death of a wife, a brother or a child; in some parts the hair is worn long for two months after a death. The elders then come and make medicine in which the *Nḡnondu* (*Solanum* fruit) plays an important part. The mourner has to kill a goat upon this occasion.

As mentioned above when an ordinary person dies it is customary for the relations to throw the body out in the open, and if another relation were to die some time afterwards the same thing would be done, but if a second relation were to die very shortly after the first the second would be buried as it would be considered that the second had died as it had been unlucky to throw out the first. If a third relation were to die shortly he would also be buried, but a fourth relation dying shortly would be thrown out and they would go on ringing the changes till the deaths stopped.

For two days after the death of a person the men of the village are not allowed to cohabit with their wives. On the third day the father of the deceased cohabits with the mother of the deceased and then both father and mother shave their heads, and the people of the village rub their feet in the contents of a goat's stomach, which is a purification ceremony. After this the remainder of the village may resume their normal sexual relationships and things go on as before.

When a person is dead the women and children of the village wail each in their own houses for 3 or 4 hours and no one eats for one day. After this every one eats as usual.

If a child dies who has not had the middle incisor in its lower jaw knocked out, this tooth is knocked out after death; this is considered very important, for if omitted someone is said to surely die in the village soon afterwards.

CHAPTER XVI.

CIRCUMCISION.

BOTH sexes undergo this rite; no reason is however assigned for the custom and its origin is unknown; no uncircumcised man or woman could marry.

The rite is called *Mwaiikwa* or *Nzaiko*, and in Ulu district there are two stages, viz.:

Nzaikonini or *Nzaikwenini*—the small ceremony.

Nzaikoneni—the big ceremony.

In Kitui, Mumoni and Kibwezi districts there is an additional ceremony purely initiative in character, it is a very secret affair and is usually referred to as *Mbabani*.

A child is circumcised when about four or five years of age and when the pubes appear, say at about 12 years, a second tiny operation is performed but the second ceremony is merely one of initiation. These ceremonies take place after the harvest is completed: at the beginning of the next new moon after the harvest the *Nzaikonini* takes place and at the end of that moon the *Nzaikoneni* is carried out; they are usually during the month called *Mubiu*.

The general procedure is as follows:

A leading elder who has a son who has about reached the age at which the operation is performed tells his friends in the neighbourhood that he proposes to hold the ceremony *Nzaikonini*, and the fathers of all the children who are ready to be operated on assemble at the elder's village, each boy's father bringing a contribution of beer or a goat for the feast.

The operator for the boys is called *Mwaiki* and he is the man who files or rather chips their teeth; an old woman operates

on the girls, only women being present. The elder who assembled the people will give the operator a goat. The ceremony takes place very early in the morning.

After the operation the patients are fed on milk, porridge and gruel, and in about ten days they are usually well again.

Two days after the *Nzaikonini* the father of a circumcised child is obliged to cohabit with the mother; if this is omitted he cannot go and drink beer at the *Nzaiko* feast and the child's wound will not readily heal. The patients eat the root of a bush called *Undu* and the crushed root of a reed called *Kithanzi* is applied to the wound as a dressing.

During the operation of *Nzaikonini*, if the patient being operated on micturates on the knife it is considered a most serious occurrence, he or she is called *Mundu wa wenzi* or *Mundu wa mwa*, and henceforth becomes more or less a social outcast or *Uthuku* as the A-Kamba call it (a forbidden or unclean thing). The stigma will remain right through life and the person will never be able to marry in the tribe. Such a person can attend the *Nzaikoneni* ceremony but is kept apart all through the proceedings and is not allowed to associate with the other youths.

Nzaikoneni.

This is a much bigger affair than the *Nzaikonini* and as many as several hundred youths may attend it with their parents. Great preparations are made beforehand for the ceremonies which continue several days. The parents of young people taking part in it bring beer, ghee, goats and even bullocks for the feast, each according to his means.

The boys and girls are placed in huts in separate enclosures and food is brought to them daily by their parents and they stay there for about four days.

Small ceremonial huts are built on the *thomi* clearing outside the village and certain of the elders make medicine there.

This ceremony is mainly of an initiatory character. A tiny ceremonial incision is made at the base of the glans of each youth.

The young people are divided up into batches of 10 or 15

with a fully initiated youth or girl in charge of each batch according to their sex; these tutors are called *Mubwiki* and it is their duty to teach their pupils their duties in life.

These *Mubwiki* are chosen beforehand by the elders who have children to take part in the ceremony.

Each day of the gathering various ceremonies take place, the principal of these are as follows :

1. The young men are taken into the woods, each section by its *Mubwiki*. They take with them miniature bows and they are told to hunt a certain lizard called *Telembo*; each youth has to shoot one, bring it back impaled on an arrow and shew it to the elders; after this each youth throws his lizard on to the thatched roof of the *Nzaiko* hut. This ceremony is supposed to be medicine to make them good shots either at game or in war.

After this they go by the name of *Wa-Singi*. On their way back from the lizard hunt, if they meet anyone they must all hide in the bush, and they are also not allowed to speak to anyone until they reach the elders who are awaiting them in front of the *Nzaiko* hut.

The girls do not hunt but they are taken off by their *Mubwiki* and go and collect firewood in the woods. On their way back, if they meet anyone they hide in the same way as the boys. All ornaments are doffed by both the boys and girls before the ceremony; the girls' bead aprons are discarded and replaced by a piece of goatskin.

2. Two days after the lizard hunt the youths are taken out for a sham cattle raid; some cattle from the village herd are driven into the grass near by, and the youths, led by the *Mubwiki*, making a detour creep up through the grass towards the cattle; an elder standing near by suddenly spies the band and calls out to the herdsmen, "Look out, the Masai are coming to attack you"; the young men then spring up, surround the cattle and bombard the herdsmen with pieces of dry cow dung which are supposed to represent arrows, and the herdsmen reply and pelt the party with the *Solanum* fruit called *Nḡnondu* with which they have provided themselves beforehand. The behaviour of the young men is carefully watched by the elders and the

Mubwiki, and one who shrinks from a blow from one of these missiles is dubbed *Wea* (a coward).

3. The *Mubwiki* then go into the woods, each alone, and cut sticks from a tree called *Mthiwa*; these sticks are called *Musai*.

The boys are then called up one by one and the *Mubwiki* cuts on the stick what may be termed riddles in picture writing and the pupil has to guess these one after the other. They are called *Ndeto* or riddles.

These riddles are conventional representations of common objects.

Thus, a portion of a circle will mean the rising sun.

Thus, a tortuous line may represent either a snake or a Mu-Kamba path.

Thus, a thick line with a number of tiny cuts on each side of it will represent a millepede (*Ngongo*).

Thus, a number of irregularly placed dots will represent the midnight sky covered with stars.

Thus, another carving will probably represent the grindstone used for making flour, the big lower slab and the round rubbing stone.

A *Musai* stick was made specially for me by one of the chiefs and the pictographs on it are as follows; they commence at the top of the stick and are carved one after the other along the stick:

- | | | |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| No. 1. | A star | <i>Ndata.</i> |
| „ 2. | Moon | <i>Mwei.</i> |
| „ 3. | Arrow | <i>Michi.</i> |
| „ 4. | Black, red-legged millepede | <i>Ngongo.</i> |
| „ 5. | Python | <i>Itaa.</i> |
| | The dots in the design are said to represent the spots on the reptile's skin. | |
| „ 6. | Spider | <i>Mbuibui.</i> |



Musai stick.

- | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| No. 7. | Tortoise | <i>Ngu.</i> |
| „ 8. | Lizard | <i>Mwilo.</i> |
| „ 9. | Wooden jar for carrying honey | <i>Kithembo.</i> |

It is quite possible that the animals carved on the stick were originally all totems of the tribe: the *Ngu* or tortoise is still looked upon with some veneration and may never be eaten.

Fathers teach their sons a number of these problems before they go to the *Nzaiko* festival, for if a youth is stupid and cannot solve the riddles the father is ridiculed and has to pay a fine of some beer which is drunk by the elders.

If, when a *Mubwiki* is appointed he is not well versed in these riddles, he pays some cloth to one who is and he goes off alone into the woods with his preceptor and practises carving a variety of problems.

The girls also have to pass an examination in the deciphering of the *Musai* picture riddles, and before the girls leave the *Nzaiko* gathering a small piece of a *Musai* stick is cut off and tied round the neck of each girl, and attached to each end of this piece of stick is one of the locally made iron beads from a *Kimengo* or married woman's apron. (The beads on a *Kimengo* are of two kinds, the iron beads along the upper edge called *Ndumunya* in Ulu and *Ndunya* in Mumoni and the brass beads called *Nthale*.)

Only the *Ndumunya* or *Ndunya* beads are fixed to the *Musai* chain which is presented to each of the initiated girls. The girls go home with this and wear it for four or five days; they then return to the *Nzaiko* village and have it taken off by the old lady who was mistress of the ceremonies and it is then thrown away. This is gone through from Ulu to Mumoni.

4. On another day one of the *Mubwiki* will get up very early and go off by himself to a *Mumbo* tree he knows (the *Mumbo* is one of the varieties of wild fig tree); he beats the tree with the back of a native axe and collects some of the white juice in an *Njeli* (half calabash); he then drives an iron nail called *Ndumunya* into the trunk and it is said that this will stop the flow of the sap.

The other *Mubwiki* will then go to the tree later in the day and fail to obtain any of this juice or sap. The spell of this nail

is said to be so potent as to also seal up the sap in all the other *Mumbo* trees in the vicinity.

Now before the initiated youths can return to their homes it is necessary for each one to eat a little of this sap which is administered to them in the bush by the *Mubwiki*, each *Mubwiki* to his section. So here we have one *Mubwiki* with a supply of sap and all the other sap in the neighbourhood sealed up by magic, and great excitement ensues which is eventually settled by each of the *Mubwiki* paying the "early bird" a few rupees or a goat for a share of the precious *Mumbo* sap.

Each of the Mu-Singi is then given a little to eat and then some black goats are taken, a little cut is made in the ear of each and a spot of the blood is rubbed on the forehead of each Mu-Singi. This is done in the village in front of the *Nzaiko* hut and by each boy's father. These points are considered of great importance as until they are carried out no youth can enter his father's house.

Each boy then goes home and upon arriving at the village he is formally offered some food which he refuses; the father then offers him a female goat; he refuses this and the father then offers him a cow which he accepts. If however the father was poor the goat would probably be accepted, or a poor man will sometimes give his son a field of sugar cane.

This present is called *Kulu Kilwa* and the boy would refuse to eat food until he had received it. The cow is however not altogether the property of the young man, for when it calves he only retains the first calf and returns the cow to his father.

About a week before any of the circumcision ceremonies the boys who are to take part in them plaster their heads with red earth and oil.

The dances which take place at these ceremonies are called *Wathi* and only young people participate in them.

During the whole of the *Nzaikoneni* the Wa-Singi have to take particular care not to touch each others heads or their hair falls of, so they cover their heads with a cloth or skin.

In Mumoni district the proceedings vary a little. As the candidates arrive they are met by an elder who gives each one a sip of native beer and then ushers them into a hut: an old

woman receives the girls and an old man the boys. Now this hut is specially arranged for the purpose: it has a back door which is opened in the wall of the hut just before the ceremony (all other huts have only one door). This back door opens on to a new gate in the kraal fence and outside the village leading from this new gate a freshly-hoed and swept road leads away towards the woods. Upon entering the hut each candidate is forcibly seized by one of an aged couple who are seated in the hut and is eventually thrust through the back door and told to proceed into the woods along the newly cut road. A boy has to go and shoot *Telembo* or *Mwilu*, lizards (or *Telengu* as they are called in Mumoni district), *Kitole*, locusts (Mumoni dialect, *Imbandi*), or certain small birds, *Nyuni*; a girl only has to collect firewood. When they return to the village they must re-enter by the new gate and door, and this gate and door are then fastened up and not used again, and that night the head of the village where the ceremony takes place must cohabit with his principal wife.

1. The young people stay in the hut for eight days and are lectured daily; the girls learn basket-making and the boys are taught to make bows and arrows; the girls sleep on one side of the hut and the boys on the other. The *Mubwiki* or tutors are responsible for the behaviour of the candidates. If a candidate leaves the hut for purposes of nature he cannot go alone but is taken into the woods by his *Mubwiki* and he always has to pass along the new road.

2. It is thought that the new door and newly cut road just referred to are probably symbolical of the new era in the life of each candidate which is being entered on. The confirmation ceremony of the Christian church is in all probability an adopted relic of the initiation ceremonies handed down from ancient times.

Mbabani.

As previously mentioned, in Kitui, Mumoni and Kibwezi districts there is a third *Nzaiko* which is of an initiatory nature and which takes place with great secrecy in the bush some two months after the *Nzaikoneni*. It is only attended by males and the youths are told that if they ever divulge any information about

the proceedings they will die. In consequence it was only with the greatest difficulty that any particulars about it could be obtained and it is very possible that there may be more details still to be learnt. In Kitui district it is said that the proceedings are as follows: the candidates assemble at a given spot in the woods with a number of their elders and at nightfall they are all placed in a group by themselves in the thick bush, no fires are allowed and they are ordered upon pain of their lives not to move or look about them. A period of waiting ensues and then suddenly a weird booming roar is heard which continues at intervals throughout the night and the youths sit and shudder with fright, the old men call out "The Mbabani has come! Oh spare my son!" and so on and make loud noises as if to drive away the fearsome beast. The roaring noise is said to be caused by a man blowing down a hollow stick about six feet long, the end of which is inserted into a large water pot which contains a little water. Next day a goat is killed and divided among the boys: it is called *Ngima ya Mbabani*. This ceremony is repeated for three nights. On the third night one of the elders provides an ox and this is killed at some distance from the encampment, the meat is cut up into small lumps which are threaded on to long sticks and in the morning the youths are informed that the *Mbabani* has been killed and that this is the meat; each youth is told to take a piece and cook and eat it. The elders sprinkle each youth with ashes and they then get up and rush off in a body to another place in the woods, where they stay secluded for a period of five days and one elder accompanies them. While there the elder cuts each young man a couple of long sticks which they carry like spears, and called *Ngai*. Their term of probation being finished, they roll their loincloths into a rope, and tie them round their waists and start off in a body for the villages; if they meet anyone *en route* they are not allowed to speak or look up, but they silently stop and surround him, and one of the youths makes a sign in the sand, thus ↑, and if the person understands he will make a mark across this sign, thus ↗, and he will then be allowed to pass on: failing this they will all beat him severely with their wands and if he is so seriously injured by the beating as to die no questions can be asked and no compensation

is paid. They search for some ashes and smear themselves all over and before they reach their homes they go and bathe and then throw away their wands.

Upon reaching home they shave their heads and each youth pays the elders a few rupees, or some brass wire, and the total amount thus received is given to the owner of the bullock which was killed.

While going through their probation in the woods they only eat beans and Indian corn, they are not allowed *Mbaazi* (pigeon peas) or meal of any kind; their food is brought ready cooked from the villages by the elder who cuts the *Ngai* wands; any food left over must not return to the village but is thrown away.

Each youth, shortly after his return home, goes away into the woods and collects some honey, makes beer with it and presents it to the elder who took him to the *Mbabani* ceremony, and who he thinks helped to save him from being devoured by the monster.

The *Mbabani* ceremony in the Kibwezi district is probably similar to that of Kitui but it has not been possible to obtain a specific account of it.

In Mumoni it is said that a ceremony called *Choo Muumba*, which corresponded to it, was performed up to a few years ago but died out with the death of an elder named Kioko, who was the last of the older generation of elders, who were skilled in the ritual, etc., connected with it.

In Mumoni there are many wide sandy watercourses practically dry during the greater part of the year, but during the big rains they become running rivers of considerable size, and it is said that, at this season, an aquatic animal comes up these streams out of the Tana river; it is said to be whitish in colour and about the size of a cow, they scouted the idea of it being a hippo or crocodile. Certain persons are said to have known the way to catch these beasts and one was caught every year and led through the country at night secured with ropes. Men went ahead of the procession beating pieces of wood together to warn the people to hide as it came along, as no one but what may be termed the priests of the cult could be present. The candidates for initiation were assembled, seated in a circle, at a certain prearranged place



(20) A-Kamba young men, *Anake*—Ulu district.



(21) A-Kamba young women—Ulu district.

on the sandy banks of one of the rivers, and the beast came along bellowing loudly and entered the circle, and the youths were warned that directly it approached they were to bend their heads down to the ground and throw sand over themselves as hard as they could so that the monster would not be able to see them, otherwise it would kill them. The beast stood in the circle bellowing and plunging about, but being secured by ropes could not harm the boys, and it then spurted out quantities of saliva over each of the candidates and was eventually taken away. If an unauthorised person wished to attend the ceremony he could however do so upon payment of a bullock to the elders who conducted the ceremony. Of course there is no doubt that this beast was of the nature of an animal one is accustomed to see on the pantomime stage, a couple of men covered with skins or something of the sort, but somewhere far back in the mists of time may have had some connection with the legends of the *dugong* or *manatee*.

These *Mbabani* ceremonies are of great interest and are probably the most ancient ceremonies preserved by the tribe. In many ways they remind one forcibly of some of the initiation ceremonies of Australia so ably described by Spencer and Gillen and great efforts should be made by European investigators to witness some of them and carefully record the proceedings.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAW, LAND TENURE, ETC.

Criminal Law.

Serious theft is tried by the accused person going through the *Kithito* ceremony—the supposed thief is ordered to tap the magic horn with a piece of stick and swear that he is innocent; if he refuses to undergo the ordeal it is known he is guilty and if he was guilty and swore on the *Kithito* that he was innocent he would surely die and his children will also die, but it is possible for the children to get an antidote from a medicine man. They formerly hanged habitual thieves. Once the thief is detected he pays the amount of his theft, but no fine is levied for the offence.

Murder. The murder of a man in Ulu is compensated for by the payment of 12 cattle (11 cows and one bull); in Kitui by the payment of 14 head (13 cows and one bull).

The murder of a woman is compensated by the payment of four to five cows and one bull, in Ulu and in Kitui by the payment of eight head (seven cows and one bull).

Rape is punished by a fine of a big goat. The goat is killed and eaten by the elders and the skin is given to the girl. The elders then order the man to pay up another goat which is called *Mtonyi Nğnondu*. This is killed by stifling and the girl is smeared all over with the contents of the stomach of the animal by an old woman. This operation is supposed to purify the girl. The elders eat the meat and the girl is given the skin of the goat. If the man does not pay as prescribed the brother of the girl will attack him and try to kill him. If the girl conceives the man has to pay three goats which are killed and eaten, and

the child belongs to its mother. If, as sometimes happens in these cases, the mother and child die in childbirth, the man has to pay four cows and one ox to the father of the girl. In the event of a man being unable to pay, his brother or his clan would meet the liability to avoid strife.

Unnatural offences are unknown between men but occasionally with women, they are punishable by a fine of one ox which is killed and the woman is purified by being rubbed over with the contents of the animal's stomach.

Cowardice is called *Wiwea* or *Ngunguu*. A coward is punished by not receiving any portion of the loot captured in the fight.

Assault. The damages are assessed according to the injury and also it is believed according to the paying capabilities of the accused.

The nominal damages in various cases are:—

For loss of one finger	= 1 bull and 1 goat or some- times even a cow
„ „ two fingers	= 1 bull and 3 goats
In case of a hand damaged beyond use	= 1 cow
For the loss of an arm	= 5 cows and 1 bull
„ „ „ both arms	= 10 cows and 1 bull
„ „ „ one leg	= 5 cows and 1 bull
„ „ „ both legs	= 10 cows and 1 bull
For damage to the head	= 1 goat
For accidental death	= 10 cows and 1 bull

If a person from another part of the country is caught in a cattle *boma* by night he may be killed without compensation being paid.

Kidnapping is not considered a punishable offence but the child must be returned.

Adultery is punished by a fine of a bull and a goat, in some cases only the latter, the goat is killed and the contents of the stomach are smeared on the ground at the door of the house occupied by the offending wife, the husband rubs his feet in this and formally enters the house and this ceremony purges the offence and normal relations are resumed between the couple.

If an adulterous wife dies in child-birth the paramour has to

pay a fine of five cows and one bull as the responsibility for her death is considered to lie with the offending man.

The abduction of a wife is compensated for by the guilty party paying over to the husband the amount of livestock he paid for the woman.

A case recently occurred in Kitui where the headman of a village had been carrying on a liaison with a young unmarried woman and she was taken ill and died while on a visit to his village. The matter of compensation was discussed at great length by a court of elders, and some held that the headman referred to should pay the father of the girl the damages due in case of a murder, but eventually the majority decided that the father's claim should be assessed on the basis of the marriage value of the girl.

Arson or the malicious burning of a house. The guilty person has to build a new house and make good any property lost in the fire.

Flogging or imprisonment is never resorted to as a punishment among the tribe.

In the old days an habitually obstinate and disobedient wife was sometimes hanged.

A tribal method of punishment.

It occasionally happens that a clan of the A-Kamba will come to the conclusion that a certain man is a thoroughly bad character and deserves public punishment, and it is then decided to punish him as follows:—

During the night his village is surrounded by a party of men, all of his clan, and a guard is placed on the door of his hut while others seize one of his oxen and slay it. If the offence is very serious, even a cow or more than one may be killed. If there are no cattle the party will kill a number of sheep and goats. The culprit is then dragged forth from his hut and beaten with fists, clubs, and anything handy and thrown down and trampled on. His wives will also be brought out and slapped and scratched; the children are not harmed.

A case recently came before one of the District Officials where a man married two wives and without any reason drove

them away. They returned to their parents and one was eventually married to someone else and after a time the other returned to him. The clan considered this to be very unseemly conduct and warned him. Later on he became a confirmed drunkard and what was worse, when drunk was very violent and beat his neighbours. This conduct became more or less a public nuisance so the clan descended on him and helped themselves to a fine ox, and then gave him a sound thrashing, but not so severe as to endanger his life. This man belonged to the Eombi clan who are not very extreme in their methods. Some clans are said to be very severe, the Ewani, for instance, it is said generally beat the victim to the point of death.

Civil Laws.

Debts. The lender makes repeated applications for payment and if the debtor does not pay, the lender complains to the elders and they go to the debtor and threaten him with the *Kithito* ordeal, because they say that the power of the *Kithito* is not afraid of the government.

In former times the lender would go at night to the village of the debtor, open the cattle kraal and take property equal to his debt. If he thought he would not be able to get into the kraal undisturbed, he would arrange with a friend at some distance and give him a fee to call the debtor to some imaginary palaver and while he was away seize the amount of his debt.

Ordeals.

Ordeals by fire. A *simé* or native sword is heated on a fire until it is red hot. First the medicine man who is administering the ordeal licks the red hot iron and then the suspected person, and if he is guilty he either refuses the ordeal or severely burns his tongue.

The water ordeal sometimes used to detect thieves. A gourd is partly filled with water and held by the medicine man who points the mouth of the vessel at the suspected persons who stand up in a row. He addresses each one in turn and says: If A has stolen this thing may the water come out, and so on to

each of the accused, and when he comes to the guilty party the water spurts out and sprinkles him.

Another ordeal is performed with a small trade bead¹. The medicine man presses the bead into the corner of the eye near the tear duct and if the accused is innocent the bead falls to the ground, but if he is guilty the bead slips inside the eyelid.

My informant described how a short time ago he and some other elders were visiting a village when one of their number lost a favourite snuff bottle. This had been stolen by a boy who hid it in his mother's house. The youths of the village being suspected they were collected and one by one subjected to this ordeal; the guilty one was quickly discovered and the stolen article recovered.

Inheritance.

When a man dies his brothers take the wives of the deceased and divide them.

The property of a man who dies is divided among the sons, the eldest takes the biggest share, the daughters get none of the estate but are supported by their eldest uncle.

If the sons of the deceased are small their eldest uncle acts as trustee for their property. During the last few years the grown up sons have taken over the younger wives of their father after his death. Formerly this was looked upon as a heinous crime punishable by *Kingñoli*.

Land tenure.

Every man owns his own *shamba* or cultivated field.

He breaks up the ground first of all and then divides it up among his wives who have to plant it—each wife reaps her portion and stores the produce thereof in her own hut.

If a man has not enough land for his requirements and cannot break up unoccupied land he will buy a *shamba* from a neighbour. It is thus clear that individual title to land is recognized in the tribe.

¹ Curiously enough this ordeal is also found occurring in Western Congoland among the Bateke, etc., vide *George Grenfell and the Congo*, Johnston, Vol. II. p. 692.

A man can pre-empt an area of unoccupied waste land as long as he marks the boundaries by felling a tree here and there along the proposed boundary line, and by cultivating a small patch within the pre-empted area. This done, his title to the land is recognized by the tribe and he can if he desires sell a portion of a piece of the land so pre-empted to a neighbour, being, however, uncultivated, the price would not be high, only about one rupee for an acre. Cultivated *shambas* cost much more, and formerly for a *shamba* large enough for four women to work, say three acres, and near a stream, would cost a cow, but now-a-days cattle are very dear and one would pay about ten rupees in cash. A *shamba* which had no frontage on a stream would be cheaper.

When a man dies each of his widows continues to cultivate her own *shamba* until she dies or is unable to, and her eldest son then takes possession of it.

No particular area is set apart for grazing and no title to grazing land is acknowledged. In former days when they could not take their cattle into the plains for fear of the Masai, they were very cramped for grazing ground and it was the practice to fence certain areas in among the cultivated districts which were set apart as commonage for grazing—these were called *Kisesi*.

The boundaries of plantations are usually marked by certain trees and shrubs; the principal are the following:—

Kiluma—a thorny *Solanum* with a yellow fruit the size of a hen's egg.

Iliba—(not determined).

Chatha—one of the *Euphorbiaceae*—a thornless variety.

When an old man is on the point of death he will collect his sons and tell them to walk round his *shambas* and take note of the shrubs he planted on the various parts of the boundaries, and he will also enumerate any debts that are owing to him. The sons will then ask him to mention any witnesses who could testify to the planting of the boundaries or to the matter of the debts, these persons will, if they are available, be called up and reminded of the fact in the old man's presence, and after that, in any dispute with regard to the estate of the deceased, their evidence would settle the matter.

If a person leaves his village and goes elsewhere the old huts are sometimes bought by someone else for Rs. 2/- per hut or if a lot of firewood is left in the hut for Rs. 4/-. The huts themselves are not used but pulled down and the purchaser takes off the parts he wants to build another hut.

When a person leaves one part of the country for another he sells his *shamba* for a rupee or two. If he is unable to find a purchaser he leaves his *shamba*, but if he comes back and finds anyone cultivating it he demands the price of it.

If a man has cultivated a large tract of land and finds he cannot keep up the same he will sell a portion of it.

There does not seem to be any custom of letting land to a tenant.

If a piece of cultivated land is very large, and cannot be cleared by the owner and his wives, he goes forth to look for friends to come and help him. The friends are not paid but much food is cooked and given to them.

Many A-Kamba now use A-Kikuyu for field work at Rs. 2/- or 3/- per mensem, but A-Kamba do not hire A-Kamba. The custom of using A-Kikuyu is of recent date, it has sprung up during the last three or four years, the labourers generally come from Mbe, Embu, and the region South of Mt Kenya.



(22) Framework of a Kamba hut in course of construction.



(23) Dry sandy watercourse Wathomi—Ulu—typical of U-Kamba.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RELIGION AND BELIEFS.

THE A-Kamba will tell you that they have two gods:—

(1) *Engai or Mulungu*, an impersonal deity who is vaguely supposed to live in the sky (*Matuni*).

(2) *Aiimu*. These are innumerable and ubiquitous and are the spirits of their ancestors; they manifest themselves in many ways.

Some believe that every person has many *Aiimu* in his body, others believe that ordinary people have only one but admit that a *Mundu mue* or big chief may have several. The *Aiimu* are not supposed to reside in any particular part of a man's body but to pervade the whole.

Death is due to the *Aiimu* leaving the human frame and when a person dies his *Aiimu* go and live in a wild fig tree (*Mumbo*)¹. The spirits of the good and bad do not associate but live apart in separate fig trees called *Mikuyu*, and the people build miniature huts at the foot of each kind, these huts are called *Nyumba wa Aiimu*.

Aiimu do not enter into the *Nthuku* or clan totems. Women have *Aiimu* as well as men.

The *Aiimu* are controlled by *Engai* and *Engai* will sometimes deliver a message to the people through *Aiimu* who will be employed for that purpose. On occasions of this nature the *Aiimu* will enter into the person of a woman or medicine-man, the medium will become as one possessed and will prophecy. In former years when the Masai raided Ukamba the *Aiimu* would often warn a medicine-man who would call out and tell the people to be ready, for the Masai would attack them within a few days.

¹ In Thaka country the *Aiimu* are supposed to haunt tamarind trees (*Mthumuba*) and the people sacrifice there upon occasion.

In every district there is one particular woman who is a medium for manifestations from the *Aiimu*. A person will sometimes be seized by a kind of madness called *Nduoka* (*Swahili-Kilalu*), when this occurs the people say that *Aiimu* have entered into the person.

When a man sleeps it is the *Aiimu* that brings sleep and often in a dream he will hear the *Aiimu* speak. Sometimes at night the people will hear a child crying in the road outside the village when they know it is impossible for a child to be there, this is a sign that *Aiimu* are passing.

The chief Nthiwa told me that he was returning home late one night from a distant village and he suddenly heard a child crying out ahead of him, he hurried on to find the child, when suddenly it cried out some distance behind him.

At other times an inexplicable light is seen moving across the country side at night time, this is a sign of the *Aiimu*; they are however never seen in human form.

Before any crop can be eaten an offering of first fruits must be made to the *Aiimu*. The offerings are made in a place cleared under the village *Mumbo* or wild fig tree, the clearing is called *Ithembo* (the place of praying).

All the people of the district assemble and a very old man and woman, selected for the purpose, leave the crowd and proceed together to the *Ithembo* and cry out aloud *Twa themba Aiimu*, and go on to say that they want permission to eat their crops. The people then dance and during the dance one of the women present is sure to be seized with a fit of shaking and cry out aloud—this sign is known to be the answer to the people's prayer to the *Aiimu*.

Legends connected with the Aiimu beliefs.

At Kibauoni or Gibauoni, a mountain in the east part of Ulu district, there is believed to be a ghost of a bull with only one leg, this is said to have been often seen but when anyone approached it, it disappeared. For some years after the cattle disease (rinderpest) swept off nearly all the cattle, of an evening high up on the mountain the people used to hear the lowing of large herds of cattle but could not see them. One day the grass

on the mountain caught fire and spread up to an important *Ithembo* or shrine which was under a large sacred *Mumbo* tree and when the fire reached the tree loud shrieks of human beings, bellowing of cattle and bleating of sheep and goats was heard but nothing was visible to the human eye. This throws rather important light on the animistic beliefs of these people as it shews that the A-Kamba believe that the domestic animals possess souls as well as mankind.

There is a hill called Mukongo between Kilungu and Mwea, some 15 miles south of Machakos, which is said to be haunted by innumerable *Aiimu*, the place is covered with thick bush and people are afraid to go there. It is related that on one occasion some women went to cut firewood there, and having chopped their sticks they hoisted their loads on their backs and started for home, but before they had reached the edge of the wood their loads were set on fire by the *Aiimu*, so they hurriedly dropped their bundles, unfastened their straps and fled; and it is said that directly the sticks were dropped they ceased to blaze.

It is said that if anyone in the neighbourhood dies and if, within a few days after the death, a friend of the deceased visits these haunted woods he may see his dead friend walking about there. I enquired if the deceased ever spoke, but they said that the inquisitive person was usually so terrified that he ran away.

On one occasion some people made a garden close under this hill and planted it with *wimbi*, the grain germinated quite well but as it grew up instead of bearing grain it all turned into grass, which shewed that the *Aiimu* were annoyed at an encroachment on their sacred preserves. The elders then met and discussed the matter and issued orders that no one should in future attempt to cut wood there or cultivate near by.

There is a legend of a pool at a place called Manyani, a few miles from Machakos, where mysterious fire is seen at night, and it is said that several people have disappeared there in some unknown manner: the fire is probably only the well-known *ignis fatuus* or marsh gas. In another place there is a legend of an unnatural being which was formerly seen; one side of this creature was the body of a beautiful woman and the other side was the body of a handsome man.

At a place called I-Kiwi in the Maruba valley there is said to reside a very big python; it lives at one of the *Ithembo* or *Aiimu* shrines and the A-Kamba in the vicinity feed it with milk and ghee; the place is called Ilubia.

Ilubia was the name of an old legendary chief who lived long long ago, he had a son named Mwicha. One day Ilubia killed a goat and he desired to peg out the skin to dry it, and so he went out into the bush and cut some sticks of a wood called *Kiboo* which is very soft and pithy and quite unsuited for the purpose for which it was required and he tried and tried to peg out the goat skin with this wood and failed; his son Mwicha however wishing to put his father to shame took the same rotten pegs and pegged out the skin on a big slab of hard rock near the village. The old man was very annoyed at his son scoring off him in this way, so he dressed himself up with all his brass and iron chains and bracelets that he possessed and went and prayed at the local *Ithembo* and then vanished from sight and disappeared in the heavens and stayed there for two days. And all the people knew then that Ilubia's supernatural powers were greater than those of his son.

In Kitui district, in the part known as Kini near the village of Ndama wa Nthuku, there is said to be a cave (*Ngunga*) called Kapia. This is believed to be a favourite abode of the *Aiimu* and at night the voices of children can be heard calling from it. If a person dies in a village near by, the footsteps of the deceased are seen next morning leading into the cave¹. Asked how it was known that they were the footsteps of the deceased they gave a curious proof, viz. that some time back a man living in that locality had six fingers and six toes, he died and next day they saw footprints leading into the cave and each footprint was that of a six toed person.

There is also said to be a holy rock in Kitui district at a place called Kapingo, near the village of Kwithia wa Katumo, this rock is called Nzambani and it is believed that if a person walks round it, he or she changes sex.

Further research into the spiritual beliefs of this people has brought to light some interesting facts and enabled the writer

¹ *Vide Tylor's Primitive Culture*, p. 455 (2nd ed.).

to gain a clearer insight into the way these natives view the matter. It appears that quite apart from the ordinary *Aiimu*, who are supposed to haunt certain sacred fig trees (*Mumbo*) and to whom the people periodically sacrifice at what are called *Ithembo*, there is another class of spirits called *Aiimu ya Kitombo*.

These spirits haunt woods and waste places and are said to correspond more to the Swahili "Shaitani"; they are evil spirits and are supposed to be the disembodied relics of people who have killed their neighbours by the help of black magic, and that the Supreme Being has banished these *Aiimu* to the woods where they wander about without anybody to care for them by sacrificing to them. They are a vindictive crew and enter into people who are working in distant fields and cause them to become seized with a kind of madness; persons so affected return to their villages, moan, groan and roll about and the *Aiimu* speak through the mouth of the possessed person and perhaps say they want a *Ngoma*, a drumming feast, performed in their honour. The people of the village then collect in a hut, the possessed one sits in the centre, the people make a drumming close by the patient for some hours and they kill a goat in the hut, if it is considered a serious case they may even kill a bullock close outside the door of the hut. Pieces of meat from each of the legs of the sacrifice are then placed close to the patient and after a little the *Aiimu* leave the person and he or she recovers. The portions of meat are left there till morning and the *Aiimu* are believed to eat a little during the night, any remaining in the morning is thrown away. The balance of the carcass of the slaughtered animal is eaten by the people.

Another aspect of the spiritual beliefs of the A-Kamba and one which shews the intimate nature of the communion which exists in their minds between the spirits of their ancestors and the living, is demonstrated by the fact that every married woman is believed to be at the same time the wife of a living man and also the wife of some *Aiimu* or spirit of a departed ancestor.

This fully explains what was not at all clear in the earlier stages of this enquiry, viz. that women are generally used as

the vehicles of expression by the *Aiimu*, and the *Aiimu* who is spiritually wedded to any particular woman will often through the mouth of his corporeal wife state his name, and the old people of the village will remark on this when they hear the name, and for instance say, "Oh yes, that was so and so's great great grandfather." It is firmly believed that the fertility of a wife depends to a great extent on her spiritual husband, and if a woman does not become *enceinte* during the first six months after her marriage they consider that her particular *Aiimu* is neglecting her, and they make an offering of beer and kill a goat as a propitiatory sacrifice, and if that fails, a few months later make a bigger feast and kill a bullock. If a woman bears quickly after marriage they are very pleased because they consider that she has found favour in the eyes of her *Aiimu*. As was elsewhere mentioned, upon the occasion of a birth, goats, etc. are slaughtered, and the explanation of this is, that they are sacrifices in the nature of a thankoffering to the *Aiimu* who has been instrumental in the matter.

The story of the man and the enchantress.

In the Mboni district of Ulu a long time ago, a certain young man went for a walk one night and he met a very beautiful woman in the path, he spoke to her and eventually took her to his mother's house, his mother welcomed the visitor and offered her some food and to everyone's surprise she replied "I do not eat food." She slept in the hut and in the morning the young man's parents awoke and called their son but he was missing, and the mysterious woman had also gone and the door was still tightly fastened. The mother called out and said, "This woman must have been an evil spirit in human form for she would not eat and now my son is lost to me for ever." The father summoned all the people of the village, and they searched far and wide for many days but found no trace of the youth or the woman. There were, however, two young bullocks missing out of the cattle kraal that morning and the people said that these had been taken for the couple to eat on their journey.

The encounter between the Mu-Kamba and the Aimu.

A man who lived at Kitundu went out one night about midnight to look at a maize field some distance away to see if any monkeys were eating it. On his way back to his village he met a spirit in the path, it was of enormous size and had only one leg, he stopped astonished by the apparition and before he could move he was struck down by a flash of fire and the spirit passed on its way. After a little while the man recovered strength and returned home. Some nights after this he went again to visit his maize crop, again met the spirit and was again struck down by the magic fire. This time, however, the spirit spoke to him and ordered him not to pass that way at night as it was his road.

The man gradually recovered and returned to his hut. In the morning, however, he went to his father and told him that he declined to look after the distant maize field any more, that twice he had been struck down by *Aimu* and he therefore begged his father to turn the cattle into the crop to eat it up. His father agreed and so the son took the village herd of cattle and let them eat up the whole crop, afterwards the people never cultivated that shamba again.

The story of the miserly father.

There was a certain young man in days gone by who lived in a village in the Ulu hills, and he asked his father to hand over to him some livestock with which to buy a wife. The father however was a stingy person, and said, "Oh no, I have no cattle or goats to spare just now, but at the end of this year I will consider it and will try and buy you a wife."

The youth was very angry at this answer and said, "Very well if you will not help me in this matter I will go up alone to *Matu* (the heavens)."

The father replied, "Nonsense, you are not able to go up to *Matu* which is the home of the sun and the moon."

The youth thereupon ascended to the heavens in sight of his father and disappeared, he stayed there two days, and on the third day reappeared at the village and again asked his father to

buy him a wife, and said, "If you don't agree this time you will go up to the heavens too, but if you do go I shall not bother you again about this matter." The father, who was very obstinate, said, "I know I am not able to ascend to the heavens, but, believe me, at the end of the year I will buy you a wife."

This promise, however, would not satisfy the son, and he said, "Well, if you will not ascend to the skies, strike this rock with your head and you will go through it." The father said, "Can you do this?" The son without further delay charged headlong at a great rock hard by the village and disappeared into the hill side. A little later he was seen coming round from the back of the hill and he entered the village, and again made the same request to his father. The father was now thoroughly cowed and said to his friends, "This son of mine must be half man and half spirit (*Aiimu*)," and he told his son to take whatever cattle he wanted, if he wanted to buy two wives, or even ten wives, he could take sufficient cattle. He told his father that he wanted enough cattle to marry two wives then, and two more in a year's time in case either of the former wives should die. In the end he took away all his father's cattle except one cow.

The footprints of spirits (*Aiimu*) are sometimes found imprinted on rocks; there are some said to be seen to this day on a hill at Kataani near the river Mukunga.



(24) Kamba family group at door of hut.



(25) Nzawi peak—southern extremity of Ulu district; it is a granite fault scarp.

CHAPTER XIX.

MEDICINE MEN, MAGIC, ETC.

A MEDICINE man is called *Muoiin* or *Muoi*; there is no clan of *Muoiin* and it is not necessarily hereditary. A man can go off to a *Muoiin* and learn the art in a month or two but he has to pay a fee of as much as a cow to be taught. The *Muoiin* or *Muoi* is a person who deals in black art, bewitches people, and the like¹.

A *Muoiin* will sometimes open the grave of a chief, and cut off a piece of flesh, and take it away to the woods and make medicine to kill people. He will spit on the footprint of a man, and take up a little of the wetted sand, and the nose of a dead hyaena and the dung of an ox; and he will cook them together, and this is medicine to kill men or cattle or to spoil a plantation.

A *Mundu mue* is a more harmless person, he deals in what may be called white magic, he is often called in to make medicine to protect a plantation or *shamba* from thieves; if this is done and a thief comes along and helps himself to the crop he will become seized with a kind of madness, will call out and thus get caught. Charms are often put on trees in the *shamba*, but these are frequently only put there for a blind, the real potent medicine is sprinkled on the ground.

A *Mundu mue* can divert a flight of locusts from attacking certain *shambas* if he sees them a good long way off.

If a person is bitten by a poisonous snake a medicine man is immediately called in, or failing that, a person who has obtained from a medicine man the power to cure snake bite. This power is said to be obtained thus: the medicine man makes a slight

¹ Among the Thaka people, the real wizard is termed *Mugao* and the ordinary medicine man is styled *Mutu murwao*.

cut in the end of the man's tongue, and then rubs into the cut certain medicines, and after that if the person thus inoculated spits on a snake the reptile will go into convulsions, writhe about and bite itself to death. And if a medicine man or a person so inoculated spits on a person bitten by a snake the patient recovers forthwith. If a person bitten by a snake cannot quickly obtain the services of one of these useful people he sends a runner post-haste to a professor in the art and the doctor cuts himself slightly till blood flow, and the messenger brings back a little blood, and rubs it on the snake bite, and the patient is said to invariably recover.

The A-Kamba do not keep tame or sacred snakes like some African tribes. The only case of a snake receiving any attention is that of the supposed python at Ilubia previously referred to.

The *Mundu mue* predicts events, etc., by shaking seeds, pebbles, etc., in a gourd and then pouring them out a few at a time on a leopard skin. Among the A-Kamba a leopard skin is always used whereas the Uasingishu medicine men always use a lion skin for the purpose. This is explained by the principle of what is called sympathetic magic, the essence of the strength and fierceness of the lion or leopard being imparted to the magic, rendering it more potent.

The contents of a Mu-Kamba medicine man's magic gourd were examined; there were not many pebbles but hard seeds and nuts of various trees were in the majority, the seeds of the wild banana and the raphia palm were identified, others could not be classified. The seeds, pebbles, etc., are called *Mbuu* by the A-Kamba and the gourd used is called *Kititi cha Mbuu*. The gourds are usually closed by a stopper made of the tail of an ox or wildebeest.

It is said that the medicine men's gourds are often adorned with anthropomorphic figures, but such a one was not seen.

A medicine man was asked how he came to collect such and such kinds of seeds and pebbles, and he explained that very often during the night he fell into a dream and in the morning he would wake up and find a particular kind of seed or pebble clasped in his hand, he knew then that he must go and search

for another one like it and so on in course of time a stock is accumulated.

In times past murder by means of witch-craft and also by poison was very common and even now-a-days it is said to occur.

The murder was generally done by putting poison in beer, or a woman would sometimes kill a guest by poisoning his food. If an *Mkamba* brings a present of honey for instance it is customary for him to taste it first to shew the recipient that it is not poisoned. Some are said to place "medicine" in the path where the victim has to pass; if he treads on it he dies; he is first seized by pains in the ankles, the pains then spread up to his knees and so on up to his head and then he dies. To kill by witch-craft in Ki-Kamba is *Kithangaona*.

Another method employed is to put the "medicine" in a powder in the palm of your hand and blow it in the direction of the intended victim, it is said to be essential that the wind should at the time blow in his direction, this medicine is so powerful that it will kill a person at a distance of a mile or two.

A milder form of this kind of medicine is undoubtedly used by thieves who rob huts at night; they blow it in the direction of the inmates of the hut and they become stupified and the thief steals with impunity. The chief Nthiwa told me that he had been recently robbed of Rs. 400 in this way; he and his wife saw the thief enter the hut but were unable to move or call out.

Kinḡnoli custom, etc.

It often used to happen that someone unknown in a district was suspected time after time of killing people by witch-craft or poison. As a rule nothing was done until the victims reached six in number, but when the seventh victim became ill with the recognized symptoms the elders of the district would go off in ones and twos to the various medicine men, and it would usually turn out that when the elders reassembled it was found that the medicine men had all independently named the same person as being the criminal. The medicine men divine by shaking pebbles in a gourd and pouring them out on a leopard skin.

The elders would then meet at a remote place in the woods and kill an ox by blows from a club, eat the meat and sleep there. In the morning they would separate and each elder would return to his village by a different route. They would wait three days and then meet again, and one elder would ask his fellows if they had said anything to warn the suspected person—another ox is killed and eaten—they then call the brothers of the suspect to the assembly and ask them why their brother or sister has killed so and so, and so and so, naming each victim; the brothers of course deny all knowledge of the matter and then each elder who has lost a man from his village demands compensation from the brothers of the accused for the life of his man. In nearly every case these brothers refuse saying: How can we pay compensation for the lives of all these people. The principal elder then calls out with a loud voice and says, "If one man kills the accused it means compensation so we will do it all together and then no one will be able to say that any one man killed him," and they then all rush to the place where the accused is to be found and the people of the villages follow in a great crowd and they kill the accused: a man is killed by arrows and a woman is stoned to death. They then bury the body very deep, but sometimes they burn it in his hut.

The custom is called *Kingnoli*.

A person killed in this way is called *Mthuku* or *Muoin*.

After the corpse is disposed of they kill a number of goats and cutting open the chests of the animals they smear their faces and bodies with the contents of the stomach, this cleans away the taint of the *Mthuku* and after that they all go down to a stream to bathe. The chiefs assured me that this custom was now obsolete but some officials believe that it still takes place in remote parts. The last acknowledged case in Ulu district occurred in the famine of 1898 near Machakos Hill at Matizo's village.

A middle aged man was seen wearing small twigs of wood on his neck and ankles, these came from a tree called *Muthito* and were amuletic in character and part of a lustration ceremony.

The story is as follows:—In the great famine of 1898-9 his

parents and some of his brothers and sisters died ; now when a death occurs in a family before a man can resume relations with his wife he has to perform the ceremony called *Ukuu*, to break this custom is called *Ku-uchwa* or *Ku-thambia*, and it is believed that as a result of the offence the joints ache and sores break out all over the body, this visitation is called *thabu* and is probably believed to be the work of the *Aiimu* of the deceased.

The *Ukuu* ceremony is as follows :—the elders of the village go into the bush and collect branches of a plant called *Muthumba* and those of a broad leaved aloe called *Nḡnondu wa ithu*; these are pounded up with water and the mixture which is called *Nḡnondu* must not be placed on the usual domestic utensils, viz. a half gourd, but on the leaves of a plant called *Kiungu*; the chief elder then takes a little of the mixture in each hand and makes passes over the outline of the body of the subject. He begins on each side of the head and ends by laying the *Nḡnondu* between the feet, he does this three times and the subject then rubs his feet in the *Nḡnondu*, the purification is then complete and the man is free to perform his marital functions.

The man referred to had omitted to perform the *Ukuu* ceremony after the death of his relations, and had therefore become very emaciated and had generally fallen into chronic ill-health. He was so ill that eventually he underwent a course of treatment from a medicine man to free him from the curse of his relations. *Aiimu* and the charms he was wearing were part of the treatment, it was said that it would take two years to cure him.

If a Mu-Kamba is sick for a long time of an inexplicable disease the term *Ku-thumua* is used.

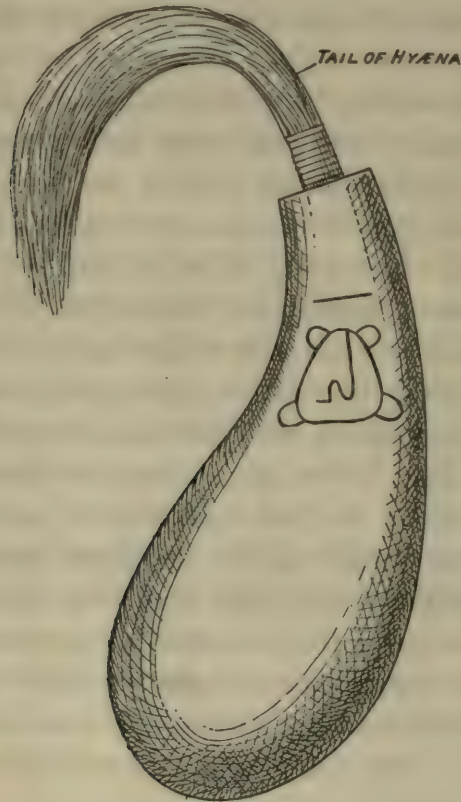
Another outfit belonging to an itinerant Mu-Kamba medicine man was recently examined and found to contain some items of interest, especially the evidences of sympathetic magic which it contained.

The objects used for divination (the *Mbuu*) were, as is usual, carried in a gourd and upon this receptacle a device was carved, this was said to represent a combination of *Ngu* the tortoise and a star, it is shewn in the illustration, p. 98.

One can imagine the representation of a tortoise but the

central part of the design which is said to represent the star is not very intelligible.

The gourd was stoppered with the tail of a hyena and the *Mbuu* when poured out for magical purposes were spread upon the skin of a serval cat (*Felis serval*), presumably the cat skin was more portable than that of a leopard or lion and being



Kititi cha mbuu.

Gourd of a medicine man named Kaimba.

a fierce beast the post mortem influence of its fierceness assisted the virtue of the magic, the hyaena tail stopper would also undoubtedly have an effect.

The majority of the *Mbuu* in this case were seeds of the wild banana (*Musa Livingstonia*) but among them were a few curious things, viz. several crocodile teeth stuffed with medicine and stoppered by the scarlet seed of the *Aberis precatorius* (called *Kibuti* in Ki-Kamba), the medicine contained in the tooth was said to be very effective for rheumatism and colic, and doubtless

its efficacy gained an enhanced value from being placed in the tooth of such a fierce animal as the crocodile.

Another curiosity was a small bone taken out of the paw of a lion, this was believed to be effective medicine for pains in the joints of the legs and feet and it doubtless owed its strength to the agility and swiftness of the lion. The spur of a domestic cock was also found and this was filled with medicine designed to prevent the owner being seized by a lion or other wild beast when travelling. The plucky nature of a cock could hardly be expected to combat the fierceness of a lion, but possibly the ability of a bird to escape the attack of a carnivore by flying into a tree might be the idea.

Some fragments of porcupine quills were noticed and these it is said were charms to protect *shambas*, or plantations; the magician burns the ends of one of the pieces a little and walks round a field full of crops, and this protects the contents from the attacks of porcupine and other animals which destroy them.

There were some fragments of a wood called *Mukao*, these are worn by travellers to protect them from the dangers of the road.

A bit of wood with a brass ferule at one end attracted attention, this is called *Muthiwa* and is used as a kind of fortune telling charm: a young man comes to the magician and tells him that he desires to get married and wishes to know if this is likely to occur; the magician shakes his gourd full of *Mbuu* and shoots some out on to the leopard skin and if the *Muthiwa* pops out early then the client will soon be married to the girl of his choice and vice versa if the appearance of the *Muthiwa* is delayed.

There is one very important point to be observed in connection with the gourd in which the magician carries his *Mbuu*. The gourd must on no account be emptied of *Mbuu*, three or four must always be left in the gourd, possibly the gourd attains some magical virtue through association with the *Mbuu* and if they are all emptied out it loses this.

Some of the Kamba magicians carry an iron cattle-bell attached to a leather thong, this is rung during the fortune telling ceremony, it is supposed to attract the attention of the

Aiimu or spirits, and this shews that the magician believes that his results are dependent upon the assistance of the *Aiimu*. This bell is called *Mbui* and one magician told me that he dreamt God told him in a dream that he should get a bell and he made a special journey to Kikuyu to buy it; upon his return home he made a feast of beer and killed a bullock to propitiate the *Aiimu*.

Medicine men also carry round with them a miscellaneous assortment of powders, which are usually of a herbal origin; some of these are magical and some only ordinary medicinal remedies, but there is no hard and fast line between magic and medicine in the minds of the natives of this country.

To give a few examples of these medicines from actual observation.

(1) This was a grey powder and was said to be made from the trees *Muthachia ndundu* and *Mukolechia*, its function was a very important one as it was believed to be an antidote to all other medicines or magic.

(2) Made from a tree called *Mwila wimbu* and it was simply a medicine for diarrhoea; it is mixed with water supplied by the physician and this water is obtained from a place where frogs call out.

(3) A white earth called *Iga* (evidently the same as the Kikuyu *Ira*); the use of this was very curious, it was said to be applied to the root of any tree from which medicine had been made, the medicine is usually made from the root and the *Iga* would be applied to the place where the piece of root was cut from.

(4) This was a blackish mixture in a shell and is used to cure swellings on the limbs, and it was called *Mochia* and was made from a tree called *Mubukulu*.

(5) This was a Thomsonii gazelle horn filled with a dark mixture; it is called *Kithito* but is quite distinct from the *Kithito* used in the oath ceremony. It contained medicine made from two trees *Mwema Manzi* and *Mukao*. In conjunction with medicine No. 4 it is used for assisting women in childbirth. The horn with the medicine inside is pointed at the patient and lines are made on the patient's abdomen with the horn.

Ithobu custom.

It was formerly the custom to pick up sticks or stones at the side of the road at the place where something bad or unlucky had been seen, for instance, if a man saw some human excrement near the side of the road he would throw a stick or stone on it and the next passer by would do likewise, and so on, till quite a heap accumulated. The same custom prevailed among the Masai, and great cairns of stone may be seen at places on the road between Kinobop plateau and Naivasha, the Masai also place stones in trees to delay the setting of the sun, and thus enable the traveller to reach his journey's end before dark; they also put wisps of grass in certain trees near Naivasha, this is probably a propitiatory offering to spirits believed to frequent the vicinity of the trees in question.

If a Mu-Kamba cuts his hair or nails, he throws the cuttings into a thicket, for it is believed that if anyone picked any of them up, and burned them, the owner would fall ill. This is a very widespread belief and is traceable to the idea that hair, etc., contains part of the spiritual essence of the owner, and that the owner is capable of feeling an injury done to any part of himself, even after it is separated from him. Other superstitions are, however, not so easily explained, e.g. in crossing a stream, if you drink there you must eject a mouthful of the water back into the stream, it is believed that if you omit to do so you will die. Truly the life of a savage native is a complex matter, and he is hedged round by all sorts of rules and prohibitions, the infringement of which will probably cause his death, if only by the intense belief he has in the rules which guide his life.

CHAPTER XX.

PROHIBITIONS, OMENS, ETC.

Prohibitions, etc.

IF one man kills another he cannot cohabit with his wife until the elders have met and made medicine, which is principally derived from the *Nğnondu* (*Solanum* fruit). This medicine is rubbed over the man's body and is evidently a purification ceremony.

If a man marries he cannot eat the totem animal of his wife's clan, neither can his children.

One of the principal totem animals among the Wakamba is a small antelope called *Ndoya* or *Ndwaya* which is a bush-buck. The Eombi clan are particularly strict in this matter. It is related that some hunters once went out and killed a *Ndoya* and they all broke out into dreadful sores, so after that they made the *Ndoya* tabu.

People to whom the *Ndoya* is tabu are not allowed to have a tame *Ndoya* in their villages, they are not allowed to touch one of the animals or even to wear pieces of the skin.

The members of the *Asi* clan are very strict observers of their own particular tabu which is liver. If an *Asi* clansman was to eat liver it is believed that his eyes would weep continuously ever afterwards. Women have to observe these prohibitions equally with the men.

Occasionally one meets a member of a clan who is allowed to eat the thing which is tabu to his clan.

Women may never eat the tongue or heart of an animal.

If a man or woman goes on a journey their son cannot cohabit with his wife while either is absent or the traveller will

upon his or her return fall very ill with fever. If this prohibition is broken, it is necessary for the offender to kill a big male goat at the door of the hut and the returning traveller rubs his feet in the contents of the stomach before entering the house.

If a man's wife menstruates while one of his sons is away from the village on a journey the father cannot cohabit with that wife. If he does he must purge his offence in the following way:—some *Nḡnondu* leaves, *Mitaa* leaves and *Mumo* (sacred fig-tree) leaves are mixed with water, a child sprinkles the mixture in the gate of the village and the traveller can then enter with safety.

A man may not have connection with a woman from behind, the woman will not conceive until he has purged his error by smearing himself with the contents of a goat's stomach.

It is considered a grave offence for a woman to commit incest with a brother, if she conceives she is sure to abort. The man has to purge his sin by bringing a big goat to the elders and the woman is ceremonially smeared with the contents of its stomach.

Mother-in-law, etc.

If a man meets his mother-in-law in the road they both hide their faces and pass by in the bush on opposite sides of the path.

If a man did not observe this custom and at any time wanted to marry another wife it would prove a serious stigma and parents would have nothing to do with him. Moreover if a wife heard that her husband had stopped and spoken to her mother in the road she would leave him.

If a man has business he wishes to discuss with his mother-in-law he goes to her hut at night and she will talk to him from behind the partition in the hut.

A man can however take steps to remove this prohibition; he gives due notice of his intention and then on a certain day the people of the neighbourhood collect at the village where his mother-in-law lives and the man sends them an ox, a big goat, several pots of honey and a supply of beer, the assembled company then hold a great dance and feast, and the man

formally presents a blanket to both his father-in-law and mother-in-law and after that he need take no special precautions in the matter.

If a girl of the age of puberty meets her father in the road she hides as he passes, nor can she ever go and sit near him in the village until the day comes when he tells her that it has been arranged for her to marry a certain man. After marriage she does not avoid her father in any way.

Omens, etc.

They believe in an omen bird which it is forbidden to slay—it is a small kind of woodpecker with a red head and is called *Ngoma Komi*, it is known by the Swahilis as *Korongonda*. If it calls out on the left side of a traveller it is a good omen, they say that in the old days it would often lead one to a dead elephant. If it calls out on the right side it is not a good sign but the traveller may get some food at his journey's end.

If it calls out ahead of you the chances are that you will be attacked by a lion or a rhinoceros. If it calls out in a *shamba* the elders can tell whether the time is propitious for cultivating and planting.

If a hyaena (*Mbiti*) or jackal (*Mbewa*) crosses your path from right to left it is a bad omen.

But if it crosses from left to right it is good.

Similar omens are observed in Kavirondo and Nandi but the rules are not quite the same, among the Bantu Kavirondo however the luck always follows the left or female side.

The ground hornbill (*Ndundu*) is a bird of ill omen—if it settles in a tree near a village so that it can overlook the village and utters its deep bass booming note, some inhabitant of the village is said to be sure to sicken and die within a few days. To obviate this the people place broken cooking pots in the trees near a village, the bird sees these black objects and is afraid to settle there.

The A-Kamba believe that it is very unlucky to move cattle or live-stock of any kind from one place to another or even to give a present of any stock—during the first four days of the new moon.

If stock is moved or given during those four days it is believed that extreme bad luck will attend them during the month and that circumstances will arise which will force them to hand over more live-stock to other people.

If a child cuts its lower teeth first it is a good sign. It is a bad sign for the upper teeth to appear first, and the child is called *Chuma*, the child however is not killed.

If a child dies who has not had the middle incisor in its lower jaw knocked out, this tooth is knocked out after death, this is considered very important for if omitted someone is said to surely die in the village soon afterwards.

An eagle called *Ndin* sometimes seizes young goats out of a village, this is considered a very lucky omen and the owner of an animal so carried off is said to certainly grow rich.

Curses.

If one man curses another he says *Kino* which is the synonym for the female pudenda.

A worse form of curse is when a person couples the mother of the object with the curse, the form then used is *Kino cha niokwe*.

A father never curses his daughter but may upon occasion curse his son.

If a son curses his father, the various members of the clan assemble, and the son is seized by a dozen men or so and well beaten with sticks, and he has to kill an ox and make a feast to purge his sin.

After cursing a reprobate son or a bad wife the man ceremonially washes his penis, this adds to the seriousness of the curse.

There is also a special curse used for a bad wife, the husband draws a little milk from her breast into his hand and then licks it up, this is a curse which has no palliative, after it the husband can never again cohabit with the woman.

Kamba medicines.

A plant called *Wala* is used for a disordered stomach, and also for bad eyes. It is a small shrub with a long root, the root

is pounded and taken with water for the stomach, it causes diarrhoea for two days.

For the eyes the leaves are used : the juice is pressed from the leaves into the eye.

The leaves of *Wimbi* (Eleusine grain) are boiled after chopping fine and the concoction drunk for fever. It is very good medicine.

A vine called *Kikuunguti* is used for fever. The fruit is like a small cucumber. Some of these are put into the ashes of a fire till they get soft; they are then pressed out and the extract is drunk either with water, gruel, or by itself. It is good for fever and head-ache.

A plant called *Ithunga*—a milky plant—is used for gonorrhoea. The plant is pulled up, roots and leaves pounded with sugar cane, the juice squeezed out and drunk. It is apparently diuretic and allays inflammation, if the parts are badly swollen in three days it is said they will be reduced to normal condition.

The A-Kamba have a drug which they give to cattle and which makes the cattle follow them at a trot. The constituents are fragments of the wood of a certain tree, a pinch of native salt, and bits of grass from the nest of an ant which clears a bare place in the bush and in the centre of the clearing collects quantities of grass seeds, etc.; these items are all ground up together, a little is put on the beast's lips and the man eats a little. The author recently saw a young bull which refused to be driven; it lay down and the herdsmen debated whether it had not better be killed; an old fellow who was somewhat of a medicine man turned up and administered a little of this medicine, and there was no further trouble, it trotted along gaily ahead of the party, following the man who had given it the medicine, which they know by the name of *Kineli*.

The above-mentioned medicines are matters of common knowledge among the elders of the tribe and are not necessarily associated with the magician class.



(26) Typical *Nthele* or young married Mu-Kamba—Ulu district.

CHAPTER XXI.

FOLK LORE.

THE A-Kamba say they possess a great wealth of folk tales which they call *Wano*.

The following are examples :—

Story of origin of death.

There was once a frog *Chua*, a chameleon *Kimbu*, and a bird called *Itoroko*. These three were sent by *Engai*, God, to search for human beings who died one day and came to life again the next day ; the chameleon was in those days a very important personage, and he led the way. They went on their mission, and presently the chameleon saw some people lying apparently dead, so as they approached the corpses he called out to them softly, "*Niwe, niwe, niwe.*" The *Itoroko* was vexed with the chameleon, and asked what he was making that noise for. The chameleon replied, "I am only calling the people who go forward and then come back," and the *Itoroko* derisively declared that it was an impossible task to find people who ever came back to life. The chameleon, however, maintained that it was possible and jokingly said, "Do not I go forward and come back?" (referring to the unique way a chameleon swings or lurches backwards and forwards before taking a step). The three then reached the spot where the dead people were lying, and in response to the calling of the chameleon they opened their eyes and listened to him. But the *Itoroko* called out and said, "Ye are dead to this world and must stay where you are, you cannot rise to life again." The *Itoroko* then flew away and the frog and the chameleon stayed behind, and the latter re-addressed the

dead and said, "I was sent by *Engai* to wake you up; do not believe the words of the *Itoroko*, he only tells you lies." The spell of his power was, however, broken, and his entreaties were of no avail. They then returned to *Engai*, and He questioned the chameleon as to the result of his mission. He said, "Did you go?" and the chameleon said, "Yes"; he then said, "Did you find the people?" and the chameleon said, "Yes"; he then asked, "What did you say?" and the chameleon said, "I called out *Niwe, niwe, niwe*. I spoke very gently, but the *Itoroko* interrupted me and drowned my voice, so the dead people only listened to what he said." *Engai* then asked the *Itoroko* if this was so, and the *Itoroko* stated that the chameleon was making such a mess of his errand that he felt obliged to interrupt him. *Engai* believed the story of the *Itoroko*, and being very vexed with the way the chameleon had executed his commands, reduced him from his high estate and ordained that ever after he should only be able to walk very, very slowly, and he should never have any teeth. The *Itoroko* came into high favour, and *Engai* delegated to him the work of waking up the inhabitants of the world; the *Itoroko* therefore to this day wakes up and calls out about 2 A.M., whereas the other birds only awake about 4 A.M.

This story appears to be connected with a very widespread idea on the origin of death; an obvious variant of the legend is found among the Bantu tribe of South Africa *vide* the version given in Kidd's *Essential Kafir*, page 76. The main points of this version are as follows:—Umkulu-nkulu (who in South Africa appears to represent to Kamba *Mulungu*) chose the chameleon as a messenger to earth to tell men that they would live for ever. The lazy fellow however loitered on the road and eventually fell asleep before he arrived. Then Umkulu-nkulu changed his mind and sent a message of death to human kind. This time he employed a lizard as messenger, he proved a better Mercury and never stopped till he reached his destination and delivered his message. Presently the chameleon awoke and continued his journey and delivered his message, the lizard however slapped his face and said "Begone, the message is that men shall die."

The people believed the lizard because he arrived first and drove away the chameleon as an impostor. This is why the natives of South Africa hate the chameleon, saying "But for you we should never die."

When we consider the distance of over 2000 miles between the Kafirs of South Africa and the A-Kamba it astonishes one to find with what persistence a folk tale survives.

In the Kamba version the lizard is replaced for some reason by a bird called *Itoroko*.

Note. The *Itoroko* or *Siatoroka*, as it is called in Kitui, is a small bird of the thrush tribe, with a black head, bluish black back and a buff coloured breast; its Luganda name is *Nyonza* and Swahili name *Kurumbizi* (*Cossypha imolaens*). I was recently marching at night through part of Mumoni district and at 3.10 A.M. a bird commenced to call in the bush, and I enquired what the bird was and was told it was the *Itoroko*. My informants were not the people from whom I obtained the folk story about it.

The following is a story of that old favourite in Bantu folk lore, namely the Hyaena.

The hyaena, the hare and the lion agreed they would each go off and try to find a wife. The hare went off to marry the daughter of the jackal, the lion went off to find the daughter of another animal, but the hyaena thought he would go and try to marry the daughter of an Mkamba.

The hyaena therefore started taking with him some cattle and goats to pay for his intended bride. During the day he assumed human shape and walked on two legs, but when darkness came on he reverted to a hyaena and went on four legs. He arrived with his stock at a village where a certain damsel lived and stated his errand, and was received in a friendly way; he said his name was *Mutili*. Night came and he changed back to a hyaena, and feeling hungry he went to the hut of his prospective mother-in-law to eat. When he reached the hut however some sheep who were there smelt him, became frightened and rushed to and fro; the mother of the girl thereupon came to the door with a firebrand to see what was frightening the sheep,

and called out, "Who is there?" In reply the hyaena gave vent to a loud howl. The woman, who had never heard the cry of a hyaena before, replied, "Well, whoever you are, go to sleep now and in the morning we will talk." So the hyaena got no supper and in the night he became very hungry, and seeing a sheep near by with a great fat tail, he bit off the tail and ate it. In the morning the villagers turned out the sheep and saw one with his tail missing. They were very surprised at this, and looking round for the cause saw the hyaena (now of course in the shape of a man again) and the fat from the tail hanging all round his mouth. Thereupon the villagers seized sticks and beat him severely, shouting out, "You are not *Mutili* but *Mbiti*, because you eat meat raw." They drove him out of the village, and he fled away to the woods.

The hyaena was very sore at heart, and called together his friends the other hyaenas and said, "I took my property to the Wakamba to marry a wife, and they have kept it all and driven me away with blows; now henceforward we will always prowl about at night and if we can ever seize any of the Wakamba stock we will do so."

And so this became their custom, and now it is said that not a night passes but someone in the Kamba tribe loses an animal in this way.

The Story of how the Animals got their Marks.

There once was a time when the wild beasts had no marks and the leopard and the hyaena were the first to think they would like their coats ornamented, and so they went off together to a famous medicine man and asked him to adorn their skins.

The medicine man agreed, and he mixed some stuff and told the leopard to lie down. He then took a stick and dipped it in the mixture and painted on the spots; the leopard was then ordered to stand up in order that the magician could see the general effect of the work. The artist was however not quite satisfied, so he carefully painted the beast's face. He then told the hyaena it was his turn, and so the hyaena lay down and was painted in bigger spots with a different mixture. The medicine man then told the leopard to sing and he grunted

and groaned as best he could, and then the hyaena had to sing and he let out his mournful howl; the latter's voice did not at all meet with the approval of the magician, and he told the hyaena that he must be very wicked if he had a voice like that, and he told him that he should not decorate him prettily like the leopard. The hyaena was very annoyed and was jealous of the pretty coat the leopard had got, and he told the medicine man that whenever he had a chance he would carry off some of his goats and sheep and went off in high dudgeon. The medicine man then called the hartebeest and told him to sing. The hartebeest emitted his curious sneezing noise, and this did not meet with the approval of the medicine man, so he only painted him a uniform red colour.

The zebra was then called up and told to sing, and he barked away merrily. This greatly pleased the medicine man, and he told him he would make him prettier than all the others, and painted him in his black and white stripes. This is how the animals got their different patterns.

The Story of the Hare, Ki-Kamba-Wa-paruku or Buku.

There once was a time when the hare was very poor, but he was ambitious and anxious to become rich, and one day he went for a walk in the woods, and stopping to rest fell asleep. When he awoke from his sleep he espied some cattle, sheep and goats near by, and he said to himself, "I will creep up quietly, and I shall be able to get some milk," so he slipped stealthily through the grass and sucked some milk from a cow; he then looked round to see who was herding the animals, and he saw a MuKamba asleep under a tree; so he there and then collected the grazing beasts and drove them away into the heart of the woods. He then took a knife and cut off the animals' tails and took them back to a native path which passed near where the herdsman was sleeping; this path was split up into three parallel trails, and in one of these he buried the tails of the cattle in a row, and in the next one he planted a row of sheep's tails and in the third one he planted a row of goats' tails: he planted them all with the tip of the tail protruding above ground.

The hare then approached the drowsy herdsman and called

out, "*Nthi Nthi Kumeseo*," which means "The earth has eaten up your property." The MuKamba awoke with a start and looked around in vain for his live-stock. The hare then hopped out of a bush, called the man and told him to follow him. The herdsman did so, and the hare took him along the path to the place where the tails were sticking out of the ground and said, "See, the earth has swallowed up everything but the tips of their tails, but let us pull both together at the tails and drag back your animals." The herdsman agreed to this, and the hare instructed him to pull when he gave the word, and when the MuKamba pulled upwards at a tail the hare pushed downwards as hard as the MuKamba pulled upwards, so the tails would not move; presently the hare suddenly loosed hold and the tail came away in the MuKamba's hand, and the hare cried out, "Oh! it has broken off and left the beast below ground"; they then went on to where the sheep's tails were buried and then on to the goats' tails, and the same thing happened. The MuKamba then enquired what was next to be done, and the hare replied, "Well, the only thing is to dig out the animals, and so go and fetch a digging stick." The MuKamba did so, and dug a big hole without finding anything. The hare however still urged him to go on digging, that he would be sure to find them if he only dug deep enough. The man dug and dug until he was quite exhausted, and he then gave it up as a bad job. The hare said, "You seem to be too tired to dig any deeper, so you had better go back to your village, but when you get home what shall you tell your friends?" The man said, "I shall tell them that the earth has swallowed up my cattle and sheep."

So they parted, and the hare collected the live-stock and drove it off towards his home. On the way he met a lion, and the lion said, "How did a small person like you get all this wealth?" and the hare replied, "Oh! I have been on a raiding expedition and taken it by force, and I had to kill nine men to get it, and if you interfere with me I will kill you too." The lion was so taken aback by this boastful speech that he was afraid to tackle the hare alone, so he went off and called in a friend and said, "Come along and I will shew you where there

is a lot of stock to be had for the taking," and he explained his meeting with the hare. The second lion expressed surprise at his requiring help, but the other replied, "That is so, but the owner is a fierce little beast; he has killed nine men in capturing the herd." The second lion however encouraged him and said, "Come along, let us both go and roar loudly at the hare and put on a fierce air, and we shall soon see if he really is the brave person he professes to be."

They did so, with the result that the hare was terrified and hid in a bush and called out, "*Mutwa Ubiu* (which is a nickname given to the lion by the hare), don't let us fight about this matter, but let us divide the spoil." The lion agreed, and they halved the live-stock.

The hare was exceedingly angry at losing half his spoil, and sat down to consider how he could get the better of the lion and encompass his death by stratagem. When he had thought out his plan he went to the lion and said, "Now our difference is finished let us eat *Kithito*" (*tule Kithito*, that is to say, "let us go through the peace ceremony together"). The lion agreed, and the hare said that to carry out the ceremony to which he was accustomed they must make a big fire, so he and the lion went and collected firewood and then lit a fire.

The hare then explained that they must both jump over the fire in turn, and he went back a little distance, took a run and jumped over the fire; the fire had at that time not yet burnt up properly. He then went and sat down by the fire and said to the lion, "I have run a thorn into my foot which I must pull out, but you now go on and jump the fire." The fire by this time had burnt up and was much fiercer. The lion came along with a run, and as he got close to the fire the hare picked up some hot ashes and threw them into his eyes, and so the lion jumped short, fell into the fire, and was burned to death.

The hare thus recovered his spoil and went off happily with his flocks and herds, and to this day the lion is so afraid of the hare that he is never known to kill and eat him. After a time however the herding of all his live-stock became a burden to the hare, so he eventually took it along and handed it over to a Mu-Kamba and said, "Herd my property for me, and I will turn

up now and again and drink milk." And so it is to this day, when cattle and goats are out grazing a hare will frequently come along and suckle the animals.

Note. I have never seen this occur, but several natives, Swahilis as well as A-Kamba, assure me that it is quite true that hares do come and suckle domestic animals when out grazing.

*The Story of the Ngu or tortoise and the Kipalala or fish eagle
(Haliaeetus vocifer) Swahili-Furukombi.*

An old Mu-Kamba had a very comely daughter, and the tortoise came along and made her father an offer of marriage, and the eagle also sought the girl in marriage. To both these suitors the father replied, "The one who wins my daughter must start at daybreak for the coast and return to me before nightfall with some sea salt."

And the eagle said to the tortoise, "Then of course the prize is mine, for you who only move at a snail's pace will never accomplish this task." The tortoise replied, "It is truly very difficult for me, but promise me one thing—agree to put off the contest for 10 months," and the eagle, feeling quite sure of winning, agreed to do so.

Next day, unknown to the eagle, he started off for the coast to fetch some salt; it took him nearly five months to go and five to return, and he hid the salt in his house. Now during his journey to the coast he arranged with all the tortoises he met on the way to station themselves on a certain day at intervals along the route between Ukamba and the coast, one at each of the various camps, streams and water-holes, and he told them all to look out for the eagle as he flew past on the appointed day and when the eagle called out, "*Ngu iko*" ("Tortoise, are you there?"), each one was to reply in turn, "*Ni iko*" ("I am here"). On the appointed day the eagle started off on his flight to the sea and at intervals he called out, "*Ngu iko*," and at various points *en route* he received the arranged reply. He was very surprised to find the tortoise getting on so quickly, and still more so when he reached the shore and found a tortoise there in the act of collecting some salt. He however quickly picked up his own

salt and flew back at full speed, and not knowing that the tortoise he had left on the beach was not his competitor, felt confident he had won. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the original tortoise, who was on the look out, saw the eagle like a speck in the distance, so he emerged from where he had hidden throughout the day and waddled up the road to the village, announced his return from the coast and handed his packet of salt to the girl's father.

The eagle then arrived and was very surprised and annoyed to find that he had been outwitted by the tortoise. The old Mu-Kamba suspected some trick and said to the eagle, "When you reached the coast did you see the tortoise?" and the eagle said, "Yes," but I cannot think how he has managed to get here before me," and he was very angry and flew off in a great temper.

And the old man said, "It is true you have won, but if I give you my daughter where will you live in safety, for the eagle is so angry that he is sure to find you out and kill you." The tortoise replied, "Oh! that is all right, do not be anxious for my safety, my home will in future be in the water and the eagle will never get me." So he took the girl and dived into the water, and this is the origin of the tortoise spending a great part of his life in the water, which it does to this day.

The cunning of the hare.

Once upon a time the monkeys were very short of food so they went to see the hare and applied to him for help in their distress.

The hare took pity on them and told them to follow him and he led the way to a Kamba *shamba* (cultivated field). He looked over the hedge and saw a number of people watching the crops, so he went to a clearing some little way off and danced and sang; the people were attracted by the noise and ran off to see the entertainment, and while they were away the monkeys crept in and ate up the grain.

The A-Kamba then realized that the hare had played them a trick so they seized him and threatened him with death. But the hare said, "Wait my friends, if you kill and eat me you will

not get much meat off my small body and if you will only have patience I will repay you."

The logic of this argument appealed to the people and they agreed; he therefore took the A-Kamba across the plains to the edge of Kikuyu country and told them to hide there. He espied a party of Kikuyu women a little way off and went up and talked to them, saying, that if they liked he would shew them a place where they could gather more salt. He led the women to near where the A-Kamba were hidden and gave a signal, and they seized the women and took them off to Ukamba. A little time after this event the A-Kikuyu caught the hare and would have killed him but he again promised to pay for his misdeeds if his life was spared and he took a party off to the confines of Ukamba, he went up and talked to a man herding some cattle and told him if he would come and look over a small hill near by he would shew him some A-Kikuyu who were lurking around, while the herdsman was thus decoyed away in one direction the party of A-Kikuyu drove off the cattle. He could never take in the A-Kamba after this, but they could never catch him again.

The constant recurrence of these hare stories in native folklore makes one wonder why primitive man should have invested the hare with such extraordinary cunning, for the hare can hardly be said to be a beast which impresses itself greatly on the imagination of civilized mankind.

Munei's prophecy.

Many years ago at a place called Mbuanii near Wathomi there lived a very powerful *Mundu mue*, or medicine man, named Munei, and on one occasion a deputation of the local elders went to him and begged him to use his magic to produce rain.

Munei agreed, and ordered them to bring a black ox and kill it at his village, saying that the rain would then fall. They carried out his wishes and killed the ox and the elders then received permission to feast on the meat. Some proceeded to cook the meat in pots and others to roast it over fires, before however the feast was over the rain came down with appalling intensity and Munei cried out to the elders, "Run to your

villages but cover your heads with skins on the way so that the rain will not kill you," they did so and this torrential downpour continued till next morning.

Munei then slept, and in his sleep he dreamt; he was so moved by his dream that he woke up, went to the gate of the village and called out in the dead of night to the neighbouring villages and summoned the elders. They were much surprised at being summoned at that hour and went along to his village, he then addressed them and said: "Mark well my words, ye came to me for rain and the rain came, I then slept and while I slept God (Mulungu), by means of a dream ordered me to tell you a message and that I should then die and the message is this—that after a time a new kind of people will come into this land and you will know them by their red faces and red ears and when those people come you must listen to their words and obey them." Immediately after delivering this prophecy Munei died.

Many years afterwards when the first Europeans appeared the elders met together and discussed the matter, and said, "Truly these are the reddish people Munei told us of."

Several of the E. African tribes possess legends connected with prophecies as to the coming of the Europeans. Some twelve years ago a chief in Kavirondo was pointed out to the writer as having prophesied the coming of Europeans many years before they did reach there.



(27) Masai cattle brand, Lugumai, sub-gilat Parseroi.
Note! Three lines for ♂.



(28) Masai cattle brand of Lugumai, sub-gilat Kirikoris.
Note! Two lines for ♀.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE MASAI.

So many observers have devoted their attention to the ethnology of this tribe that it may be considered rather rash to venture to write anything upon the subject, but for all that, it is believed that certain aspects have not yet received sufficient attention, and there are possibly a few facts that may have escaped notice.

As is well known, the tribe is divided into groups founded on geographical districts, and these divisions are the dominant ones at the present day. Before however these became so prominent they were divided into what Hollis calls clans and families, which are variously termed *gilat*, *orot*, or *Njomito*. This classification is apparently in a state of decay, being overwhelmed as it were by the geographical divisions, so much so that a casual observer might live among the Masai for years and not know of its existence; systematic enquiry however is able to demonstrate its presence in many of the unwritten conventions which govern the life of a Masai.

No Masai wears the mark of his family or *gilat*, so one meeting a stranger of his tribe can only discover his *gilat* by direct enquiry. The Masai cattle are however marked with a brand peculiar to each *gilat*, but this is however not general, for only the cattle of the *moruak* (old men) and the senior *moran* (warrior class) are so marked. A very exhaustive catalogue of cattle marks is given in Merker's book *Die Masai*, and a few

specimens are herewith published which have been obtained from personal observation.

Merker extends the *gilat* marks to other objects besides cattle, viz. the arrows used by *moruak*. The northern Masai however deny that the arrows are ever so marked.

No explanation of the origin or significance of these designs has hitherto been published, and the writer has long been on the look out for some clue. Many of the Masai appear to be ignorant of the root of the designs, others will not trouble to explain the matter to Europeans. The discovery however of the fact of the persistent repetition of these designs in cycles was strong evidence that they were not mere arbitrary patterns. The present Purko *moran*, for instance, of right-handed or senior age (Ol Egelishu's *moran*) inscribe on their shields the badge formerly used by Terere who was *lutuno* of the Nyangusi *poror* or age. Ol Aikotikush and his men, the Purko *moran* of the left-handed or junior age, wear the badge of Ol Ekoisikir, who was *lutuno* of the age junior to Terere. The *laiok* who will after the next *eunoto* ceremony become the right-handed branch of a new age or *poror*, will wear Ol Egelishu's badge.

It was hoped that these badges might turn out to be conventionalised representations of clan totems, but the fact that they follow the *poror* or age instead of the *gilat* effectually disposes of this idea, and no information is yet available as to why a generation of warriors should adopt a certain pattern, or why it should recur according to a particular rule. The list and description of the patterns themselves is given a little further on in the book.

What is believed to be a fairly comprehensive classification of the *gilat* of the northern Masai is appended to this chapter. It will be seen that these divisions have as a common basis two groups, viz. the *Oodo Mongi* (red bull) and *Orok Kiteng* (black cattle), and one cannot but suspect that these were originally totemistic in their origin, for the Masai still tell you that formerly all members of the *Orok Kiteng* group would use nothing for breeding purposes in their herds but black bulls, and similarly the *Oodo Mongi* would have nothing but red bulls; at the same time they have however no objection to killing respectively

black or red bulls for food. Again one cannot help speculating whether the names of these two groups have any connection with the fact that the Masai recognize a black god and a red one, the former being the beneficent one and the latter malicious.

The marriage laws among the Masai are profoundly affected by the various artificial restrictions introduced by the *gilat*, and it is the existence of these barriers which probably prevents these divisions from being completely blotted out by the geographical grouping.

The restrictions governing marriage among the Masai are far from simple, for whether a man may marry a certain woman or not depends first on the age or generation (*ol poror*) to which the girl's father belongs, and secondly on the *gilat* of the girl's father.

For instance, among the Mokesen family members of the two sections Rakita and Kipolonga cannot intermarry with individuals belonging to any of the other divisions of the *gilat*, but must marry with say a Taarosero or Molelyan. A member of any of the sub-divisions other than these two can intermarry with an individual belonging to any other sub-section of the Mokesen *gilat*. For instance, a Lema Keri can marry a L'Parkinambe or Taarongojine, or a Le Kirikoris can marry a L'Taarongojine or Mbirrda, and so on. In the Taarosero family there are two sub-divisions Napowaru and Loomishir, and these intermarry freely.

In the Molelyan family some sub-divisions of the *gilat* may intermarry and some not. Thus a Lema can only marry a Keri Ngishu, but a Keri Ngishu is able to marry in all other sub-divisions of the *gilat* except Eparsagaa.

The Mamasita family among the northern Masai has no sub-divisions, so its members must marry into another *gilat*.

In the L'Aiser family members of the Kitoe branch cannot marry members of the Partimaro group, but all the other sub-divisions of the *gilat* intermarry.

The sub-divisions of the Logumai cannot intermarry.

The members of the Aitayok *gilat* among the northern Masai is so small that members of this *gilat* always marry into another.

These are the principal "forbidden degrees" imposed by the *gilat*.

Now we come to the *poror* or generation. These divisions, which are alternately termed right- and left-handed and are connected with the circumcision, are confined entirely to the male sex. Women do not have *poror*, that is to say they are not circumcised or operated on in groups but at odd times when they are considered old enough.

A man cannot marry the daughter of a man of his own age—he must marry the daughter of a man of a previous age to his own. Like many other races it is the custom among the Masai for a man to be provided with a temporary wife when he sleeps at a kraal he may stay at in the course of a journey. He can however only cohabit with the wife of a man of his own *poror* or age; these relations are looked upon as quite lawful. The visitor always enquires if the *gilat* of the woman who is given him is one that he can lawfully marry into; if he could lawfully marry the woman then the temporary relations are considered moral. E.g. if Masikonde went to visit a Molelyan of his own *poror* and the Molelyan offered Masikonde a wife who belonged to Logumai, he would refuse. (Masikonde belongs to the Parseroi which is a sub-*gilat* of the Logumai.)

Another important point is that a woman's *gilat* is that of her father, not of her mother. There is no rule governing the distribution of the various *gilat*; often members of as many as three *gilat* will be found in one *moru Engang* or a *moran manyat*; in a *moran manyat* the unit is a *sirito*, and members of various *gilat* are often found in one *sirito*.

When a man marries it is not lawful for him to marry two wives out of the same sub-family of the *gilat*. If for instance a Molelyan marries two Logumai women, he could not marry two Parseroi women but would take one say from the Parseroi and the other from Tootu.

If a man has cattle stolen or lost the matter is taken up by the head of his *sirito* or company, which is based on the age or *poror*. But if a man is killed it is the business of the *gilat* to compensate the relations of the murdered man. Thus if a Logumai (Parseroi) killed a Molelyan it would fall upon all



(29) Masai cattle brand, L'Aiser, sub-gilat Parkinetti.



(30) Masai cattle brand of Taarosero gilat. Note! Two lines for ♀.

the other branches of the Logumai to assist in compensating the relatives of the deceased Molelyan; that is to say, the Tootu, Parkurito, Matosio, etc. would all have to contribute. If the murderer was wealthy he might pay all the necessary compensation to the relatives of the deceased out of his own herds, but the other branches of the *gilat* would still contribute and they would pay their share to the murderer.

If a Logumai kills a Molelyan then the amount of the compensation would be fixed by the elders of another *gilat*, say the Mokesen. If the attacking party called in the Mokesen and the injured party called in say the Taarosero, then the elders of these two *gilat* would settle the dispute.

If the murder was unprovoked the compensation would probably be 100 head of cattle, if committed under great provocation 100 sheep. The compensation would be either sheep or cattle, not both. Only female or castrated animals may be paid as compensation. For the death of a woman the payment is not heavy, about 30 sheep, but if a man kills his wife he does not pay, as he has already paid for her.

If a Masai kills a member of his own branch of *gilat* he pays the compensation himself, the other branches do not contribute. If a Masai kills a member of another branch of his own *gilat* the other branches contribute towards the compensation. Thus if a Parseroi kills a Parkurito the Tootu, Matosio and Shombo branches contribute towards the compensation.

Now with regard to the distribution of the compensation it will be seen that all branches of the *gilat* a member of which committed the offence contribute their share, and upon a similar principle each branch of the *gilat* to whom the murdered man belongs receives a share of the compensation; the father of the deceased will generally receive half to two-thirds of the compensation, the remainder will be divided among the *moruak* (elders) of the various branches of the *gilat*.

For instance, if a Parseroi kills a Parsekero the other branches of the Molelyan *gilat*, viz. Lema, Keri Ngishu, Epar-sagaa, etc., will all receive a share of the compensation. The Laibon or medicine man does not receive a share. This palaver does not take place for two years after the killing. Until the

compensation is fixed up the murderer cannot eat with the relatives of his victim.

MASAI TRIBE.

CLASSIFIED TABLE OF *GILAT* OR *OROT* OR *NJOMITO*.

OODO MONGI (red bull)	}	IL-MOKESEN ...	Le-Seko Il-Mamasita L-Omoll M-Birrda (this clan marks its cattle by slitting the under side of the ear, the piece of the ear which hangs down after this operation is called M-Birrda). Ol-Aigwanan, Rasiti, belongs to this clan
			Le-Rakita Le-Kaiki Le-Kipolonga Le-Makiri L-Taarongojine Le-Kirikoris Le-Parkinambe Il-Kiporōn L-Oiger (refers to the small slits made along a cow's ear, this is the cattle mark of this clan)
		L-TAAROSERO	Loomishir Olengoilii (the black mark on the flank of the Thomson Gazelle) Le-Napowaru (hyaena) Il-Parsekero Le-Lema (Ol-Oegelishu belongs to this clan)
			Le-Dagua Il-Moingo Il-Massangua Il-Keri Ngishu (spotted cattle), Ol-Aigwanon El-Morak belongs to this clan
		IL-MOLELYAN	L-Eparsagaa Il-Enditi
			(None of El-Purko belong to this branch, no sub-divisions)
		¹ L-MAMASITA	

¹ The Mamasita *gilat* is kept separate because among the Kapotei Masai this *gilat* is considered to be a subdivision of the Molelyan and among the Purko Masai it is considered as a branch of the Mokesen.

OROK KITENG (black cattle)	IL-LUGUMAI ...	{ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Le-Parseroi (Kilengo and Masi- konde belong to this clan) Le-Tootu Le-Parkurito Il-Motosio Le-Shombo
	L-AITAYOK ...	{ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Il-Miñgana Sumaga L-Siria (the Dalalogotok of Nyeri belong to this clan) Il-Moshono
	L-AISER	{ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> L-Partimaro { (Ol-Onana and Sa- or bori belong to this N-Gidongi clan) L-Kitoe Le-Parsoi Le-Kuluo Le-Toya Le-Musere Lodogishu

CHAPTER II.

NAMES OF CHILDREN, SHIELD PATTERNS, CATTLE BRANDS.

Names of Children among the Masai.

A MASAI child generally does not receive a name until it is about two years old—the accepted sign is when teeth appear in the upper and lower jaw, two or three in each jaw. About the fifth, sixth to eighth day of the moon are suitable days for the naming. The father calls an elder of a former *poror* or age, not necessarily of the same *gilat*, to his kraal, and this old person names the child. If it is a girl the mother calls an old woman to name the child. A girl must not be named on the fifth of the month but on the fourth day of the moon. Similar to a male child it must not be named in Ol-adalo. There are certain elders who will name children in the month of Ol-adalo, but they are uncommon.

The names given are usually those of elders of old time. It is customary for the elder who is called in to mention two names and then to settle on one. It is considered a very good thing for the elder to bring a small child of his own with him when he goes to a village to name a child, and in the same way an old woman going to name a female child will bring a little girl with her.

The details of the ceremony are as follows. In the morning an old woman calls out in the kraal: To-day we want to perform the Endomono ceremony connected with naming the child of "so and so," viz. Eo Endomono. The father then gives the women of the village a dark red sheep, which is killed at the door of the mother of the child. The old women then toast the meat by a fire (it must not be cooked in a pot) and then eat



(31) Uasingishu tribe cattle brand, Nyaya gilat. Totem—lion.



(32) Uasingishu tribe cattle brand, Siria gilat.
Totem—Indicator-bird (Enjshowi).

it; the mother of the child does not partake. The head and feet of the sheep are not roasted, they are given to a woman belonging to another village; they must not be eaten in the village where the ceremony takes place. Then one of the women shaves the heads of the mother and the child. The head is massaged with a mixture of water and milk to make the shaving easy. After the shaving the heads are anointed with sheep fat and red earth; the earth is called *Engoina*. In the evening the mother milks the cows, carrying her child on her back. When she has finished milking the elder choosing the name of the child comes and names it. This is the custom among the northern Masai.

After the youth is circumcised and becomes a *moran* he receives a nickname from his fellows, e.g. Ol-gisoi-lai, the one to whom I have given a ring; Paa-Kiteng, the receiver of a cow. Only the persons who gave him the ring or the cow would call him by this name. Other *moran* would call him by the name of his father. Old women would call him by the name of his childhood. When a man becomes a *moru* and marries he is generally called by the name of his first child, whether male or female. When a woman marries her husband renames her, either giving one of the nicknames of the *poror* or age or one of the names particularly appertaining to women. When she marries she is often referred to as the mother of "so and so," the name of her first child.

A man often calls his wife if she came from near where he lives Na Tahana, "the one from near by," or Nadungwangop, "the one from afar," if she came from a distance.

If a Masai asks another his name he must not give the name he received in his childhood but his father's name, viz. I am the son of "so and so." But if a man calls out a man's childhood name it is not wrong to answer to it.

Shield patterns among the Masai.

These patterns follow the geographical divisions of the tribe, not the family divisions; thus the Purko carry one badge and the Matapato another badge. The junior or left-handed

(*kedyanye*) *moran* generally have a different badge to the right-handed or senior (*tatene*) *moran* of the generation or age (*poror*).

The designs or marks on a shield are called *sirata*, and each has a name. The only designs in use at present among the Masai of British East Africa are:—

1. *Sirata ol orasha*. Plate XIX. Said to be derived from the markings of a bird called Naitolya, which is the crested crane (*Balearica gibbericeps*). This design is used by the following sub-tribes:

Sigirari senior,
Loitai senior,
Damat senior.

2. *Sirata Sambu*. Plate XVIII. Said to be derived from the markings of the zebra. This design is used by the following:

Purko senior,
Gekonyuki senior,
Dalalogotok.

It is said to have been introduced by Laiboso, an ex-laigwanan of the generation called Il Peles. It is probably more mimicked than any other design by the Uasingishu and Kikuyu.

3. *Sirata ol ebor*. Plate XVIII. The white space in the centre of the shield is said to represent the inside of a warrior's kraal—*ol ebor* means the bare space inside a kraal. This was originally the design used by the Gekonyuki senior but is now used by the Matapato senior, Kapotei senior and Dogilani senior.

4. *Sirata ol enapita legai*. Plate XIX. So called because one side is red and one side white. It is said to have been produced by reversing half of the design called *ol ebor*. It is used by the Gekonyuki junior, Matapato junior, and Kapotei.

5. *Sirata ol olorika* or *ol engerere*. Plate XX. Supposed to have been derived from a particular kind of spotted cattle. It is also sometimes called the "design of the stool." It is carried by the Purko junior.

6. *Sirata el engameta*. Plate XX. Said to have been derived from the conventional chevron bead design on the belt of an *ndito* or young unmarried girl. It is said to have been originally designed by Naiterukop. It is now only used by El Kereao, a small group of the Purko senior.



(33) Uasingishu tribe cattle brand, Mogishu gilat.
Totem—Blue Starling (Mogishui).



(34) Uasingishu tribe cattle brand, Masarunye gilat. Totem—hyaena.

7. One occasionally sees a large patch of red painted on one side of a shield. This is the *sirata el langarbwali*, and is the badge of a brave man who has distinguished himself in action. It can only be added with the permission of the head laigwanan. It is supposed to be derived from a mass of clotted blood often found inside a dead ox. Plate XIX.

Cattle Brands.

Cattle among the Masai and Uasingishu are marked both on the flank and on the ears. These marks vary according to the *gilat* or family clan of the owner and not the geographical divisions. Examples of some of the more notable brands are published in this volume.



Brand of Laitayok *gilat*.



Brand of Lodogishu *gilat*.

It will be noticed that among the Masai the heifers and cows are generally marked with a double line and the bulls with three lines. The people offer no explanation of this distinction.

In addition to the clan mark, cattle often bear a private brand of the owner; note the brand on the right shoulder of the specimen of the Logumai-Parseroi brand.

As each of the family clans of the Uasingishu has its own totem it was hoped that there might be some relation between the totem and the brand of the clan, but nothing of the kind is evident and the origin of the designs of the brands is a mystery which yet remains to be solved. See Plates XIV, XV, XVI, XVII.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY COLONIZATION OF BRITISH EAST AFRICAN HIGHLANDS.

THE history of the early colonization of the central highlands, or Kenya area would if more data existed prove to be one of the most interesting chapters in East African ethnography. Unfortunately up to now, owing to the absence of specially trained observers, the limited opportunities of the few observers who have tried to pierce the veil, and the absence of any documentary evidence, but little progress has been made. Enough has however been discovered to demonstrate the desirability of further research.

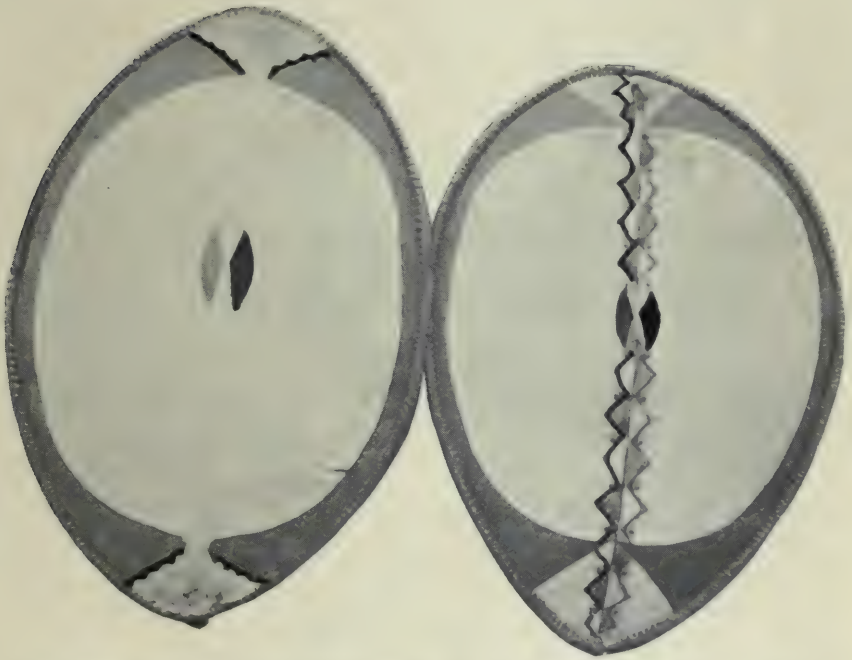
To go back to very early times, the existence of a stone age in this part of Africa is now fully proved, although to what geological horizon the implements should be referred is not yet settled. Obsidian arrow heads and scrapers are of common occurrence in the alluvials of the Rift Valley, and a worked flint from the Tana Valley gravels is recorded. A finely shaped stone bowl was recently discovered near Lake Naivasha and two artificially perforated stones, evidently the heads of prehistoric stone clubs, have been dug up near the Teita Mountains¹. As the country becomes more settled up by Europeans many other relics will undoubtedly be discovered. A few weeks' careful digging in the extensive Elgon caves might reveal many implements, and it is to be hoped that now the general topography of this country is so well known, explorers from England will turn their attention to detailed work of this character.

Besides the Elgon caves there are unexplored caves on the Nandi escarpment, on the Uasingishu plateau, on the Athi plains, etc., all of which might repay the investigator.

¹ See Plate XXVI.



(35) Masai. *Sirata Sambu*. Badge of Purko senior, also adopted by Gekonyuki senior and Loitai, Damat and Dalalogtok senior.



(36) Masai. *Sirata ol-ebor*. Originally badge of Gekonyuki senior: but now that of Matapato senior.

Whether the manufacturers of the stone implements were the ancestors of the Torobo (or Dorobo) or Oggiek (or O Kiek) or not can hardly be proved until specimens of the crania of some of the stone age men come to light. From native legends however it appears that previous to the arrival of the Masai from the north and the A-Kikuyu from the south and south-east the whole of the East African highlands was inhabited by considerable numbers of the aboriginal hunting people.

The Nilotic and Bantu invasions however scattered these folk; some sank into the position of serfs to the dominant tribes, and others hid away in the forests of the Mau, the Sattima or Aberdare chain, and Kenya and their descendants are to be found there to this day. Another factor that appears to have had a great effect on this distribution of the aboriginal hunters is the fact that there is considerable evidence that in comparatively recent times the plateau between Mount Kenya and the Aberdares was more densely forested than at present. Patches of this forest still survive on the tops of small hills all over that area—this was probably due to the great extent of the ice cap on Kenya at that time—a factor which could not fail to profoundly affect the climate. During the last few centuries however the great enemy of the forests has been the spread of the fertile A-Kikuyu, who have steadily carved their way north and north-west, ruthlessly cutting down the forest year by year as it became necessary for them to obtain more ground for cultivation.

With the disappearance of the forests from this area the elephants migrated to other habitat and the hunting people followed the elephants. In the early days of the A-Kikuyu occupation of the country between Ngongo Bagas and the Laikipia plateau, they were only able to hold their own against the Masai by the natural defences afforded by the forests, and they were careful to leave a ring of several miles of forest between their outer villages and the plains upon which the Masai roamed. The Masai spearmen were at a great disadvantage in bush and forest country and could be easily picked off by the arrows of the A-Kikuyu; consequently when the A-Kikuyu worked as far north as where Nyeri Station now

stands, they made no effort to go on and occupy the Laikipia plains but flowed eastwards to the flanks of Kenya and gradually occupied the southern and eastern slopes of that mountain, and now Mweru marks the limit of their expansion; in the Mweru region they apparently came into contact with, and absorbed a colony of people of Masai stock who had abandoned their pastoral life and settled down to agriculture. It is very possible too that they absorbed remnants of other tribes, people of Semitic origin, migrants from Bworana country.

The Masai invasion had a very disintegrating effect on the older occupants of the area under consideration. A tribe with a coherent military organization suddenly appeared on the scene and raided tribe after tribe. In a few generations their prestige became so great that the very name of Masai almost caused a panic: not that the Masai were individually so much braver than the tribes they raided, but simply owing to the sudden nature of their attacks and the fact that they worked with a rude discipline under recognized leaders who had definite tactics. The fact too that the *moran* or warrior class was continually segregated in kraals, and always ready for war, proved a perpetual menace to their more peaceful neighbours. Thus it happens that we find many of the surrounding people have imitated the Masai war dress and even adopted Masai customs and rules of life; even at the present day, when Masai prestige has much declined, one will find Kikuyu warriors decked out in the head dresses, arm ring (*erap* of Masai), ear plug (*gulalem* of Masai), leg bells and spear of a Masai *moran*. Not that they buy these from the Masai, they make them themselves, but they are most distinct mimics of the Masai articles. The A-Kikuyu often indeed go to the length of imitating the patterns or badges on the Masai shields, never however very accurately, probably on account of its being done from memory.

All this mimicry of Masai habits, etc., is an unfortunate thing from the ethnological point of view, as undoubtedly many interesting old customs and incidentally legends and folk lore connected with them have been blotted out by the adoption of those imported and superimposed. In the same way, during the

last few years, contact with Europeans and the partial adoption of European and Swahili dress is in many parts of the country leading to the extinction of many interesting native articles of use, attire and ornament, and one would strongly recommend some determined effort being made by our ethnographical museums to obtain collections of these things while they can.

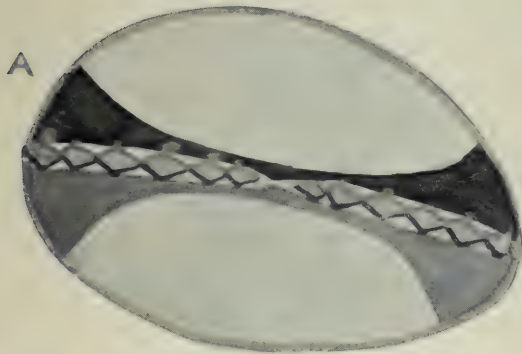
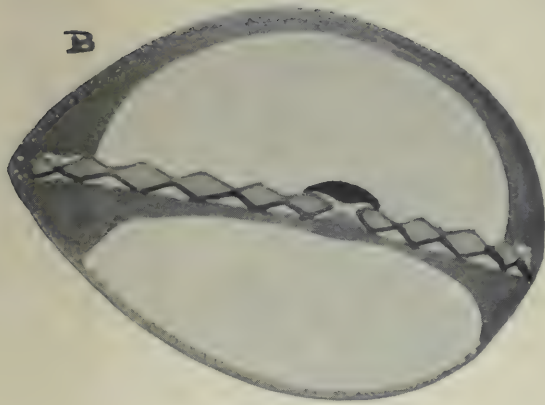
CHAPTER IV.

A-KIKUYU HISTORY AND NOTES ON LAND TENURE, MAGIC, ETC.

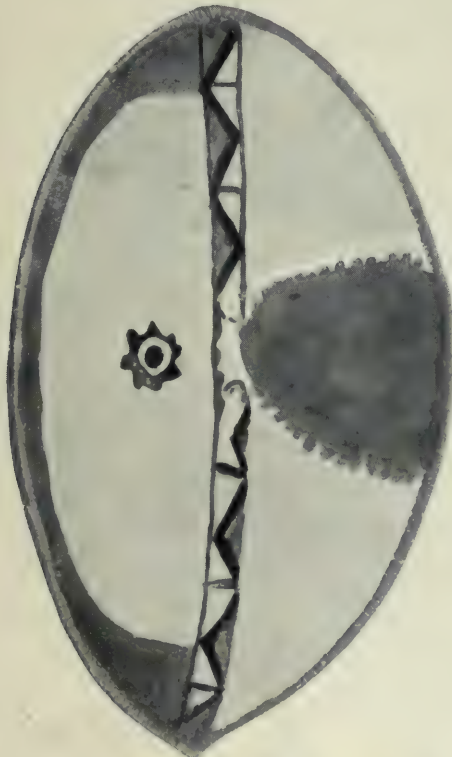
AS several investigators are working on the ethnology of the A-Kikuyu the writer has not attempted a systematic survey of this tribe, but through the kind assistance of several of his colleagues (viz. Messrs Hope, Haywood, McClure and Barrett) has been able to collect some notes on the system of land tenure and the laws of inheritance, etc., in vogue among the A-Kikuyu. These are now being published in the hope that the information may be of some value to civil officers working among the tribe, and in order that people may realise that the term "native rights" has a concrete meaning in the mind of the native himself.

As far as can be discovered the Kikuyu tribe as it stands to-day represents the fusion of many different tribes and even several races, and out of this mixture owing to intermarriage and the subtle influences of environment what may be called a composite type is undoubtedly being evolved; as a parallel to this may be quoted what is known as the American type, which is the resultant of the greatest mixture of European nationalities in a new environment which the world has seen in historic times.

The dominant basis of the Kikuyu tribe is Bantu; some say that this section is composed of offshoots from tribes on the E. and N.E. of Kenia, viz. Šuka or Shuka, Shagishu and Ngembi. It is also maintained that the Agachiko and Achera clans are of Kamba origin, the Chaga tribe of Kilimanjaro is said to be represented by Aizaga, a branch of the Digo tribe from near Mombasa is also said to have settled in the Tana valley. Kikuyuland is one of enormous fertility, and suffers less from



(37) Masai. *Sirata ol-orasha*. (A) Sigirai, Lotai, and Damat junior all use this badge.
(B) *Sirata ol-enapeta legai* used by Gekonyuki, Kapotei and Matapato junior.



(38) Masai. *Sirata el langarbwali*. The blotch on the right side and the star are both marks of bravery.

famine than perhaps any other part of British East Africa. It is believed that the various immigrations nearly all took place during periods of famine; the people streamed off to where they could get food and then permanently squatted there.

The Masai stock is also represented in varying degrees in different parts of the country. Some of the chiefs are half-bred Masai, Kibarabara is even said to be a pure-bred Laikipiak Masai; his wives are however Kikuyu, so the fusion may be seen to be still in progress.

There are stories in existence of Galla settlements in Kikuyuland as recently as 60 to 70 years ago. They were eventually expelled by force and do not appear to have left any great morphological impression on the people.

Last of all, and probably most important, must be mentioned the infusion of Okiek blood. The true Okiek, Asi or Azi, the original aboriginal inhabitants of the plateau between the Aberdare range and Kenia, were a scattered race and were without any great social coherence, so offered but slight resistance to fusion with the invading Bantu people, but once fused the strain exercised a profound influence on the product resultant to the fusion as the Okiek are a people of considerable natural ability.

Note. The Athi River or Azi as the natives call it probably derives its name from the Azi tribe.

The Kikuyu occupation of the country south of the Chania River only dates back some 80 to 100 years. At that period the forest land, in what is now called Kyambu district, was effectively occupied by the Okiek and any open land by a branch of the Masai, an offshoot of the main body of that nation which then occupied the grazing grounds around Kili-manjaro. This offshoot of the Masai extended as far east as the Yatta plateau, E and N.E. of Donyo Sapuk, and the A-Kamba have stories of their relations with them.

Eventually however internal dissension broke out among these Masai and their power was further broken by losses inflicted on them by the A-Kamba of Mwala and Kanjalu. The consequent loss of prestige encouraged the A-Kikuyu under an ambitious chief called Katirimu, to move south and

found settlements along the edge of the forest, but they commenced their usual policy of cutting down areas of forest to make *shambas* (gardens); this brought them into conflict with the forest dwellers and they frequently fought on this account. The Okiek however, finding themselves unable to stop the Kikuyu advance, soon made friends with them and many of the Kikuyu chiefs and others took the daughters of the Okiek to wife—the chief Karuri is the offspring of such a marriage¹. Once peace was made the Kikuyu chiefs appear to have dealt fairly with their allies, for all are agreed that it became the custom to buy forest land from the Okiek when it was desired to extend the plantation area. The purchase was arranged by the chiefs and elders and payment usually took the form of goats; as many as 300 goats were often paid over for pieces of forest. A piece of forest thus bought was then portioned out by the chief among the members of his clan. It is the custom for each shareholder after clearing the forest on his piece of land to present the chief with some beer and later on when his crop is half grown he makes the chief a present of a sheep. The members of the first generation who clear pieces of forest land are said to hold their land at the will of the chief, and he can dispossess them for offences against tribal law; compensation for growing crops would however have to be made. After the first generation this right of compensation would appear to lapse.

Tenure and Inheritance.

Individual title to land only applies to land which has descended to the owner as agricultural land, and all such land may be said to be entailed, for on the death of the owner it passes to his eldest son. It is however the custom for the eldest son to allot portions of the estate to his younger brothers.

If a man dies without male issue the family estate would pass to the nearest male relation. Nothing of the nature of a *death duty* is levied by the chief upon the occasion of the succession to an estate by the son, but the elders of the clan assemble at the village of the deceased and discuss the division of the estate and advise upon the amount of the younger sons'

¹ Portrait of Karuri on Plate XXIV.

portions. A feast of mutton and beer is provided for these worthies.

Women cannot be said to have any rights to land or stock, but are often recognized as trustees or guardians of property during the minority of their male children. Should any such children die in infancy the estate reverts to the nearest male relation.

Generally speaking, the chief however is the guardian of any orphans who are minors, and cultivates such land as they are entitled to, and hands it over to them when they reach a mature age. The chief in this connection would be the minor chief-head of a clan or the senior chief on a ridge.

There is a curious form of tenure conferred by marriage, viz. a man has the right to cultivate a piece of land on the estate of his father-in-law; such a holding would be considered as his property during his lifetime but would not descend to his heirs, for at death it would revert to the father-in-law or his heirs.

The boundaries of estates are mutually agreed upon and marked out by adjoining landowners. They meet and kill a sheep; they then take numbers of cuttings of bushes which are suitable for the purpose (thorny *Solanum*, etc.), smear the ends of the cuttings in the contents of the stomach and plant them along the boundary agreed upon. The meat of the sheep is then eaten by the landowners and their friends.

If a landowner goes away and allows his plantations to revert to waste, it is said that the chief can after six months or so confiscate his title and give the land to another tribesman.

No sale or donation of land is considered valid unless it receives the formal consent of the chief. Even if, however, a landowner sells his land with the chief's consent, the chief appears to still exercise manorial rights over the land, for it is said that he can dispossess the new-comer if he seriously offends the tribal law.

Every clan has its grazing lands which are common to all the members, and adjacent clans often graze their stock on each other's common land.

The chief is however considered to be within his rights if he

disposes of part of the common for agricultural purposes. Since the advent of the Government administration, this right has however fallen into abeyance, as waste and common grazing land is now looked upon as the property of the State.

The A-Kikuyu formerly bought and sold land to a considerable extent, and 10 years ago the approximate price for one acre of land under maize averaged about two goats, but a similar area of sugar cane, bananas or yams would be four or five goats. At the present day however, owing to the presence of white settlement and the greater market for produce, sales are very rare and any land that may be sold commands according to native standards very high prices.

In some of the more thickly populated parts of Kikuyu, north of the Tana, cultivated land is let to tenants on the rental system ; the tenant usually pays a sheep per season of six months for a *shamba* of the size that one or two women can cultivate.

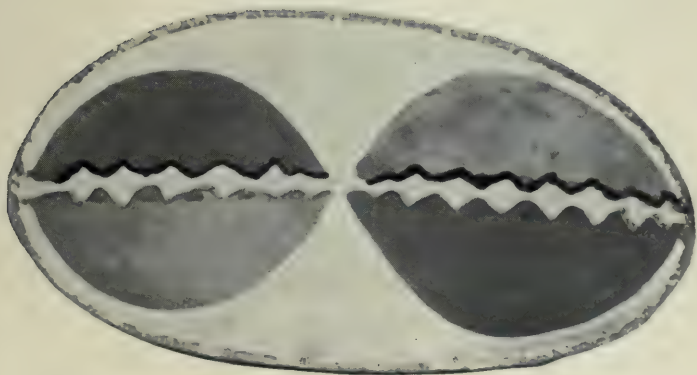
In the above account the clan is referred to as a unit and, up to comparatively recent times, each clan is said to have inhabited its own location. In recent years, however, the clans have become much broken up and intermingled and the result has been to substitute the ridge for the clan. Kikuyu country is, generally speaking, a series of steep parallel ridges with streams between ; these valleys vary from 100 to 300 ft. deep, and form very definite boundaries. It has thus come about that each ridge keeps more or less to itself with its own chiefs, its own plantations and its own grazing grounds.

It is now necessary to consider the tribal law with regard to the inheritance of live-stock and movable property. The general procedure is as follows : The brothers of the deceased take his widows as their perquisite ; if the eldest son of the deceased is a minor his eldest uncle acts as his guardian and as trustee of his property until he takes a wife ; the stock, etc., is then handed over to him. The brothers of the deceased have no claim on the estate.

The sisters of the deceased are cared for until married by the eldest son, or if he is not of age the elder brother of the deceased. The whole of the dowry brought by them into the family by marriage is the property of the eldest son.



(39) Masai. *Sirata el engameta*. Badge of El Kereao, a branch of Purko senior, the star-shaped mark is called *ol lonḡno*. It is a badge of bravery, and is principally used by the Masai.



(40) Masai. *Sirata ol-olorika* or *ol-engerere*. Badge of the Purko junior.

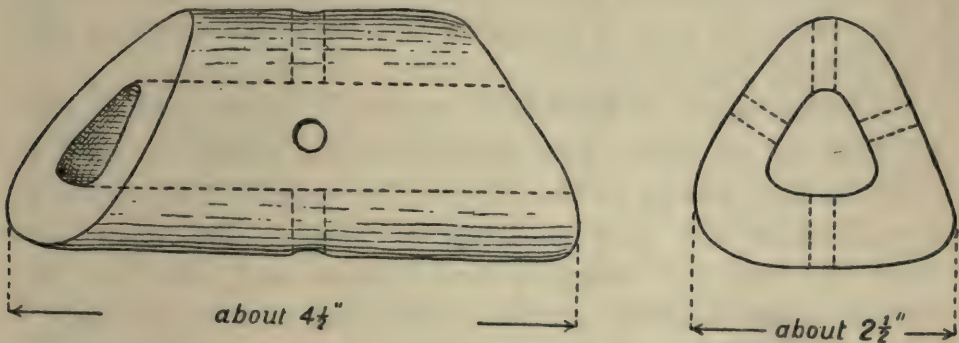
The eldest son of the deceased takes all the property when his brothers reach a marriageable age; it is his duty however to supply the wherewithal in the shape of live-stock to purchase a wife.

The eldest son succeeds his father as head of the family and, in due course, when his brothers have taken to themselves wives becomes the head of the village in which they all live; the live-stock which has descended to him and its natural increase is entirely at his disposal. It is however incumbent upon him to place live-stock at the disposal of his brothers when any one of them wishes to pay for an additional wife.

Kikuyu Magic.

In much the same way as the A-Kamba detect criminals, etc., by use of the magic medicine known as the *Kithito*, the A-Kikuyu use the *Kithathi*.

The *Kithathi* used in Southern Kikuyuland is a curiously shaped piece of reddish burnt clay, roughly tubular in shape, and with four circular holes in its circumference. The following rough sketch will make it clear:



This object is in charge of a certain old man of the tribe who always keeps it buried in the bush at some distance from a village. It is so powerful that it must never be taken into a house or the result would be disastrous to the inmates; it must never be touched by human hands but is lifted up on a stick and deposited in a pocket made of dry banana leaves. The parcel is then tied up and it can be safely carried from place to place.

The writer was fortunate enough some time ago to be present at a trial by the *Kithathi*.

About that time several natives had died somewhat suddenly and unaccountably, and the idea arose that a certain individual had been poisoning his neighbours. Suspicion appears to have been fixed on this man because he had been known to have dabbled in magic for some time and he had recently made a journey to Embu and taken a bullock with him. He had however not been seen to bring anything back from Embu in exchange for the bullock; he moreover would not deign to explain to his neighbours the object of his visit, so popular opinion became convinced that he had bought poison with his bullock and it was suggested that he should be killed by the tribe. The chiefs however demurred as they foresaw that this would make trouble with the District Commissioner, so they decided to perform the *Kithathi* ceremony.

The appointed day arrived and the chiefs and elders for miles round assembled under a big *Mwerothi* or *Mwerosi* tree and seated themselves in a semi-circle about 10 yards from the tree; each person except the accused twined a sprig of *Mukengeria* round his neck to protect him against the potent "medicine" of the *Kithathi* (the *Mukengeria* is a common creeping grass with a light blue flower).

A forked stick of dead wood was stuck in the ground under the tree by an elder who conducted the ceremony and the *Kithathi* was placed in the fork. The accused then discarded his garments and took 10 twigs of *Mugeri* and *Munyururu* wood; he took two twigs in his left hand and with that hand supported the *Kithathi* on the forked branch, with his right he took a twig and placed it in one of the holes of the *Kithathi* and then swore on the *Kithathi* as to his innocence. He would discard that twig and then make another statement, and so on till he had used up all the twigs. The following are the sort of declarations he made:

"If I killed the persons I am accused of killing (mentioning them by name) may the *Kithathi* kill me."

"If I went to buy medicine (in this case poison was meant) may I die."

“ If any Mu-Kikuyu goes to buy poison from the A-Kamba may he die.”

“ If anyone in the district takes lies to the European (meaning the Government) to get his neighbour into trouble, may he die,” etc., etc.

The last quoted is rather curious as it shews that the accused was endeavouring to divert the magic power of the *Kithathi* from himself to the gossips who had been instrumental in causing him to be subjected to the ordeal.

The mental excitement of the accused was intense. He quivered and perspired with the strain of the ordeal and the spectators were visibly moved by the ceremony, and it was really very impressive as everyone was so deeply in earnest over it.

At the close of the ceremony the presiding elder gave him a little white china clay (*Ira* is the Kikuyu name), he ate a little of this and rubbed a little on his hands; until he was thus purified from the contact with the *Kithathi* he could not go and eat. The accused then left the place alone and everyone was careful not to touch or brush up against him.

The elders stated that for three months after going through the ordeal he would not be allowed to go and sleep in his village or to cohabit with his wife, but would have to live alone in a tiny hut away in the *shambas* (plantations), and if he died in the meantime all would know that he was guilty.

After the accused left the spectators waited a few minutes until a goat had been killed in their path. This was done and the contents of its stomach poured out on the road; the people then marched off in single file and when they came to the sacrifice they carefully rubbed their feet in the half-digested grass and went their way freed from the dread influence of the *Kithathi*. No information is yet available as to whether the accused died during or survived his three months' probation¹.

Enquiries were made as to the history of the *Kithathi*, but beyond the fact that an elder of about 70 said it was used in his grandfather's time, and that it was said to have originally come

¹ The man is still alive (this is written 12 months after the ceremony) and has now enlisted as a policeman.

from Ukamba, little was discovered. The late Capt. Merker, however, informed the writer that the Chaga people on Kili-manjaro use similar magic objects; in that region some are however anthropomorphic.

Description of Kikuyu Oath Ceremony.

This is the most solemn oath known to the A-Kikuyu and is called *Ku'ringa-thengi* and was imposed at the instance of the head chief who wished to induce them to fulfil certain obligations which of late they had neglected.

The ceremony was performed by an old man named Kuria wa Karuga of the Mu-withiageni or Aizia-geni clan. It is said to be necessary that it be performed by a member of this clan or one of the Amberi clan: members of the Agachiko, Acheru, or Mwithaga clans are not allowed to conduct the ceremony.

A male goat of not less than two or three colours had its four legs all tied together in a bunch by means of a green withy, a number of twigs of certain plants were gathered and then packed in between the legs and the body of the animal. The twigs were of the following plants :

Kikuyu name of plant	Botanical name where identified
Muhondu	—
Matura thongu.....	Emilia sp.
Mugeri	Solanum sp. (the hairy stemmed variety)
Lujoi	—
Mutongu	Solanum (the common African species called Tunguja by Swahilis)
Rudioi	—
Muthumba	—

These preparations being complete all the participators in the oath moved to the windward of the animal—all except the elder who conducted the ceremony. The elder in question then took a large stone and beat the legs of the animal until he considered they were broken, all the time calling out that any who broke the oath would have their legs broken in a similar way. He then enumerated the obligations which it was essential they

should fulfil. He then hammered the spine of the animal and finally beat in the skull with a stone, continually haranguing the assembly and condemning them to a similar fate if they broke the oath by omitting to fulfil the duties he enumerated.

It is considered very deadly to stand down wind from the goat while this ceremony is going on.

The assembled crowd then marched off chanting and about half a mile down the road another speckled male goat had been slaughtered and the blood and contents of the stomach were spread on the path; each member of the assembly had to tread in this with his bare feet and on every one who did this the oath was considered binding.

The second goat was killed by its stomach being opened.

Neither of the sacrificial animals was eaten but left in the bush to be devoured by hyaenas.

The following is an authentic account of an exhibition of the powers of a Kikuyu medicine man named Kamiri of the Anjiru clan.

Some little time ago at a certain station among the A-Kikuyu a case of cattle theft was being inquired into—a cow had been stolen from a European settler. Certain individuals had been arrested on suspicion but direct evidence was not forthcoming, and it would have been necessary to release the accused. While the proceedings were however in progress Kamiri, the medicine man, arrived and the officer conducting the enquiry asked him if he could assist in unravelling the matter. He consented to try his powers but said he would require some twigs from certain trees. Accordingly the head chief present sent a man to cut these twigs and Kamiri directed that a twig should be allotted to represent each person suspected to be implicated in the crime.

To prevent any possibility of collusion the European officer, the head Kikuyu chief and the interpreter retired to the officer's quarters and there allotted each twig and marked each one, at the same time writing down which mark referred to which person, thus:

Mark	Name of tree from which twig was derived	Person to whom allotted
One notch	Mugaga	Complainant's herd boy Karanja, not present at enquiry
Two notches ...	Muchatha	Kogi wa Kithambu
Three notches	Murumbawe	Kamuchove wa Koivita
Four notches...	Muchatha }	Witnesses for prosecution
Five notches ...	Mutongo }	

Three other twigs were allotted to the names of various natives who might possibly have been implicated.

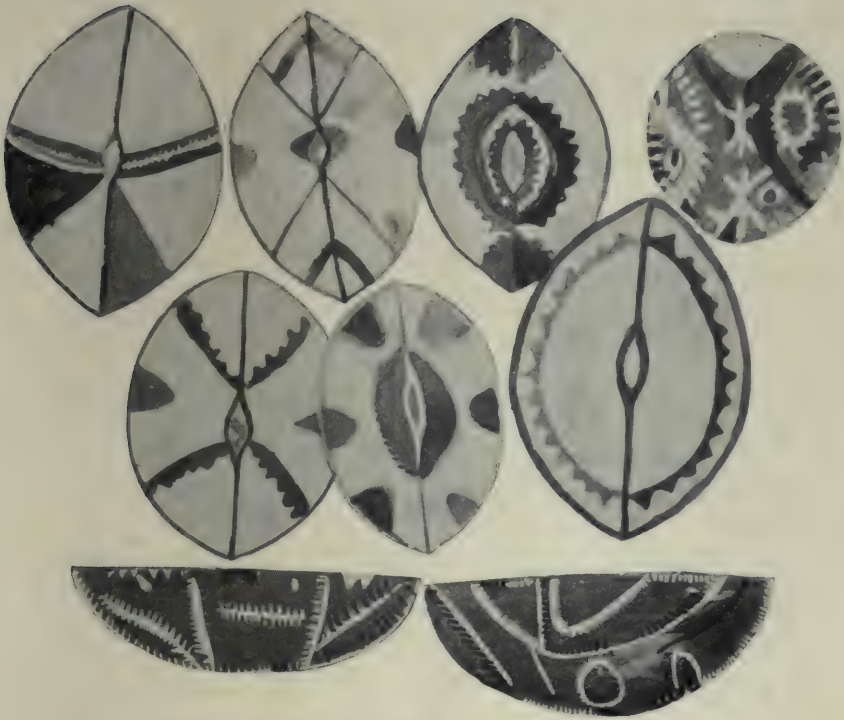
When this was completed the party returned to where Kamiri was waiting. The twigs, eight in number, were handed to Kamiri in a bundle; he picked them up one by one and waved them about. He then selected three out of the bundle and placed them apart, saying that the other five had no bearing on the case.

Then out of the three he picked up one and said, "This is the thief" (upon reference to the list it was found that this was Karanja's twig). He then took up the second (Kogi's twig) and said, "This man bought the cow from the thief." He then took up twig No. 3 (Kamuchove's twig) and said, "This man was cognizant of the theft."

Kogi, who was one of the suspected persons, immediately confessed to having bought the cow from the thief for six goats and described the way the theft was committed and confirmed the fact that Karanja was the actual thief. Karanja was arrested that night and confessed his guilt. The carcass of the cow was found at Kogi's village and brought in on the following morning. Kogi had killed the cow to avoid detection.

The European officer was present the whole time and took special care to prevent any possibility of collusion between Kamiri, the head Kikuyu chief or any other persons present, and Kamiri undoubtedly had no knowledge as to which twig was allotted to which person.

The trial is called *Kutagura*. Kamiri brought with him a small gourd, called *Mbuthu*, containing a white chalky powder, called *Ira*, and he rubbed some on his navel, and then rubbed



(41) Dancing shields (Ndomi) of A-Kikuyu around Kenya.



(42) Reverse sides of above. The left arm is passed through the boss at the bottom of the shield, the hole in the centre is to enable the dancer to look through. The designs are said to be arbitrary on the part of each individual. The shields are only used by youths in the dances held prior to circumcision.

some down one side and round the mouth of a large gourd, called *Mwanu*, which contained a large number of pebbles and one leopard claw ; the mouth of this gourd was stopped up with a dried cow's tail, called *Kichuthu*. He did not however use the pebbles at all during the ceremony.

After the trial he was given a sheep, and he took a small quantity of a black powder he had with him, called *Mwarisa*, being derived from a tree of that name. He placed a little on the tongue of the sheep, and then made a small incision into one of the hind legs of the sheep, and into this incision he also placed a small quantity of the powder. He then proceeded to blow into this incision and in a few minutes the sheep swelled up to about double its size and died.

A few weeks later a second trial of Kamiri's powers was made. He was asked if he could tell when the writer was going away for a journey ; he said he would try. Four marked sticks were given to him ; the stick with one mark represented the first week, the one with two marks the second week, and so on ; he was not told which stick represented which week, but merely that each stick represented a week. He took the sticks and waved them about and then threw away numbers two and four ; he then said that the writer would probably travel in the weeks represented by sticks numbers one and three. He broke a piece off the stick of the third week to make it good. The writer had no idea at the time when his next journey would take place, but absolutely unforeseen events occurred which necessitated his starting on a journey on the sixth day of the third week. This journey could not possibly have been foreseen by Kamiri, being connected with a supposed mineral discovery.

This is doubtless pure coincidence, but coming on the top of the other incident it is considered interesting to record.

CHAPTER V.

NOTES ON MOGOGODO TRIBE.

MOGOGODO or Mokogodo is the name of a small tribe inhabiting the foothills on the N. side of Kenia. It is believed to be the scattered remnant of a migration from the north, and their history and language would well repay further study.

Their former name is said to be Il Mwesi. They formerly lived in a district called Pore on the slopes of Mount Kenia and later on in a district of Mweru to the N.E. of the mountain but were driven out by the Laikipiak, who fought them at a place called Lewa, and the tribe is now greatly scattered; some live among the Sambur and others among the hills called Doinyo Longishu and at Mgur Nanyori in the little known country between the Euaso Nyiro and Kenya. They are said to have always been a pastoral people, and they know nothing of agriculture.

Probably from long intercourse with the Sambur they have adopted many Masai customs. The men are divided according to their age into *laiok*, *moran* and *moruak*; they circumcise and have *poror* or right- and left-handed generations on the principle of the Masai, but curiously enough they are said to have no family divisions, *gilat* or *orot* like the Masai.

An ancient elder named Parmashu is their recognized chief; they however have no medicine man or *laibon* but consult a Mweru *laibon* named Lakaibe.

They kill any animal but do not eat any that are carnivorous.

The information regarding these people is unfortunately somewhat meagre owing to lack of opportunity to visit their country and to the writer having met very few members of the



(43) A-Kikuyu chief—Muturi wa Theka.



(44) A-Kikuyu chief—Muturi wa Theka.

tribe. A fair vocabulary of their language has however been obtained and is here given, and it is hoped that it may furnish philologists with some clue as to their origin. The vocabulary has been checked and rechecked and the roots can be relied on, but great difficulty was experienced with the verbs, owing, in the first place, to the fact that the interpretation had to pass through the medium of the Masai and Swahili language and, secondly, owing to the inability of the subject to understand the difference between first, second and third person in the conjugation of a verb. However as he could not be induced to make a long stay in the region of civilization the information must be leniently judged¹.

Mogogodo Vocabulary.

Above	Aii
All	Tukutuk (tukul = all, in Nandi)
Animal	Henin
Arm	Tuggili
Armlet	Gaton
Arrows	Lah
Ashes	Romi
Axe	Hegoi
Baboon	Titarit
Back	Tolo
Bad	Tepiter
Beads	Siririm
Beard	Munyei (M. ²)
Bee	Keturit
Beehive	Merengo
Before (place)	Ietu
Behind	Rosomai
Belly	Irei
Below	Diberi
Bird	Legei
Big	Tein or Tihin
Black	Kumbu

¹ For type of Mogogodo see Plate XXVII.

² (M.) = Masai root, (N.) Nandi root.

Blood	Sogo
Bone	Mucho
Bow	Paha
Brass wire	Oton
Brother	Tei
Buffalo	Pie
Buttocks	Kashi
Camel	Laūr
Cap	Karanda (M.)
Chain	Monhorit
Chest	Shoo
Child, female	Kerai
Child, male	Utei
Clean	Tetet
Clouds	Katamboi
Cloth	Karasha (M.)
Club	Kuma
Cold	Demato
Colobus (monkey)	Koroi (M.)
Cooking pot	Duru
Country, land	Dimin
Cover or lid	Imni
Cowrie	Segherai (M.)
Cow	Wuat or Wāt
Crocodile	Keinyang (M.), Nyang = crocodile in Tho-Luo
Dog	Kwehen
Donkey	Libet
Dirty	Duruk
Ear	Nibe
Earth	Tirri
Egg	Kechoposhon?
Elephant	Sogome
Eland	Kenetia
Enemy	Puri
Excrement	Jūn
Eyes	Ila
Far	Tissegei



(45) A-Kikuyu chief—Kiondo wa Kitei.



(46) A-Kikuyu chief—Kiondo wa Kitei.
Note! Sheep's-wool woven on his natural hair.

Father, own	Pashi
Father, else's	Payisi (N. = Apoiyo)
Fingers	Hobi or Hubi
Fire	Iku
Firewood	Keme
Fish	Singiri (M.)
Fly	Esanit
Food	Egetu
Foot	Mijji
Forest	Sousou (small woods)
Forest (big)	Kaiet
Frog	Temononi
Fowl	Ngoilet (N. = Ingokiet)
Friend	Darit
Generation or age	Erei (Poror of Masai)
Giraffe	Shanga Dogirri
Girl, young	Eta
Go	Habi
Goat	Oto
Good	Shoboshōn
Grass	Hilet
Grey	Kepuni
Guinea fowl	Keresure (M.)
Hair	Risit
Hand	Tegei
Hartebeest	(not known)
Heifer	Rehei
Heart	Ichei
Head	Mitei (N. = Metit)
Here	Taān
Hide (of ox)	Ata
Hide (any skin)	Keshi
Hide (of wild animal)	Omōt
Hill	Kaiet
Hippo	Langari
Honey	Seka
Horse	Barta (M.)
Horn	Opet

Hut	Hai
Hyaena	Kotei
Inside	Irei (N. = oriit)
Iron	Sengei (M.)
Ivory	Inji
Knife	Sheou
Kudu	Malo (M.)
Lake	Ando (variant of Antu = water)
Leg	Ochōt
Leopard	Shibin
Lies	Sobare
Lion	Sungai
Long since	Etirak
Man	Iei or Sei (Ke-Sei = that is a man), N. = chii
Moran (warrior)	Oromishi
Moru (elder)	Roshei
Meat	Iyou
Moon	Lei
Mother, own	Iyo (N. = eiyo)
Mother, else's	Itigarai
Mtama (millet)	Not known
Mahindi (maize)	Not known
Milk	Atta
Nails	Sgilli
Name	Ishi
Near	Tetōō
Neck	Tochono
News	Ogo
No	Keiolei
Not yet	Erotit
Now	Auteti
Nose	Nugha
Ostrich	Sida (M.)
Oryx	Kimasarok (M.)
Outside	Bor
Paa, Madoqua Gazelle	Embaba
Palm of hand	Dab (M.)

Penis	Shabo
Pincers	Putet
Poison for arrows	Morijoi (name of tree used) M. Akokanthera Schimperii
Present (noun)	Parna
Quickly	Habie
Quiver (noun)	Ror
Rain	Soho
Rat	Daroni
Red	Wehen
Rhinoceros	Orset
River	Nogoi
Road	Dar
Saliva	Endo
Salt	Ngabulei
Salutation	Keshoboshon (Sobat of Masai)
Salutation	Aishei
Sandals	Namoke
Serval cat	Not known
Sheep	Abūr
Shield	Reget
Sick	Lua
Simé (sword)	Shutei
Sister	Tō
Small	Tinīn
Snake	Murhot
Snuff box	Ketil
Spear	Tōr
Stick	Siribit
Star	Eso
Stone	Tebu
Stool	Lorigha (M.)
Sun	Tezo
Supreme being	Sokho or Engai (M.)
Tail	Kidongoi (M.)
Teeth	Injīt
That is	Kisie
Thing	Kesi

They have come from afar	Kesi Gedi
There	Soōl
Thorn	Orulo
Thirst	Esho
Thief	Shibindet
Tobacco	Kumbahau
To-day	Achei
To-morrow	Imehei
Tongue	Erei
Tree	Keded, tree = ketit in Nandi
Truly	Kitēēgo
Urine	Kusa
Village	Luata
Wart-hog	Kwehei
Water	Antu
Wild fig tree	Chōl mokōt
Wind	Dehamu
White	Pokenyei
Woman	Damatut
Woman, old	Tasat
Woman, young	Siangiki (M.)
Work	Shasho
Yes	Ii
Yesterday	Khalen
Zebra, Burchell's	Ol-oserat
Zebra, Grevy's	Ol-Kanka kepuni (grey)

Numerals.

One	Wēhet
Two	Chei
Three	Hāāt
Four	Shuen
Five	Hobi
Six to Nine	Not obtainable
Ten	Kapūn or Apūn
Hundred	Teta



(47) A-Kikuyu chief—Karuri. Karuri is the son of a Dorobo father by a Kikuyu mother.



(48) Karuri.

Agreement of Nouns and Numerals.

One bird	Legei wehet
Two birds	Legei kechei
One elephant	Sogomei kibwehet
Two elephants	Sogomedi kechei
One knife	Sheou wehetu
Two knives	Sheou kechei
Three knives	Sheou khahaat
One house	Hai wehet
Two houses	Hai kechei
One hand	Tegei wehetu
Two hands	Tegei cheion or jejon
One lion	Sungai kiwehet
Two lions	Sungai muchei or kechei
Three lions	Sungai khahaat
One axe	Egoi kiwehet
Two axes	Egoi kechei
One spear	Tor kiwehet
Two spears	Tor kechei
Three spears	Tor khahaat
One man	Kib wehet or kесеi wehet
Two men	Ke chei
Three men	Kha haat or kесеi khahaat
One woman	Damatut wehetu
Two women	Damatuti chei
Three women	Damatuti khahaat
To awake	Nakahou
bathe	Tohodi, Ntoka
Born	Adilit
bring	Ilehei (cause to come)
cut	Nakati
die	Akehet
fall	Nachokei
follow	Khabi
forget	Nashanet, Shaanu
give	Iin
go	Nkhana

To love	Mala
milk	Ndiksa
obtain	Kendēr
return	Naecho
scratch	Kahata
I eat	Ndeta
He eats	Egeto (giheji) = (food)
We eat	Egitai
They eat	Egeto (gihechen)
Give me	Iisee
I want	Ngededi or Ngjeja
He wants	Jeji
He wants a thing	Kwi kijeji
We want	Jejon
They want	Kejehen
I know	Ngeheno
Thou knowest	Geheno
He knows	Cheheno or chegekeheno
We know	Kegeheni or Gaiheno
They know	Chegehen or kisei chekehen (those people)
I do not know	Ishahanu
I do not go	Niakhani
I do not want	Ngjeji
I do not see	Ila teetei or Ngnen a waakan
I can't see anything	Ngnen toiyi
I see	Ndoyia or Na waakhi
I go to water	Antu Khalkhani
Where are you going	Shilākhandi
Where is (Kibaradi)	Engado (Kibaradi), <i>Kibaradi is a proper name</i>
I say	Nokhāa
(Kibaradi says)	(Kibaradi) okhō, <i>Kibaradi is a proper name</i>
He says	Okhoi or okhō
We say	Nini okan or ogoo okan
They say	Okoyan or yesaga okan

Conversation between two people	Maokhoten okōo
I am good	Kongo shoboshon
Thou art good	Kagu shoboshon
He is good	Ke shoboshon
We are good	Kege shoboshonadi
They are good	Ke shoboshonadi
Ye are good	Kabu shoboshonadi
He is bad	Ke tepiter
I sleep	Nbomwa
He sleeps	Nbomi
We sleep	Nabomi
They sleep	Nebomin
I sit	Ngupehema
He sits	Akupehem
We sit	Nkupehemu
They sit	Akupehemit
I am coming	Nalehe
He is coming	Alehe
We are coming	Nalehenu
They are coming	Lehei or keselehei
I drink (water)	Nukha (antu)
Take hold of	Injan

CHAPTER VI.

NOTES ON MWERU.

MWERU is the name of a very large tribe living on the North and N.E. slopes of Kenia and on the Jombeni range which runs in a N.E. direction towards the Euaso Nyiro.

They are not pure A-Kikuyu but appear to have a strong strain of Masai blood, probably due to numbers of Laikipiak having settled among them and intermarried with them.

Their geographical divisions are as follows :—

Sub-tribe	Chief
(1) Janjai	Kamuru
(2) Oringo	Njoo
(3) Kunati	Waikaiwa
(4) Mbuya	Waivori
(5) Akithii	Mutwiarando
(6) Athwana	Kirigwa
(7) Muthara	Ndaminuki
(8) Karama	—
(9) Iembe	Kiliungu
(10) Muchi Muguru ...	Njaiili
(11) Kithio	Mutiarando
(12) Amwa	—
(13) Mnithu	Paimwisu
(14) Nyangini	
(15) Tera	
(16) Ntagira	
(17) Karuanjoi	
(18) Kithironi	
(19) Rukho	
(20) Iokhi	
(21) Amengnendi	
(22) Thaicho	Paratobi



(49) A-Kikuyu women pounding sugar-cane to make beer.



(50) A-Kikuyu women in village.

The Mweru also have *gilat* like the Masai, these divisions have a totemistic basis and are called "Mwiria"; the members of each Mwiria have a distinctive badge or pattern which they mark on their honey pots and they have other marks for their cattle; the cattle are marked on the ears and on the flank.

The following are the principal Mwiria :—

Mwiria	Totem or Netiri
(1) Ntowitza	
(2) Athanya	The twine with which their "vyondo" or baskets are made
(3) Njaru	White cattle
(4) Nthia	Speckled or mottled cattle
(5) Ntuni	Red cattle
(6) Amakui	A plant called Mukui which has an edible root
(7) Athinga	Giraffe
(8) Antuanthama (<i>Antu</i> in Mweru language means people)	Mpala
(9) Singamburi... ..	Goats
(10) Antwa mwakia (means the greedy people)	Neotragus (dik dik)
(11) Angilo	Black cattle
(12) Mwianda (<i>Anda</i> is Mweru word for louse)	Lice
(13) Amatu (<i>Matu</i> = ears in Mweru)	Francolin (Swa. = Kiringende)

In cases where the totem is edible (for instance Ntuni have red cattle as totem) a youth cannot eat the totem until he is adult and has been initiated; his father makes medicine and goes through certain ceremonial in which the youth has to take part, the young man can then eat the totem without ill effects. The totem is called *Netiri* or the "forbidden thing."

Exogamy prevails among the Mweru, this is based on the totemistic clan, for example an Amatu man cannot marry an Amatu woman but must marry into another clan.

The Ntowitza is the dominant Mwiria or clan; they have an interesting piece of folk-lore to explain the origin of the name of the clan; the story runs as follows :—

A long time ago this clan lived in a country far away from

their present habitat, on the banks of a big river and they were called Njiru in those days. Suddenly an invading army swept down and occupied their country, they could not escape being penned in between the enemy and the river, and so the tribesmen approached the leader of the raiders and begged for peace. This chief promised peace upon the fulfilment of three things. The first was a demand for countless fleas, the people did not know how to fulfil this so went to consult their *laibon* or medicine man. The *laibon* said, "Go and cut off tails of cattle, camels, horses and donkeys and bring them to me," they did so, and he then said, "Chop up the hair into very fine pieces," they did so; and then the *laibon* made medicine and the fragments of hair jumped about like fleas and the enemy was satisfied and imposed the second test, which was to procure a pair of hide sandals with hair on both sides; to solve this problem the *laibon* ordered them to cut off the ears of a donkey and make them into sandals, the enemy accepted this. The third test was to make a stick of iron reaching from earth to the skies; this seemed impossible so they again consulted the *laibon* and he said, "Bring a man to me to whom I can do whatever I wish and I will make medicine," they did so, and the *laibon* cut open his body from his chest to his abdomen and examined his internal organs; and he then told them to bring a small ewe lamb, some ass's milk, and some human milk, and he took all these things to the river which was cutting off their only route of flight; the milk was poured into the river, the lamb was tied up on the bank and the *laibon* prayed to God to give his people a way of escape from the enemy, and God heard the petition, divided the waters of the river and the tribe crossed over on dry land. The *laibon* then prayed that the flow of the river might be restored behind his people and it was so, he then sewed up the body of the man whom he had cut open and he quickly recovered and went along with the tribe. They then journeyed on unmolested, and came to Mweru and settled there. This is the origin of their family name NTOWAITA, *ku-ita* in Mweru tongue means "to cut." The Ntowaita are mostly located among the Atwana sub-tribe.

This legend cannot fail to remind one of the flight of the

Israelites from Egypt and one wonders if it may not have filtered down from the Semitic races of Bworana.

Notes on the Sambur, Laikipiak, Elgeyo, Uasingishu tribes, etc.

The Sambur strenuously assert that they and the Laikipiak were never one tribe; at the present day however there are many Laikipiak living among the Sambur, these are mostly refugees from the El Purko raid on the Laikipiak about 1889.

The following are the principal geographical divisions of the Sambur:—

Sub-tribe	Chief
(1) Pusigishu (grey cattle)	Ol-Lelelit
(2) Masola	Lal taram
(3) Lukumai	Ol Emantili
(4) L'orogishu or L'orogichu (corruption of Masai for "black cattle")	Ol Arūs
(5) El Doiju	Paramorijo
(6) El Mwesi	Larandilin
(7) Loimusi	Lanawasai
(8) Longeli	Leiguruguru
(9) Nyabarei	Lolegul

Gilat or orōt of the Sambur.

(1) *Sitat*. The origin of this *gilat* is said to be as follows:—

In the early days of the tribe there lived a very powerful chieftainess named Sitat; a woman had a female child which she presented to Sitat, and Sitat ruled that the progeny of this child should found a clan called after her name.

The Sitat *gilat* is the dominant one among the Sambur.

(2) *Ol Lesilali*. *Supposed origin*—Sitat then adopted a boy, the son of an elder named Ol Lesilali, and the progeny of this boy founded the clan.

(3) *Maletis*. The members of this clan are said to be the descendants of a boy who was also adopted by Sitat and who was the brother of Ol Lesilali.

The Sambur appear to have no totems attached to the *gilat* or family clans.

A Laikipiak named Ol Segeteti is the *laibon* or medicine man of the Sambur.

The following are the principal geographical divisions of the Laikipiak :—

- (1) Memerūn.
- (2) Momonyōt.
- (3) Il Morijo.
- (4) El Aibaratari.
- (5) Muzara.
- (6) Lanat, chief Lengila.

There are others, but owing to the break up of the tribe a complete list is difficult to obtain.

The principal *gilat* or *orōt* of the Laikipiak are as follows :—

- (1) Bartaolin.
- (2) Sioma.
- (3) Kisengeni.

The writer has been unable to find that any totems are attached to these divisions but further research is necessary on this point.

The home of the Lanat is on the Kirimar plain on the west side of Lorian swamp (or *Irimba* as the Lanat call it) and on south bank of the Euaso Nyiro, where the remains of their villages can be seen to this day. They were driven out and dispersed some 20—30 years ago by the Sitaa or El Duju a branch of the Bworana people ; they came mounted on camels, and a few of the raiders wore cloth and had guns.

Most of the survivors of the Lanat now live among the Sambur, they are clever hunters.

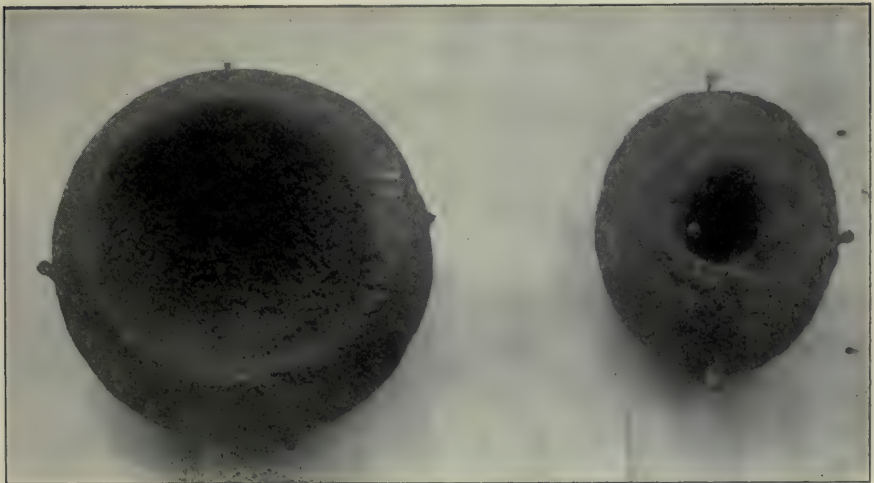
A curious little known tribe called El Keriet by the Sambur is said to live in the semi-desert country north of Lorian, they are great elephant hunters, their only domestic animal is the dog and dog-flesh is a more or less staple article of diet.

They formerly lived around Lorian but were driven into a range of hills called Mariti some distance to the north of the swamp.

Their speech is said to be allied to that of Bworana, and their hair straight like that of a Somali, and their complexion is reddish. Possibly they may turn out to be an off-shoot of the Somali Midgans?



(51) A-Kikuyu bee-hive marked with badge of the Anjiru clan.



(1)

(2)

- (52) 1. Prehistoric stone bowl or mortar discovered near Naivasha at the foot of a cliff 4 ft. below the surface.
2. Perforated stone dug up at Mwatate, Taita Mountains: either the head of a stone club or the weight for a digging stick.

Gilat or Oret of Elgeyo tribe. (Oret in the Nandi group of languages means a road.)

Oret (Korgat of the Nandi and Lumbwa)	Totem (mome—not eaten)
Talai	Lion
Korbilo... ..	(<i>Toret</i>) bush pig
Tuyoi	Snake
Teriki	Elephant
Tarkök	Rhino
Kunġnatu	(<i>Tisiet</i>) monkey (<i>Cercopithecus</i>)
Tula	Jackal
Kimoi	Buffalo
Soti (in Maragwet)	Sun

Gilat or Oret of the Kamasia tribe.

Oret	Totem
Kip-Sojon	Zebra
Kip-Segeja	Buffalo
Kip-Kukoi	Buffalo
Kip-Etu	Hyaena
Kip-Kwikwi	Buffalo
Kip-Sibon or Kisibon	Baboon (<i>moset</i>)
Kip-Sura	Lion

In both these tribes descent follows the paternal line, e.g. a chief named Kipchillum belonging to the Sojon *gilat* told the writer that his father belonged to the Sojon and his mother was Segeja, he stated that he could not marry a Segeja woman that being the *gilat* of his mother and of course like most other tribes in East Africa he viewed with great horror the idea of marrying a Sojon woman all of which he classed as sisters.

This is believed to be the first recorded instance of any trace of definite totems being acknowledged by a branch of the Masai.

Gilat of Uasingishu tribe.

Gilat	Totem	Principal representatives
El Mogishu ...	Emogishui, Rift valley starling (<i>Lamprocolius chalybeus</i> , Ehr.)	Ol Ainamodo } Ol-aibon, Ol Murumbi } or medi- Ol Emberei } cine man
El Masarunye	Hyaena	Mlarininyi (laigwanan of moruak, Eldama Ravine)
El Siria ...	Enjoshowi (Indicator bird)	Ol Nangoris
L-Nyaya ...	Lion	Ol Enolul (<i>Lutuno</i>) Sayen

It is curious to note that in Nandi the *laibons* or medicine men belong to a clan whose totem is the lion and it was rather expected that among the Uasingishu it would possibly turn out that their *laibons* had the same totem, for when divining events with their sacred pebbles, the stones are usually poured out of a gourd on to a lion's skin and the neck of the gourd in which the pebbles are kept is decorated with strips of skin from a lion's mane; this predisposed one to think that the lion had some special significance to them, but the principal *laibon* stated that a lion's skin was used because their medicine was very strong, i.e. it was symbolical of the strength of their magic.

Names of months among the Elgeyo and Kamasia:—

- (1) Iwat kut time of big rains
- (2) Maumūt rains
- (3) Wagi or waki
- (4) Engnei or Ngnei
- (5) Robtui
- (6) Puret (this month commenced 27/7/06)
- (7) Kipsundei
- (8) Kipsundei
- (9) Mulgul dry weather
- (10) Mulgul
- (11) Ngnotiotu
- (12) Kiptamo

Kiptamo is the auspicious month for the circumcision of youths. The two months called Mulgul are also good months for this ceremony.

Girls can be operated on in any month, there is no particular time.

Among the up-country tribes in British East Africa the smallest sub-division of the year is usually the month and some tribes even have no names for the months. Among the Rāndili (usually spelt Rendile) and Burkeneji¹ who inhabit the steppes east of Lake Rudolph we however find distinctive names for the days of the week.

There is of course little doubt that this is a legacy from their Semitic ancestors.

Randili names for the days of the week.

1st day of week	Hahat
2nd	„ Hura hakhan (hura in Randili means sun)
3rd	„ Sere (sere = day)
4th	„ Kumat
5th	„ Ser hakhan
6th	„ Sere adi (the day of the goats and sheep)
7th	„ Sere gal (day of the camel)

On the day *Ser hakhan* they may not travel or move their grazing ground, they also may not make cattle medicine on that day.

It will be noted that if we call the first day of the week Monday, *Ser hakhan* will coincide with Friday (vide European superstition against travel on Friday); the persons examined however could not tell with which day of our week *Ser hakhan* corresponded.

Hura hakhan appears to be their Sabbath, no work may be done, animals can however be slaughtered for food. *Hahat* appears to be a fast day, animals cannot be slaughtered for food and the people pray to God.

¹ This name is probably really Naibor Keneji (white sheep), they are more allied to the Sambur than the Randili.

The Lumbwa and Sotik are divided genealogically into clans and geographically into districts as follows:—

Geographically.

Murukabto
 Kabsili
 Kwaigei—nearly all the Sotik belong to this clan
 Kebeni
 Kasanet
 Ngetunya
 Murieti

Genealogically.

Korgat or Clan	Mome or Totem	
Sotik:		
Pokuseri	Kisireret... ..	Kite
Matabori	Magetiet... ..	Hyaena
Kipsamaiek	Ngetundo	Lion
Kamogu	Jablanket	Leopard
Kibaiek	Kungonyot	Crested crane
Paswetek	Mororochet	Frog
Lumbwa:		
Kibomwiek	Cheptirigichet	Duiker
Kabsioinek	Tisiet	Cercopithecus albigularis
Kabaranwek	Cheptalamya	Marabou stork
Kabtoya	Ilet	Lightning
Kiblegenet	Kipsingit	Rhino

APPENDIX.

THE following notes were obtained too late for incorporation in the body of this work.

(1) *Counting people and cattle.*

There does not appear to be any superstition against counting stock ; if a man has a large herd he does not know the number, but he or his wives when milking would quickly notice if a beast with certain markings was not present. A man however knows the number of his children but is averse to telling anyone outside his family. There is a tradition that a man named Munda wa Ngola who lived in the Ibeti Hills had many sons and daughters, and boasted of the size of his family saying that he and his sons could resist any attack from the Masai ; one night however the Masai surprised him and killed him and his people, and the country side considered that this was a judgement on him.

There is also an idea that boastfulness will induce jealousy on the part of other less favoured, and cause some envious person to use magic on the boaster's family and thus the family will die out.

Among the Kitui section certain persons are found who are believed to be congenitally unclean and bearers of ill luck ; if such a person counted people or live-stock he would by so doing bestow ill-fortune, and the people or stock would probably sicken and die. They state they have no reason for suspecting a person beforehand, but if any untoward sickness occurs they are often apt to pitch upon someone as a scapegoat. The accused is called up and requested to spit upon the sick person or beast ; it is believed that this will exorcise the curse.

(2) *Prohibitions observed while cattle are grazing.*

In Prof. Frazer's luminous paper on the Folk-Lore of the Old Testament in the Essays a reference is made to A-Kamba customs recorded by an early German traveller named Hildebrandt, *Ethnographische der Wakamba, etc. Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 1878, p. 401, with reference to a recognized custom among the A-Kamba to the effect that intercourse among the sexes must not take place while the cattle are out at grass: the writer has not had the opportunity of reading Hildebrandt's paper, but enquiries were made on this interesting point. It was found that this custom still exists and is still strictly followed, but it refers only to the people left in the kraal and does not apply to the herdsmen; if the people in the kraal infringed this prohibition it is believed that the cattle would die off, and also that the children would sicken: no explanation was offered as to why the herdsmen were exempt.

(3) *Aiimu beliefs.*

As has been previously demonstrated the part played by the ancestral spirits in the life of the A-Kamba is intensely real, and further research has brought to light several points worthy of notice. As was before described, at the foot of each *Mumbo*, a sacred fig tree which is supposed to be inhabited by the spirits, there is a small clearing, a shrine in fact, where offerings of food are placed; this food is known to be eaten by birds, rats, etc., but it is believed that the *Aiimu* are pleased at this, but a human being dare not eat of any such offering as it is believed that he and his live-stock would die; in some parts of the country it is laid down that he must not enter the sacred grove wantonly out of mere curiosity, neither must he go thither alone but always in company with one or more. If he was to go there alone he would be fined a bull or five goats by the elders. In Ibeti district it is stated that should a man unwittingly enter a sacred grove he would hear voices ordering him to retire from the vicinity, stones would also fall all round him but would not hit him; he would then realize that he had offended the *Aiimu* and would return to his village, and standing outside would announce that he had been chased away by the spirits and ask

for *Moyo*. A goat would be killed and the contents of the stomach smeared over his face, hands and feet, and only after this lustration could he rejoin his fellows.

Now this mysterious stone throwing is a very curious belief; it is said to occur all over India to intruders who trespass in the vicinity of sacred groves, and a curious case was recently related to the author of a European in this country who built a house under a sacred tree and was constantly annoyed at night by mysterious stone throwing on the roof—but this enquiry would lead us into the occult world, and it is not desired to lure the reader into the region of psychic phenomena.

At times it is said that the sacred place glows like fire—*Mwaki* it is called. Should a man passing the place approach it to investigate, the fire however disappears. Children are told by their parents never to mention having seen this fire or if they do they will die.

If *Mumbo* trees are not found in any part of the country the *Aiimu* haunt a prominent rock or rocky hill; there is a rocky hill in the bush West of Kibwezi said to be haunted by *Aiimu*; it is surrounded by the densest bush traversed by tracks difficult to find; it is said that if a man penetrates this belt of bush and reaches the hill he will hear voices all round him and the usual noises of a kraal—lowing of cattle, etc.; when he turns to leave he will not be able to find the track by which he has entered, and will wander round and round till he dies, and his spirit will then join the colony of *Aiimu* on the hill.

There is a sacred rock called "Kabubooni" in Kitui district, where people go regularly to pray to the *Aiimu* for increase of worldly goods such as cattle, goats, etc. A libation of mead is poured out at the foot of the rock; a male goat is then held up on its hind legs and facing the hill, its neck is pierced and the blood allowed to run into the ground and mix with the mead. When the mead is spilt the elders pray, saying, "We pray to you, O God, to bring us rain and keep our flocks and herds from harm." The goat is then eaten by the elders at a little distance from the shrine, women and young men are not allowed at this ceremony.

There is another rock called "Nzambani," and the *Aiimu*

haunting it are believed to be able to produce rain, so it is a popular shrine on that account. For rain and good crops the offering consists of samples of various grains, honey and milk; a male goat is then killed some little distance away. A piece of the meat is cut up into tiny fragments, and these are covered up with a small piece of the skin of the sacrificial goat. All these are laid out at the foot of the rock in a line with the morning sun, but it is said a little South of East. The remainder of the flesh of the goat is eaten by the elders.

The food is carried to the sacred place by married women, but they go away before the ceremony, leaving only the elders.

They pray as follows :—“ O God, we bring you food, we pray for rain, we pray for food.”

(4) *The Kithito Oath ceremony.*

On pp. 47 and 78 reference is made to this form of oath. It is found that when this is administered for judicial reasons the ancient sacred specimens described on p. 47 are not generally used, but one is made for the purpose. It is usually a bundle of articles about 8 inches in length and 2 inches in diameter and composed of the following constituents :—part of a *Chondoo* or grain bag, a twig from the *Mvuavoi* and *Mukulwa* trees, seven twigs of the *Mguguma* tree, samples of all kinds of cereals grown, two goat horns, some cow dung and butter mixed up together; the top is sealed with hyaena dung and two spots of red earth are daubed on; the bundle is bound up by bark from a *Musizili* tree and the article is suspended by a loop of the same. The *Kithito* is placed on three small stones between two twigs of the *Mobou* tree with the side on which the hyaena dung is smeared facing East. The person taking the oath stands on two stones about 3 feet away and swears as to his innocence or to the bonafides of his claim as the case may be; when he swears he taps the *Kithito* with a twig of the *Mobou* tree. The idea of placing the *Kithito* on stones, and also the fact that the accused stands on stones, is probably to insulate the *Kithito* from the soil and prevent its magic defiling the soil, for after the ceremony is over it must not be left near a village or plantation, for in the former

case harm will befall the village and in the latter rain will not fall on the plantation; it is therefore taken away to a rocky place called a *Ngunga* and placed in a cleft in the rocks. When the bearer of the *Kithito* approaches this place he turns his back on it, and walks backwards till he reaches it and is able to deposit the magic bundle. He leaves it there and returns home telling no one where he has hidden it, but before he can eat he must cleanse himself of the influence of the *Kithito* by smearing sheep's fat over his hands, face and legs. Not till the third day after constructing the *Kithito* may he cohabit with his wife. If a man carries a *Kithito* about during the rains it will cause the rains to cease.

There is another minor form of *Kithito* which is used in the case of a man who dies of a virulent disease. A neighbour will take some pebbles from a *Ngunga* and wrap them in the fibre from a *Mubia* tree; this is placed on the dead man's tongue and then taken away and deposited in a hollow in a *Ngunga*. All risk of others incurring the disease of the deceased is then supposed to cease, the magic of the *Kithito* having absorbed the virus. It is probably believed that the *Aiimu* which haunt the *Ngunga* rocks guard the magic *Kithito*. Although not specifically stated, there is reason to believe that disease is often believed to be due to the influence of malignant *Aiimu*; in Kitui, if the cattle in a certain district are suffering from disease, the people of the surrounding districts will often erect an arch of sticks on the path at their frontier and suspend feathers from this erection; this is believed to stop the disease from entering their country.

(5) *Tame snakes.*

On p. 94 it is stated that the A-Kamba do not keep tame snakes as the Wa-Nyamwezi and many other African tribes do. This is true of the greater part of the tribe, but in some remote parts of Mumoni it is said that tame snakes, probably pythons, are kept; they are doctored by a medicine man, which treatment makes them domesticated, and they are fed daily with milk at the gate of the village. It is said that if the villagers are all away in the plantations and someone comes to steal, the snake will act as

guardian of the gate and wind itself round the thief, holding him there with his spoil until the villagers return.

(6) *Clans-Mwiriga or Mbai of Thaka or Tharaka tribe.*

<i>Mwiriga</i>	<i>Nthuku or totem</i>
Ntonga	Duiker (<i>nthia</i>)
Mbua	Baboon (<i>Ikuli</i>)
Koli	Monkey (<i>ntheo</i>)
Nya	Ard Vark (<i>guma</i>)
Nkuyu	Dik Dik (<i>Kabii</i>)
Kamowao	Hartebeest (<i>Ando</i>)
Kanyaki	Elephant (<i>nzoo</i>)
Kangina	Wart hog (<i>ngi</i>)
Kamugwi	Reed buck (<i>ndoya</i>)
Kathoka	Bush pig (<i>ngulwe</i>)
Kanjogo	Elephant (<i>nzoo</i>)
Engimu	Rhino (<i>ngimo</i>)
Kirundu	Buffalo (<i>mbogo</i>)
Mutua	Hyaena (<i>mbiti</i>)

As among most other tribes, clan escogamy is the rule, and the children are of their father's clan.



(53) Mogogodo tribe—chief Matungi.



(54) Mogogodo tribe—Matungi.

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