

Author's tracks

A WOMAN'S PLEASURE TRIP IN SOMALILAND.

BY
FRANCES SWAYNE.

ILLUSTRATED BY SIXTY-ONE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY THE AUTHOR,
AND BY A SKETCH MAP OF THE DISTRICT
ROUND BERBERA.

BRISTOL: JOHN WRIGHT & CO.
LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, HAMILTON, KENT & CO., LTD.

1907

JOHN WRIGHT AND CO.,
PRINTERS, STONE BRIDGE, BRISTOL.

To My Host.

PREFACE.

IT seems to be usual now-a-days to begin every book with an apology for its existence. The apology in my case is, that although there are many books—and good ones, too—written on Somaliland, they are either devoted to accounts, more or less technical, of the different military operations which have taken place in that country, or else have been written with the object of giving information concerning the fascinating sport of big game shooting, for which for many years it was famous. There has never been published, to my knowledge, any description of the Protectorate as a holiday resort, and I therefore thought that a slight, unpretentious account of how a woman could pleasantly spend three winter months in a country where many of the fancied necessaries of a civilized life are absent, would not be altogether unacceptable to a certain class of readers. I do not pretend to be able to impart any information about

the anthropology, zoology, botany or other sciences which may profitably be studied in Somaliland, but I can claim one quality for my narrative, and that is its absolute truthfulness. For the sake of that one quality I beg for the indulgence of my readers towards the many imperfections to be found in the following pages.

CLIFTON,

December, 1907.

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A WOMAN'S PLEASURE TRIP IN SOMALILAND.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

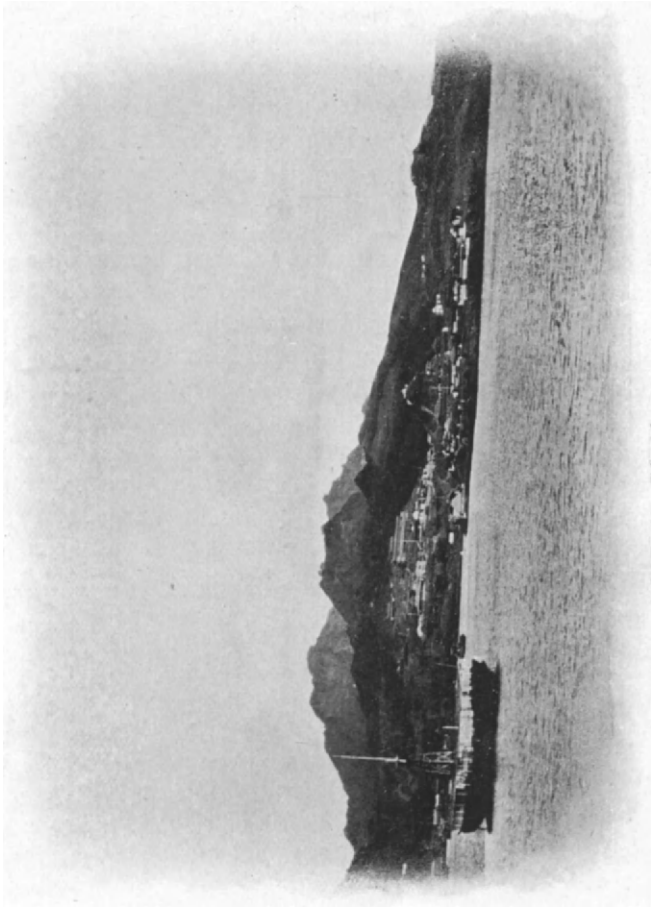
REASONS FOR WRITING THE BOOK, AND ALSO FOR SELECTING SOMALILAND AS THE SCENE OF A PLEASURE TRIP—SHORT SKETCH OF THE RECENT MILITARY OPERATIONS—WEDDING AT ADEN.

BEFORE describing my actual experiences in Somaliland, I think it best to explain in as brief a manner as possible, why I chose that little-known Protectorate as the scene of my outing of the winter of 1905-6. For twenty years or more I have been intensely interested in the Protectorate owing to the constant visits paid to it by my two first cousins, brothers, Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. C. Swayne, R.E., and Brigadier-General E. J. E. Swayne, C.B., the latter of whom was on this occasion my kind host, and to whom, when I am not speaking of him officially, I shall in the following pages refer as E——. Both these brothers have spent many a pleasant time on hunting expeditions and have also, between them, surveyed and mapped for the Government by far the larger part of the British territory, thereby getting to know intimately both the inhabitants and the physical aspects of the country. That exhaustive book, *Seventeen Trips in Somaliland*, is from the pen of

the elder brother, Colonel Swayne, R.E. The younger was transferred from the Uganda Rifles to the command of the Police forces of the Protectorate in the year 1900, from which Police, in November of that year, were obtained the non-commissioned officers for 1500 native levies, organized and commanded by him. With these levies he conducted two arduous but successful campaigns against the so-called "Mad" Mulla, who had risen into undesirable prominence since his former visits, and three times drove the latter well out of British territory, at very small expense in money or loss of life, on our side; unfortunately he was laid by for many months by a severe attack of fever, and during his absence at home a large force of regular Indian troops was sent to the country to complete what he had begun; but Somalis, who can move without baggage or rations, are so extraordinarily mobile, that it is difficult for any regular troops to force on a fight except on the Somalis' own terms, and although the Mulla was defeated in the open at Jidballi, it was found impossible to finally bring him to book, and when the troops were, after a year, withdrawn, the Mulla was still in force on our frontier. Brigadier-General Swayne, who by that time had returned to Somaliland in his old appointment of Commissioner, was now again entrusted with the supreme military command, with the perilous duty of settling the country, and pacifying the friendly tribes who were disorganized by the war, and also somewhat embittered. However, to make a long story short, the Mulla sued for, and obtained, the protection of the Italians, and as the result of an agreement with us, was subsequently settled in a district of his own near where the Italian sphere of influence touches the British. In about a

year from that time, owing to the watchfulness of our people on the frontier, and the passage of the Mulla's people on friendly journeys through our territory, the country became so quiet that it was considered safe for ladies to visit it; the wives of two officers stationed in Somaliland availed themselves of the opportunity of joining their husbands, and I received my long looked for invitation to pay E—— a visit of some months' duration. I was accompanied on my journey out by a young cousin of his and mine, who was married the day after our arrival at Aden, to an officer of the local battalion of King's African Rifles, and the same evening our party of five, consisting of the bride and bridegroom, the best man, E—— and myself, crossed over to Berbera—the Resident at Aden, Major-General Mason, having made all arrangements—on a steamer which was crossing the Gulf of Aden that day. General Mason was our kind host during our stay at Aden, and by his great hospitality and warm welcome has made us look back with great pleasure to our visit to that much-abused station.

A Woman's Pleasure Trip in Somaliland.

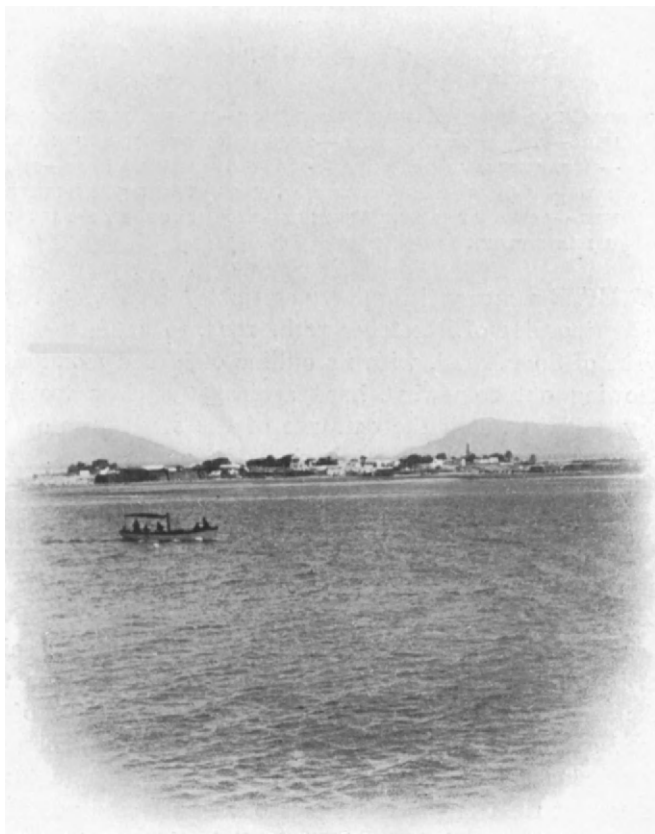


Aden from the Sea.

CHAPTER II.

APPROACHING BERBERA—THE RESIDENCY—DESCRIPTION OF BERBERA—AFTERNOON VISITORS—EFFICIENCY OF SOMALI SERVANTS—DEPARTURE UP COUNTRY—ESCORT OF CAMEL CORPS—FIRST HALT—SOMALIS' CARE OF THE ANIMALS—THE COMMISSIONER'S MAIL—CAMP AT LOWER SHEIKH—ASCENT OF THE PASS TO UPPER SHEIKH.

QUITE a merry little party assembled on deck on the morning of December 12th, 1905, to catch the first sight of Somaliland, with its outline of jagged mountains showing out somewhat hard against the clear tropical sky, and to watch the entrance of the steamer into the harbour of Berbera. The harbour is long, narrow, and fairly deep, and capable of accommodating five or six big ships at a time. It is formed by a low coral reef running out from the shore almost parallel with that part of the coast on which the European part of Berbera is built. As the coral reef is only about from two to five feet above high water, it appears from the deck of a ship as if she were certainly intending to run right up on to the shore; but, on passing a low signal at the end of a sand spit looking like a large black umbrella, the helm is put suddenly hard to port, and the steamer takes a turn almost at right angles to its previous course, and you feel by the cessation of the swell of the Gulf of Aden, that you really are safe in the harbour. We had to land in the ship's boats, for the pier, although very long, does not now, owing to the gradual silting up of the harbour, go



Approaching Berbera.



Part of the Residency, Berbera.



Gardeners at the Residency, Berbera.

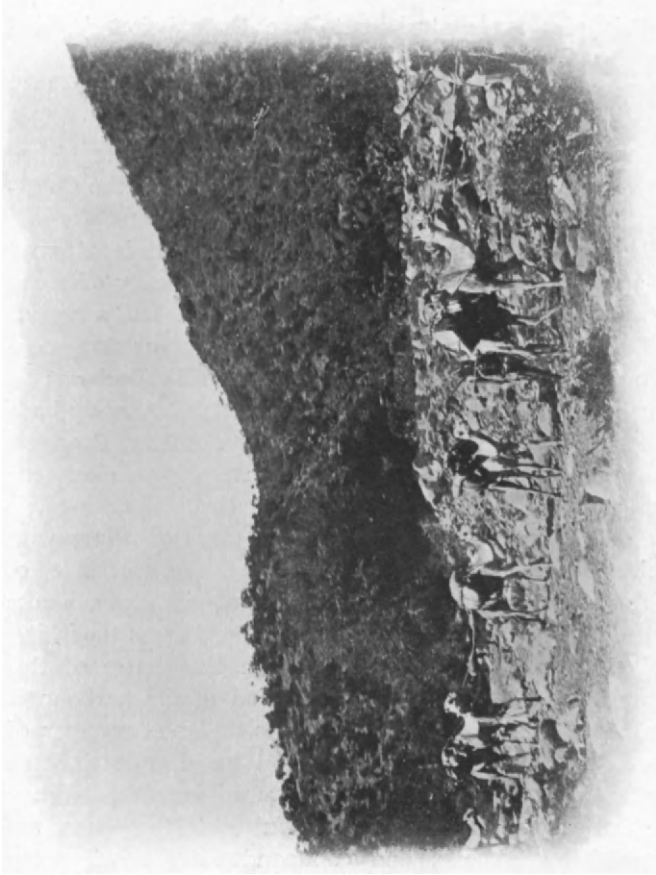
out far enough into the sea to accommodate anything larger than the coasting steamers.

This pier leads straight to the Commissioner's, and Deputy Commissioner's houses, both of them pleasant white stone built, flat-roofed residences, embowered in palms and tamarind trees, the Commissioner's bungalow, which has a deep verandah, being of course distinguished by the Union Jack flying from the flagstaff in the Court-yard.

There is a good kitchen garden and a certain attempt at a flower garden and lawn, for there is plenty of water brought in pipes from the Dubar hills, eight miles away.

Besides these two houses there are four or five more belonging to different officers quartered in Berbera; a courthouse, a post-office and a store which has lately been opened by the Aden firm of Cowasji Dinshaw, Bros. A quarter of a mile west of the official quarter, along the high coral reef behind the beach on the Bulhar road, is the old Egyptian Zariba—a fortified place of refuge with white loopholed walls. On the other, the east side, of the official quarter, three-quarters of a mile away, across a sand flat, kept hard by the rise of the tides, is the white-walled Somali town of Berbera. In the centre of this town, and jutting into the inner end of the harbour, is the customs pier, alongside of which a good number of dhows are generally lying. At the time of my visit some of the Government armed dhows were lying there. They are fast sailers, have three powerful Hotchkiss guns, are manned by Somalis, and commanded by naval petty officers. They resemble the ordinary dhows so closely that they are most useful in checking the illicit trade in guns and ammunition. The great majority of the native

A Woman's Pleasure Trip



Native Caravan.

shipping in the harbour are trading dhows plying to the Eastern coast of Somaliland, to Aden, and to the ports in Arabia, while the biggest of them are engaged in the Persian Gulf and Bombay trade. The native town is faced on the harbour side by stone houses, and the main streets which are wide and clean, contain several stone buildings, but behind are pitched many groups of native skin-covered huts, and again behind these are encampments of movable "gurghis" made of mats woven from grass, and from bark, and which vary in number according to the season of the year.

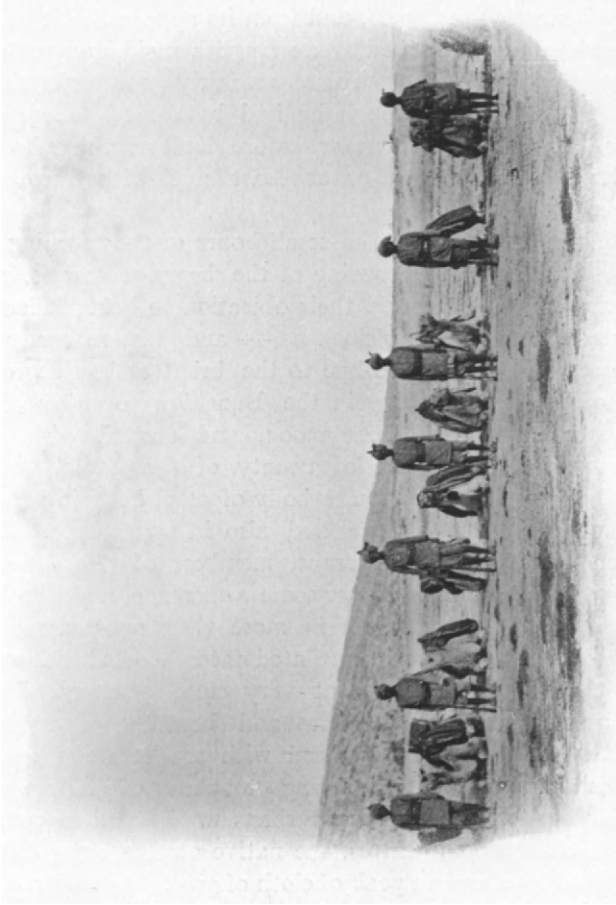
In the cold weather, October to March, when the trading caravans come in from the interior of the country to dispose of the accumulations of sheep skins, gum, ostrich feathers and other goods, there are constantly as many as 30,000 or 40,000 people accommodated in huts and houses. There are very few Europeans living in this part of Berbera, but among them are the French Fathers and the nuns of the "Poor Clare" order, both of which communities have schools, at which orphans, many of them made so by the war, are being educated and fed.

Two years before my present visit I had paid a flying visit of a week to Berbera, but although I was able to enjoy a small cruise in an armed dhow the time was too short to go inland, but I had become acquainted with all the English officials stationed at the coast, as well as with the Revd. Mother and the nuns, and had also seen everything that there was to be seen at Berbera. There was, therefore, no object to be gained in this my second visit by remaining longer than was necessary at the coast, and the Commissioner, who had only come down for a few days, was anxious to get back, as soon as possible, along

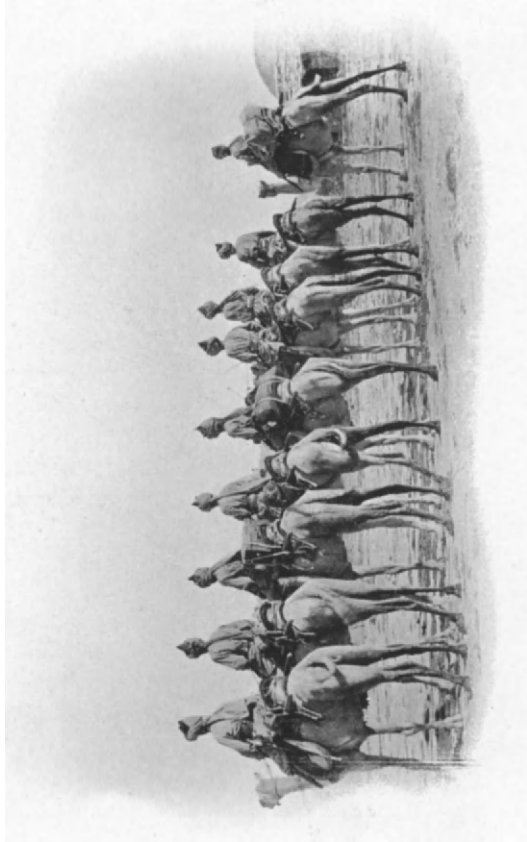
the telegraph line to Sheikh, where he had pitched his permanent camp, and where the work of drilling the militia and governing the country was being carried on. He therefore told me that the baggage camels were to be dispatched ahead of us at 2 a.m. the next morning, while we were to be in the saddle not later than 6 a.m. I had no time to spare; everything I possessed had to be re-packed, for a good many of my goods and chattels had come out from England in the case containing my saddle, which was far too large for a camel's load, and I naturally did not want, up in the jungle, any of the finery I had used at Aden. I looked forward to having first to select boxes of a suitable size for caravaning, and then to spend several uninteresting hours, both sorting and packing. I was, however, unable to do one or the other, being occupied the whole afternoon in entertaining my English and French friends, as well as an Indian gentleman, an Oxford man, who all kindly came to call on me. I was not then aware, as I am now, how perfectly Somalis can help you when once you have made them understand what you want, and I was not altogether easy in my mind when I realized that the only thing I could do myself towards the packing was to hastily divide everything into two heaps, and to entrust the whole to Ahmed, who had been the Commissioner's "boy" during my former visit, but who was now promoted to be assistant transport headman of the Commissioner's camp. I need not have been alarmed; I saw no more of the things wanted up country until I unpacked at Sheikh, and found everything most neatly put together in small boxes, my clothes never mixed up with the Etna, Dalli iron, photographic things, etc., and other impersonal articles, while nothing at all

was missing ; and I did not open the box containing the smart clothes left behind, until my return to Berbera when starting for home, and from its appearance it might easily have been packed by an English maid, and perhaps not been as well done. This was a fairly good performance for a man, who, although he had been used to packing for his master, had never before had anything to do with women's attire, or at least not with European women's clothes.

I was awakened in the small hours of the morning by the grumbling and growling of the baggage camels, who invariably thus showed their objection to being laden or unladen, and by six o'clock E—— and I were ready to be off. We bade good-bye to the bride and bridegroom whom we were leaving in the Bungalow to enjoy their somewhat deferred honeymoon, and started with our servants and an escort of twenty of the Camel Corps. This Corps is a very smart body of men, both in respect of what they have done and also in appearance. The men are nearly all veterans, members of those levies raised by the Commissioner some years ago, and who had been fighting under him in more than one campaign, and whose scarred and mutilated faces showed that some of the fighting had been at very close quarters. Their uniforms were khaki tunics and breeches, dark blue putties, their tunics confined with scarlet waist sashes which just showed relieving touches of red under their bandoliers, and their turbans were khaki in colour, with blue peaked centres, the native officers being distinguished by a turban peak of cloth of gold. As we emerged into the courtyard the camels were all kneeling, the men standing at attention by their sides, but the moment we

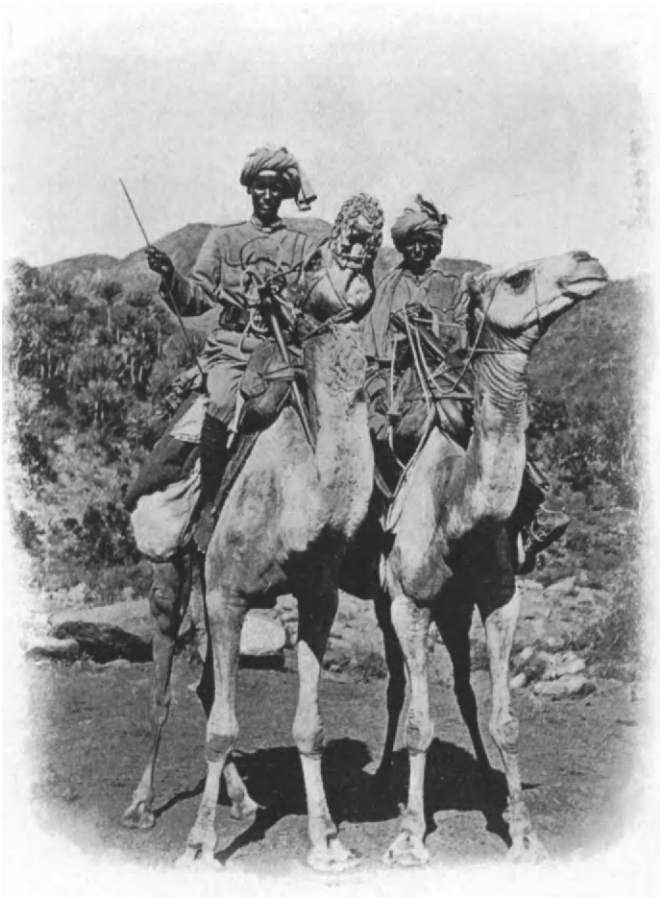


Part of Escort of Camel Sowers, before mounting.



Camel Corps—a few of the Escort, mounted.

A Woman's Pleasure Trip



Two Sowars of the Native Corps.

were mounted on our ponies they were up in their saddles, every man a picture.

It was a positive joy to me to have the leading two as a continual foreground to the many beautiful landscapes we saw during that three days' journey, and moreover they were as useful as they are ornamental, for they were ready to put their hands to anything from pitching a tent to picking a flower, besides performing their proper duties as escort and night sentries, or as scouts. I was soon to see an example of the constant usefulness of these men for we had not ridden more than a mile or two when the Commissioner spied a man with a rifle on his shoulder. Now, except a Somali is in some official position, either as gamekeeper or in the militia, camel corps, or police, he is forbidden to carry firearms, consequently one of the Sowars was immediately dispatched to catch him up, happily for the man, however, he was able to produce a permit to carry arms from Colonel H——, the Chief of Staff, and so was allowed to go on his way. Before the heat of the day became oppressive we had reached Dubar, where the Berbera water works are situated, and owing to the plentiful supply of water there is a plantation of date palms and also a large garden cultivated by convicts, which produces "jowari" (a kind of grain) and other fodder for the Government camels and ponies. When we rode up to the palms we found tents which had been sent on ahead in the night being pitched under their shade for our siesta, and our second breakfast was cooked and ready.

At first I was much astonished to find how very simple the cooking arrangements were : simply three stones with a wood fire between, and with only this and a cooking



Date Palms at Dubar.

pot or two, everything was turned out very fairly well. Our bread was made every day with baking powder or yeast, also our butter, when there was enough cream, but the cow, who went with us everywhere, and with her keeper always headed the caravan, was not always sufficiently thoughtful to supply us with enough cream to make into butter, although the milk supply was ample. When the butter failed we fell back upon tinned Bombay butter which is better than salted butter and keeps for a month or so. The butter, as well as our other stores, was supplied from the big Aden shop of Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw. In addition, a case containing bacon, ham, Stilton cheese, and butter beans came out each week from the Army and Navy Stores. Somalis will not touch pigs' flesh in any form, and it was necessary to get a Midgan, a man belonging to a servile aboriginal tribe, to cut up the breakfast bacon every morning. When on "trek" it is advisable to spend several hours in the middle of the day at some camping ground, not only for one's own comfort and welfare but also on account of the camels, who do not feed after dark, and require six hours grazing every day. If they are prevented from feeding, as often happens on military expeditions they gradually waste away and die. Over 17,000 perished in this way during the operations of the troops, and it might be possible for a stranger to find his way from Berbera to Sheikh by following the line of camels' skeletons which are still remaining in small heaps at intervals during the whole distance. One of my photos is of two of our burden camels which had just been unladen and had gone to the nearest thorn bushes to feed on the few leaves to be found on them.



Burden Camels feeding on Thorn Bushes.

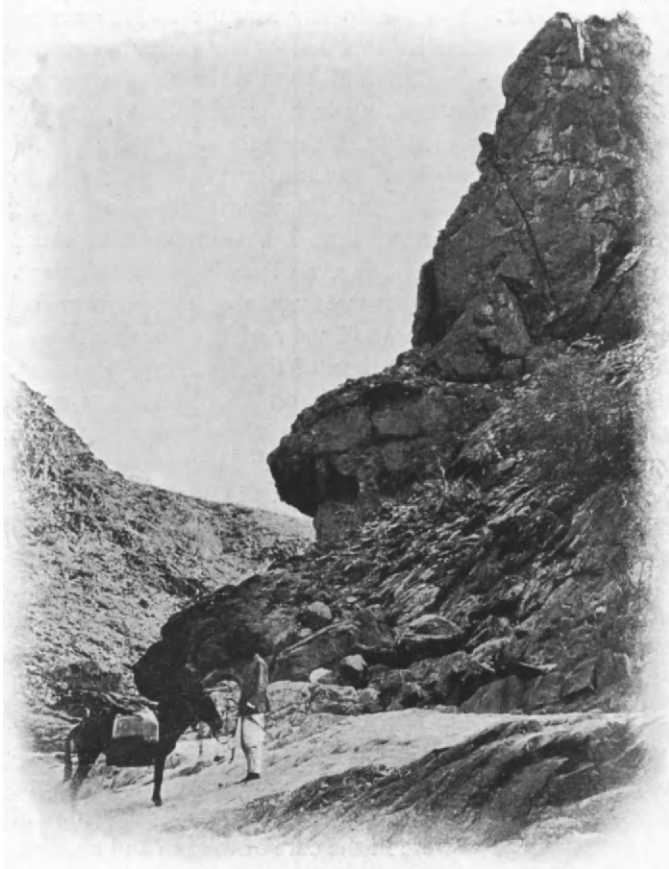
If Europeans wish to keep their animals in good health they must here, as elsewhere, be guided by the natives of the country in their care of them. They understand their animals as no one else does, they know where the grass is, and can estimate how long after rain it is likely to appear. The camp headman, by name Abdulla Mohammed, was first rate in his care of the burden animals ; our camels always looked as " fit " as possible, and our ponies and mules quite fat, and well cared for. When we were using our ponies every day we had, of course, to keep them near us, and have grass brought to them ; but even then, when we were at Sheikh camp, they were driven more than three miles to be watered, but the burden mules always subsisted upon what they could pick up, and Abdulla thought nothing of taking them some twenty miles away in order to give them better grazing. If one looks forward a little it is quite easy to accomplish this ; the headman comes and asks when they will be required next, and manages accordingly. Indeed the whole of the caravan arrangements, provided you get a good headman, seem to be simplicity itself. He comes to the " Sahib " in the evening and asks for directions for the next day, such as where the midday halt will be made, and where the night camp is to be pitched, and after that there is no further trouble. He arranges when the heavy baggage is to be started, and generally has two sets of tents so that one can be sent off in the middle of the night, while the other is in use ; he also decides how the small personal effects are to go, and only once in all our moves did I suffer any discomfort from his arrangements—that was on the second morning of our first journey. As my orders were that I was to be in the saddle not later than six,

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Camp Headman—Abdulla Mohammed.

I was naturally obliged to get up before daybreak. I had been out of bed about five minutes when my candle lamp went out. I called to my servant and demanded a fresh candle when he told me he was very sorry but that the box of candles had gone on with the burden camels! There was nothing to be done but to finish my toilet by feeling, and I found the only real difficulty was in lacing up my boots. Circumstances certainly alter cases, for I should have been somewhat dismayed had I been told before starting that I should have to dress, do my hair, etc., by feeling, and entirely in the dark. This contretemps never occurred again, and I was rewarded for my discomfort by a good view of the Southern Cross which was visible at this time of the year in Somaliland, just before sunrise, and which on this particular night was unusually brilliant owing to the intense darkness. Our route soon after leaving Dubar in the afternoon of the first day took us through a gap in the first range of hills, the ascent being very gradual. On emerging from this gap we found ourselves on a second plain, with vegetation consisting of larger thorn bushes than are to be found on the first plain. There were not many ravines, and the surface being fairly smooth we had several opportunities of cantering, but as we met a large number of small caravans going down to Berbera to trade, we had to slow down when passing them. Many of these caravans consisted merely of a camel or two laden with sheep skins, which sell in the Berbera bazaar at an average price of one rupee each, and were in the care of women and children only. A short time ago these caravans would have of necessity been guarded by armed men, but this is no longer necessary, while the country is in its present peaceful



Part of rocky River Bed serving as a Road.

condition. I noticed that all the people, whether they knew us or not, saluted respectfully as we passed. Before it had got dark we reached our night camp, which was pitched near a dry river bed at the foot of the second range of hills, in a neighbourhood said to be frequented by panthers; we however saw nothing more formidable than rock conies, although we went out in the moonlight to look for something more exciting before sitting down to dinner.

The next morning our route lay through a broad river bed, sandy at first, rocky afterwards; some portions of which were quite dry, but the greater part was through running water, and in places where the bottom was too rough and the banks too steep our ponies had to clamber farther up the sides of the rocky hills to get a footing. There are no roads anywhere, except the more roundabout military road up to Upper Sheikh, which I shall describe presently; the path is simply indicated by the footmarks of many men and animals, who had passed that way before. This river bed continued for some miles between frowning red cliffs, when we emerged into an open space, very well watered, and where there used to be a plantation of twenty-two fine fig-trees, of which now only one remains, the others having all been burnt down.

This is sufficiently fine to make one regret the loss of its companions. When we passed it on our downward journey, at the end of my visit, it was bearing hundreds, if not thousands of figs, and our escort thoroughly enjoyed climbing it and eating the fruit. This place is called Bihendoola, and the Commissioner has built here a small traveller's rest-house for the convenience of Europeans moving up and down between Berbera and Sheikh, which

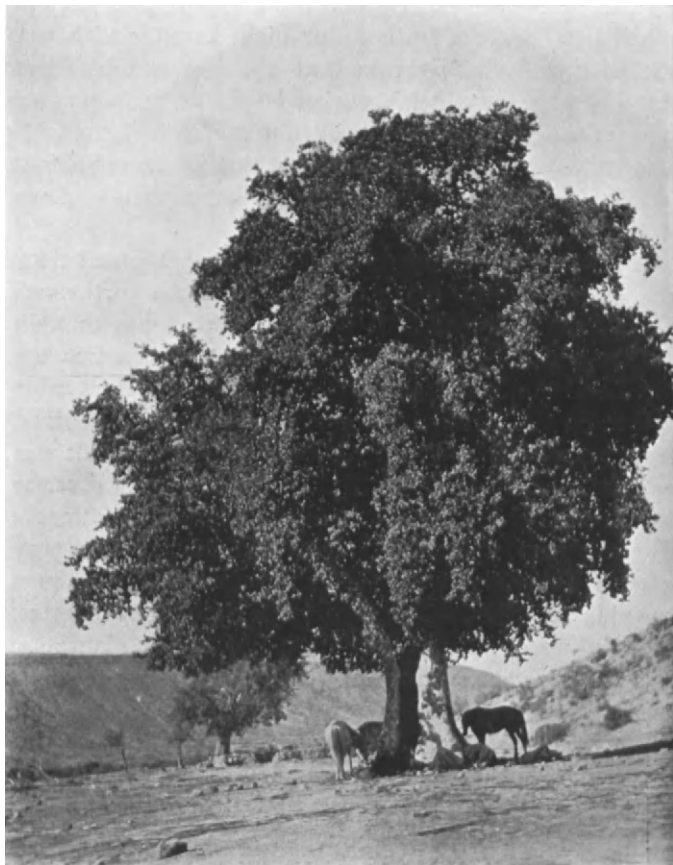


Fig-tree at Bihendoola.



Commissioner's Mail Camel.

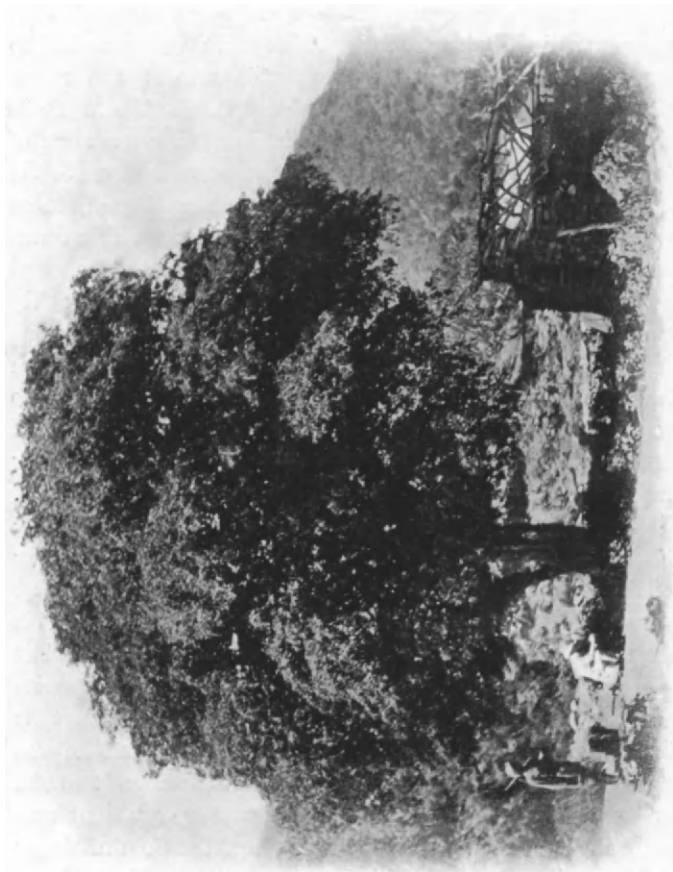
will, when two others already begun are finished, obviate the necessity and expense of taking tents for this journey. We made our midday halt in the rest-house, and occupied the time in writing home.

The mail is carried up to Sheikh by a camel Sowar who does the whole journey of forty-five miles (which owing to the nature of the country takes most people two or even three days) in about nine and a half hours. He passed us on his way down to Berbera, and took our letters, thus saving a week. Soon after leaving Bihendoola we turned round a corner between two bare rocky hills, and on emerging from the gorge the view, which thus came suddenly upon us, astonished me with its beauty. Now for the first time we could see the well-known Golis range, with its varied peaks and many picturesque spurs, well wooded in places, and looking quite misty and mysterious in the evening light. In the middle distance was a plain more or less broken up with ravines, the work of many waters in the rainy season, and diversified at intervals by beautiful conical hills of fine shape standing quite alone, of which the highest, called Demolewein, is also the most beautiful. The foreground was a river bed of brilliant golden sand, in which the necessary life was provided by our two Sowars who were riding just in front of us. I felt almost indignant that my relations had not enlarged more fully on the physical beauties of the country, and I felt that however enthusiastic they had been, they had not been enthusiastic enough. It was positive pain to turn our horses' heads from the direction of this charming landscape, but we wished to inspect a very flourishing garden which lay between our present position and our next camping ground. The owner of this garden was, I believe, a Eurasian. I

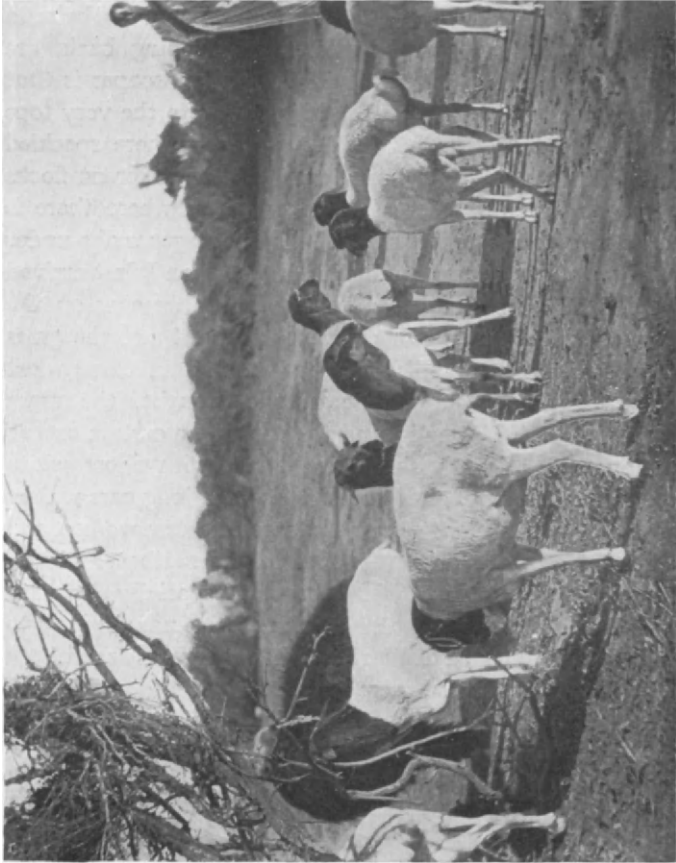
did not see him, but was much interested in his garden, in which we noticed, besides tropical vegetables, nearly every ordinary English vegetable; he had also a good number of turkeys and poultry, all of which were doing well. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that he had dug a well and had a good water supply, or all his efforts to make a garden would have been in vain. This is a veritable oasis in the desert, for the plain, called Guban, which we were then crossing, has not in this part much vegetation; the trees are certainly larger than any we had hitherto seen on the road back to Berbera, and many were covered with a creeper, called "Armo," growing in great profusion and often assuming fantastic shapes given to it by the wind. But there was at this time of year no grazing of any sort, consequently there were scarcely any Somali encampments to be seen, and no collection of trees which could be called a wood until the Golis range of mountains is reached. After a ride of some miles up and down fairly deep nullahs, we reached a place called Gelokr, where a Somali has fenced in a field of forage for the ponies, and where Abdulla had already pitched our night tent. This night was passed without incident, and the next morning we strolled along for a mile or two before mounting. A ride of a couple of hours took us past one of those (for the interior at least) modern innovations due to the incursion of Europeans and Indians, viz., a permanent karia, the inhabitants of which gain their living by commerce instead of tending their flocks and herds, which, with the exception of fighting, is the only natural occupation of the Somali. This karia, or bazaar, is known to Europeans by the rather absurd name of Wagon's Roost, which is, I suppose, a reminiscence of the Boer war, for

many of the officers now serving in Somaliland have previously fought in South Africa. I noticed several of the men were busy in making wooden "hans," (the native name for water or milk vessels), and vessels in which millet or coffee is crushed. These vessels are gouged out with a curiously shaped curved gouge, which the men make themselves for the purpose, and are often ornamented with poker work. Their size only deterred me from gratifying my wish to buy some of these quaint vessels; but I was not the loser, for as I shall presently relate, vessels of this description formed part of the present I afterwards received at Berbera from the Ressaldar-Major. I also noticed at Wagon's Roost a number of cups and saucers laid out on benches, and was told that that betokened the existence of a coffee-shop, another new innovation from the coast towns which has sprung up of late years on the principal caravan routes. Immediately after passing Wagon's Roost we came upon the old rough-and-ready caravan road which the Commissioner had made from this point 1500 feet up to Upper Sheikh, during his two campaigns against the Mulla in order to drag up his guns to take part in the fighting. It is cut in the side of the hill, and gradually ascends for about three miles, when it divides in two. The well-made military road, which owes its existence to the Indian troops during the last expedition, diverges on the right, and after many windings, at about seven miles distance again joins the old road at the top of the pass, which has got over the same distance, though of course at steeper gradients, in less than two miles. In order to save distance we, like the majority of travellers both white and black, rejected the longer and easier way, turned down to the left, crossed

a wide and rather green valley, and after another short rise came to a charming little open space covered with grass, nestling between hills which were well wooded to the tops. This delightful spot still retains the name "Lower Sheikh," given it by Colonel H. G. C. Swayne in his exploration surveys, and here is now being built one of the traveller's rest-houses to which I have referred. On our up journey the bungalow had not been begun, there was nothing in the shape of a building but a tumble down hut, the remains of one of the Indian Camps, but we lunched under the shade of a lovely tamarind tree, and thoroughly enjoyed our siesta in the picturesque surroundings. The steep path up to Upper Sheikh could be traced through the wood on our right, and as it was very steep and also stony, my steed was here changed for a mule, which I always afterwards rode on unusually rough tracks; for the pony, being unshod, was apt to splinter his hoofs. This mule was part of a present from Ras Makonnen, the Abyssinian Governor of Harrar (since dead), to my cousin, and had been handed over by him to Government. I gave the mule the name of his kind donor. He was a very intelligent beast, with a strong will of his own, but he went very well, being able to keep up with the ponies in speed. His trot being short was not so pleasant as theirs, but his canter was quite comfortable, and he was very sure-footed and seemed to delight in difficult roads. As I was riding up the pass, with its steep gradient and very rough surface, I was wondering how the Commissioner could possibly have got his guns up there. He told me it was done under the direction of Captain Cordeaux, the present Commissioner, by numbers of Somalis dragging them; but it must have been a most arduous undertaking.



Tamarind Tree at Lower Sheikh.



Somali Sheep and Persian Ram.

The views up this path are very beautiful; the trees, although not nearly so thick as they are still higher up, are sufficiently numerous to give the idea of its being a well-wooded country, and the views, looking back, are superb. One curious feature in Somali landscapes is that camels are to be seen on steep hillsides up to the very tops of the mountains, and the hills are everywhere speckled with blotches of white spots, marking the different flocks of sheep which wander about everywhere where there is a blade of grass to be found. They are generally under the care of one or two small children. When I first arrived at Sheikh there were over 100,000 sheep grazing on the plateau, which, as the dry season advanced and the grass grew less, gradually disappeared; then rain came most unexpectedly in the middle of the drought, the grass sprang up as if by magic, and the sheep to a certain extent re-appeared. Somali sheep are small, with short white coats like a terrier, and black heads with long ears; they go about all day long under the care of a few women and children, and are driven back into the zaribas at night for protection against wild beasts, especially hyænas, which are very abundant. Sheikh is the name given to the plateau at which one arrives when the pass is ascended; it is so called because there is a small white dome-shaped mosque at the top of the pass where a very holy sheikh is buried. This plateau is over 4000 feet above sea level, and gradually slopes away southwards towards Burao, and thence to the frontier; towards the east there is a plateau called Suksodi, where there is generally good grazing, while on the other sides it is bounded by the higher ridges and peaks of Golis. It is a convenient centre, as it commands most of the caravan routes into the

interior, and for that reason the Commissioner not only fixed upon it for the station of the local battalion of troops enlisted in the Punjab (the only regiment of regular troops in the country), but also made it the headquarters of the native standing militia. As one emerges from the pass the camp of the 6th K.A.R., the Indian battalion, is to be seen on the left, and the militia camp on the right about a mile and a half away. The latter is pitched on an eminence with a most lovely view looking down the valley, first towards Lower Sheikh, and then over the intervening plains towards the mountains near Berbera. Before we quite reached the top of the pass, two of the officers stationed at the Commissioner's camp rode out to meet and welcome us; these were followed at short distances by several officers from the militia camp, and last of all the Chief of Staff, Colonel H——, accompanied by Mrs. H——, joined our party and rode with us past the two polo grounds towards the ranges of mountains now facing us. About three miles distant, sheltered by the mountains and partially hidden by the shade of large euphorbia trees, I could see small white specks, which I was told were the tents belonging to the Commissioner's camp and to the smaller camp about two hundred yards away, where Colonel and Mrs. H—— were living. It was very pleasant being welcomed in this way by all the Europeans living anywhere near Sheikh, and it made me feel, although I had never met any of them before, that I had fallen amongst friends, and that the next few months would, in all probability, be very pleasantly spent. In this expectation I was not disappointed.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CAMP AT SHEIKH AND CAMP LIFE—CHRISTMAS DAY IN CAMP—PARTY OF DERVISHES ARRIVE—A HADJI AGED 101—A GIDDY YOUNG WIFE—A MATRIMONIAL DIFFERENCE—HOW SOMALIS KEEP THEIR WORD—THE NATIVE MILITIA AND THEIR MOBILITY—THE “MAD” MULLA’S COMMERCIAL CARAVAN—DRESS OF SOMALIS, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN—STYLES OF HAIRDRESSING—RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES.

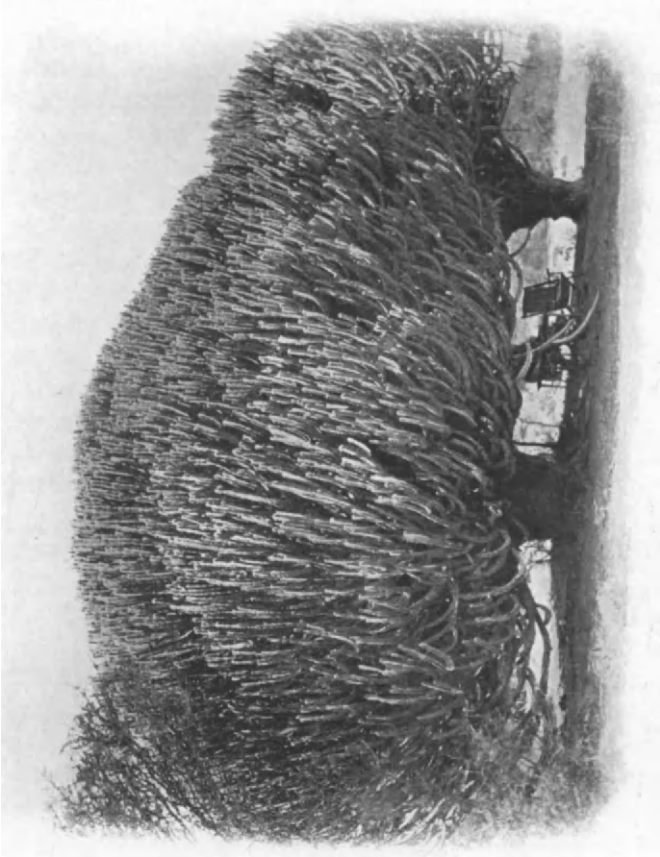
AS I do not presume to give any information in this very slight work, either to people already fortunate enough to know Somaliland, or to the many others who have often enjoyed camp life in other countries, but address myself to those who are curious to know how it is possible to be happy without either houses, carriages, or even roads, I will shortly describe our camp and the life in it. Of course it was surrounded with a zariba, a defence made of large branches of bushes, principally box bushes, and thorns, and arranged so that in appearance it was like a fairly high hedge.

The camp covered a considerable piece of ground, for with every one all told, it usually afforded shelter to about eighty men. We had two English officers, one military, one civil, stationed there, who of course messed with us; and there were besides, typists, telegraph and post-office clerks (who were mostly Eurasians from India), a carpenter, a washerman; Tomals who work in iron and other metals; a tent-maker, who likewise mended boots and worked in leather; some of the camel corps and of



Distant View of Commissioner's Camp.

the militia, who supplied the guard and did sentry work; government messengers; different men who minded the live stock; the personal servants of the other two officers, of ourselves, and of the clerks; the under servants who waited upon them; numerous grooms, and hangers-on of every description. There were naturally many tents, most of them of the usual "European pattern" size, each meant to accommodate twenty-four men; and, roughly speaking, the Europeans' quarters were near the principal entrance, and the others, with the rations' huts and cooking-place, towards the other end. I was made particularly comfortable, for I had a large tent for my bedroom, with a smaller one for bathroom, both enclosed in a little zariba inside the large one, to ensure greater privacy; and besides this, I had arranged for me a sort of bower under a very large euphorbia tree which grew just outside the opening of my private zariba. These trees afford the densest shade imaginable, not a single ray of sun ever penetrating through them when they are of any age, and the temperature under them is usually five or six degrees cooler than in the tents. There is one drawback to these trees, and that is their extremely poisonous nature. Like many others, they milk freely when wounded in one of their soft parts, and the liquid which flows from them appears to be a strong caustic; it turns the ground black where it falls, and would entirely destroy a person's sight if a drop were to get into the eyes. However, with one big waterproof sheet stretched overhead to prevent any droppings, another doing duty as carpet, and the addition of a writing table and two or three comfortable chairs, the bower made a very fair substitute for a sitting room where I could read, write,



Euphorbia Trees.

work, or receive my friends. Many people have asked me if I was not afraid of sleeping in a "savage" country; and my answer always is, How could one possibly be in a safer place? My tents, within their zariba, were situated between the guard tent and those of the Commissioner, the sentry was walking up and down within a few yards, and last, but not least, "Jack," a very powerful bull-terrier, slept on my bed. True, I was often awakened by the screeching of huge baboons, the howling of hyænas, and once or twice even by the growling of leopards; but except when in a temporary camp, where there was no zariba, nothing more happened than that Jack became very excited and did all he knew to escape and get into close quarters with his natural enemies. Besides—which perhaps is the strongest point of all—I never saw a "savage" the whole time I was in Somaliland. Colonel H. G. C. Swayne, in his book, *Seventeen Trips in Somaliland*, says that the only true Somali savages are those products of civilization the Aden hackney carriage drivers, or boatmen, and my small experience certainly makes me agree with him. During the three months that I was living amongst them, I never saw or heard the very slightest thing I would rather not have witnessed; and where, I would ask, in any other country, even our own, can the same be said? It must be remembered also that ours was not a small camp, with only our personal servants around us, but people of every tribe and in every rank of life were perpetually coming for one reason or another, and I scarcely ever went outside my tent without seeing many faces I did not recognize. This fact also emphasizes their extraordinary honesty. I am told that in the matter of tent pegs and camels, their probity cannot resist the temptation

of annexing these desirable possessions; but my tents never suffered from want of pegs, and as to the care of camels, this was not my duty but that of Abdulla Mohammed, the first of our two camp headmen, so on those points I may be unable to give any opinion. But I do know this, that I had everything lying about in my tent exactly as if it had been in my bedroom at home, and never lost the worth of a penny. The days at the camp passed away all too quickly, although at first sight there did not seem to be very much to do. The spending of one day will serve as a specimen of most of the others. I got up at daybreak and had early tea in my tent, generally shared by Jack; this was followed by a ride, when my attendant was a Somali, sometimes in proper servant's garb, sometimes in full war paint, and they used to try and amuse me by throwing their spears in various ways, and showing off other accomplishments of this kind. Only a few besides Abdulla and my own servant, Hashi, could speak English; and as Somali is a language which can only be mastered after many months' study, and my knowledge was confined to the names of a few nouns, most of our conversation was carried on by signs. I laboured under the additional disadvantage of not knowing any Hindustani. Most of the Europeans in Somaliland are Anglo-Indians, and Hindustani is the first foreign language the Somalis learn, consequently the servants always have their orders given them in that tongue. But to return to the day's doings: after the ride came breakfast, when the Europeans met for the first time; this was succeeded by a quiet time during the heat of the day, when I read, sewed, wrote, or worked at photography; and then after an early tea, on the days when there was no polo, we walked until

it was quite dark. Dinner followed, and soon after we were all glad to retire to our tents early. The officers usually played polo three times a week, and we three ladies, Mrs. H——, Mrs. B——, and myself, took it in turn to give tea on the polo ground; this ensured our having a little society, which was increased by occasional luncheon parties at the different camps. Evening entertainments were unusual except at full moon, on account of the difficulty of avoiding the rough pieces of ground in the dark, when it would be extremely easy to injure a horse badly. Somalis are very fond of sport of every kind, and they took the deepest interest in the polo; not only did the grooms get very excited at the success or failure of their respective masters, and keep a keen look out that they might supply them with fresh polo sticks when wanted, but all the men in the neighbourhood used to come and squat round the ground, though often suffering much from the cold wind which rose towards evening, and discuss very freely the merits of the respective players and their ponies. The grass on the grounds was conspicuous by its absence, consequently the dust was rather trying to the onlookers, and after a time we were obliged to give up the shelter of some friendly bushes and move to the windward side where there was no shade. However, some of the Somali militia came to our rescue, and put up a very neat hut of box boughs large enough to seat ten or twelve people, in which we used to have our tea-tables set out, and which the natives called the "Mem-Sahib's coffee-shop"! Strictly speaking, it is against the native law to permanently enclose any land outside the actual coast towns which we bought from the Egyptian government, because all land in the country belongs to



Jack, the Bull-terrier.

the tribes, and not to individuals, and every one in the tribe has an equal right to the grazing, or to a site for his karia. The Somalis respected the polo grounds, although they were not protected in any way, thus showing their sympathy with sport. Although dogs generally are unclean animals to Muslims, "Jack" was an exception on account of his sporting qualities, and was quite a *persona grata* to all who knew him, and when he got into scrapes, which was often, there was never any lack of people anxious to go to his assistance, often at risk of injury to themselves.

Christmas Day came nine days after our arrival at the Sheikh camp, and we determined to celebrate it by asking every available European to dinner, and we were fortunate enough to secure twelve guests. I got up very early to decorate the mess tent and make it look a little "Christmassy," and I soon found myself surrounded by over twenty eager helpers, headed by Abdulla, who acted as interpreter. They covered the whole of the inside of the tent with Italian striped silk blankets which I had brought out with me, and which, as well as the safety pins with which they were fixed, afforded the men the greatest satisfaction. But much as they admired the pins, none were missing when the decorations were taken down. The militia men, quite of their own accord and without my telling them, brought in boughs of box and tied them to the tent poles, and also made a wreath of evergreens long enough to go quite round the tent and edge the blankets. This they brought in, and arranged it by placing themselves at intervals, supporting the wreath on their heads. The effect was very decorative, as they looked like Caryatides, and were nearly as immovable; but much

in Somaliland.

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Some of the Servants under the Union Jack on Christmas Day.

as I admired them, I knew they had other work to do, so I said the wreath must be sewn to the walls of the tent. The only packing needle available was far too small to carry our string, but the Somali has plenty of *savoir faire*, and in a few minutes one of the men brought me a capital needle exactly the right size, which the Tomals (the metal workers) had made while I was waiting. They usually make the tools for any work upon which they happen to be engaged, and these are often wonderfully well adapted for the purpose for which they are to be used. After the dinner, we Europeans took photos of each other, and I also secured one of some of the servants under the Union Jack, and the latter made themselves intensely happy by putting on the various paper caps which came out of the crackers, for they are as easy to amuse as children. My friends at home often wonder how I could find enough to interest me during my three months' stay in the country, but there was no difficulty in avoiding boredom, even when living at the permanent camp at Sheikh, and of course our short trips farther into the jungle, which I shall describe later on, were full of interest. The Commissioner's camp, connected as it was by field telegraph and telephone lines to the coast towns and to the frontier military posts, was really the seat of Government, and consequently was a very busy place, and although, of course, I knew very little of what was really going on, I was told of and shown anything which did not matter ; for instance, one day a party of Dervishes came in from the Mulla with a letter from him to the Commissioner, and I took a walk round the camp and had a look at them while they were sitting in a ring waiting for the answer, and fine looking men they were, and not



Hadji Guléd, with his Son and Followers.

at all fierce in their demeanour, whatever they might be in their practice. The Dervishes are fond of finery; one of the party had a striped red and white umbrella, all had beautiful white "tobes," and most of them crimson turbans and silver-mounted walking sticks. The name Dervish (derived from the Sudan), I understand, implies poverty, but they only offer another example of practice not always coinciding with precept, which is not confined to Africa or to any one part of the globe. Again, when Arkills of friendly tribes came to have an interview with the Commissioner, they sometimes asked to see me, some of them giving as a reason that they had never seen a white woman before; so I used to be sent for, and they were presented to me, and I shook hands all round, and occasionally was rewarded by being allowed to take photographs of them. I particularly remember one instance of an old Arkill who I was told was 101 years of age, and could not be expected to be very much up to date, and might therefore object to being photographed. The Ressaldar Major was acting as my interpreter, and promised he would get the old fellow's permission for me to take his photograph, and also one of his party. After a little parley he succeeded, and all were most amiable; but I afterwards discovered that the Ressaldar Major drew somewhat largely upon the rich stores of his imagination, for he informed Hadji Gu'ed, the old man in question, that if he would allow his picture to be taken, I was going back to England and would show it to the King! I hope he will never find out that my part of the bargain has not been carried into effect. Another day a very pretty girl of about eighteen asked to see me, and then disclosed a piteous tale that she had, against her will, been married



Aralla, aged 18. Ayal Yunis Tribe, with Midgan Woman.

to an old man "who had many camels" (the Somali way of describing a rich man), but who also had "children, and children's children, and children's children's children," and that he was not kind to her and did not give her enough clothes, and would I do something for her. Naturally I was powerless, but referred her to the "General Sahib," who was the final authority in the land. On talking to him about her case, he told me he couldn't interfere, as he was conscious of no cruelty having taken place, but that I might, if I liked, give her a silk blanket, which I did, and sent her off a little comforted, and in a few days she finally disappeared. I learnt that her husband, thinking that discretion was the better part of valour, and that he had too many fascinating young "bloods," militia and others, about the camp, had wisely packed up his worldly goods and removed himself, his flocks, his karia and his giddy young wife to a less populous and safer neighbourhood. Another discontented young lady was brought into camp soon afterwards, whose case was rather more difficult to deal with. She also had been sacrificed to a man "with many camels," but had taken the law into her own hands by eloping with a younger man who was more to her liking. Her husband, after a three months' search, had succeeded in capturing her, and according to native law she would have been put to death. Luckily for her this summary justice is not meted out now, and instead, the case was brought before the "General Sahib." He first of all talked to the wrathful husband, and persuaded him to take her back, forgive her, and not beat her or otherwise ill-treat her, and then had an interview with the lady herself, in the presence of her husband and his friends. He told her that if she would return willingly

to her husband's karia, bygones would be bygones, and no punishment would ensue; but she must do so willingly. If she persisted in obstinately refusing to make up the quarrel, she would be sent, under the care of four militia men, to Burao, and there given up to the custody of the Kadi of her tribe. The Commissioner clenched the affair by informing her that the fact of whether she went back to her husband or not, would not in the least affect the fate of her young friend, who had already been sentenced to a term of imprisonment with hard labour. Apparently this settled the matter, for she consented to return to her proper home; but I could not help being sorry for the poor girl, and wondering whether she would not, after all, be badly beaten and ill-treated in many ways, but I was assured that as the man had solemnly promised he would not do so, he could be trusted to keep his word. Here, I thought to myself, is another instance of the superiority of the way of settling affairs in this part of Africa, to that in vogue in the more civilized west. A very characteristic instance of how Somalis consider it worse to break their word than to take life, occurred a few days before we left the country. When the regular troops were withdrawn, the Commissioner issued a certain number of rifles to picked men among the frontier tribes, who were to use them in defence of their flocks, and act as a first line of defence against possible aggressions of the Mulla; but when the men received the rifles they were required to give a solemn promise that they would not use them against each other, as otherwise the rifles would prove to be "snakes stinging them," and they were expressly forbidden to use them for the purpose of killing game, but only under orders, against the enemy. It was therefore



Two Militia. wearing their "Rosaries," or Prayer Beads.

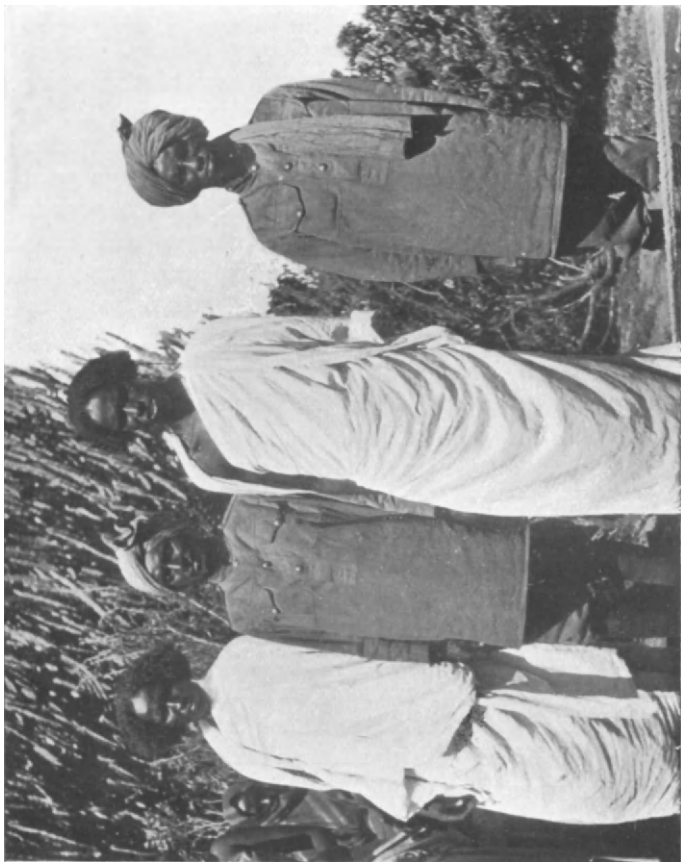
rather disturbing to get a telegram from the front announcing that a tribal dispute, concerning a woman's dowry (the most fruitful source of such disputes), had broken out amongst two tribes, and that six men had been killed and twenty-two wounded, one of the killed being the "eldest boy" of my aged friend, Hadji Gulēd, who had rushed into the fray to try and make peace, and who was over eighty years of age. The nearest Political Officer with his escort proceeded at once to the spot, and at the same time the Chief Native Officer left our camp for the same place. In a very short time a reassuring wire was sent to our camp to say, that although it was quite true as to the numbers of killed and wounded, all the mischief had been done by their own spears; for both sides, owing to their unwillingness to break the compact with the Commissioner, had piled their rifles before beginning the fighting.

I was much struck on several occasions by the extreme utility of the Somali as an irregular soldier on account of his extraordinary mobility.

Now that the Mulla has accepted Italian protection, and has settled down in a certain district beyond our borders, near Illig, within the sphere of Italian influence, he is generally friendly with us. Like all other Somalis he appears to have strong commercial instincts, and is anxious to revive trade by sending caravans right through our territory to Berbera. On consulting the map, Obbia would appear to be his most convenient port, and it is also in the Italian Protectorate; but Obbia suffers from the great disadvantage of not having a good harbour, and the surf is so great during the greater part of the year that landing is all but impossible. Berbera not only has a good and safe harbour, but being only 150 miles from

Aden is practically in touch with the whole world, and through the many brokers living there, skins and other products of the land can be disposed of, and American calico to make tobes, and other necessaries bought. Consequently last winter the Mulla sent a letter to the Commissioner asking for permission to send caravans of skins, etc., through our territory to Berbera, and as the Commissioner was endeavouring to settle the country, and knew that there was nothing like commerce to effect this end, the permission was given under certain conditions, one being that the Dervishes' arms should be given up at the frontier, to be returned to them on their way home. The Mulla acquiesced, and sent messengers to announce the coming of his party. Of course they could not be expected to go unarmed and unprotected through the territories of our armed tribes, consequently a company of 100 militia, under one British officer, was despatched to escort them down to Berbera. There was not much time to lose, and the militia had only two hours' notice before they left Sheikh; but they marched 100 miles in forty-eight hours, carrying their rifles, ammunition (150 rounds of .303 per man), rations and water! The British officer was, of course, mounted. This is a smart record. The affair passed off satisfactorily. The Dervishes sold all their skins at Berbera, stayed there a fortnight or so, bought their stores of tobes and other things for disposal in their own country, marched back, escorted by another company of militia to the frontier, where they received back their own arms. As commerce, all the world over, is the surest guarantee of peace, let us hope that this will show Abdulla Mohammed (the so-called "Mad" Mulla) that peace pays better than war; and that for the future,

at any rate so far as we are concerned, his efforts will be directed to improving his trade, and that Somaliland will get to be considered as a safe as well as an interesting country in which to spend a few happy months. Unfortunately there are special difficulties in the Mulla's keeping peace with the tribes not under our protection, for he has to feed his followers, and whilst he keeps them together in a big camp the consumption of live stock is so great that he is continually obliged to raid his neighbours in order to reprovise his camp. As there is no cultivation in Somaliland, people in the interior live entirely on meat and milk. For the foregoing piece of militia work no shooting was happily required, but I understand that the militia are no mean shots. They have shooting competitions every month, when the Commissioner presents a camel to the man with the highest score. There is great anxiety on the part of the Somalis to be enlisted in the militia, but the Commissioner used to be extremely careful to admit none to the force except men of whom he knew something, or of whom he could get a good character from some one he knew. The service was popular, as only "the standing" portion of the force had to live in camp, the rest, "reserves," were living, with their arms, in their own karias with their families, and after a certain time those in camp were sent out to relieve them, and so enable the reserves to do their military training. They were allowed to wear their hair as they wished, but any want of uniformity in this unessential matter did not show when they were in uniform and wearing turbans; in fact, essentials tending to efficiency were the great matters insisted upon, and although strict discipline was enforced, as few irksome regulations as possible were imposed.



Four Camel Sowers—two in "Mufti."

Perhaps here will be a good place to describe the dress of both Somali men and women when their costumes are not spoiled by odds and ends of European clothes, which those who have lived much at the coast are rather fond of adopting. The principal article of both men's and women's clothes is the "tobe," which is a long length of American shirting, washed very white, and consisting of two breadths sewn together, but not made up in any way. The women arrange it first in a sort of full petticoat just reaching to the ankles, and secured round the waist with a band, two points are then drawn up, one in front and the other behind, and fastened on the right shoulder, this leaves the left shoulder and arm bare. This is artistic, for their limbs, as a rule, are beautifully modelled, and never coarse. They wear armlets of more or less value according to their rank in life. Women with less clothing than I have described are never seen. After arranging the tobe in this manner there is still a good deal not used, and this is utilized as something in which to carry a baby or any other burden, or is drawn up over the head and shoulders as an additional protection against cold. The feet of both men and women are bare unless they are going to walk in stony places, and then they wear native shoes, which are a kind of sandal with soles composed of about five thicknesses of leather, kept on by a heel strap and a leather loop round the middle toe, and with turn-up ends in front which serve as an admirable protection to the feet. The Somalis' hair when worn long is not naturally curly, and so both sexes do their best to improve upon nature in this respect. The unmarried girls plait their hair in tiny plaits, each of which is fuzzed out at the end, and the married women dress theirs in puffs at the side



Woman carrying Baby.

(something like the present fashion at home), which are confined to nets of about the thickness of a mosquito curtain, but dark blue in colour. In addition to the armlets they wear toe rings, silver or bead necklaces of different values. Some of these necklaces are composed of massive silver and large amber beads, and are very handsome. One of the inferior races, the Tomals, are the metal workers, and make silver ornaments out of rupees. The men wear their tobés in quite a different manner from the women, and the style depends on the weather, and the work on which they are engaged. The coast Somalis often affect Arabian customs, and frequently wear under the white tobe a sort of short petticoat or kilt made of a material like a checked duster. This, though often showing when worn under a long shirt, such as the servants wear, rarely shows when under a tobe. When working very hard, or when fighting, the Somali man arranges his tobe only to reach from a foot off the ground to the waist, but one sees him very rarely in this get-up; he generally has it draped over one or both shoulders, and he naturally contrives to make it fall into most artistic folds, so much so that I always used to associate one of the camp followers with the statue of Sophocles in the Lateran Museum at Rome, the tobe being draped in the same way as the Roman toga.

When the wind is cold, or at night, or if he is shy or distrustful, the man draws his tobe quite up over his head. One peculiarity of the Somali is that, leaving aside the religious Mullas and servants of Europeans, who generally wear turbans, one never sees any head covering. On referring to my photograph of Askar, the Commissioner's tent orderly, it will be observed that he has on a turban

A Woman's Pleasure Trip



Askar, the Commissioner's Personal Servant.

with his tobe, but that was entirely my fault. I met him one evening after he had gone into mufti, and admiring the folds of his tobe, I photographed him; but as I was always used to seeing him in the red turban worn by the Commissioner's Chuprassies, I told him to put it on; but it was a mistake on my part. I think the photos of all the other costumes will be found to be correct. The style of head dressing is more varied with the man than with the woman in Somaliland, and one can tell roughly his age by the style of a man's hair. Children, both boys and girls, have their heads shaved with a few ludicrous tufts left; as the boys grow up and become vain they wear the hair long and frizzed until it sticks out some distance from the head all round, and gives them rather a womanish appearance. When a man is middle aged he wears the hair cut short, English fashion; but when claiming religious or other dignity, he shaves it again, and this is generally the case with the elders; but whether shaved, or indulging in long hair, the Somali exposes himself to the hottest mid-day sun with absolute impunity. The frizzing of the hair is done by a somewhat curious process. A paste is made with fine white chalky clay, and plastered all over the head. This is kept on say for twenty-four hours or more, and then brushed out, and a fine frizzed head is the result, bleached sometimes to a Titian red, and sometimes a deep claret colour. It is said that this application of clay is very cleansing to the head, and I dare say it is; at any rate, any young man with respect for his personal appearance never neglects to use it, and one sees nearly as many heads in their temporary white covering as without. I found that most of the militia, being chiefly young men, were in this stage of dandyism, and when out of



Man with Hair encased in White Clay, accompanied by a Man of another Tribe carrying his Arms.



Militia Men in Native Dress, standing beside a broken Ant-hill.

uniform were the happy possessors of very elaborate coiffures.

Of course, when in uniform the hair was hidden by the turbans. The full dress of a Somali man is completed by a prayer skin thrown over his shoulders; a leather or silver armlet; a leather band with a small leather pocket attached, into which is sewn a text from the Koran, worn either as a necklace or a chaplet round the head; a rosary; two amber balls strung round the neck; an ox-hide shield; a native sword strapped round the waist; two or more spears; and a water-bottle constructed of grass, made waterproof by fat and tanning. The womanish appearance which some of the men present is enhanced by the delicate appearance of their hands and arms, which are always small and finely shaped; but it is only in appearance that the Somali is womanish, for his worst enemy could not deny that he is one of the bravest of mankind, and will attack anything, either man or beast, without firearms. They will, for instance, attack a panther with only stones and sticks; the servants did so one night when our bull-terrier was carried off by one of these brutes, and they rescued the poor dog after he had been badly mauled, and this on an intensely dark night. Somalis, both men and women, are tall and slight, built for speed, and generally light in weight—one man in the militia, 6ft. 2in. in height, weighed only nine stone! They walk extremely well, and are very dignified and graceful, the women especially so; carrying themselves in a dignified yet easy manner. They are rather conceited, and think themselves the pink of perfection; but this prevents their having any *mauvaise honte*, and makes their intercourse with strangers easy and pleasant. Of



Abdulla Mohammed in Full Dress.

66 **A Woman's Pleasure Trip in Somaliland.**

course they are ferocious, and think little of taking life ; but on the other hand (when we leave aside the Aden-bred Somalis, or people of the coast towns) they are most particular about keeping their word when once they have made a promise ; they are absolutely sober, honest, and very moral in their relations of life. Their religion is a very strict sect of Islam, the precepts of which they appear to carry out in everyday life, and often and often have I felt that we Christians would do well in many ways to take example by them in religious observances. Each morning at five, again at midday, and a third time at sunset, every man who could possibly be spared joined in a religious service. They spread their tanned prayer skins (used instead of prayer carpets) in a row, and one who stood out in front of the general line chanted what sounded to me like a Litany, while the others chanted the responses and Amens. This was never omitted wherever we were, and made them quite independent of a mosque or any place of worship. There are five regular prayer times during the twenty-four hours. "Arorta," the morning prayer at sunrise, "duhurki," midday, "assarki," 4 p.m., "magribki," sunset, "fidki," or "an wissan ki," 9 p.m. to midnight. In the towns the Muezzin, or mosque criers, stand at the summits of their minarets and chant the Din, or confession of faith, from an hour to half an hour before sunrise, when it is pitch dark.

CHAPTER IV.

CURIOUS PLANTS—"JACK'S" ADVENTURES WITH HYÆNAS—DISTRESS
CAUSED BY THE WAR—ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIEF CAMPS FOR
GATHERING ALOE FIBRE—INFANTILE "MISAKINS" OR PAUPERS.

A PART from human interests, there is a great deal in the animal and vegetable world in Somaliland to attract the attention, which is constantly aroused by different species as one moves about from one place to another. At Sheikh the most remarkable plant I noticed I could not find anywhere else, and I much regret that thinking I might, as time went on, find many opportunities to photograph a specimen, I neglected to do this when I could, and as a matter of fact I never got a chance again. This plant has a most extraordinary appearance, and I have not the faintest notion to what family it belongs. (I have been told since that it is allied to the Baobab.) It grows in the very dry spots, and is in appearance exactly like a large limestone boulder. The first that was pointed out to me I entirely declined to believe was anything else but a stone until it was cut, when on examination the sides of the cut were found saturated with moisture like a new potato. On the top of the boulder-like form grew a creeper, with a leaf not very unlike our honeysuckle, and as a casual glance did not reveal the fact that the creeper and the boulder were all one plant, the illusion was not destroyed, but rather enhanced by the leaves. I am told that the blossom is something like

a tulip, but I did not see it. No doubt botanists know all about this, but the only list I know of plants, etc., in Somaliland (which is that in Mr. James's "Unknown Horn of Africa") is so technical in terms and conveys so little to an unscientific person like myself, that I do not know whether it is included in that list or not. As my visit was in the dry season flowers were not very numerous, but the red and yellow spikes of the medicinal aloe, the tall white flowers of a sedum, a little resembling the blossom of the tobacco, and the brilliant purple blossoms of a small creeping plant, which was in great profusion, made the plateau quite gay when I first arrived at Sheikh. I started with the idea that I would always have fresh flowers on the mess-table; but I soon had to give that up, for the Somali flowers have one great drawback, and that is that they never last in water. Those gathered in the morning were all dead by dinner-time, and some used to be hopelessly withered in my hand, or even in a basket, before I reached camp. The servants used often to bring me in large bunches of a flowering shrub they called "waba," as they knew I was fond of the scent; but it only lasted an hour or two. "Waba," out of whose roots the hunting "Midgans" make a deadly poison, grows into a big shrub, almost a tree, which has a stem and small dark green leaves very like boxwood, and blossoms like a poor specimen of *laurustinus* in appearance, but with the perfume of *stephanotis*. The birds are very varied and beautiful. I saw eagles, vultures, and hawks amongst the birds of prey, other birds with huge hooked bills, then wild doves, "minas," of a beautiful kingfisher blue, crows, which some people dislike, but whose "caws" always had a homely sound to my ears, little red-breasted

birds like our robins, and who have very much the same habits as our little friends in England, as they hop about round the tents and look inside in an inquisitive manner, brilliant little birds of a bright emerald green colour with dashes of yellow, birds looking like small birds of paradise, jays, and last, but not least, birds called "bulbul," who sing almost like nightingales. Our camp contained many pets, amongst others, pigeons and doves ; but these lived rather precarious lives, having enemies both on the ground and in the air. We often saw hawks hovering above the dovecot which, if the coast were clear of mankind, would swoop down and carry off some poor inoffensive pigeon, and although the dovecot was carefully shut up at night, occasionally some fox or jackal would force his way through the zariba, and either get into the pigeon house or else into the place where the poultry slept, and take toll of its inmates. The hyenas, jackals, and foxes used to often afford us amusement through Jack, who never lost an opportunity of going for them. This sometimes involved the necessity of digging him out of their holes, and during the very first walk I took, he managed to get stuck in a rocky hole which resisted all our efforts to enlarge it by means of our walking sticks, stout though they were ; but his furious barking attracted the attention of the inmates of a neighbouring karia, and the men set to work with a will with crowbars and hammers to break away the rock, while the womenkind looked on and kindly helped with their advice. After Jack was safely exhumed from the jackal hole, the many willing helpers walked back with us to the camp and were regaled with milk and dates. While the men were working the women tried to make friends with me, but were handicapped by the usual

language difficulty. However, they managed to attract the Commissioner's attention sufficiently to ask the usual questions, namely, whether I were a girl of his own tribe, why I wore a hat, and if they could be allowed to look at my boots. The hat and boots seemed the only articles of my dress which ever interested them, except once when a Dervish picked up one of my gloves and was struck with admiration; as it was a loose fit for me, and his hands, like all Somali men's, were small and delicate, I told him to try it on, but he evidently considered that too great a liberty, and contented himself with stroking it and pulling out the fingers, and ejaculating in his own tongue, "Clever, very clever!" On another occasion we had to succour Jack ourselves. We were walking one evening at dusk when, as we often did, we missed the dog, but this time did not hear him barking. Listening attentively, we became conscious of a scuffling not far off, and by following up the sound we discovered Jack at the entrance to a hyæna's hole, making his legs very stiff in his frantic endeavours not to be dragged right under ground. On looking in, the mystery of his silence was solved, for the hyæna had seized him by the jaw, his upper teeth being firmly fixed into the dog's nose, and his under jaw holding Jack's chin equally firmly. The poor dog could not only not bark, but could scarcely breathe. I immediately knelt down by the hole, and seized the dog by his collar, when by our united efforts we dragged the hyæna sufficiently out of the hole for E—— to be able to belabour him about the head, and make him relax his hold. I suppose the struggle only lasted a few seconds, but it seemed hours to me before Jack got himself free, but as soon as he had disengaged himself from the grip of

the hyæna, he in his turn seized his enemy by the nape of the neck, and with one twist of his jaws killed him instantly. Happily it was one of the smallest species of hyæna (there are three distinct sorts in Somaliland), or the dog would not have got off so easily, if at all, and as it was, I doubt if he could have managed the affair alone. It was pointed out to me afterwards that two people and a dog joining against one hyæna was rather an unsportsman-like proceeding, and that the hyæna had fought most pluckily, but had had no chance against such odds. I am afraid the sporting side of the question did not appeal to me, and that I only thought of saving our dumb friend.

When enumerating some of the plants I noticed on my first arrival, I mentioned the aloe; that one I believe to be the medicinal sort, and is the only kind which flourishes at Sheikh and in the west, and is a favourite food of elephants; but there is side by side with this another species (the "Sandieria") which produces extraordinarily strong fibre, is very common, and is likely to prove a great boon to the country. During the warlike operations, which lasted several years, there was a considerable loss of life, and, as usual, principally amongst what we should call the bread-winners of the community. That description hardly applies to a country where no bread is eaten, but at any rate the women and children were reduced to the sorest straits when deprived of their mankind and also of their flocks and herds, which were perpetually being looted by the enemy. Some of them used to make themselves shelters under large boulders and overhanging rocks, for they were far too poor to obtain the woven mats or "gurghis," which form the huts in the karias, while they clothed themselves in anything they could



Two Poor Women gathering Sticks.



A Motley Group of Natives.

pick up, such as fragments of old tents, or, what was a great luxury, discarded, ragged military blankets. Of food they were absolutely destitute, and were dependent on the charity of their neighbours, and as the whole population is always on the move, they were constantly deprived of these neighbours, and their sufferings were intense. This was one of the most pressing difficulties which confronted the Commissioner when he returned to take charge of the country. As I mentioned before, there are orphanages in Berbera, and the Jesuit fathers and also the nuns of the "Poor Clare" order both have schools, one for boys, the other for girls, where they receive orphans, or children voluntarily given up by their parents, and bring them up and educate them for various trades; but, naturally, the capacity of these schools is limited, and the benefit of them does not extend far from Berbera, and cannot touch the distress which existed in the interior. One of the British officers who had served most of his time on or near the waterless Haud, told me that he himself had seen hundreds of bodies of infants who had died from starvation, or thirst, in that neighbourhood. At first some of the poor women and children were employed in collecting grass for the ponies, and received enough for that work to get sufficient food to keep themselves alive, but there was nothing to look forward to in the future, the supply of grass was intermittent, and even when fairly plentiful the poor people could never hope by that work to attain a position of independence. It was simply useful as a temporary relief. The Commissioner then thought of the possibility of making use of the aloe fibre, and having ascertained that it would sell at a good price in London for the purpose of manufacturing rope, he organized a



Boy, Six or Seven Years Old.

large scheme of relief camps. About 100 women and children were placed in each camp under the care of a head man, who received the aloe brought in each day, and distributed the daily rations of rice, dates, and ghee (clarified butter). When any individual had collected a certain number of pounds, he or she was presented with a sheep, and thus the foundation of a permanent provision was given to him, and he was started again in life in the national manner. It is the custom when a child is born to parents more or less well to do (and I understand that inland, before the war, there were no paupers), a certain quantity of stock is ear-marked for the child; it may be a camel, a cow, a goat, or a sheep, or perhaps all four, and the progeny of that animal belongs entirely to that child as his or her own private property. By the time the child is six or seven years of age there is quite a nice little flock of animals (one small boy of about six, whom I photographed, was tending seven or eight calves, all of them his own property), and when the child attains a marriageable age, if a boy, he is sufficiently well off to start a karia of his own; and if a girl, she is endowed with such a good "dot" as to be quite a matrimonial catch. By adopting this system of relief, and giving bonuses of animals in addition to food and money for the aloe fibre collected, the recipients are not pauperized, but enabled, if they are industrious, to regain the position which they have lost through no fault of their own. I witnessed the formation of one of these camps, and saw how it was worked. All the "misakin" (the Arabic name for paupers) were assembled outside our zariba, and were seated on the ground in rows to be inspected by the Commissioner, and I walked round with him while he spoke to each little



Poor Women and Girl.

group, and not one attempted to beg, but greeted us with smiles, and seemed grateful for what was being done for them. In cases where there were tiny children absolutely alone in the world, some large-hearted mother was asked to adopt them into her family, not to support them, but to enable them to become members of her tribe, as many were too young to know who they were. A large number of tobes were brought up from Berbera, and these were distributed in the proportion of a whole one to the women, half to the men, of whom there were very few in the camp, and those generally partially disabled, and a quarter to the children. The latter sent a message by Abdulla to ask me to pay them a second visit and see them in their new clothes, and I shall not easily forget the delight the tiny creatures took in their dazzlingly white garments. The camps are formed at various points in the country where the fibre aloe is most abundant, but the particular camp to which these people were being taken was pitched beyond a place called Suksodi, and which was only about twenty-seven miles from Sheikh. The procession was headed by several camels carrying the rations, these were followed by the people apparently in the best of spirits, and the whole was under the charge of Abdulla, who returned to us in about a week, reporting that everything was started well, and going on satisfactorily. The work of collecting the fibre is not hard, as the leaves are simply bent backwards until they break off at the ground. This does not injure the plant, which sprouts up again vigorously during the next rainy season. After the leaves are collected the fleshy parts are scraped off by large flat wooden knives, and then the fibre which remains is knotted up into skeins, and these are eventually made into large bales for export.

The work of breaking off the aloe leaves and scraping them afterwards can easily be done even by small children, although they cannot of course get through as much in the day as their elders.

We had an object lesson one evening as to the necessity of starting these relief camps, or something similar. We were riding home towards the camp, and were going in single file along the narrow track which was just distinguishable in the darkness. Suddenly I noticed the Commissioner's horse swerve on one side, and then I saw it was shying at an object which looked like a very small ant-hill. I was puzzled at this, as ant-hills are not common just there, when I heard the smallest human voice I had ever listened to issuing from my supposed ant-hill, and when I came up to it I found it was a tiny girl, dressed in a fragment of an old tent, who was entreating the Commissioner to let her come inside our zariba. She began the conversation with him by saying she was a "misakin," and as she went on, she gave him to understand as well as she could, that she had no one belonging to her, and that several of the militia had kept her alive by giving her food, and that people in the neighbouring karias had given her shelter at night; but that now the grass was all gone, the sheep had been driven off elsewhere, and all the karias had disappeared, and as she was so dreadfully afraid of the hyænas, might she just lie down inside our zariba. The hyænas are a very real danger, and large numbers of poor children are eaten by them. Of course she was admitted, and was given over for that night to the care of Abdulla; I noticed as she passed the sentry, who was an unusually short man, that she did not come up to his waist by a couple of inches, and I wondered if she

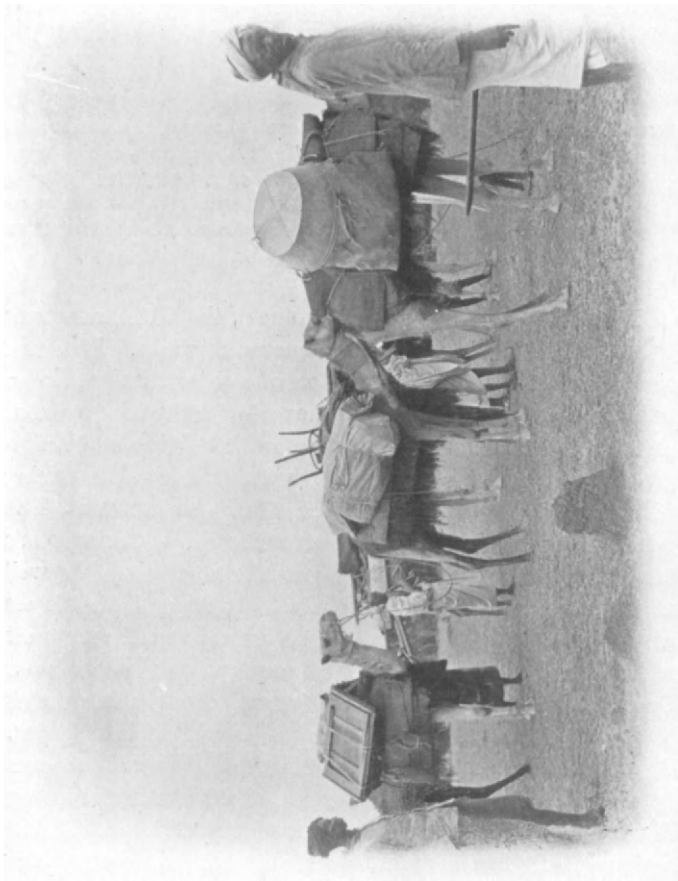
could possibly be even as much as three years of age. Fancy a baby like that, left absolutely alone in the world, and without any shelter! The next morning Abdulla made enquiries and found her tale to be true in every particular; she had no relation of any appreciable nearness, except an invalid sister incapable of work, and only a little older than herself. There was one man of her own tribe who lived in the neighbourhood, but he was himself a "misakin," having lost everything, and was getting a bare subsistence by collecting grass. She and her sister were assigned to the nearest relief camp, and when I saw her next she was trotting off quite cheerfully, adopted by some woman who had other children, and happy in the possession of a new tobe. The poor little mite's dread of the hyænas was not unfounded, for only a morning or two afterwards the Mulla, Hadji Jama, who has charge of one of the two small mosques at Sheikh, brought in another little girl with the greater part of one cheek much mutilated by a hyæna's bite. This poor child was sent up to the militia camp, and the doctor stationed there skilfully sewed up the wound, and she was doing well when I last heard of her.

CHAPTER V.

VISIT TO FRIENDS—START TO ASCEND WAGGAR, THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN—INSPECTION OF MILITARY PONIES—CAMP WITH NO WATER—CAMELS AS MOUNTAINEERS—SENDING OUT A SCOUT TO LOOK FOR RAIN—“ARABIA AROMATICA”—ASCENT OF FOUR PEAKS—A WOULD-BE MURDERER, AND A HORSE DEALER—SOMALIS AS LITTER BEARERS.

I MUST now begin to describe some of the little excursions we took away from the permanent camp. The first time I left it was on the occasion of my host having to go to Djbouti to pay a visit of ceremony to the French governor at the New Year, and as my cousins, the bride and bridegroom, very kindly asked me to stay with them during his absence, I gladly accepted their hospitality. The practice observed in this part of the world of taking one's tent, furniture, and all one's goods and chattels, as well as one's clothes, when a visit is paid to friends, struck me as very peculiar, and I was much amused at the amount of impedimenta which went on before me on this occasion. Captain and Mrs. B——'s camp was about three miles off, close to the quarters of the 6th King's African Rifles. The day before I started, Abdulla took over two tents to pitch in their compound for me, and the same morning I left, what then appeared to me a large caravan, headed by my personal servant, started with my belongings packed on camels and mules. I was not then used to seeing beds, chairs, baths, etc., moving about on animals' backs, and did not look upon it, as I did soon afterwards,

A Woman's Pleasure Trip



Part of Caravan—Author's personal Servant, "Hashi," at the extreme right.

as a most ordinary proceeding. I followed on my pony later in the day, accompanied by Jack and a groom, and found on my arrival not only a warm welcome from my cousins, but everything most comfortable in my tents, the servants arranging all my household goods as nearly alike to how I had been used to have them as possible. Somali servants are very observant, and are very particular to carry out every little thing exactly as they think you would do it yourself. When I first arrived, the servants, who had never seen a side saddle before, were somewhat puzzled with my safety stirrup; but they set themselves steadily to grapple with it, and soon mastered its mechanism, of which they highly approved. My eight days' visit to my cousins passed very pleasantly, but without incident, except that once when riding alone, I came across a great ant-eater, an animal which is very rarely seen in those parts. I was attracted by something moving under one of the bushes, and kept my pony very still, and the creature, busy snuffling along the ground, did not notice me until he was quite close and I had had a very good view of him. Happily on that occasion Jack was not with me, or I should have had no opportunity of getting within many yards of the animal.

My next departure from the permanent camp was when E—— arranged an excursion up Waggar, which is the highest mountain in the Golis range, and covers about twenty-five square miles of ground. The highest summit in the whole of the country behind Berbera, reaching to an altitude of about 6,800 feet, is part of this mountain. The budget for the ensuing year having been made out and sent home, and other important business attended to, the Commissioner thought he might give himself a short

holiday, and leave the camp at Sheikh for the days between the weekly mails, inspecting the Mounted Infantry grazing ponies on the way. So one Friday we sent off our caravans to the camping-place, and were to follow ourselves as soon after daybreak as possible. Of course some of the tribes took it into their heads to send in messengers that morning, and we were unable to get away before lunch. This necessitated our starting about 1.0 o'clock, and we had the hottest ride in my whole visit, but as the days generally begin to get a little cooler by 2.30 o'clock, and we never descended below 4000 feet, it was not as bad as it seems. That day, however, was an unlucky one; it started badly and went on badly. Our way lay first by the bazaar at the other side of the Sheikh plateau, where are congregated the only Somalis I saw to whom I did not take a fancy. They are of the "loafer" type, and get their living by selling meat and other things at high prices to their fellows travelling by, who are better men than they, and they also keep or encourage a number of pariah dogs which haunt their huts. We never liked taking Jack past the bazaar on account of these dogs, with whom he always fought, and whom I must say he generally killed; but that day we could go no other way. After passing the bazaar and going about half a mile, we came upon a very stony track we had to cross, and where "Ras Makonnen," the mule, had been ordered to meet us. That wily animal had, however, given the grooms the slip, and while we, under the shade of a thorn tree, waited for him to be caught, we missed Jack, and never found him again that day. A note was sent back to the Sheikh camp that evening, begging our friend, Mr. B——, to send out men in every direction to look for the dog. He did so, and one of them

found him and brought him back terribly wounded from an encounter with one of the pariahs. Blood poisoning ensued, and for one or two days he was not expected to live; but the doctor most kindly attended to his abscess, and on our return we found him convalescent, but a pitiable object to look at. I suppose he did not this time put an end to his enemy, for more than once he slipped his collar and went back to the bazaar for a renewal of hostilities long before he was fit to be about at all. Our having lost Jack took off some of the pleasure of our first ride, which, after getting across the rough, stony part, was principally along a wide valley called Suksodi, between two ranges of hills, where, on account of the abundance of grass, most of the ponies belonging to the mounted companies were stationed. Unlike most rides we took, the nature of the ground allowed us to canter the greater part of the way, and we were not very long arriving at our first resting-place, sixteen miles off, which our head man had fixed about half a mile from the camp of the British officer who had the superintendence of the ponies. As soon as our arrival was noticed, men went out in all directions, and before long the valley seemed to be alive with horses coming in on every side for inspection by the Commissioner. After some food we strolled up to the officer's camp, and there found about 500 riding ponies, most of them in good condition, about 100 mares each with a foal, and a certain number of mules, some of whom had been used rather hardly and had got sore backs in consequence, and which had been sent out to Suksodi for rest, and where, with care, it was expected they would in time become fit for work again. The Commissioner thought it wisest to camp for the night rather nearer the mountain,

so as to leave less for the next day's journey; therefore, before we started to look at the ponies, he gave orders that the tents should be carried on another five miles and pitched on some rising ground amongst some patches of curious looking shrubs called ergin. These are of a brilliant green in colour, and consist of long round stems about the thickness of ordinary cord. The green is speckled with small brown *spots*, and in outward appearance only differs in this respect from an edible plant which has *stripes* of brown on the green stalk. The speckled sort is deadly poison, and can be known by its milking freely when wounded, which the other does not; indeed, it is almost an invariable rule that if a plant bleeds it is poisonous, and has to be avoided. These two shrubs occasionally grow together, and it is very curious to note how, with unerring instinct, the animals will greedily feed upon the one and avoid the other. Ergin often affords covert for lions, but to my great disappointment I never saw any of these noble beasts. There is nothing Somalis like so much as to be moving on, or hate more than staying quietly in one place, consequently they were not in the least put out by having to take down all the tents and pitch them afresh five miles further on; the only difference they made, was to send on the mules with all the eatables, etc., first, so that when we arrived our dinner was ready, and while we were dining our tents were pitched and arranged. This spot was the only camping-ground I was at, where there was no water; of course the men knew this fact beforehand, and arranged for it by taking a couple of camels specially to carry the water tins containing water for our use, and for cooking purposes; but we were the only living creatures provided for, no

other man or beast had a drop, and as far as we could see, it made no difference to their comfort. One man to whom I spoke said, "We drank yesterday, and shall drink to-morrow; plenty of water to-morrow, it's all right." As Abdulla was much employed at the Sheikh camp, and had so many things to look after, we took for our head man this time Adan Yusuf, who had, twenty-one years before, been head man to Colonel S——, R.E., brother to the Commissioner, and had since then accompanied him with the Rodd Mission to Abyssinia and other exploring parties. He came up after dinner to receive his orders for the next day, and then inquired most particularly of me about Colonel S——, and enlarged upon his prowess as a sportsman. Except for his appearance, and even that was more European than Abdulla's, Adan Yusuf might have been a very superior upper servant in England. His manner was extremely quiet, he managed all the men under him without once raising his voice, and all the machinery of the caravan worked without a hitch. The next day's expedition began with a ride of about five miles to the part where the ascent of the mountain begins in earnest. This was rather a pleasant ride amongst bushes, very much covered with creepers, through which we had to pick our way, and across gently rising ground, broken by only a few bad nullahs. There was little forage, consequently we saw few livestock, but a herd of baboons with some large males crossed from one haunt to another, just in front of our horses. When we came to the steep part of our track, we were obliged to dismount, for clever as the ponies are at getting up hills, this was too much even for them if they had riders on their backs. My first wonder was how our cow was going to accomplish



Adan Yusuf, Dolbahanta Tribe, standing by Ant-hill.

the feat, but I was reminded that as there were a good many herds of cattle grazing on different parts of the mountain, she could do what other cows managed to accomplish; and so it turned out. She was slow, but she was sure, and she gave no difficulty. The real puzzle was how to get the tents up. The sleeping tent which I used on these expeditions was, although of course not nearly as large as the one in which I slept at Sheikh, much larger than men generally have for difficult country, and this path, if it could be so called, would have been too steep for camels of any other country, even if they had had no burdens. Constantly I had to use my hands as well as my feet in getting up the rocks, so that I was not altogether surprised when we overtook our baggage camels at a particularly difficult part; the poor things had to turn and twist, with these heavy tent poles on them, where there was scarcely an inch to spare. I kept on thinking that they must strike the rock on one side and so push themselves over the precipice on the other. We passed them with a little manœuvring, and they eventually caught us up in the grassy glade where we stopped for luncheon. The only accident to any of our goods and chattels was that a camel had caught my hold-all on the point of an overhanging rock and split the canvas some few inches. The handy Dogali, the tent-maker, however, mended it so strongly and well that it has served me perfectly well ever since, but poor Adan Yusuf seemed quite upset when he came to tell me about this *contre-temps*. The place where we stopped for our midday halt was a picturesque glade between large rocky walls, with a fair amount of trees and, best of all, some good wells of water; so that we had the pleasure of watching all

our faithful friends, both man and beast, go off to the pools and refresh themselves after their long thirst. As the caravan was behind us instead of being in front, as usual, we had some hours to wait, and Askar made us comfortable in his accustomed manner. These midday halts afforded us many opportunities of indulging in some good solid reading, as we were on those occasions free from interruptions. They also gave opportunities to the servants to show their willing and intelligent service. As soon as we dismounted we invariably found under the tree which threw the deepest shade, and if possible with the finest view, a military blanket spread, on one side of which was arranged E——'s overcoat, rifle, cartridges, and the book which he happened to be reading at that time, while on the other side of the blanket was set out my saddle with a cushion on the pomels, making a comfortable back on which to lean, my coat, walking-stick, photographic camera, and the book in which I was then interested. I never gave orders about these things. Askar simply collected them from our tents before we started, loaded them on his own mule, and then took care not to be separated from us, so that we never had to wait about for him. All this showed great thoughtfulness and anxiety for our comfort, but what surprised me the most was that he never by any chance gave one of us the other's book, even, as was often the case, when they were bound alike. Yet he was absolutely ignorant of English, and could, therefore, get no help from the titles of the books. When it was time to go on we simply mounted our steeds, leaving everything on the ground, and did not see them again until we reached our tents for the night, but there they were always to be found in their accustomed

places. I have never in my life been so spoilt as I was in Somaliland! On the day I am describing, we were sitting in a bit of dense shade, and as we were in advance of our party and very quiet, I suppose the inhabitants of the glade were unaware of our presence, for presently two men emerged from a karia a little way off which we had not at first noticed. One was very aged, apparently nearly blind, and was hobbling along with two sticks, the other was quite a young man, and as he was fully equipped with his prayer-carpet, his rosary, the chaplet containing a text of the Koran, his spears and shield, we guessed he was starting on a journey. When they got to the top of one of the rocky walls, from whence they could see a good distance, the old man began declaiming in a loud voice, and what he said to the young man, E—— afterwards told me, was to the following effect: "Go forth in the name of the Lord. It is the Lord that sendeth rain upon the earth. It is the Lord that feedeth the flocks and herds, blessed be the Lord. Go forth and see where the Lord hath sent the rain, then come back and tell us where the Lord hath been merciful, that we, and all our cattle, and all our sheep, may rejoice in the goodness of the Lord. Go forth in peace." So we had witnessed the solemn sending of a scout to find out the exact locality of the rainfall. All the day before we had noticed heavy rain clouds passing from one part of the Golis range to another with unmistakable showers at intervals, and no doubt the young man would before going thirty or forty miles, come upon some place where the grass was already beginning to sprout, and then he would return and fetch the karia and all its inmates. I noticed that he had no provisions of any sort for his journey, and I was

told that he was depending upon the charity of anyone whose karia he passed, and who would never grudge him milk, and with that he would be quite content. It seems to me that it requires no small amount of faith to start in such a manner on a journey probably lasting many days, and where no habitations are permanent, and it is impossible to reckon with any certainty where a karia is to be found. As the old man was hobbling back to his hut, the Commissioner called to him and entered into conversation with him, and discovered that he was a relation of one of the government gamekeepers, who are dotted about here and there to prevent any infringement of the International Game Laws, which were passed two or three years ago for the preservation of game in the African Protectorates. It was now the close season, and if the report of a gun was heard anywhere the gamekeeper had to be up and off, and not rest until he had discovered the delinquent. During the last twenty years there has been such an enormous decrease in the number of antelopes, etc., that had nothing been done many species would, in a few years, have become extinct. Twenty years ago large herds of various sorts of antelopes were roaming all over the plateau at Sheikh, but now it is the rarest thing to see two, or at most three, individuals together, and the same remark applies to many other districts of Somaliland.

When our caravan at length arrived, our servants immediately made friends with the gamekeeper's family, the girls of the karia came out and made themselves agreeable, and everyone seemed to be having great fun. But when Adan Yusuf appeared, he looked very grave, and told us that although our own camels had come up so far without mishap, contrary to his expectations, yet as

we had twice as far still to go, with quite as bad a path, he was afraid they could not do the rest of the journey. He, however, had a way out of the difficulty, and had ascertained that he could at this spot hire some mountain camels which were used to climbing, and leave ours in the charge of their owner until our return. Of course E—— consented to this plan, which was adopted with the greatest success, and all our possessions were carried safely up to the camp, which was pitched at a height of more than 6000 feet above sea level, and within 800 feet of the highest point in middle Somaliland. After being refreshed by our long midday rest, we started again on our stiff climb. Every mile we went the vegetation became more and more dense, and our progress became slower. After about two hours we emerged from the jungle to find ourselves on a nice grassy slope, on one side of which the ground fell rapidly away, disclosing a very extensive view over the Suksodi valley and the hills beyond. I was enchanted with the place, and begged that we might camp there, but E—— said no, a climb for another hour or so would bring us to a still more beautiful spot, from whence we should be able to ascend four or more of the summits of Waggar, and which had a good supply of water close by. So, reluctantly, I wished good-bye to this pretty place, and again plunged into the forest. We were now getting into the cedar district, and these beautiful trees, together with hill oak, very aged olives, and a certain number of euphorbias, made up the higher growth of the woods. The undergrowth was supplied principally by myrtle and daphne, the latter in full bloom, while my favourite “waba” and some eucalyptus seemed to fill up the gaps between the two.

Just on the edges of the woods, where the sun could get at them, many of the bushes were covered with ordinary white jasmin out in flower; so some idea can be formed of the multiplicity of delicious scents which met one at every turn, and in which we revelled. Truly did the ancients call this country with its scents, its gum Arabic, myrrh, and frankincense, "Arabia aromatica." As I said before, this was not the best season for blossom, but quite a blue tint was given to some parts by the flowers of the plumbago plants which were not yet over.

After a pretty stiff climb through the jungle, broken once or twice by our coming to small open spaces covered with short green grass, we at last emerged into a glade which made quite a perfect camping-ground. It was about 200 yards wide, more or less, and a quarter of a mile long, gently sloping towards the west. At the bottom was a very good water pool amongst rocks, apparently with an inexhaustible supply of water, grass well grazed entirely covered the open ground, which was broken up with clumps of trees here and there, and about five paths led into the jungle in different directions. As we were ahead of our caravan, we utilized the time of waiting by starting to ascend what we thought was the highest summit; our only follower being Askar, carrying the gun, camera, etc., as usual, but as E—— had been up every height in the neighbourhood during his surveying trips in order to fix his instruments, he thought we could dispense with a local guide. The so-called paths are merely passages made through the dense vegetation by the cattle, and consequently we could scarcely ever stand upright in them, and even when I stooped, the two men had constantly to beat away the creepers with sticks

before I could get on. We first of all had to ascend some way, then descend, when we came to an open space, and could see the peak towering above us quite near, but at a stiff angle, the trees reaching to about 15 feet of the top, the actual summit being formed of enormous boulders of granite. We followed a cattle path which was rather illusory, but after many windings came to the foot of the boulders, when a marvellous panorama was opened out before us. Owing to the boulders and the huge trees we could not see far to the right or left of us, but immediately in front there was nothing to obscure the view. The ground fell away suddenly in a sort of chimney about 2000 feet long, disclosing a view of the maritime plains and the different ranges of mountains which break them up, nearly as far as to the sea. Although about eighty-four miles have to be traversed to get from Berbera to the spot where we were, as it is necessary to go through Sheikh, and ascend the mountain from the sloping or south side, I suppose Berbera was not much more than forty miles north north-west as the crow flies, and on a clear day the harbour can be distinguished. The many ranges of hills seem to rise up in billows one after the other, getting more and more covered with vegetation, and the trees being larger and larger the nearer they were to our mountain, and yet there was no hill sufficiently high to shut out any appreciable part of the view, the shoulders of Waggar itself being far below us, and quite unapproachable from where we were. We sat and gazed on the lovely scene, scarcely caring to speak ; consequently the birds came all round us, and we noticed several beautiful specimens which I had not seen before, one which hovered about from twig to twig for some time, being very much like a small



Servants' Quarters at Gargou Camp on the Waggar Mountain.

bird of Paradise. After a bit, Askar jumped up and ran up the nearest granite boulder and then leant over to help me, and with his assistance I managed to do the same, but on our arrival at the top we discovered, to our disappointment, that we had ascended the second highest peak of Waggar, instead of the highest. However, we had enjoyed our climb immensely, and as we had one whole day and part of another to spend on the mountain, we felt we had plenty of time for the higher summit; so we sauntered back to the camping-ground, to find our tents pitched in a lovely spot, and a most welcome smoke, telling of dinner preparations, rising up from the servants' quarters. The sun was just setting and casting very long shadows, and I risked the light being good enough for photographing. I am glad I did so, for the two I then took turned out successes, but they are the only two I have of the beautiful Waggar district. I put in a new roll of films into my camera that evening, and I suppose did not fix them in quite rightly, for as I turned them round after exposing the films they became stiffer and stiffer, and at last the roll broke in two between Nos. 8 and 9, and the whole were spoiled. I did not attempt to remove them until the full moon was over, and the nights had become dark, and then, although the operation was performed by the light of a lamp obscured by a chuprassi's red turban, these precautions were in vain, and as I said before, every one was ruined.

At the height of over 6000 feet the evenings soon begin to get chilly, however hot it has been in the day, and we were glad to have our camp fires lighted before we began dinner. As usual, I dressed for dinner, but the wind was so cold that I was obliged to supplement my costume by the



Camp at Gargou on the Waggar Mountain.

addition of my warm dressing-gown worn as a substitute for an "evening wrap." Here was my first experience of the luxury of having cedar wood to burn. Any of my readers can imagine the delicious scent of burning cedar, and although the Commissioner never allowed boughs to be cut off the trees, there was enough wood fallen on the ground to supply any number of fires. While we were at dinner a militia man came up briskly and saluted, giving E—— some letters; he looked as smart and fresh as if he had only turned out from the nearest karia, but he had really marched all the way from Sheikh camp that day. First of all he had tramped along that hot valley past Suksodi, and had then climbed those dreadful paths up the mountain to where we were encamped. It was almost impossible to believe it, for after the thirty-four miles he looked so absolutely untired. We heard from Sheikh this way each day, and I was specially glad to get bulletins of "Jack." That night we had a regular Scotch mountain mist, and I felt very sorry for the men who had, as usual, no tents, but were cowering under rocks and bushes, and making the best protection against the rain which was possible, by fixing up the camel mats as overhead shelters. The sentries had the benefit of the large fire just outside our tents, and as they had no one else with whom to share its comforts, they were better off than the others, who were perhaps six or eight round one fire. Our tents kept out all moisture from penetrating to the inside, but several bucketsful of water might have been collected from the drippings on the outside of the canvas. This may constantly happen simply from the effect of the heavy dew, even when there is no rain. The next morning broke in a thick mist, so

thick that one could scarcely distinguish the trees close by; but as it was Sunday morning, I was not sorry to have to remain quietly in camp for a few hours before starting on our walks. However, soon after the second breakfast it cleared, the sun came out, and we started for the real summit which we had missed the day before. In order to make no mistake this time, a man from a neighbouring karia was engaged as a local guide, and we decided on taking our lunch and tea with us, and have our food whenever we felt inclined. This necessitated our having an attendant company of about fifteen men, each carrying some utensil or article of food, and if they were either militia or camel-corps men they had their rifles and ammunition as well. The guide went first with a kettle full of water, then Askar with the sporting gun, camera, coats, etc., E—— and I followed, and the militia man immediately behind me occupied himself the whole time in gently disengaging me from the thorns, and which was a never-ending occupation. It was too hot to wear a coat, and when I tore my thin silk blouse, you might almost have imagined from this man's look of distress, that he would have to provide me with another. Immediately behind this friend came a man carrying a jugful of milk, who would be followed by others with teacups, plates, dishes, tins of meat, loaves, and tins of butter, knives, forks, etc., which gave a most comical effect to the procession; but the wonderful part was, that neither the guide with the kettle, nor the man with the milk jug, spilled as much as a tablespoonful of the contents during the whole scramble!

The first part of our walk was in the same direction as the one we took the evening before, but on arriving at the first open space we made for a different peak, which

to us looked lower than the one which we had already ascended. We had again to force our way through dense undergrowth while ascending rapidly the whole time, and again we found enormous boulders of granite forming the very top of the mountain. They were piled one on top of the other, the topmost one looking as if it had perpendicular sides. The guide, however, did not find it impracticable; he put the kettle down, certainly, and then took the boulder at a run on all fours, not unlike the way a lizard would have done it. Our own men looked enviously at him, and evidently hated to be beaten by a man of another tribe; so they climbed up the lower boulders, and found that the other side of the highest rock was not quite so perpendicular as it appeared, and at last, by the help of boughs of trees, they too joined the guide on the top. Of course E—— was not satisfied to be left behind, but as his boots handicapped him altogether too much, he took them off and then succeeded in negotiating the slippery rocks. By this time I was the only member of the party left quite below, and as I could not see over the tops of the trees, and consequently had no view, I thought I would try if I could not, at any rate, get up to the top of the secondary rocks; so I began by climbing a small tree which was growing conveniently between some of the boulders, and from that I managed to get upon the second highest rock, though at the bottom of an extremely smooth steep slope. E—— afterwards told me that the men took sides, some believing I should be able to manage the scramble, others that I couldn't; but happily for my friends who believed in me, I was wearing the boots which Dogali had soled, and as he had used soft undressed leather, I found that the soles quite

clung to the rock, and I got up easily. I was rewarded with a glorious view over the whole of the surrounding country, and saw that there was no doubt whatever that we really were on the highest summit of Waggar, and therefore of the whole country. E—— wished to mark it in some way for the benefit of those who might come after, and he had only to express the wish, when the guide ran down the same way he went up, rooted up a young tree, stripped it of leaves, carried it up, and wedged it into some crack, fixing it in tightly, so that it stands some feet above the highest part of the rock. Just at this time I delighted all our own followers by remarking to E—— that the guide was exactly like a monkey in his movements. Those few who understood what I said translated it for the benefit of the others who, rejoicing in nicknames, as all Somalis do, called him “dayyur,” or monkey-man, for the rest of the time he was with us. I must say he did not resent this, but laughingly acknowledged the soubriquet, and seemed to enjoy it quite as much as the others. After enjoying the view for some little time, we plunged into the forest again by a different track to the one we had used in climbing up, made a rapid descent, followed by a stiff ascent, and found ourselves on a third summit. By that time I thought we had earned some food, and the guide was directed to take us to the nearest open space, which he did, and brought us to a grassy place enclosed by enormous trees, not unlike our camping-ground. We had hardly settled down to our books while waiting for the fire to be made and luncheon cooked, when we heard the well-known bark of baboons in the wood close to us. E—— and I crept quickly up to where the noise was coming from, and hiding

under a bush we were rewarded by seeing a large number of the animals, amongst which were several huge males with manes of white hair which gave them the appearance of wearing shoulder capes. These were quarrelling and snarling amongst themselves, and did not trouble about us at all. When we had watched them out of sight, we returned to our tree and books, but we were not to have much reading that day, for we had scarcely settled ourselves when a man rushed up to the Commissioner in a tremendous rage, brandishing his spears and looking most formidable. He had come to make the mild request that he might be allowed to kill a man. On being questioned as to the man's offence, he said that the delinquent had hunted his cows with stones until they had become overheated, and that he must be killed in consequence. The Commissioner said, "Go, bring your cows to me, and let me see how far they have suffered." Off he went, and in the course of about half an hour returned with a herd of extremely nice looking heifers. Whether the fact of his having to drive them quietly cooled his anger, or whether his rage usually did not last long we knew not, but he was not nearly so murderous as when we saw him first, and in fact when the Commissioner chaffed him about the affair, and asked him if he really thought that nothing but a man's death would recover the cows from their indisposition, he saw the joke, burst out laughing, and so that incident ended. This individual had not long taken himself off when another man attracted our attention to himself and his horse, the latter of which he wanted to persuade us to buy. He showed off its paces with great effect, and performed several pretty feats of horsemanship. But we were not buyers, and had



Boy Tending his own Calves.

we been, I doubt if our suspicions as to the soundness of the animal would not have been aroused by the smallness of the sum asked, namely, R.30, or £2. After a time all our self-invited visitors left us, and our meal was served ; after which we strolled leisurely back to our camp, talking to various people we met, including one little fellow of about seven years of age who was taking charge of a dozen nearly full-grown calves. He was very shy at first, and would not vouchsafe any answer except that his name was Jama, but was eventually made happy by the present of a pencil, the only thing E—— had with him which he could offer the child.

That evening during dinner another militia man arrived with letters from Sheikh, just as fresh and as little distressed by his long walk and climb as his brother of the night before. Before finally leaving the mountain the next morning, and after all the animals, both baggage and riding, had been dispatched, we made yet another ascent, that of the fourth peak of Waggar, so that I think we can rightly boast that we know, very fairly well, the highest mountain in Central Somaliland. The return journey down to the waterless camp at the foot was accomplished without incident, except that Adan Yusuf made a mistake in the orders, and instead of leaving our ponies at the foot of the very steep part of the track, he took them on with him the whole way to the night camp, and we were obliged to walk, instead of riding, the last five miles ; but he is such an excellent fellow, and so rarely makes a blunder, that we pretended both to him and to the other men, that we always meant to walk the extra distance to which this mistake committed us.

The next day's journey, the last of our pleasant outing,

was quite different to the others, as we were able to canter the greater part of the twenty-one miles which lay between our sleeping quarters and the permanent camp at Sheikh. We first called at Suksodi, and found that Captain B——, the officer in charge there of the military ponies, was that day being removed to Sheikh to be attended medically. The week before he had met with an accident at polo, and the consequent shock had brought on rather a sharp attack of fever, and as he was the only white man at Suksodi, the doctor thought it better for him to be in the militia camp with white companions; we were therefore told that he had started an hour or two before our arrival. We soon overtook him, and found that he was being carried in his ordinary camp bed, which was rather heavy for the purpose, the poles being very strong. There is so little sickness in Somaliland that it is not thought necessary to provide ambulance dhoolies, but there did not seem to be much difficulty about the porters. About every half mile we met parties of eight militia men who were waiting to relieve one another at this work. There were two men to each carrying pole, and I watched them change twice, and was pleased to see how carefully they did it, without causing any discomfort to the patient. Happily the change of air and scene had the desired effect, and in a few days Captain B—— was out and about again. We were loath to come to the end of our pleasant outing, and so we made one more halt during the heat of the day about six miles from home, under the shade of euphorbias and near some water, where we were joined at luncheon by Major O'N——, who had ridden out to meet us. This officer had been through every campaign which had taken place in Somaliland, and had just returned from leave to

England. He knows the country and people well, talks their language, and is most enthusiastic about the good qualities of the Somalis, with whom he has often been quite alone for months. His "boy," or personal servant, was a young Dervish who had some time before deserted from the Mulla's camp, and had insisted upon going into the Major's service, whether he liked it or no. This lad was extremely good-looking, although in rather a feminine style, and his love of finery was quite ridiculous; he managed to make an extraordinary collection of scarves, veils, etc., of various hues, and appeared in quaint combinations of colour and form, especially in the matter of headgear, which were most amusing, but however bizarre his appearance might be, no one could deny its picturesqueness, and he apparently knew that fact!

As we neared the Sheikh plateau we were very pleased to see the difference in colour which had taken place during our four days' absence, for the general effect was now green, owing to the refreshing rain which had fallen whilst we were up on Waggar. Certainly in Somaliland one realizes to the full the meaning of the Psalmist's expression when he says, "the clouds drop fatness."

CHAPTER VI.

SUNDAY PICNICS—NATURAL WAY OF ASCERTAINING THE TIME—
 RESSALDAR-MAJOR MUSA FARAH—HIS DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE
 FESTIVITIES—LAST INTERVIEWS WITH AHMED.

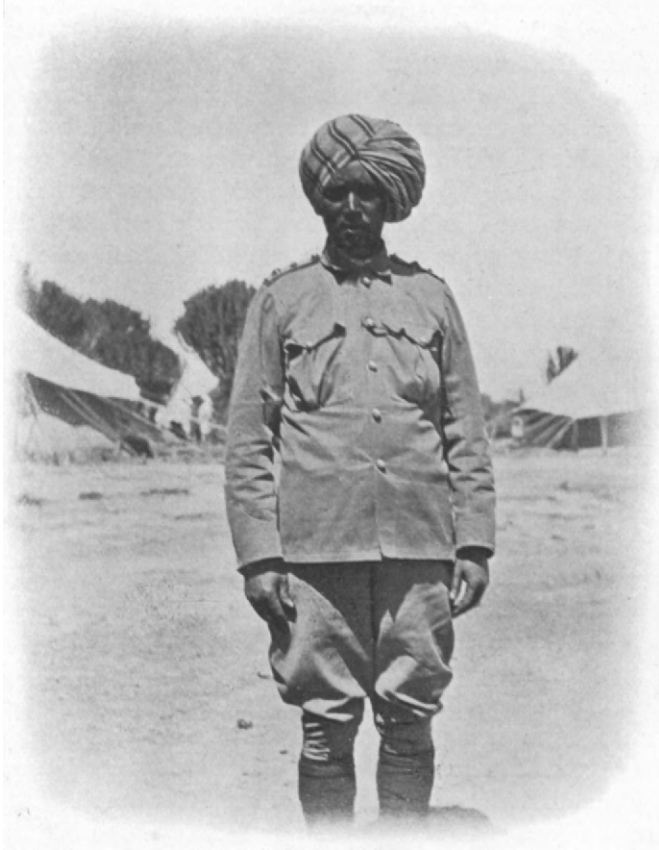
A FEW weeks elapsed before we were able to make another expedition and camp further out into the jungle, but we varied our life each week by spending the Sundays somewhere away from the large camp. The Commissioner never allowed any work to be done, and kept Sunday, at any rate as a day of *rest*. In consequence there was a general exodus; but not only used the officers to ride out some distance to see friends, but the clerks, typists, telegraphists, etc., all took their day out. One Sunday was much like another, except that we usually chose a different spot for our quiet picnic. Therefore it is unnecessary to describe more than one, which I will do in the words of a letter I wrote home at the time. We did not go in for elaborate preparations, but only sent on Deria and another servant with a mule carrying a simple luncheon and tea (which is always a combined meal here), and started ourselves on our ponies about 12.45. After riding a few miles we left our ponies in charge of a man, and walked round the shoulder of a mountain to the entrance of a ravine, where under the shade of some magnificent trees we found our meal spread out and the kettle boiling. It was not the spot E—— intended, but Deria had placed natives about on the hills to direct

us, and as he had chosen a place with a lovely distant view, we did not grumble. After we had fed and rested a bit, we went off to see other ravines where the trees were simply gorgeous. Fig-trees had boles over 30 feet in circumference, and there were olives still bigger, and as the olives in Somaliland have bright green foliage instead of the grey-green of Italy, they are far prettier. I tried hard to photograph, but the trees were too big for my camera, the shadows were so deep that the light became troublesome, and the results were not very successful. About half-way down one ravine we came to a regular sloping lawn of real grass leading down to some water holes in the dry river bed, and bordered on every side with huge fig-trees, olives, and euphorbias. It had the appearance of a garden in some tropical country, and it might have been in a park in Europe had the euphorbias, with their straight lines and bright red or yellow blossoms at the end of every branch, been omitted. The garden had for ornaments some seven or eight beautiful figures of children, who looked like bronze statues, they were so immovable; but after they had inspected us and satisfied themselves that we were not dangerous, they rushed down to the water hole where their mothers were busy filling their "hans." These are vessels made of grass, so tightly woven that they will hold liquid without leaking, and are used for carrying water or milk. They are often ornamented with cowry shells, and have leather straps with which to fasten on the lids, and also by which they can be carried. After E—— had talked a little to the women, we clambered up the side of this ravine, which must have been still more beautiful two months before when the river bed was a rushing torrent, and all the flowers were

A Woman's Pleasure Trip

out. Soon after gaining the top, we came to a fairly large karia, which we entered, and found one girl making pretty mats for her prospective home, for shyly she informed us she was very soon going to have a karia of her own. These mats are also woven out of grass, and on the inside have a pattern something like Manilla matting. When made into a hut the patterned side shows on the inside, while the outside has a surface with the ends placed over one another, giving the appearance of a thatched roof, and which serves admirably for shooting the rain. There was a second girl busily employed in crushing "harud" (millet) in a sort of wooden mortar, and besides these two, who might have been the sisters of the head of the karia, there were eight children, the eldest looking about ten years old, the youngest on its mother's back, who herself looked quite young. They none of them were frightened or even shy, answered all E——'s questions quite pleasantly, and told Askar they hoped we would come and see them again. After clambering about some little time longer, up and down nullahs and watercourses, we picked up our ponies and got back just as it was getting dark. We scarcely ever stayed out after it was really dark, partly because of the man-eating leopards called "argoba," who frequent these hills and claim many victims, and at Sheikh, partly because it did not do to wander off the track, as the ponies might easily meet with accidents amongst the rocky ravines. The time for our return to camp, as for every other event, was regulated solely by the position of the sun in the heavens. I found that scarcely any of the Europeans even, were keeping their watches going, and when I appealed to any of them to ask the time, they looked up at the sky before answering.

I also tried to be independent of artificial timekeepers, but found that this natural way of ascertaining the time, like everything else, wants practice. However, I discovered that once a week, in order to save the trouble of taking altitudes with a theodolite, the little steamer brought over the correct time from Aden, and then telegraphed it up to Sheikh, so afterwards I used to keep my watches correct by this means. By means of Dairs' sun's true bearings there is no difficulty in finding the time in the morning or evening, but this method requires the looking up of figures and keeping of books. Of course the natives can guess at the hour even better than the Europeans; their expressions are somewhat vague, such as "an hour before sunrise," or "two hours after sunset," etc., but in practice it is wonderful how punctual they are; meals are always ready to the minute, and if the time varied it was the fault of the Europeans, not of the servants. I believe Deria had a watch; at any rate, he wore a silver watch-chain with a dollar of Menelek's as a charm, and the Ressaldar-Major wore one, and really used it, but those two were the only natives that I know who had watches, although more than one wore empty watch wristlets, probably as charms, and were proud of them. Mentioning the Ressaldar-Major reminds me that I have not yet described that very interesting personage. His name is Musa Farah (*Anglicé*, Moses, son of Pharaoh); he belongs to the Habr Yunis tribe, and has been in the English service for more than twenty years, and during that time has taken part in almost every engagement in the country. When I arrived at Sheikh, he was stationed at Burao, keeping an eye on things in general, but about the time that we returned



Ressaldar-Major Musa Farah.

from Waggar, he brought in his militia for their monthly firing at the butts, and I saw a good deal of him. He was not very fluent with his English, but I could quite well make out what he meant, notwithstanding that occasionally he used curious expressions; but the matter of his conversations was most interesting, as he had been an eye-witness of many stirring incidents. He naturally understood the native mind, and could often give valuable advice as to the direction to which different things were trending; he is thoroughly loyal, and his willing co-operation is of the greatest assistance to the European rulers. For his long and faithful service the Commissioner obtained the King's permission to present him with a sword of honour, an illuminated address, and a purse of 2000 rupees. This was done in open Durbar before all the Europeans of Berbera, and an immense number of his fellow-countrymen, and he is intensely proud of his decorations. He brought the address to show me. It was nicely illuminated, having been done in London, and the wording was both in English and Arabic. While I was looking at it, one of the officers came into the tent and began to chaff him about it, and asked him if he did not think the address rather a waste of money, for it had cost five camels to get it painted, but he proudly answered that he wouldn't part with it for 500. Here I rather touched upon a sore point, as I said of course it would always be an heirloom in his family, and he sadly told me that he had no son, and only one daughter, who was going to be married the following week to a merchant at Berbera. I then hastened to retrieve my mistake by saying that her family in future generations would prize it; but evidently daughter's children are not the same

in his eyes as son's children would be. He is thoroughly well mannered; never thought of sitting down before I asked him to do so; or let me get up for a moment without standing all the time, and was exceedingly quiet in speech. There have been so few ladies in Somaliland, and he has been so perpetually on active service, that I cannot think where he learnt his manners; but I suppose that, like all Somalis, he is very observant and also imitative, and he has tried to do exactly what he sees English gentlemen do on similar occasions. The marriage of the daughter began the following week at Berbera, and the different religious ceremonies and festivities lasted nearly a month. Musa Farah gave a great many receptions, and altogether entertained 3000 people. One of his receptions was for Europeans only. My cousins, Captain and Mrs. B—— happened to be at Berbera and went to it, and they told me it was uncommonly well done. They were received by Musa Farah and the bridegroom in a large tent decorated with plants and flags, and had coffee, sherbet, and other refreshments. But they did not see the bride, which I was surprised to hear, as Somali women are not kept shut up.

Musa Farah has built one of the best houses in Berbera; his daughter and son-in-law live there permanently, and he makes his home with them when he has any time to himself; but he cannot be there much, as one hears of him at one time at one end of Somaliland, and hundreds of miles away two or three days after. He rides usually a fast trotting camel, which he does not over-burden with baggage, his rations being nil, for he told me that like most inland Somalis, for months he had lived upon nothing but milk. He is a Hadji, having performed the

pilgrimage to Mecca last year. This pilgrimage is often attended with disastrous results, and ought to count to the credit of those who perform it for conscience' sake. The pilgrims have not only to run the gauntlet of various armed bands of brigands who infest the country between Jeddah, the seaport where most of the pilgrims land, and Mecca, and between Mecca and Medina, but they are liable to catch all sorts of dangerous diseases while waiting about at Jeddah for ships to bring them away.

About this time we were much shocked to hear of the death of the faithful Ahmed, who had got as far as Jeddah on his return journey from the pilgrimage when he succumbed to some virulent complaint which he had contracted there. His travelling companion came to see us, and said he thought cholera was the cause of his death, but when he added that Ahmed had been ill for a week, I rather doubted the diagnosis, as I think cholera would have done its work in a day or two at the utmost. Poor Ahmed ! how well I remember the last two occasions on which I saw him. The first was at our camping-ground at Dubar, where he had walked out eight miles in the hottest part of the day to ask me for the key of the box which I had left at Berbera under his care, because he said I had forgotten to lock it. I replied that it didn't matter, I knew everything was quite safe, and he said, Yes, it would probably be safe, but as he should not be there, he preferred leaving it locked. So I gave him the key, and asked him to leave it in the care of Ali, the other servant, who would look after the house in his absence. However, about a week afterwards at Sheikh, I was sitting reading under the shade of a big euphorbia during the midday heat ; I heard no noise of approaching footsteps,

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but a delicate-looking black hand appeared between my eyes and the book, and looking up I saw Ahmed's smiling face and piercing eyes quite close to me. He had brought back my key, walking forty-five miles—and such a forty-five miles!—to do this little errand! I laughingly scolded him for taking so much trouble, and then he said, “But I felt I must see the General Sahib once more. You know I am going to Mecca, and I may never see him again.” I then replied, “Oh, don't talk like that; he will not be gone on leave before you come back; you are only going for two months, aren't you? We shall be sure to see you again.” His face became very grave, and his only answer was “Inshallah,” (God willing), and I felt rebuked.

CHAPTER VII.

ROUGH ROAD—UNUSUAL RAIN—LAYING A TELEGRAPH WIRE UNDER DIFFICULTIES—NUMBER OF ANIMALS FORMING CARAVAN—DESCRIPTION OF DARA-ASS—GARDEN AT ARMALI—ENERGETIC GARDENERS—POSSIBILITIES OF DARA-ASS AS A HEALTH RESORT—STORM AT DARA-ASS—VISIT OF AN ADEN FRIEND—RETURN TO SHEIKH.

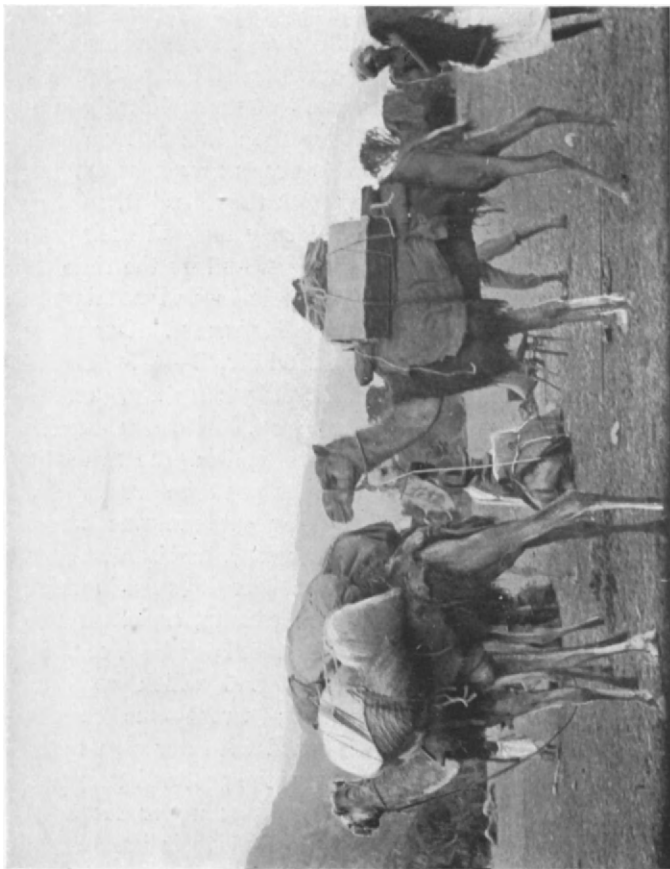
AFTER some stay at Sheikh, the Commissioner gave orders for our departure to a favourite spot of his, some miles to the east, called Dara-Ass, from the redness of its earth—*ass* being Somali for red. As he proposed to stay over a mail-day, it was necessary to take the light field telegraph wire, and of course the telegraph and other clerks. It is about eighteen miles from Sheikh to Dara-Ass, but such a journey cannot be estimated by mere miles, and it was thought too severe for me to accomplish in one day. Both our starting-place and our destination lay over 4,000 feet above sea level, and both were situated on shoulders of the Golis range; but between the two there are, besides smaller valleys, about seven important ones hundreds of feet deep, which are crossed by the primitive way of first scrambling down the rocky sides until the bottom is reached, and then scrambling up again, the track being known simply by the wear and tear of animals' and men's feet. The gradients were not as steep as those on Waggar, and altogether the "road" was superior, because it was just rideable the whole way. A day before



A Sample of the so-called "Road" between Sheikh and Dara-Ass.

we started, four Somalis were sent out, with mules, to lay the telegraph wire. On the few flat places, and where the surface was fairly smooth, it was certainly laid on the ground, but never for more than about a quarter of a mile at a stretch, and for the whole of the rest of the distance it was fastened from tree to tree, sufficiently high to be well out of reach. These men had not only to roll before them the heavy wooden reels carrying the wire, but had to climb each tree to which they fixed it, as they had no ladders or steps, and yet they finished their task within the two days allotted to them, and by the time we reached our camping-ground, the clerks had nothing to do but connect the wire to their instruments. Our party was larger than usual, for our friend Mr. B——, who was kindly acting as the Commissioner's secretary, accompanied us, and we had to take a staff of clerks, besides four camel-corps men and twelve militia, the latter of whom had to furnish the sentries, and be ready for messages or any emergencies. Our caravan was consequently larger than on former occasions, and consisted of the cow and her keeper; five donkeys carrying skins in which to fetch water from the wells to the camp, and their two attendants; nineteen mules which carried our food, cooking utensils, pantry things, etc., etc., and which required several men to look after them; twenty-one camels, also with their attendants, burdened with our own tents, those of the clerks, and for the use of the post and telegraph services; the clerks' riding mules, our upper servants' ditto, and our three riding ponies and their grooms. I also had the mule, "Ras Makonnen," to ride on over the worst parts of the road, as "Mousie," my Abyssinian pony, not being shod, was apt to split his hoofs when the path

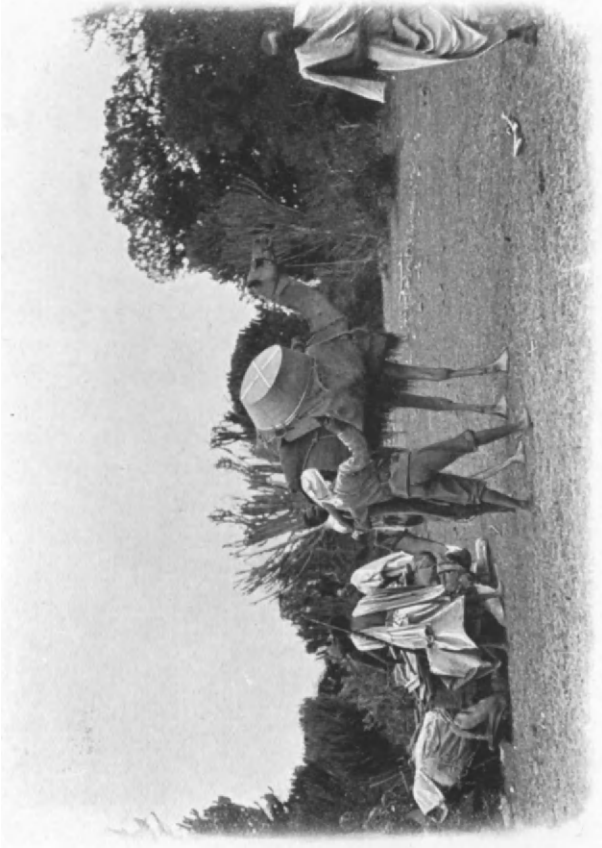
A Woman's Pleasure Trip



Part of Caravan going to Dara-Ass.

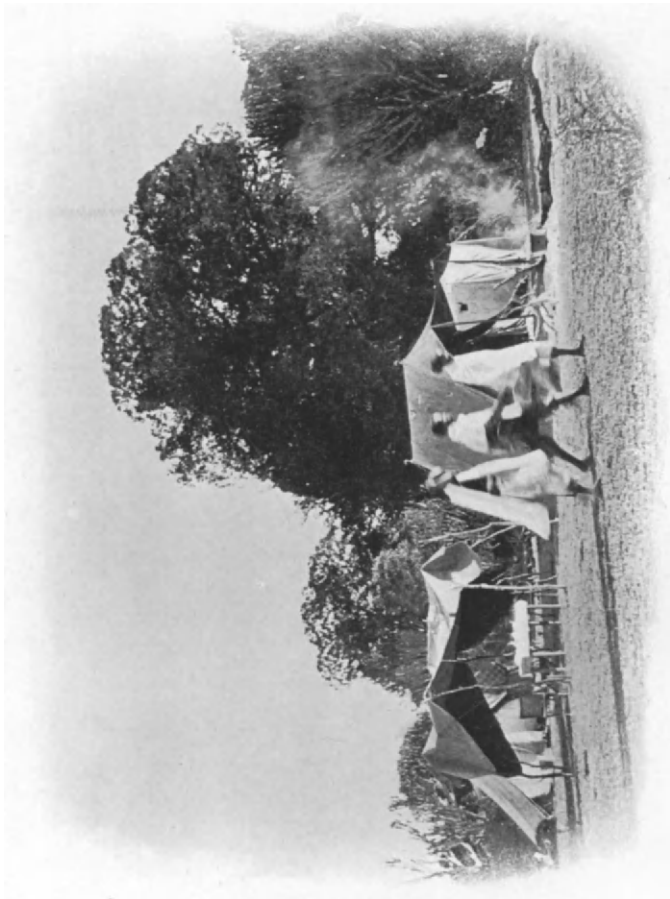
in Somaliland.

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Caravan arriving at Dara-Ass.

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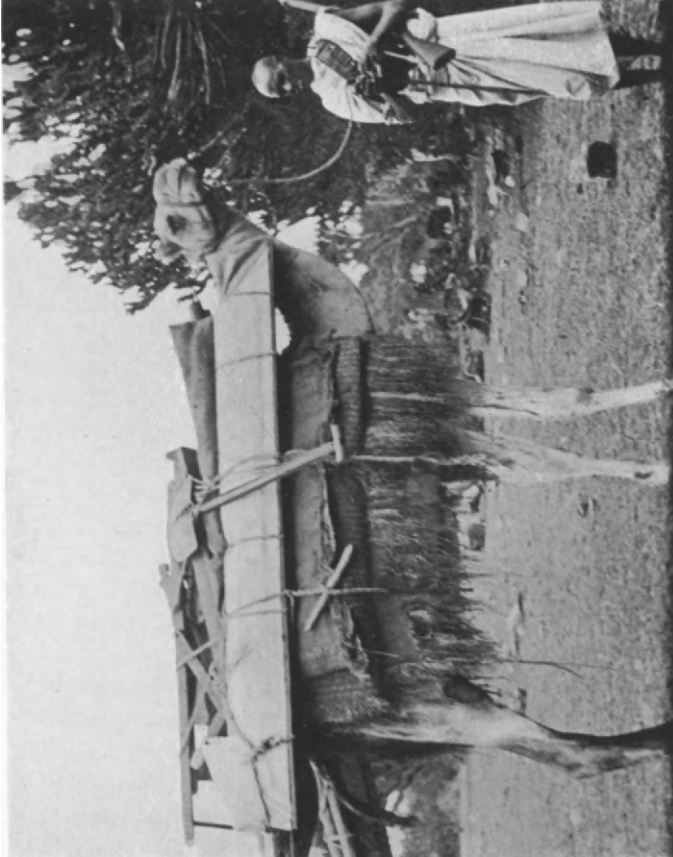


Camp at Dara-Ass.

was very stony. This seems a large caravan for our numbers, yet we took nothing but what was absolutely necessary, reducing our personal baggage to the smallest possible dimensions, and doing without a mess tent. When it was fine we had our meals under a spreading cedar tree, which afforded nice shade; and when it was wet, the natives rigged up a sort of pergola made of waterproof sailcloth stretched over poles stuck firmly into the ground.

The animals in the caravans of Europeans usually go free and detached from one another, but in Somali caravans the nose of one camel is attached by a cord to the tail of the camel in front of him, the foremost animal being led by a man or, more often, a woman.

As usual the heavy baggage was sent on during the early hours of the morning, and we were to have followed soon after daybreak; but as usual, everything seemed to combine to delay our starting, messengers coming in one after the other with business to which it was absolutely necessary the Commissioner should attend; and it was almost midday before we were able to get off. The weather was cloudy, and we were rejoicing that the heat was not excessive, but before we had ridden three or four miles a thick drenching rain came on which wetted us through and through. I had on a light "shower-proof" coat, but it was not proof against Somali showers, and we were all more or less uncomfortable by the time we spied our tents pitched cosily under the protection of some fine trees, each with a fire in front of it, at a place called Wadi. (Since reaching England I have been told that at this place two men have been carried off by lions.) As we were riding up the last steep pull, we started a quantity of guinea fowl, the first I had seen of these birds in any



Camel Loaded with Bed, etc.

numbers, also a good many partridges, so Mr. B—— went out with his gun and got us some welcome additions to our larder.

That evening there was nothing to be done except change, dry our things, and read. I noticed Askar during the evening in a state of suppressed laughter, and got E—— to find out the cause of his merriment. It appears that the men, trying to account for this rain—which was most unusual, but at the same time most beneficial, coming as it did in the very middle of the dry season—came to the conclusion that it was owing to the presence of the “General Sahib,” who brought rain with him wherever he went, “just the opposite to the Mulla, who was always followed by famine,” and so they bestowed on him the nickname of “Hadji Robleh,” or “the holy man who brings the rain.” As Hadji is a title usually only bestowed on those who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, they must have thought that the rain-inducing power was something great indeed. Not being a Somali, it didn’t strike me quite in the same light, and I begged him, when he left Somaliland and returned to England, to leave his holiness behind him! The rest of our journey to Dara-Ass was much the same in character as the first part, with no great promise of the extreme beauty of the place to which we were bound. Just before our arrival at our camping-ground, and right in the middle of the principal path leading to it, was a large rock about 6 feet high and 16 feet or 18 feet in circumference, with a large hollow in it near the top, and our servants told us that a panther was in the pleasant habit of hiding in this hollow and springing out on unwary passers-by. We none of us had this disagreeable experience, but all the time we were at Dara-Ass we



Trees near Camp at Dara-Ass.

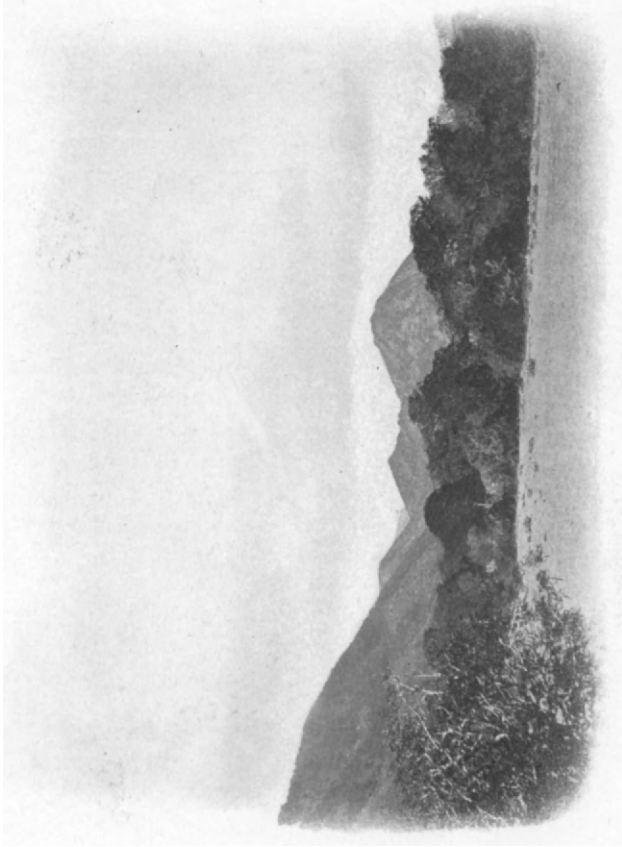
took care not to be away from the protection of our camp-fires after dusk, and we constantly heard the low growls of panthers near our tents ; while one night one of these beasts was audacious enough to come and carry off a large piece of bacon, the whole of our stock for that week. Evidently the panthers do not share the Muslim prejudice against pig's flesh. Perhaps some people might not like the idea of being visited by these unbidden guests ; but omitting that (and of course if many people were to settle there the wild beasts would get more and more scarce), it would be difficult to find anywhere a more beautiful site for a residence than the spot where our tents were pitched.

In February, when I was there, the grass was fine and short like English turf, and nearly as green, but in other parts of the year the grass grows 3 feet or more in height, and is very beautiful, waving about with every breath of wind. This open space, which is some acres in extent and gently undulating, is like a natural park bounded on all sides with cedar woods, and broken up by clumps of smaller trees and shrubs.

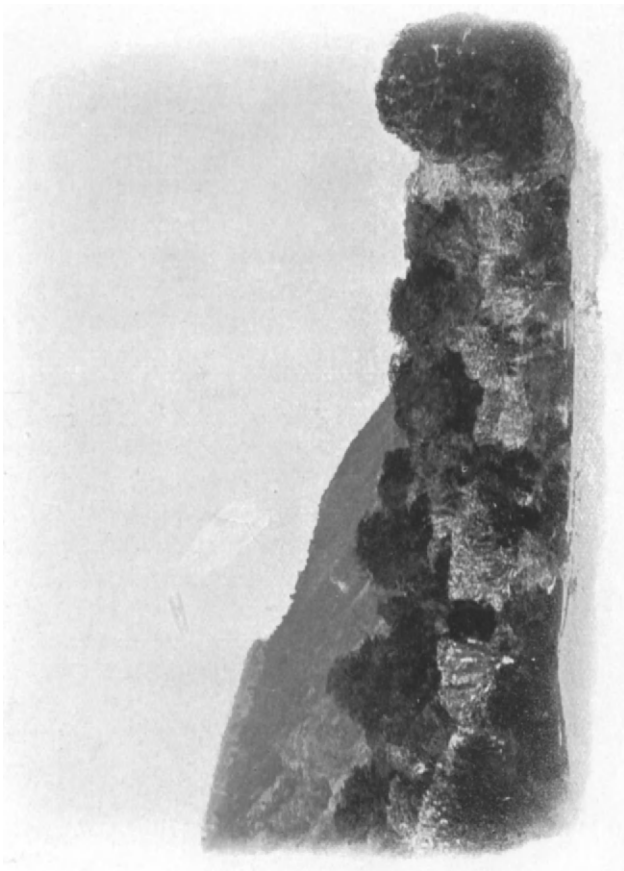
Towards the south the mountains rose some 1500 feet above us, clothed with beautiful trees to about 100 feet from the summit, where there was a ridge of precipitous sandstone rocks of a bright red colour, contrasting beautifully with the rich green of the trees. On towards the west the hills were lower, and between them we caught sight of other summits of the Golis range, such as Gan Libah, then of the mountains above Hargeisa, about ninety miles off ; and on the far horizon, looking very misty, and more like a cloud than solid earth, one could make out faintly the twin Naso Hablod hills and the high tableland rising to 6000 feet, which leads up to Jig-jigga,



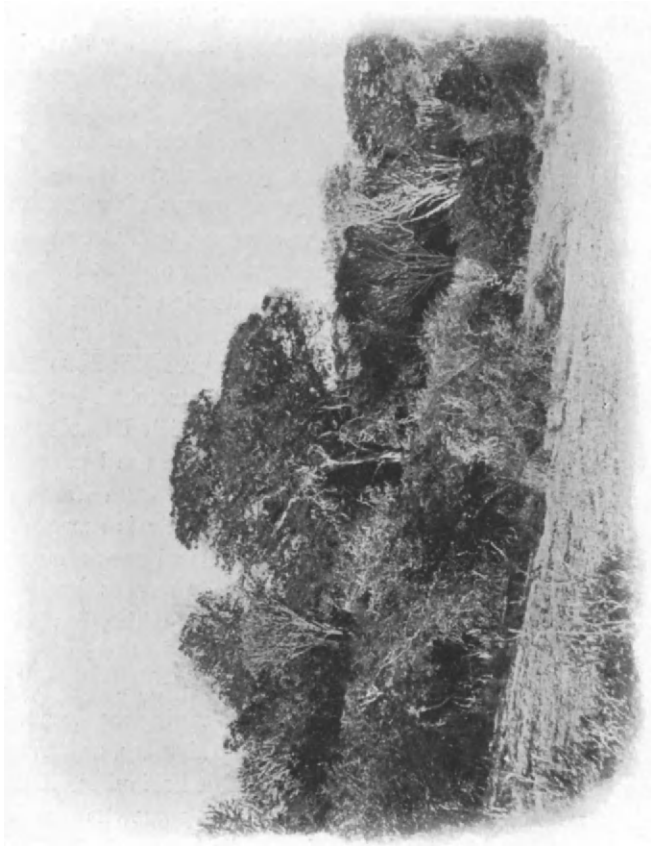
Hill above Dara-Ass.



Looking towards Hargeisa from Dara-Ass.



View from Dara-Ass Camp.

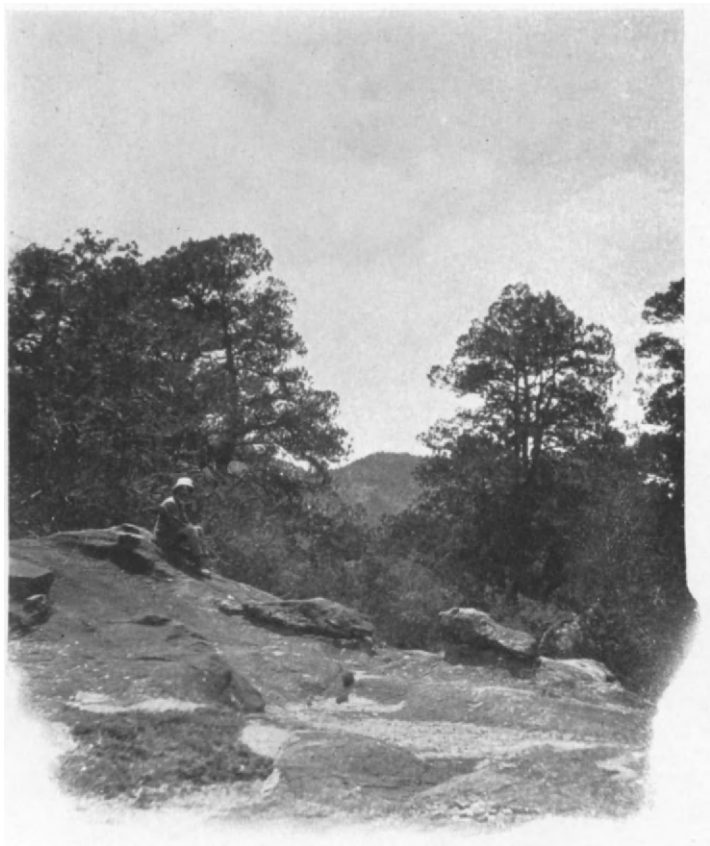


Near Dara-Ass Camp.

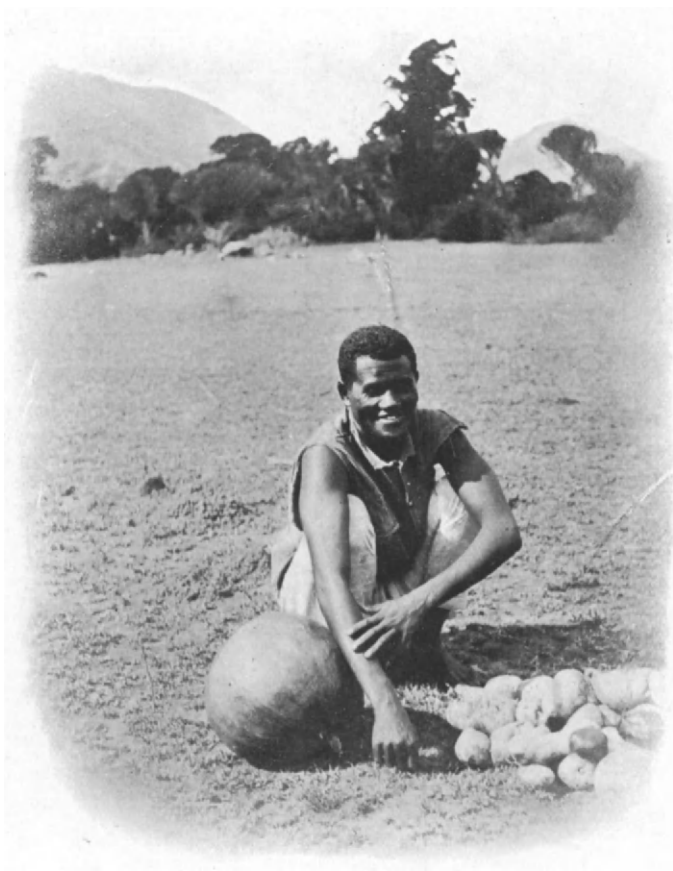
and eventually to Harrar. I was taken for my first walk to the north of our park-like open space, which is here, as on other sides, bounded by thick woods composed principally of cedars; one of the trees was "blazed," and here we entered the wood by a very slightly worn path which we followed for about half a mile, dodging in and out amongst the great trees and occasionally clambering over rocks. All of a sudden, without any warning, we found ourselves in the open with a glorious view in front of us. The rock on which we were standing was bounded at the extreme limit by a low natural wall about 18 inches in height, but forming sufficient protection to enable us to go quite to the edge and look over.

The mountain here ends in a sheer precipice 2000 feet in depth, and at the foot the plain lies stretched out like a map, broken up by pyramidal hills of which Demolewein (the mountain which first impressed on me the beauty of Somaliland as I was coming up to Sheikh from Berbera) is perhaps the most conspicuous. The plain is scored by river beds running in various directions; but when once the plain is gained no great difficulty presents itself in trying to get to Berbera from this point, which lies only thirty-five miles distant as the crow flies. This view is too extensive for a satisfactory photograph.

On the next spur to where we were standing the Commissioner has had a mule path cut in steep zig-zags, and as the 2000 feet are accomplished in two and a half miles, it can easily be imagined that the descent is somewhat rapid. At the foot of this path, at a place called Armali, the Commissioner had made kitchen-gardens, depending upon a cement tank and pipe line which he had constructed to store there the water of the ravine, to avoid the possibility



View at Dara-Ass, looking away from the Precipice.



Abyssinian Gardener.

of a shortage. Refugee Abyssinians are employed as gardeners, because the Somalis will not pay any attention to cultivating the soil, and these men are obliged to sleep in cages to protect them from the attacks of lions and other savage beasts who are attracted to the spot by the water. Every morning one gardener, and sometimes two, climbed up the 2000 feet of hill path to our camp laden heavily with vegetables, but did not appear to suffer much from fatigue. We used to get a good assortment of different kinds, for in the same week we had gourds, yams (or sweet potatoes), tomatoes, radishes, lettuces, mustard and cress, a small kind of cucumber, French beans, and green peas. They were all good, but I think I never tasted such excellent lettuces, the hearts of which were very firm and succulent owing to their having grown so quickly. For the same reason, although the radishes were not tempting in appearance, being the size of large carrots, they were not at all biting or bad to eat. The energy of the gardeners in carrying heavy baskets of vegetables up such a long steep path surprised me, but I was still more astonished when I was told that at least half of the vegetables which I had enjoyed at Sheikh had come from Armali, and that there was no other way to get to Sheikh from thence but to ascend to Dara-Ass and then travel along that rough eighteen-mile road which I have already described. At home a kitchen-garden twenty miles off would not be considered to be of much use, unless there were a perfect road and a motor for carrying the produce to the house. Each day that we spent at Dara-Ass I was taken for a different walk, generally with something new and interesting to see. One expedition was down a steep path to the district

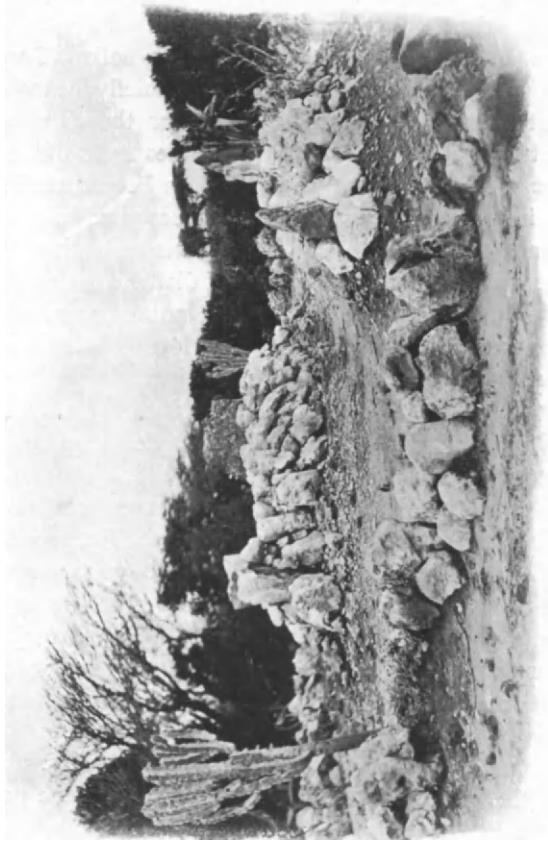
from which our water was fetched. The water came filtering out of the sandstone of the mountain, and as it ran over a bed of clay, which it could not soak through, it wandered about causing lovely vegetation wherever it went. We really managed to get our boots muddy here, and were actually obliged to pick our way over stepping-stones, a luxury in such a dry land. This swampy ground lasted for some distance ; there was a little papyrus, but maidenhair ferns were growing by the acre. If the water were only directed, and some of this ground drained, I feel sure that anything would flourish, and a most lovely garden be the result. As it is, Nature has proved herself no mean gardener ; most of the same trees and shrubs (including my favourite "waba") as are to be found in Waggar, are in profusion, with the addition of some flowers which I did not notice on that mountain, such as white convolvulus, and a creeper with blossoms resembling *pirus japonica* in shape and character, but of a scarlet colour more intensely bright than anything I know. Although to me the solitude and unspoilt nature appealed strongly, I can quite realize that without artificial improvements in communication, Dara-Ass would be inaccessible to many ; yet in these days, when all the world is looking for fresh pleasure grounds and health resorts, and every year the old favourite haunts become more and more crowded, and consequently less restful to the overworked brain, and there is a constant anxiety to the would-be traveller as to whether when he arrives at his destination there will be a roof over his head, I could not help thinking what an ideal place for a holiday haunt Dara-Ass would make if only some enterprising Cook & Son would discreetly take it up and exploit it. I daresay there would

be practical difficulties in the way, but after all, are not difficulties "things to be overcome," as I believe Charles Kingsley once remarked? At any rate, it would be quite easy to get to Dara-Ass from England. A voyage in a comfortable P. & O. liner from Aden, then a short crossing to Berbera, which is only 150 miles due south from Aden. No doubt Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw, who own the three boats, one of which alternately now does the trip, would be sure to put another and larger steamer of their fleet on to this station if the passenger traffic warranted it. I suppose a road would have to be made from Berbera to Armali, but the way is fairly level and hard, and there are no difficult mountain-passes to cross, and it ought not to be an expensive work; and once at Armali, amongst the lower woods, there is nothing but the ascent of 2000 feet to be accomplished. If it were in Switzerland a funicular railway would be built before one realized it had been begun, but even before that convenience could be managed, Dara-Ass is by no means inaccessible. It is a nice walk for strong people, quite rideable for people who prefer using mules' legs to their own, and if invalids want to enjoy the perfect air and lovely scenery which seems waiting there for that purpose, they can always find men willing and able to carry them up. It does not cost as much for camel hire to take stores to Dara-Ass as it does to Sheikh; cows, poultry, turkeys, pigeons, and sheep could all be kept close by; and last, though not least, the water supply is permanent, and with proper storage arrangements, plentiful. A good vegetable and fruit garden could be laid out near the water-works, which would supply any number of visitors. For amusements there is already a small polo ground, which could easily

be enlarged; and although shooting is not allowed, this being a game reserve, wild animals are to be seen daily, and people who care for botany, zoology, geology, anthropology, sketching or photographing, could always find something to employ themselves in a congenial manner. I suppose the one great difficulty would be to get a permanent lease of the land from the tribes, and without that it would hardly be prudent to risk erecting permanent buildings; but I can't help fancying this could be got over if people could only appreciate what a perfect climate it has, and into what a charming health resort it could be made. If for no other purpose, such a retreat, with its extremely dry and cool, healthful climate, would be the greatest possible boon for the sun-baked residents of Aden; and to look farther afield, it appears to be quite in the realms of possibility that the climate of Egypt may become so affected by the improved civilization and cultivation that it will lose its hold upon the vast number of invalids which it now yearly attracts; and if so, Somaliland might in a measure take its place. Of course there are practically no antiquities of any note, but I can testify from personal knowledge that the physical aspects of the country are very much more beautiful than anything Egypt can boast of. It can offer mountain air, which is certainly what Egypt cannot do, and I should think that with proper arrangements the food would be very much more nourishing. For instance, I noticed that in Egypt the milk was very poor, and there was an entire absence of cream; whereas in Somaliland there is an abundance of both cows' and camels' milk, the latter especially being very nourishing, and good in illness. I have said above that there are no antiquities in Somaliland, but that, I

in Somaliland.

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Modern Somali Graves near Sheikh.

believe, is not strictly true ; it would be more correct to say that there is no history of the antiquities that can be found. There are various ruins all over the country, being the remains of the buildings of a race inhabiting the country before the present Somalis. Those I saw in various spots near Sheikh are chiefly heaps of stones, but I am told that in the interior they are very much better preserved, and in many cases arches and doorways are still standing. Very little has been done in the way of investigation, chiefly because these buildings are mainly connected with burial grounds, and Muslim prejudice is very strong against any kind of disturbance of last resting-places, even if the dead were not co-religionists. It is not known what religion these former inhabitants of the land professed, but as crosses have been found cut in some of the stones, it is possible they may have been Christians ; not so very improbable, when it is remembered that their next-door neighbours, the Abyssinians, have preserved their Christianity (such as it is), although for many centuries they have been surrounded on all sides by followers of Islam. There are also some proofs of a still older race of men peopling the country, for from time to time stone implements have been found, very perfect in shape, and extremely like many one has seen in England. These implements from Somaliland which I have come across are quartzite, and were found at a distance of more than thirty miles from the nearest rock of the same sort. It is well known that the present race of men have always used metal, which they import from outside, for both implements and arms, and know nothing of the use of stone for either purpose. They now know that Englishmen value these things, and in consequence in the

vicinity of permanent camps the implements are getting very scarce, but E—— took me to a dry river bed near Sheikh, where he had formerly found some, and I was fortunate enough to pick up one very good specimen of a spear-head, besides several splinters, which I brought home and presented to a friend who is well known in the geological world, and who was much interested in them.

My warm eulogy of Dara-Ass is quite on the merits of the place, for we had no assistance in the way of weather, the week we were there being the worst in this respect we had at all while I was in the country. We had one or two heavy storms of rain, and the drenching mountain mists were so continuous that we might almost have been in Scotland; they never cleared off the mountains until about 11 o'clock, and came up again from the plains before sunset, and even when it was not raining we had several grey sunless days. The rain was troublesome owing to our having no mess tent, and we were obliged to move about under our shelter according to the wind; but no doubt the beauty of the vegetation is mainly due to the prevalence of mist. E—— told me that cedars were not found under 5000 feet, because there is very little mist under that height. Even at Sheikh large, heavy, dark bodies of vapour used to rise from the hot plains late in the afternoons, and look most threatening; but we soon got to feel no alarm about them, as they invariably passed on further towards the interior without dropping, and occasionally very beautiful sunsets were the result. The mountain behind our camp at Sheikh lies to the west, consequently the sun always sets just behind it. On the very top of this mountain ridge are a row of fine solitary cedars, showing out black distinctly against the

sky. Generally they did not attract our notice, except that I thought they must be very fine specimens to look so large when so far above us, but on three separate occasions they caused a most curious effect just before sunset. The mist as usual rose from below, and spread itself out all over the plateau like a ceiling, about the same height as the top of the mountain, and when the sun came level with the trees it caught the under surface of the cloud, turning it a bright rosy red, but at the same time the trees each cast a long, narrow, black shadow on the rosy cloud, which became so elongated just before the sun finally disappeared that the effect was as if the ribs of a gigantic fan were spread almost over the heavens. Of course the effect lasted only a few minutes, but it was repeated at least on three different occasions, and as we were at that hour always returning to the camp, and had our faces in the right direction, we never lost any of its beauty.

At Dara-Ass we were not only troubled with rain, but with wind, which was also unusual at that season; but the Somali clerk of the weather evidently thought it necessary that I should sample all the seasons. During three months in the summer, that is from the beginning of July to the end of September, a very strong hot wind, called the "kharīf," blows almost continually. It stops for two hours in the afternoon, but that is the only restful time to be enjoyed during that season. It carries sand and dust, and deposits them everywhere, and is sometimes so violent that no tents will stand against it. I don't mean to say that I had any experience of the real kharīf, but one night at Dara-Ass the wind was far too strong to be pleasant, although it was not particularly

hot or dusty. My tent, the travelling one, though not large, had of course double flies, and the wind got in between the two, swelling out the outside one like the sail of a ship. To economize space I had tied up my riding-habit and other things against the "walls" of the tent; but after I was in bed that night, first one thing and then another began flapping about, and making such a noise that sleep was impossible, and I had to get up and take down all my clothes which were hanging up, and put them on the floor; but just as I was getting asleep again, over went my washstand with a great clatter, though nothing, happily, was broken, and a few minutes later the small looking-glass, which I had pinned to the tent with a large safety pin, tore away and bombarded me where I lay. Thinking it was best to be prepared for emergencies, I got into my warm dressing-gown and lighted a lamp, for there was no moon. I then noticed that one of the tent poles was swaying to and fro in an ominous manner, and I wondered what was usually done on such occasions, and how, if both poles gave way, I should be able to crawl out. My first thought was to free Jack, so I undid his chain, not wanting him to be smothered, and then went outside. Just as I was wondering why no one was stirring, and if the wind was really not violent enough to disturb the peace of the camp, and if I were fussing about nothing, I heard E—— call up the men. In a few seconds, just as the pole was really falling, about twenty men arrived on the scene with mallets and other tools, and in a few minutes they had the thing under control; they each seized the canvas of the tent in a different place, and reduced the swelling caused by the strength of the wind, and so were able to



Man Sitting in the Native Fashion.

draw it back into place by means of the ropes and pegs, and refix the pole firmly. In about five minutes everything was comfortable again, and I went to sleep with the soothing feeling that nothing much could go wrong with such a number of willing men to take care of one. I noticed that my bathroom tent had entirely collapsed and was on the ground; but that was set up and got quite ready for me long before I wanted it in the morning. This one uncomfortable incident, which was really nothing, was the price I had to pay for my luxurious tent, for I noticed that both E——'s and Mr. B——'s tents, which went from the central pole down to the ground, without "walls," remained taut and firm throughout the gale.

Owing to Dara-Ass being more accessible than Sheikh, and taking less time to reach it from Berbera, a friend from Aden was actually able to come up and spend a day and night with us, between the arrival and departure of the mail-boat. Arriving on a Tuesday morning, he mounted a trotting camel and rode to Armali, where our kitchen-garden was situated, and slept in a tent sent down for him from Dara-Ass. He came up on Wednesday morning, left us on Thursday morning, managed to get over the bigger half of the distance to Berbera before night, and arrived at the latter place in good time for the steamer on Friday. He was also immensely struck with the beauties of Dara-Ass, and assured us he had enjoyed himself immensely, although, poor man, he had several things against him.

E—— and I set out soon after six on the Wednesday morning to "stroll" down to meet him, which stroll ended by finding ourselves almost at the foot of the 2000 feet descent. There had been heavy rain during the night,

and every leaf was charged with moisture. I dressed myself as if on a similar expedition in England, that is, in a very short tweed skirt and my thickest boots; but our friend, from having been stationed in Aden so long had, I suppose, ignored the possibility of rain, and when we first caught sight of him he was riding one of the mules E—— sent down to meet him, in a costume, of which a white riding coat, white spats, white shoes, and a very white helmet, all immaculate, were the more noticeable items. Directly he saw me, and that I was walking, nothing that either of us could say would prevail on him to remain on his mule; so, regardless of his appearance, he began to trudge up that steep muddy path. Long before the ascent was half over he was almost wet through from the moisture discharged by every tree and bush we passed, and though we constantly paused to admire the view, it was apparent that the unwonted exertion was somewhat trying for him. In Aden there is but one road, namely, the way from Steamer Point to the native town where the tanks are, about four miles off, and those who do go there invariably drive; consequently, unless one cares to climb Shumshum peak, there is no practice whatever in walking; and I have noticed that people obliged to live at Aden will not realize the absolutely different conditions of the country on the other side of the Gulf.

On arrival at the top our friend made an entirely fresh toilette, and then sallied forth to see the famous view from the top of the precipice. We were all writing against time to save the mail, so he quietly slipped away to avoid disturbing us, but was again unlucky, for he lost his way in the bit of jungle he had to push through, and while endeavouring to find the camp, violent rain came on and



Solitary Cedar, about 100 feet high.



Stem of Solitary Cedar.

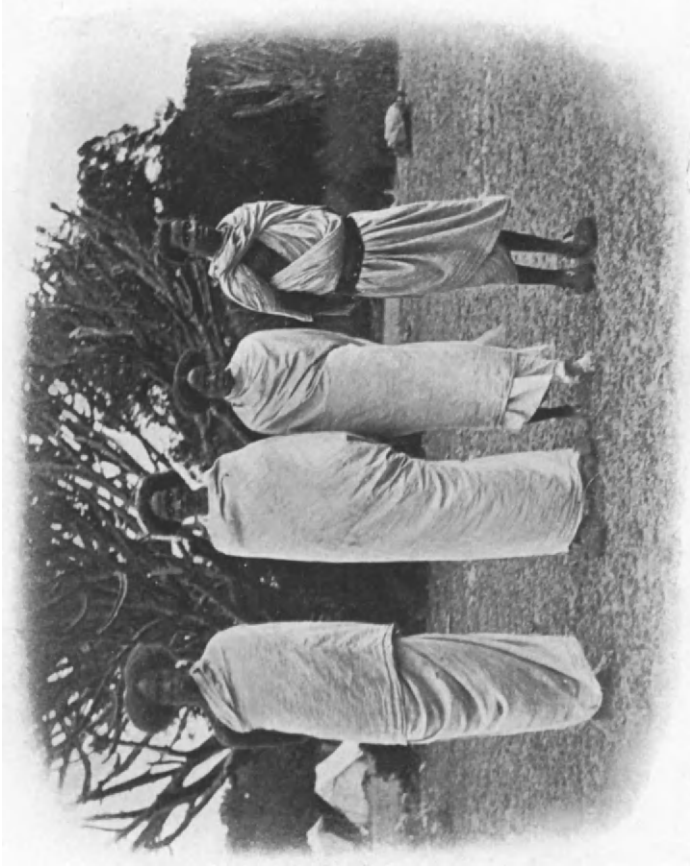
he was a second time soaked to the skin, the result of which misfortune being that he was reduced to using Mr. B——'s dressing-gown for a dinner coat. However, notwithstanding these *contretemps* he seemed to enjoy his visit; and so did we, and we sat up far later than usual round the delicious camp fire made of cedar wood, listening to various African and other travellers' tales.

After our friend's departure on the following morning no incident occurred worth recording. I employed myself all my spare time in getting a good number of photos. I was able to make friends with the inmates of a karia close by, and consequently got leave to photograph the women and the children. There was an old man just outside the karia who was most of his time employed in making sticks out of cedar and of olive wood; they were about 5 feet long and very strong, nicely made, and with some slight carving just below the knob. He told my servant that he was obliged to raise the price of these sticks, and could not then make one under half a rupee. However, we did not consider 8d. an exorbitant price for a really good stick. E—— had given me one on my first arrival, and I never took a walk without it. I found it most useful especially when going down very steep places, as its length and strength made it an invaluable prop.

One feature of Dara-Ass was the number of ant-hills made by the white ants. They are high and slender, and formed from dust and sand stuck together with an acid which the ants exude from their bodies. This forms such a firm, compact mass that it resembles mortar more than anything else, and resists every attempt made on it, unless regular crowbars are used. In British Central Africa the ant-hills are ground up into powder and then



A Karia—a collection of Native Huts within a Zariba.



Four Young Men on a Cold Day.



Old Man Carving Cedar Walking-sticks.



Old Man with his Friends.

154 A Woman's Pleasure Trip in Somaliland.

made into a paste, which, when dry, forms excellent building material ; but as houses are non-existent in every part of Somaliland except the seaports, no use seems to be made of the ant-hills there. In the dry season the ants desert their hill, but when rain comes on again they take advantage of the soft ground to reappear and make an addition to the old building, which, when fresh, is easily detected by the difference in colour. The men who know the country well think nothing at all of the ant-hills of Dara-Ass, as those on the Haud run up to 50 or 60 feet high ; but to an unsophisticated English eye one 11 or 12 feet high is sufficiently surprising.

Our return journey had no drawbacks, the hiding leopard, of whom we had heard so much, did not jump out of his hole upon any of our party, and we did not even get wet, as we had done on our outward journey. We encamped one night on the way, rather near to Sheikh, so that we were all at home and at work again by 9.0 o'clock in the morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEPARTURE FROM SHEIKH—STAY AT LOWER SHEIKH—VISIT TO DUBAR AND ITS FORT—EXCITING NIGHT ADVENTURE WITH THREE HYENAS—ARRIVAL AT BERBERA—THE RESSALDAR-MAJOR'S PRESENTS—FAREWELLS TO BOTH WHITE AND BLACK FRIENDS—REMARKS ON SOMALI CHARACTER.

AFTER our return from Dara-Ass we had only a few days at the big camp at Sheikh in which to prepare for our final departure, and to wish all our friends good-bye. During our absence the Indian Regiment, which had been recruited from different parts of India by Major H—— for special service in Somaliland, had arrived at Sheikh, and was encamped in a large number of small tents near the bazaar, and about a mile from the militia camp. I found my cousins, Captain and Mrs. B——, the former especially, energetically organizing cricket and tennis matches besides the polo-meet three times a week; and as there were now a good many British officers altogether, there were plenty of men to make it worth while to get up matches. In order to give ample time for dealing with the following mail we went to Lower Sheikh, our camp occupying a small level piece of ground bounded on one side by a river bed in which was actually running water, and on the other by the steep slope, up which, some years ago, the Commissioner cut the rough path leading up to Upper Sheikh, and up this path the nine-pounder guns were dragged when the Mulla troubles came on. This path, though steep and rough, is the one

invariably used by the Somalis, for they never mind either steepness or roughness, and prefer short cuts, irrespective of the gradients. The more perfectly made but costly military road which ascends in a much more roundabout way, being about five miles longer than the other, is now almost deserted. We found this road very pleasantly useful during our sojourn in Lower Sheikh, as it afforded unusually good walking, and from it we were able to get on to various different parts of the hills in our search after plants, flowers, and butterflies. If my idea of health resorts in Somaliland ever comes to be an accomplished fact, there would probably be an hotel built at Sheikh, and in that case it is not improbable that this road would be a delightful promenade for the old and invalid visitors, as the gradient is never trying, and it is so winding that it offers a succession of beautiful views of the various valleys. After going in and out of the many nullahs, often with abrupt turns at the end, it is at length, after some seven miles from the turning off to Lower Sheikh, seen crossing the rock high above our camp, which the rougher road reaches in less than two miles. Other creatures besides human beings avail themselves of the older path, flocks of sheep and goats, and caravan after caravan of many camels tied together in native fashion, the nose of one animal being attached by a cord to the tail of the one in front of him, passed both up and down in endless procession.

It is on one of the great trade routes between Berbera and the interior, and the traffic appears to be unceasing except during very dark nights. I suppose that the fear of wild beasts, and the danger of falling, scares men from entrusting their flocks on the road when they cannot see

what they meet. One night from our tents we all distinctly heard a panther ascending the path, growling as he went, and the next day, when Captain J——, one of our friends from the militia camp, rode down the pass to lunch with us, he told us that on that night his cow had been killed and partially eaten by a panther, probably the one which we heard pass by.

Several of our friends from Sheikh came down to spend some hours with us; but pleasant as it was to see them, there was a certain amount of sadness in knowing that with each it was "good-bye." The country round Lower Sheikh was looking very pretty, principally owing to one sort of acacia being in full bloom which had blossoms similar in colour, and somewhat in form, to an out-of-door azalea. The trees were large, and it was with difficulty that we could ever reach a blossoming branch.

"Jack," of course, was always on the *qui vive* for game, but here he was not successful in bringing down any. He started a family of klipspringers one evening, but instead of scampering away from him frightened, they all three perched themselves on an inaccessible boulder (at least inaccessible to any but their own kind), and looked smilingly down on the dog, who was barking furiously, as if they dared him to do his worst. They did not mind us in the least; and as they were within twenty yards of us, I had a capital view of them. All the antelopes seemed to know instinctively that E—— was not an enemy, possibly they saw he was not carrying a gun. As he has trophies of every animal to be found in the country, he has ceased to hunt them, and never now shoots at anything except vermin like hyænas, having given up shooting for shooting's sake.

The last day at Lower Sheikh came all too soon. We had heard from Cowasji Dinshaw Bros. that they had secured berths for us on board the P. & O. *Moldavia*, calling at Aden on March 14th, and we were obliged to have at least two days in Berbera for packing. We went down by easy stages, wanting to acclimatize ourselves gradually to the heat of the coast after the delicious atmosphere of the uplands. Our journey down was very much the same as the one up country; we stopped at the same places, and no incident occurred except on the very last night at Dubar. Our headman since leaving Sheikh had been Abdulla, for we had left Adan Yusuf behind us to look after the Commissioner's camp, etc., and on arriving at Dubar we found he had pitched our tents quite out in the open, and not under the palm trees as before, the reason he gave being that as the season had advanced the mosquitoes near the water-works would be unbearable, and we should get no rest at night. Somalis have always been believers in the theory that mosquitoes give fever, and this was commented on in printed reports on Somaliland some years before medical science took the matter up.

It was intensely hot in the open coast plain, and so we were glad of the shade of a large tamarind tree near the palms, under which to rest during the great heat of mid-day, the belligerent mosquitoes notwithstanding. As the afternoon wore on, and it became cooler, we strolled along the foot of the mountains over rather rough ground and inspected the water-works which supply Berbera with water. These works were originally made by the Egyptians when they were in possession of the country, and are sufficient to provide the town with an ample supply,

several different springs issuing out of the side of the hills, which never run dry. The water is conducted into tanks, where it settles, and is then passed over filtering beds before it is finally sent down in fairly large pipes to the coast. The tanks, filtering beds, and some of the piping has, of course, been renewed since the Egyptian occupation, but the pipes are still very near the surface, consequently the water, which at its source is warm and in flowing to Berbera is always close to the sun-baked earth, reaches the town in a lukewarm, or sometimes hot, condition; so that if cold water is wanted, it has to be drawn off and put under some thick shade for several hours before using. For instance, the water which supplies the large fixed baths in the Commissioner's bungalow, is quite as warm as is pleasant for use in that hot place. There are many date palms growing close to the water tanks at Dubar subsisting upon the overflow, and it seemed as if a good deal might be done in the immediate neighbourhood by making a plantation of dates. Of late years dates have increasingly become an article of food for the coast Somalis, and consequently a large quantity is annually imported from Arabia; and whereas before contact with western people or Indians, the natives of the interior existed upon milk for nine months in the year, and meat the other three, they have now taken, to a certain extent, in addition to dates, to the Indian fare of rice and ghee (clarified butter). For instance, when a servant is engaged, his master agrees to give him, when away from the towns, besides his monthly pay, rations of 1 lb. rice, 4 oz. dates, and 2 oz. of ghee per diem, although occasionally when a sheep is killed, and on other similar occasions, the servants are allowed to have their pickings,

they do not ask for it as a rule. We noticed that some of the date palms were quite weighed down with a number of birds' nests, several of which were fixed on the same leaf, one below the other until the very end. They were beautifully formed, each with a little tunnel serving as an approach to the nest itself, but I am ignorant of the sort of bird which builds them.

Having seen all that there was to see at the water-works, we turned eastwards along the foot of a mountain, on the very top of which a Dervish for more than twenty years has been living a life more like that of an Indian fakir, than anything else. On a large flat stone at the very top, the shape of which we could just distinguish from below, he lives year in, year out, exposed to heat, cold, wind, rain, or sun, the latter probably at that comparatively low altitude (about 2000 feet) being the most trying of all. Once a week a follower of his, a boy, walks out from Berbera with food, which lasts the week until the boy pays another visit. For water he is dependent on pools left from the rain, and if that fails he walks down to the springs near the water-works to satisfy his thirst. I should imagine he must feel rather glad to be thirsty, as the climb down would afford some relief to the terrible monotony which he has to endure in addition to the actual suffering caused by the exposure. The Commissioner saw him and talked to him quite twenty years ago, and he is still there waiting patiently until death releases him from his self-imposed task. Continuing our walk, we came upon a well-made path ascending to the right in sharp zigzags, and leading up to a square stone-built fort. This building was erected some years ago to provide stables for the Berbera camel-corps, and commands the water-works battery. It is

strongly made with turrets at the angles for guns, and contains a courtyard into which about twelve or fourteen rooms open, and there are besides two larger apartments. Everything is well finished and in perfect order, but it has never been used. It was found that the fodder in the vicinity did not suit the Arabian riding camels, and the steep descent to the good wells caused too much wear and tear on the camels. Moreover, the nearest water, which was intended to supply the immediate wants of the men inside the fort, was brackish and unfit for use. I have just said that this fort has never been used; I ought to have said for military purposes, for the nuns told me that occasionally they take their orphans out there and put up for a night or two in order to give the children a little fresh air in the very hot season. I was interested to hear this, for after going through the rooms, I remarked to E—— that if only the water difficulty could be solved, what a nice little hotel might be made out of it, and what a boon it would be for week-end visits out of Berbera, that port being only eight miles away.

When we had got some way down to the plain again we noticed that Jack was not following us; we whistled and called in vain, but no answer, so we determined to climb up again and thoroughly search the fort. E—— took one side, I the other, and in the very last room we opened, there was the poor dog imprisoned. Evidently he had been exploring on his own account, and the wind, which was very high, had blown the door together. Had we not persevered in looking for him, he must have been starved to death, as no one else would be likely to visit the fort, and the men at the water-works were much too far off to hear his barks or whines. This was one of Jack's

unfortunate days, for his adventures were by no means at an end. After dinner we discussed the advisability of tying up the dog in my tent, which was usually done when the camp was without a zariba ; but as we were quite out in the open and there was no covert, we thought it very unlikely we should be troubled by the visits of any wild beasts. As usual Jack made himself happy at the foot of my bed, and I went to sleep soundly. After some time I was half awakened by feeling Jack leap off the bed, and immediately afterwards the report of a rifle— which from its sound was apparently fired off close to me— thoroughly roused me ; before I could get up I heard a second report, this time rather farther off, and on going to the opening of my tent I saw the whole camp, consisting of at least forty men, running helter-skelter, tumbling one over the other in the wildest excitement, one of them upsetting himself amongst the ropes of my tent, and all disappearing down a neighbouring nullah. I asked them what was happening, but the only word they vouchsafed to utter was “ wuraba.” This I knew meant *hyæna*, and I, too, became somewhat excited. Just then Askar was to be seen coming back away from the rest, towards my direction. On asking him where the “ General Sahib ” was, he pointed down to the nullah, and also said “ wuraba,” but without stopping, rushed on to E——’s tent, where he hastily picked up some cartridges, and in his turn disappeared. I thought to myself, I won’t be the only person left out of what is going on ; so I hastily put on some clothes, and was just starting off when Ayali, the Midgan, appeared, leading Jack covered with blood ; but the only word he would utter was “ wuraba.” I told Ayali he must wash Jack, and when that was done I

thoroughly examined the poor animal, but happily discovered nothing worse than some rather bad scratches; and so, having tied him up in my tent out of mischief for the future, I walked out and met E——, who was returning to find me, and tell me what had happened. He said he was wakened first by Jack barking, and then a second or two afterwards he saw from his bed, which was opposite the opening of his tent, a very large hyæna pass, with Jack hanging on to his tail. There was no time to lose, so from his bed, by the light of the moon only, he fired and wounded the brute, who, however was not killed, but managed to make off, leaving a thick trail of blood behind him. Knowing hyænas usually go about in pairs, E—— took up a second cartridge and walked towards the nullah to look for the second hyæna. This creature soon made its appearance, and also had Jack attached to its tail. E—— fired and killed the hyæna instantly, and naturally thought that that was an end to his evening's sport. By this time all the men of the camp had joined him, and they were rejoicing over the brute's great carcase, (for every hyæna killed is a distinct joy to a Somali) when shouts went up that a third animal had appeared on the scene, and that the faithful Jack had also secured this one by the tail. Unfortunately E—— had not another cartridge with him; and while Askar was returning to the tent to fetch one, the hyæna snapped so viciously and continuously at the dog, that E—— had to interfere with the butt end of his rifle. The hyæna tried to snap at him, but was unsuccessful in reaching him, and happily E——, when he had got the third cartridge, succeeded in also disposing of this animal with one shot. To kill two hyænas and wound one mortally, one after the other in

three successive shots, in the treacherous light of the moon, with the hyænas and the dog struggling together and being all mixed up, without once hitting the dog, seemed to me at the time to be rather an unusually clever performance. I walked back down the nullah with E—— to inspect the two corpses, and there they were stretched out in pools of blood, one rather larger than the other, but the smallest as big as a donkey, with enormous jaws and such murderous looking teeth locking into each other, that one can readily believe the tales one hears of men's legs being broken by one nip of such powerful jaws. Jack has good jaws and teeth of his own, and weighs 60 lbs., but he looked quite a delicate little animal when placed beside one of these brutes. The next day we sent Ayali back to cut off one of the heads; he skinned it for me, and I brought it home. When I took it to a naturalist to have it whitened and set up, he would not at first believe that the skull was that of a hyæna, owing to its unusually large size (twelve inches long).

After all the excitement was over, Abdulla came up to us to say that as the camp was thoroughly disturbed, he thought he might as well send off the baggage camels, for it was hardly worth while to go to sleep again; but on consulting my watch, and finding it was only just midnight, I decided to go to bed, and did not reappear until 6.0 o'clock, when it was time to start for our last ride. Not long after leaving Dubar we came in sight of Berbera, looking very hot in the shimmering haze; but the ride seemed longer than it really was owing to there being little to divert our attention except occasionally starting two or three gazelles, who leapt from bush to bush in a very graceful way, trying to get covert where there was

very little. Parties of men and women were walking towards the town generally burdened with "hans" full of milk, which they were going to sell in the Berbera bazaar.

We had to spend two days at the Commissioner's bungalow, the greater part of which time was occupied in necessary packing; most of our friends came to see us, including the Indian Stipendiary Magistrate who so very kindly lent me Indian newspapers, both on this occasion and when I passed through on our way up country. He talked a good deal about the Prince and Princess of Wales' visit to India, which was then taking place, and in which he was intensely interested. It was very pleasant to listen to the grateful way in which he spoke of the English rule in India, describing himself and his co-religionists as being "fanatically loyal." The Ressaldar-Major rode down 100 miles to see us once more, and asked me when he could come and see me on the last morning, as he wished me to accept a little souvenir of the country to take home with me. I begged him to come early before the great heat set in; and so between 7.0 and 8.0 o'clock, on coming out of my bedroom, I found one of the spaces under the arches quite full of beautiful specimens of Somali industry. I naturally thought he had brought them in order that I might make a selection of those I liked best, but I discovered that he meant me to keep them all, and I was quite overwhelmed with his generosity. Amongst other beautiful things there were specimens of grass woven, and also carved wooden, "hans," vessels for crushing "jowari," or coffee, decorated with poker work; several wooden pillows much decorated; fans, and baskets woven out of coloured grasses; combs

of various shapes; several knives; whips of rhinoceros and other hides; a very perfect and beautifully white shield made of oryx hide; six spears, which, although they looked as if they had seen service, were in perfect condition, all the beautiful wirework fastening the heads of the spears to the shafts being quite intact; and a prayer-skin, also made out of oryx hide, made up a really representative collection of Somali industries. I am told that it is impossible to buy a prayer-skin, as the Somalis will not sell them; so I prize the gift of one all the more. It is difficult to believe that the shield and prayer-skin are made out of the same animal's hide, the former being intensely hard and very white, looking, from the work on it, as if it were carved out of ivory, and the latter being thin, beautifully soft, tanned a rich brown colour, with a finish like suède gloves, and ending in a fringe four inches deep made of the edges of the skin cut into narrow strips and twisted. These prayer "carpets," as they are often called, are about $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards square, and take several skins to make them, but the joins are neatly sewn, and show very little. There is a device painted on the inside of the shield, just under the loop into which the arm of the wearer is inserted, very much resembling an illumination in an ancient MS. I felt quite embarrassed at receiving so many beautiful things, but the Ressaldar-Major added to his kindness by finding a box and packing them all up for me, his only remark being that he had wished also to give me a "gurghi," which is a mat for making huts, but refrained, as he thought it was so heavy and cumbersome to carry, that I should not care to have it. These things, together with a dagger-like sword, very artistically mounted, given me by Captain B——, V.C., one of the



Porters bringing Luggage from the Residency.

militia officers, make an attractive trophy at home, and always remind me (if I need a reminder), every time I pass through the hall, of the happy winter spent in Somaliland.

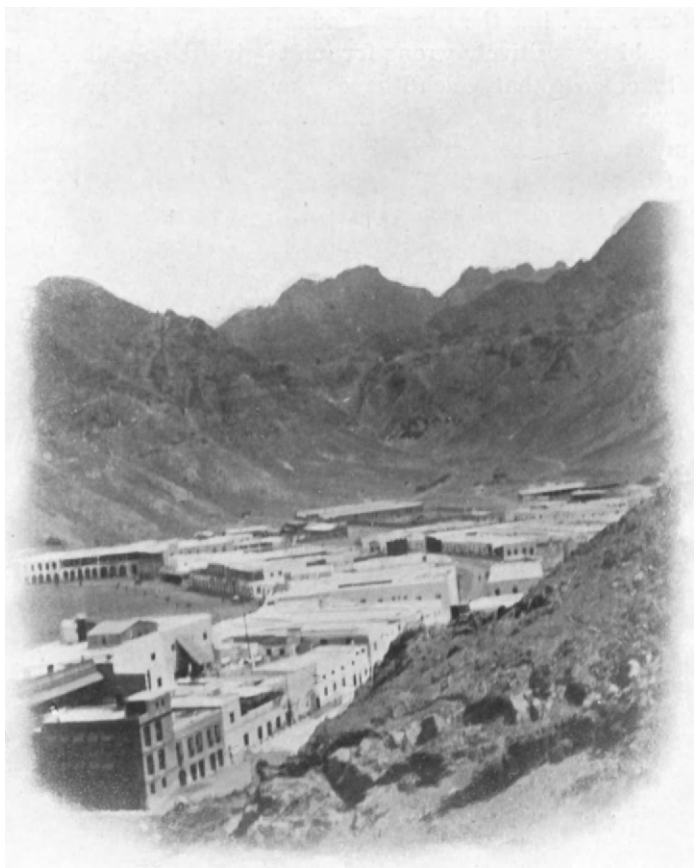
The Deputy Commissioner, who now has succeeded my cousin as Commissioner, very kindly gave a luncheon to all the Europeans in Berbera as a send-off, at which we were very pleased to meet Colonel and Mrs. H——, who had come down from Sheikh to bid us good-bye. The first friend that we had to part from was our faithful dog "Jack," for we had to tie him up to one of the pillars in the Commissioner's bungalow to prevent his following our boat when we put out in the harbour to join the steamer; and as sharks abound, we did not wish his final fate to be swallowed by one of these horrid monsters. E—— had given Jack to our friend Mr. B——, who, I am sure, will prove a good master to him, but that did not prevent our feeling sad when we saw the last for ever of our faithful dumb companion. These leave-takings were altogether somewhat upsetting, for the news that the Commissioner had accepted a Colonial Governorship in another quarter of the world was announced by cable only an hour or two before we left.

The pier leading from the houses at Berbera is a long one, and it was lined on both sides all the way by rows of people. The first we passed were the Arkills, or any natives who filled a civil office of any kind, and as we walked down between their ranks they simply saluted and wished good-bye, but first one and then another broke the line, and very soon the Commissioner was entirely surrounded, and he had to shake hands with every individual before he could get away. The next body of men were

a detachment of the Berbera police under their native officer, then came a detachment of militia, looking very smart and soldierly in their new uniforms, which Captain J——, the British officer commanding them, had succeeded in getting in time for this function, in order that the Commissioner, who had raised and formed the force, should see them in their proper "war paint." No uniforms are required to prove these men are soldiers, their deeds show how efficient and mobile they are; still it was nice to see them looking as they should. The next body of men were some Somali sailors who man the armed dhows, another institution founded by the Commissioner; and the last were some of the war-worn veterans comprising the camel-corps, under their own jemindar. All these bodies of men being under military discipline kept themselves under control, and forced themselves to be content with a military salute as the Commissioner passed by them; but I could see from the wistful expression of their kindly faces that they too would have liked to have broken their lines, after the example of the civilians, and have had a handshake from their old Commander-in-Chief. After bidding farewell to all our servants, who were in a body at the top of the steps, and saying good-bye to our English friends, the very last man whose hand I pressed was the Ressaldar-Major, and he, instead of saying good-bye, was only able to utter these words, "This *is* a blow." I turned hurriedly away from him, leaving the Commissioner to say farewell by himself, and got into the government boat, which in a few seconds was pushed off from the pier; but when I looked back and saw about a hundred of the natives, who had not been admitted to the pier, turn up their tobés and rush into the sea as far as they could go, quite regardless of the sharks,

I felt that these poor people by their signs of sorrow in parting with the man who had been for so long a time spending his life in trying to better their condition, and make their country happy and prosperous, were not making it easy for him to entirely sever his connection with them.

Having been favoured by Messrs. Cowasji Dinshaw, Bros. with a special trip of their steamboat, the *Falcon*, the captain of which vessel most kindly giving me the use of his own cabin, we had a very pleasant crossing back to Aden, which we reached about 9.0 a.m., on March the 14th. As Aden is so well known, and is really in the world, there is no need for me to add anything more to this informal record of a very pleasant winter holiday. I have been in various parts of the world, and have visited many of the conventional holiday resorts both summer and winter, and the conclusion I have come to is, that if this, my latest experience, was in a "savage" country, then civilization has something to learn from savages, for never have I experienced such attention, consideration, and willing service, or had such an entire absence of every kind of vulgarity, as during my three months' stay in Somaliland. I am quite aware that all who read these pages may not agree with me ; I have heard very different accounts from others who have lived in this country, and I have more than once been told that I have only seen the best side of the Somalis. To that last remark I reply, very likely you are right ; but what human being is there who has not a best and a worst side to his character, and if the best side of the Somalis' is as attractive as the one they showed me, they are not a race to be despised. I hold no brief for them, I have no reason for speaking well of them except this, that I think it is the duty of



The Business Part of Steamer Point, Aden.

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all people to speak of others as they have found them, and as I have experienced nothing from the natives of Somaliland but the utmost kindness and consideration, it would be positively wrong for me to give them a different character to that which I have given. Possibly, nay, most probably, I have profited from the affection which both my cousins have inspired by their kind and just treatment of the Somalis, but I do not think that gratitude is such a very common virtue as to be without its value, whether it springs from the heart of a white man or a black.