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A Journey through the Somali Country to the Webbe Shebeyli.

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Map, p. 704.

It had long been my wish to explore the interior of the Somali country: therefore, in January 1884, accompanied by my brother and Mr. E. Lort Phillips, I embarked in an Arab dhow at Aden, and visited Berbera and Zeila, the two chief Somali ports. At Berbera we made a short expedition to the foot of the great hill range, trusting ourselves entirely to a Somali escort. The people appeared to be so friendly, and encouraged us so much to go further inland, that we went back to England fully determined to return and strike for the hitherto unexplored Ogadayn country. With the exception of Herr Haggenmacher no European had penetrated southwards beyond the high range of hills visible from the coast. Herr Haggenmacher had gone about 50 miles beyond these hills, but his map is not a very trustworthy one, as from fear of the natives he had been unable to use his instruments. On the coast the principal explorers have been Cruttenden, Speke, Revoil, Hildebrand, and Menzies. None succeeded in getting beyond the maritime plain. The Italian Sacconi, who endeavoured to penetrate Ogadayn from Harrar, paid with his life for the attempt. Captain Burton was the first explorer, but his explorations were far to the west of our intended route. We found his book, 'First Footsteps in Eastern Africa,' however, a useful guide, and a capital account of one of the most successful and plucky journeys ever accomplished in Africa.

We reached Aden in November of last year, with a further addition to our party in Mr. Percy Aylmer and Mr. Godfrey Thrupp, and two European servants, Durling and Anselmier. Here we succeeded in getting together a band of Somalis to act as an armed guard, and were particularly fortunate in securing the services of one named Dualla

Idrees, who spoke English well, and who for several years had been one of Mr. Stanley's chief men on the Congo. We made him our headman and found him of the greatest use, and his tact and management of the natives contributed very largely to our success. After a very pleasant visit at the hospitable house of General Blair, the late Resident at Aden, on the 8th of December we embarked in a dhow for Berbera with our Somali servants, and some horses and mules which we had purchased at Aden.

On arrival we despatched two of our headmen into the interior to collect camels for our luggage, which had increased to considerable proportions, as we had to carry quantities of cotton cloth and beads—money in the interior being unknown—in addition to rice and dates for our servants. Our previous experience taught us it was better to hire than to buy these camels, for the natives are always careful about their own beasts, and thus the risks dependent upon injury or theft would be greatly diminished. From all accounts we heard previous to our start, we were led to believe that our camels would be stolen within the first few days, unless a most careful guard were kept over them, and the best guards were clearly the men who were the owners of the beasts.

After something more than the usual delays and vexations consequent upon all dealings with natives, a contract was signed by which we hired sixty camels and thirty drivers who were to accompany us as far as the Webbe Shebeyli. We left Berbera on December 23rd; our road lay nearly south, and led between steep hills and along riverbeds till we reached the foot of the mountain range, 40 miles from the sea, and 2200 feet above its level. The whole of this country is called by the Somals "Guban," while the cooler country beyond the hills is called "Ugub." During the winter months the natives descend from the plateau, and at this time Guban is dotted with villages and covered with flocks of sheep. Numerous small streams flow from the mountains, and grass grows in the crevices of the rocks affording sufficient food for the sheep.

Every Somal carries two spears, a shield, and a short sword, and the slightest difference of opinion with his neighbour causes him to instantly draw his sword or to thrust with his spear.* Fortunately the tribal laws are severe against any one who takes a life, the fine being a large number of camels, which have to be paid by the tribe if the individual is not sufficiently wealthy to pay them himself. For this reason it is to the advantage of the kinsmen of the combatants to separate them before much harm is done. They can nearly always show you several wounds, and are just as proud of those which are behind as they

* The Somal approach more nearly to the ancient Egyptians in many ways than any other African race with which I am acquainted. Their swords, for example, are exactly like those used by the ancient Egyptians.

are of those which are in front. Their condition of health is such that they survive even the gravest wounds, and we saw many cases in which men recovered quickly from injuries which would have certainly been fatal to Europeans. They have quick tempers, which, when aroused, are absolutely beyond control, but if once you can get a Somal to listen to your arguments, you can nearly always turn him round to your way of thinking. They are very great talkers, and every new plan is discussed for hours. They will sit in a circle, and divide themselves into two parties, each appointing a spokesman, who, squatting a little in advance of his fellows, and holding a stick in his hand, will draw intricate geometrical designs on the sand, and at the same time hold forth lengthily on the subject in discussion. However slowly he may talk, and however long he pauses to collect his ideas, he is rarely interrupted until he has quite finished. They are keenly sensitive to ridicule, and if there be a mutiny amongst your men—as happened to us more than once—and you can manage to make the people laugh at their ringleader, he will be completely cowed, and covering his face with his *tobe*, will retire.

On the third day from Berbera we had our first serious trouble with our men, and this was caused by a curious trait in the Somali character which makes them rebel against anything in the way of a leader. We had endeavoured to divide them into three parties, for purposes of defence and guard at night, and over each of these parties we had placed a headman. The others at once threw down their rifles and refused to proceed: the camel men then interfered, and a free fight was the consequence, which with great difficulty we succeeded in stopping before much damage was done. I may mention that it was only during the first part of our journey that we had serious trouble with our people; afterwards in Ogadayn a common danger made them more careful in their behaviour, and a threat of expelling from camp any who gave trouble effectually kept them in order. We also got to understand and to like each other, and we never had the slightest reason to suspect or to fear treachery.

Every night whilst in the more populous districts a number of natives would come to be fed. This was a most serious tax on our resources, but one which we were seldom able to refuse. They would sit silent on the ground near the camp fires where our men would be eating, and though they never asked for food, they always succeeded in getting it given to them. At the foot of the mountains we were met by Sultan Aoud, the Sultan of one part of the great Habr-Gerhajis tribe. We turned out our escort, whom we had endeavoured to drill and teach the use of firearms, and forming them in line, saluted with a volley. The Habr-Gerhajis tribe had formerly been under one sultan, and were very powerful, making frequent raids into Ogadayn; but on his death two cousins, Aoud and Noor, divided the country between them, and since

then they have been constantly at war with each other. Sultan Aoud was a fine-looking man, but I suppose from fear of his neighbours had never visited the coast, and spoke no Arabic.

With considerable difficulty and the aid of the Abdul-Ismael tribe of Somals we got our laden camels up a difficult pass which led to the top of the mountains, 4700 feet above the sea. The scenery amongst the mountains presented a pleasant contrast after the Guban. The hillsides were covered with thick jungle, and gigantic euphorbia, somewhat like the quolquol which grows on the Abyssinian mountains. On the top we found the only building we saw in the country—a sheikh's tomb—and also large stone mounds, which the Somals ascribed to the Gallas.

The first day's journey after we reached the top of the mountains took us well away from the hills, and we entered on the level stoneless plain, which stretches without interruption for 200 miles south. At first our route lay along the course of the Tug Dayr (the long river) till we reached a well called Burao, whence we were to strike across the long waterless stretch of the Haud to Ogadayn.

The Tug Dayr is a large watercourse, dry except during the rains, but with numerous deep wells, in the vicinity of which the Somals live. Captain Burton, in his 'First Footsteps in East Africa,' mentions the probability of the Tug Dayr and the Wady Nogal being one and the same thing. This by careful inquiry from the natives we believe to be the case. Nogal is the name of a large district to the east of the Haud, and not of a river; no river-bed is called wady in this country, but Tug. After leaving the Habr-Gerhajis country it flows in a westerly direction through the Habr Tdjaleh tribe and on through the Dolbohanti country, through Nogal, and ultimately flows into the sea north of Garad.

On our arrival at Burao, Sultan Aoud collected his people in our honour, and they went through some well-executed evolutions on horseback before our zariba; charging in a body—there were about 200 of them—and with wild shouts flinging their spears into the air, and then all reining up their horses on their haunches close to our inclosure, shouted "Mort, mort" ("Welcome, welcome"), to which we replied "Kul leban" ("Thanks"). Another day the Midgans, a low-caste tribe who carry bows and poisoned arrows, came with numbers of tame ostriches, whose feathers they pluck and send to Berbera. Their bows were decorated with white ostrich feathers, and they went through a curious dance.

These Midgans are found living among all the Somali tribes, and are very much looked down upon. There are two other low castes: the Tomals, workers in iron, and the Ebir, workers in leather charms.

Here we were to start on our long waterless journey. Sultan Aoud promised us every assistance, camels to carry water, and men connected with the Baha Wady, the first Ogadayn tribe we should meet, to go with

us. Suddenly we noticed a great change in their behaviour ; they divided up into parties under the trees, and entering into long discussions, gave up all preparations for our departure. We were not long in finding out the reason of this change. A Somal had arrived with a letter from Major Hunter—the British Consul-General for the Somali coast—enclosing copies of telegrams from Earl Granville ordering Major Hunter to stop our departure from the coast. The messenger had been instructed to try and stop our continuing our journey, and, in order to do this, he went among the natives, telling them not to assist the Christians who had come to take the country, demanding why they permitted Christians to drink at their wells, where no white man had ever drunk before. Luckily for us, the messenger was of a different tribe from that we were among, and well known as a very troublesome man and a great mischief-maker. By doing too much he defeated Major Hunter's object, and we despatched him back to the coast with a letter to Major Hunter, in which we showed that although the Government had ordered him to prevent our departure, they had said nothing about forcing us to return if we had already gone, and pointing out the danger we had been placed in through the conduct of the messenger. We then, after great delays and endless discussions, succeeded in making a start. Just as we left Burao another letter was handed to us from a friend at the coast, warning us against the extreme danger of proceeding, as Lord Granville's telegrams were *public property* in the bazaars at Berbera, and the Ayal Achmet—the tribe inhabiting Berbera—would not unnaturally think that hindering us would find favour in the sight of the British Government. We knew the Ayal Achmet were strongly against our journey, and a messenger from Berbera told us they had sent letters ahead of us to Ogadayn trying to rouse the people against us. This we subsequently found to be true, and our chief difficulty in Ogadayn was counteracting the influence of these letters, which several times put us in great danger.

At Burao we procured extra camels to carry water, as we were told we had a waterless stretch, variously estimated at from seven to nine days to cross, at the end of which time we might find a little water by digging, but if not, three days farther would bring us to a well. In consequence of the excitement caused amongst the natives by the messenger who brought the telegrams, we further completed our preparations by taking with us three men, relations of Sultan Aoud's, who had daughters or sisters married among the Baha Wadly, the first tribe of Ogadayns we should see, and who would therefore, in the language of the country, act as *abbans* or protectors. We bought a flock of forty-five sheep and a number of camels for food on the way for our large following, which now amounted to nearly 100 people, as we had extra drivers with the new camels, one to each beast.

On the 9th day of January we started across the Haud on a most monotonous and trying journey. The animals had nothing to eat but

the driest of dry grass, and the whole way there was not a single shade tree or any signs of a watercourse to vary the monotony of the dead level country. Belts of dried mimosa alternated with open plains of shrivelled grass, and as we got further south the skeletons of gum-bearing trees completed a forest of desolation.

On the second day our camel-drivers, who I imagine had all along thought we never would attempt to cross the desert, mutinied and declared they would go no farther; we told them that if they returned we would drive the camels on, and that not one animal should be taken back alive. After an animated argument they agreed to load up, and sullenly did so. The water-camel men then insisted on returning, as they were frightened of being attacked on the way home by the rival sultan (Sultan Nur); however, we made them accompany us one day farther (five days in all), and then loading up our own camels with the water, allowed the others to return.

On the eighth day we were told we were approaching the place where water might be found by digging, but our men feared Dolbohanti marauders, who they said watched for caravans, and so we pitched our camp and sent out scouts. Night came on and they had not returned, and we were all getting anxious about them, when two arrived and said they had found a little water by digging. Early on the ninth day we marched on and reached Hodayu, which, as it is characteristic of all the natural watering places we saw, I will here briefly describe. As I have said, the country is level and stoneless, but at certain places the rock—red sandstone—appears on the surface, and large barren depressions are formed, varying from 10 to 100 acres in extent. In this the water collects during the rains, and remains for perhaps two months after these rains cease. Hodayu was one of these natural pans; it was quite dry, but by digging in the fetid black earth to a depth of six or eight feet, a small quantity of liquid black mud was obtained. Our men dug thirty or forty of such holes, and we stayed one day collecting the water, after which we marched on and reached the first Ogadayn wells on the fourteenth day, fifteen days after our camels had had their last drink. I may here mention that all Somali animals appear to be able to stand thirst in a most remarkable degree. A sheep will go six to eight days, and our horses several times went three days without water and without apparent suffering. Our arrival at the wells of Gerloguby astounded the Somals who were watering great herds of camels and flocks of sheep. Their attitude was menacing, and we therefore quickly formed a strong zariba. Round this they crowded in hundreds and expressed the greatest amazement at us and our doings. Smoking particularly astonished them, as they thought a pipe was part of our persons, and that the white man kept a fire somewhere inside, and when one of our party shot a bird, many fell down, while others invoked the protection of Allah. We despatched as soon as possible messengers for some headmen well known to our people, and in

the meantime tried to make friends with those who were about us, but they met our advances coldly and seemed very uncertain how to treat us; indeed, afterwards, when we really became friends, they did not hesitate to say that they had determined to kill us as soon as possible. Some headmen at last arrived and began to make known their wants; as these started with the modest demand of 4000 pieces of cloth, negotiations proceeded but slowly; suddenly a cloud of dust was seen, and our men shouted that we were going to be attacked. Upon this we sounded a call to arms and closed the gate of the zariba. A large crowd of horsemen, spearmen and bowmen surrounded us, and the noise was so great that it was some time before we found out they had come to inquire what we wanted in their country and to back up their demand for 4000 pieces of cloth. They performed evolutions round the zariba, similar to those we had seen at Burao, and this was followed by long and loud addresses, in which they described their valour, and showed how they could vanquish all other tribes. This over, we in our turn said we would now show them what we could do, and thereupon we formed our men in line and fired volleys into the air. This action on our part probably saved us from immediate attack. In addition to some twenty-five stand of Remingtons, we had served out for this occasion our elephant guns and all our sporting rifles; and the impression produced by the reports of the former, was evidenced by the chorus of Allahs with which those reports were greeted. Many ran away, upsetting all with whom they came into contact; others threw themselves on the ground and covered their faces, and there was a general stampede of riderless horses.

At last the efforts of our headmen were successful in securing three chiefs of the Rer Dollol tribe as abbans. As these men belonged to one of the most powerful Ogadayn tribes, we were given to understand that their presence in our camp would insure our being well received by other tribes. They were given a small present of cotton cloth, and two bales were distributed among the other headmen. This completed our negotiations, and enabled us to leave Gerloguby for the Webbe after a delay of thirteen days. Of all the watering-places for cattle, Gerloguby is the chief in Eastern Ogadayn; the wells are numerous and never fail. They are cut through the solid rock, to a depth, in some cases, of 60 feet, and date back to the Galla occupation of the country.

We had not proceeded far on our fresh journey before we found that a large section of the people we met were opposed to our advance. Letters had been sent from Berbera, telling them that we were coming, and that if they allowed us to return we should be succeeded by others more numerous, who would take the country from them; that in fact we were only acting as spies for the English, who were everywhere attacking the Mussulmen, and seizing their lands. On our road lay an important village of priests called Faf, the only permanent village we saw between the coast and the Webbe, and here it was that we were led to expect

the greatest opposition. No sooner had we encamped near Faf than our scouts brought in news that the natives were collecting in large numbers for the purpose of attack; all night we kept under arms, and fired off occasional volleys, chiefly to please our own people, who always felt more secure when firing—and partly to let any neighbours know we were awake. Next day we rode close to the village, and pitched our camp, surrounding it with a strong zariba, among the finest trees we had seen since leaving Burao, and close to the Tug Fafan a river which, during the rainy season, floods the entire country. All around we saw signs of cultivation, and wild cotton was plentiful, brought I imagine from the Webbe, where it is cultivated. Our abbans started for the village, and after negotiations which lasted for two days, and during which time the natives had viewed us with considerable suspicion and hostility, we succeeded in persuading the head priest to pay us a visit. A little civility, a cup of coffee, a few pieces of cloth, and a display of some children's picture-books brought for the purpose, made him our ally, and henceforth we had no further trouble in that particular place. Following the course of the Fafan for some distance and then striking across a low range of hills we reached the Webbe on the 18th day of February. The view of the Webbe valley as we descended the hill was very fine, and unlike anything we had seen in the country before. A green and lightly-wooded plain dotted with flocks and herds, and relieved here and there by native villages, formed the foreground to a thick belt of grand trees which marked the course of the river. Beyond this a barren expanse of land extended to a high range of mountains, whose summits were lost in the mass of clouds which hung about them. We pitched our tents among the Rer Hamers, the first Somali tribe against whom we had no reason to complain. They seemed to be the only Somals who did not fight with the Shebeyli people, and who were not afraid to live near them.

The Shebeyli sultan came to our camp, and through our abbans informed us that he and his ancestors, all Hawiya Somals, had for many generations ruled over fifty-six villages of the Adone—as the Shebeyli folk are called—and that latterly half his villages had revolted, and electing another sultan had separated from him. He invited us to accompany him to his principal village, which we accordingly did, and making a strong zariba on the edge of the river prepared to enjoy the luxury of shady trees and of plentiful water. The Webbe* we found to be a rapid and deep river, measuring 50 yards in the broadest place; and we were told that a week before our arrival it had been nearly empty and easily fordable, but that lately, owing to rains having fallen towards Harrar, it had come down in flood. It is a singular fact that this immense volume of water never reaches the sea, but after flowing to within half a degree of the equator loses itself a few miles from the coast.

* Webbe is simply the native name for river, and Shebeyli means leopard.

Crocodiles and fish were plentiful, and in some places where there were large marshes, hippopotami abounded, and waterbuck and other antelope were numerous. The natives, who were different in every way from the Somals, cultivate the land, and plant quantities of dourra as well as pumpkins, and a kind of bean. Most of them presented strongly marked negro features, and though they spoke a Somali dialect, it was not their own language, which is the same as that spoken on the coast between Merka and Zanzibar.

They live in permanent and neatly made villages built of durra stalk, and cultivate the ground extensively, digging channels from the river for purposes of irrigation. Durra similar to that grown in Egypt is the staple food, and attains to a height of 15 feet; a heavy camel load costs from two to three tobés—18 to 27 yards of cloth, value at Berbera about 7s. Like the Somal, the Adone have large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, but all these animals are poor and suffer from the fly in the rain and from the ticks in the dry season; neither camels nor horses are used, for they will only live in the dry season, but the Rer Hamer, who leave the river valley for the plateau in the wet season, bring numbers to graze there in the winter. All small articles are exchanged for beads, but sheep and cattle are paid for in cotton cloth, the former costing one tobe and the latter five to eight. Unlike the Somals the Adone eat fowls, and by means of empty tins and bottles we were able to obtain a pleasant change in our diet. All the chief men are Hawiya Somals, but negroes form the mass of the population, and of these the majority are slaves. The Adone detest the Somal, but the latter are obliged to deal with the former for grain, though it rarely happens that their caravans return from the Webbe without being attacked. All are armed either with spears—of a different shape from the Somali spears—or with poisoned arrows, and a man is not looked upon with favour by the women of his tribe till he has killed another, either in fair fight or, what is very much more common, by assassination; this entitles him to paint the boss of his shield red or to wear a feather in his hair.

Arrived at the sultan's village, Barri, we were hospitably entertained, but we had not been there many hours before we found that we were the central figures of a political crisis, and expected to take part in what the sultan intended to be a brilliant *coup d'état*.

Within three miles of the sultan's village was that of his rival. This man, once a subject, was now a formidable foe, for he had gathered round him a following which far exceeded in numbers and in fighting strength that of our host. No sooner, therefore, did the Sultan of Barri hear of our approach, than he determined to place us in a position from which, in order to save ourselves, we should be forced to act as his ally. His first step, as I have shown, was an invitation to his village with the promise of a hospitable welcome. His second was to send a message

to his rival, saying that unless he at once tendered his submission, he would level his village and destroy his following, and that with this object he had obtained an army from Europe furnished with weapons which no mortal could resist. Until we arrived, the Sultan of Barri had been in daily fear lest his rival should be the first to indulge in acts of open hostility, in which case, by his own confession, he would have been powerless to defend himself, for many of his own people were wavering in their allegiance, and prepared at the first opportunity to go over to the stronger side. It is needless to say that this manoeuvre on the part of the sultan was unknown to us until we had established ourselves by the side of his village, and were surrounded by some 1500 of his people, and from their attitude it appeared more than probable that if we declined to give them the assistance they desired, their first act of hostility would be towards ourselves. Once possessed of our arms, they could easily frighten their neighbours into subjection, and the loot offered by our camels, horses, and camp equipment, was tempting to people who covet all they see. However, we flatly declined to fight any battles but our own, and endeavoured to make it clear to the sultan and to his people that if they wished to interfere with their neighbours, they would have to do so without receiving any assistance from us or from our men.

It was not long before news of our decision reached the rival village, who, attributing our attitude to fear, at once expressed their intention to attack the Sultan of Barri and his European army too. This increased the difficulty of our position, for, on the one hand, if we left, we should have been at once attacked by the people of the sultan, while on the other hand, if we acted as their allies, we were to be overwhelmed by their more powerful rivals. The middle course, which was to remain neutral, seemed likely to end in the probability of the two hostile villages combining their forces against us; and though this might have been a peaceful solution of the quarrel between the Adones, it was not one which commended itself to us as at all convenient. The united strength of the two villages amounted to some 4000 warriors, a number which we, with our little band of sixty, could scarcely expect to defeat. However, we adhered to our first resolution, and strengthening our zariba with such material as we could obtain, prepared to await events. Our rear had a natural protection from the river, which was some 50 yards in width, and well guarded by crocodiles; therefore from that side we had only to fear the poisoned arrows of the archers, who had good cover in the thick jungle on the opposite bank. The erection of a low traverse, however, enabled us to feel secure against this weapon, and our main efforts were directed towards our front and flanks, which were exposed to direct assault. Fortunately the country here was too open to afford much cover to any enemy by day, but a large force might have crept up to within a hundred yards of us at night.

For the first five days we were kept in a condition of tension which was as irritating as it was wearisome. The blowing of the war-shells, the yells of the women, the continuous reports that the enemy were coming, and the demonstrations of the sultan's warriors, made night and day one long and tedious watch, in which sleep or rest in any form was impossible. During these days we allowed our men to fire frequent volleys in the air, while we made short shooting excursions, and succeeded in slaughtering a number of crocodiles and many of the larger antelopes. This produced an excellent effect on the sultan's people, and gave them so much respect for our rifles that we soon felt sure we should have little to fear in the way of a surprise from them; and the sense of security from at least this danger induced us to cross the river on a rough raft and explore a few miles of the country on the opposite side, where game was abundant. At the end of the fifth day the sultan came to us with a very cunning proposal. He said the enemy were so much afraid of our rifles that though they had made frequent feints, they had never dared to approach within a mile of our zariba, and he now saw his way to reconquer his revolted subjects without bloodshed. His scheme was that we should advance with all the circumstance of war upon the enemy, while he and his people followed behind. That on reaching the village we should arrange our men as though we were about to attack, but that before we fired he should rush forward and implore us to desist from the slaughter of men who once had been his loved and faithful subjects. Thus those now in revolt would look upon him as their saviour, and at once return to their former state of allegiance. This was very ingenious, and doubtless an excellent programme as far as the sultan was concerned, but it did not suit us to leave ourselves and our camp equipment exposed to his people who were to form our rear, nor did we at all share the sultan's professed certainty as to the peaceful results. We, therefore, again declined to interfere in any way, and again expressed our determination to do nothing but defend ourselves. The following days were repetitions of the preceding ones—alarms by day and alarms by night, all accompanied by shrieks and yells, by wild war-dances, and great parades of warriors, who rushed about, and showed in pantomime how great and terrible they were, and how a thousand phantom foes were falling beneath their spears. It now seemed hopeless to expect to leave the Webbe without a fight, and we all felt a sense of relief when a crisis arrived, and the enemy came out in their full strength to attack. When, however, they were within a few hundred yards of us, the discretion of their leaders suggested a halt and a consultation. During this we sent an advance guard headed by our chief man Dualla, who challenged the enemy when he got within bowshot. The answer was a volley of imprecations, and in return our men replied by a few shots, fired high, and then they galloped back to

us. Upon this the enemy retired, and spent the remainder of that day in consultation. We also took counsel together, and decided to go straight up to the enemy's village on the following day and settle the question one way or another. We were weary of everlasting alarms and feints of attack; all efforts at conciliation had failed, and it seemed that we had either to remain indefinitely in a state of blockade on the Shebeyli, or to fight our way out against serious odds and great disadvantages. Next day, while we were preparing for our exodus amid the usual cries of alarm and warlike demonstrations of the villagers, some sixty of the enemy appeared in sight, with their spears reversed in token of submission. Among their number was the sultan's rival, who was received with yells of welcome on all sides, and carried on a platform of raised shields into the presence of his now acknowledged sovereign. Thus peace was declared between these two claimants to the royalty of the river, but we learnt from our spies during the night that it was probably only the first move towards a combined attack upon us. Therefore before daybreak we gave the order to load the camels in silence, and with the first streaks of dawn left the rival sultans in possession of our empty zariba, and by a rapid march reached the neighbourhood of our old friends, the Rer Hamer. We were much disappointed at having to return northwards, but we were quite unable to persuade any of our men to accompany us further south. Fear of the Adone worked strongly upon them, and they urged with great reason that the rains, which might be expected to commence any day, would render travelling impossible with camels, both on account of the mud and also on account of the fly. We offered them every inducement to proceed, but nothing would make them alter their minds.

Travelling along the Webbe westwards, we encamped again amongst the Rer Hamer, and set to work endeavouring to buy animals as food for our men, for our camels were still in such bad condition, owing to the effects of the long desert journey, that we were unable to load them up with corn. Here, as elsewhere in Ogadayn, we experienced the greatest difficulty in buying food; flocks and herds abounded, yet the natives were most unwilling to part with their animals at any price, and at last we determined to go farther north and to pitch our tents and wait there until our abbans, whom we sent out in various directions, were able to purchase the eating camels we required. These are bred in large quantities solely for the purpose of food, and attain to a very large size, the hump alone weighing in many instances as much as 100 lbs. They are driven in herds to the coast and sold for prices ranging from 18 to 25 dollars, and their flesh is much prized by the Somals, as they imagine that by eating camel's flesh they acquire the camel's power of being able to endure great hunger and thirst.

Reaching the Tug Fafan by a new route, we were able to cross it at once. This was fortunate, as on the following day violent storms of

rain burst over the valley, and the Tug became a roaring torrent; the rain was almost continuous for several days, and impeded our progress, as the ground became soft and slippery and thus dangerous to our animals. The whole of the valley of the Tug assumed the appearance of an immense lake, bearing out what all the natives told us, namely, that the Farfan never reached the Webbe, but lost itself in a series of marshes, the largest of which is called "Dobwayn," the Somali term for "great mud."

Continuing our journey as soon as the state of the ground permitted us to do so, we reached Hahi, where we determined to remain to collect provisions before starting over the long stretch of waterless country, which extends north to the mountain range. The rain had ceased, but its effect was evident, for the aspect of the whole country was changed; trees were covered with leaves, and the ground was carpeted with flowers and grass. The natives, who during the dry season make their villages within two or three days' journey of some well from which they draw their supply of water, had now spread themselves all over the country, and their cattle were luxuriating in the new grass. It is during this season too that the Ogadayns push farther north, and live near the various pools formed like Hodayu by a depression in the rocks, while the coast Somals press farther south. Thus antagonistic tribes are brought into close relation with each other, and as a result raids are frequent, and blood feuds kept alive. The Rer Harun and the Rer Ali, who inhabit the Tug Fafan in the dry season, move eastward to the large district called Harradiggit, which contains many pools. We had frequent discussions with our guides as to the best road back, and found we practically had the choice of three, which represented the principal trade routes between Berberah, or Bulhar, and eastern Ogadayn, the one we came by not being a trade route. The most westerly, and by far the most important, follows the Fafan as far as Milmil, and then extending for a five days' journey across a waterless stretch reaches Harrer es Sagheer. The middle one, called Wadaa Gulif, follows the Fafan as far as Warandab, and then extending towards the east, passes Harradiggit and the Toyo plain, having a stretch of seven days without water from Harradiggit to Syk. The most easterly route, called Wadaa Hamid, goes from Hahi to Farfanyer near Hodayu, and thence due north through the Toyo plain to Gunder Libah, and this is the most waterless route of the three, except during the rains. I may mention that there is still another route, Wadaa Arnot, or the "fruitful road," farther east, through the Dolbohanti country, but this is rarely used by large caravans.

We gave up the western road, as we should have had to pass through the Rer Ali and the Rer Harun, who were reputed very troublesome, and we were anxious to avoid delay; the eastern road was too near our former one to commend itself to us, and we therefore determined to

strike nearly north and to join the Wadaa Gulif road at Harradiggit. Before starting we were anxious to feel certain that the rain had extended farther north, and so we despatched two men to Harradiggit. They were away just over thirty-six hours, and performed a most remarkable feat of endurance. Starting with nothing but a skin of milk between them they marched to a waterpool called Deta, and back, a distance which we found afterwards to be 120 miles. None of our men seemed to be at all surprised at the rapidity with which the march was made. After nearly a fortnight's delay, and having succeeded in buying a few camels and sheep for food, we continued our homeward journey and fully justified the Arab proverb which says, "God help the goer, but the return is rolling." Abundant rain filled the waterpools, green grass and trees enabled our camels to pick up their strength, and as their loads were light, nearly all our stores and provisions being finished, we were able to make a rapid march. On the 10th of April we reached Sultan Nur's territory and were received by a large deputation on horseback who were anxious to prove that they were more powerful than Sultan Aoud's people who had given us a similar reception on our outward journey. With the greatest difficulty we managed to get away from them after only half a day's halt, and then continuing northwards across a wild country intersected by ravines and watercourses, we descended a magnificent pass which led to the maritime plain, and hurried on to Berbera, reaching that town on April 16th, one day ahead of our caravan. We had the satisfaction of feeling that we had neither lost a life nor been obliged to take one.

Before closing I should like to say a word as to the commerce of the country. Of the amount of that commerce I will not speak, as that may be accurately determined by reading the official reports published by the Aden authorities, but what I wish particularly to draw attention to is the fact that so small a quantity of English goods enters the country. All the cotton cloth, with but few exceptions, is of American or Indian make, and the only English cloth we took was taken on account of its rarity as presents for chiefs. Natives of India have for generations lived at Berbera and supplied the traders from the interior with goods; this no doubt accounts for the Indian cloth so largely used, but why is American cloth so common there?

I trust the English authorities now firmly established at Berbera will do all they can to assist natives arriving from the far interior in disposing of their goods at the coast. The custom is for the Ayal Achmet to act as brokers, and too often most of the profits stick to the hands of the middle man. Till lately no Ogadayn ever went to the coast, but intrusted their goods to coast traders; now, however, they are beginning to trade for themselves, and each year find their way to Berbera and Bulhar in increased numbers; this must, and indeed already has, tended to open up the country, which has been hitherto closed to

Europeans, more on account of a distrust of their motives in travelling, than from any real hatred to the white man.

With regard to the scientific results of our expedition, besides the map which was most carefully made by my brother and Mr. Aylmer, who fixed astronomically, after a series of observations, all the important points on the route, we have to point to collections of mammals, birds, plants, and butterflies, in all of which several new species were found; a detailed description of these collections will appear appended to this paper in the 'Proceedings.'

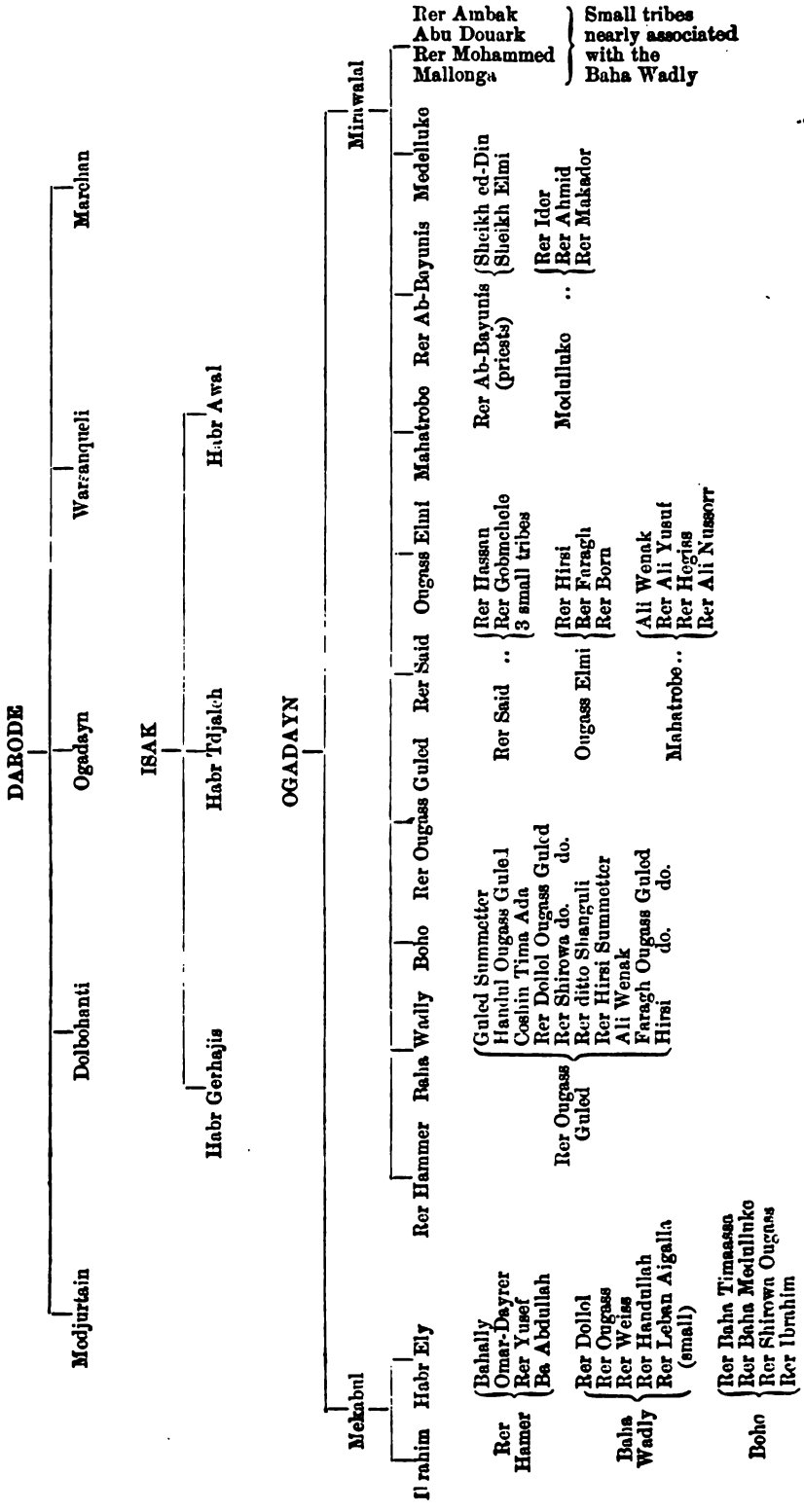
Genealogical Table of Somali Tribes.—All the tribes are either descended from Darode or Isak, two brothers. The Ogadayn are descended from Darode, and have two great divisions, Mekabul and Mirawalal; these divisions are again subdivided into innumerable subdivisions, the principal of which are given in the table on the following page.

Note by Professor Oliver, F.R.S., Kew, on the Botanical Collection made during the Expedition.—The collection made by Messrs. James and Thrupp includes nearly 150 species, chiefly of herbs and undershrubs, indicating a flora of low growth. They do not materially modify the general characteristics of the Somali-land flora as indicated by M. Franchet in his 'Sertulum Somalense,' which was based upon the collections of M. Révoil and the sparing materials sent to Europe by the late Dr. Hildebrandt. They, however, considerably enlarge our knowledge of the vegetation of the country, having been the result of travel over a more extensive area, and they further contain several new species. These latter have been described by Professor Oliver for publication at Kew, and will appear with plates in a botanical work, the 'Icones Plantarum.' Unfortunately no specimen of the myrrh and balsam yielding plants (*Balsamodendron* and *Boswellia*) are contained in the collection.

One of the most interesting discoveries is a flowerless specimen of a plant affording an arrow-poison, which Professor Oliver has identified with the *Adenium Somalense* of Dr. Balfour, a plant belonging to an order (Apocynaceæ) notorious for its poisonous juices. This is not the previously described arrow-poison of Somali-land, called *ouabaio*, and upon the medical and toxico-physiological properties of which a memoir has been written by MM. de Rochebrune and Arnaud in the 'Mission Révoil.' The material sent home by M. Révoil did not suffice for the determination of the botanical affinities of the plant affording the *ouabaio*, these consisting of only flowerless twigs. M. Franchet, however, provisionally referred it to a species of *Carissa* (or *Acokanthera*). A species of this genus has also been sent home by Dr. Hildebrandt from Somali-land with the statement that the juice of the root is used as an arrow-poison, and it appears to be identical with *Carissa Schimperii*, a native of Abyssinia; and as Heales gives the same name (*Spillea Wabajo*) for this plant, it may be concluded that there are two arrow-poisons in Somali-land, that of the *Carissa*, found by Révoil, and the *Adenium*, found by Messrs. James and Thrupp.

Zoological Collection: Mammalia.—Mr. Oldfield Thomas, of the Zoological Department, Natural History Museum, South Kensington, supplies the following note:—

The specimens consist of (1) *Heterocephalus phillipsi*, a new species of hairless rodent, allied to the remarkable *Heterocephalus glaber* Rüpp, described in 1845, of which none but the original specimen have ever been obtained. The specimen collected by Mr. Phillips was exhibited and shortly described at the Zoological Society's meeting in June, and will be the subject of a further more detailed



communication to the same Society. (2) *Crocidura* sp., a minute shrew, obtained by Mr. James, is believed by Dr. G. E. Dobson, who has paid much attention to this group, also to represent a new species.

Birds.—Captain G. E. Shelley reports that the collection of birds made by Mr. James and his party is excessively interesting. It contains specimens of sixty-one species, seven of which are new to science. Among them are *Tricholæma stigmatothorax* and *Trachyphonus erythrocephalus*, two barbets recently described from Masai-land and U-kama; a new species of bush-shrike (*Dryoscopus*), very unlike any previously known, with a bright red crown; *Uræginthus ianthinogaster*, a beautiful violet-breasted finch recently described from Masai-land; and four species of glossy starlings (*Cosmetornis regius*, *Speculipastor bicolor*, *Notanges hildebrandti*, and *Spreo albicapillus*) of great rarity, and confined, as far as at present known, to the northern portion of the East African sub-region.

Lepidopterous Insects.—Mr. A. G. Butler, Assistant Keeper of the Zoological Department of the Natural History Museum, has examined the collection of Lepidoptera. There are forty-six species, two of which belong to the section *Heterocera* and the remaining forty-four to the *Rhopalocera*. Not fewer than seventeen are new species, one constituting a new genus. The most interesting novelties are *Neocænynra duplex*, *Acræa mirabilis*, *Spindasis Somalina*, *Teracolus ocellatus*, *T. proclarus*, *Synchlœ distorta*, and *Eusemia Thruppis*.

Previous to the reading of the foregoing paper,

The PRESIDENT (the Marquis of Lorne) said he had the pleasure of introducing to the meeting Mr. James and his brother, who, though young in years, were old African travellers, having been no less than three times in the Soudan, once during the reign of the late General Gordon. The Geographical Society were particularly proud of Messrs. James, considering them as sons of the Society, because they were among those gentlemen who had taken advantage of the system of instruction established by the Council, and had been under the training of Mr. Coles, to enable them to take accurate scientific observations. They were also under particular obligation to the Messrs. James, because in American parlance they "had the floor" last week, but with great courtesy and kindness had given it up to Sir Peter Lumsden. That was another reason why the Society would receive them with cordiality and listen to their paper with great attention.

After the paper,

Captain R. F. BURTON said they must all feel highly obliged to Mr. James for the admirable paper he had read and the excellent maps he had shown, which added so much to their knowledge of the almost unknown country of Somali-land. He wished particularly to acknowledge the kind way in which Mr. James had spoken of his (Captain Burton's) former labours. He had expected to hear something more about the old ruins in the country, and especially about the ancient Christian tribes, but in Africa strangers had two things to learn—in the first place what there was, and in the second place what there was not, and generally what there was not was more circumstantially reported than what there was. He had the pleasure of meeting Mr. James at Trieste before he set out, and had an opportunity of pointing out to him a few of the difficulties of his undertaking. He himself had always found that the great difficulty of exploring the sources of the Nile was in London, and the great difficulty of exploring Somali-land was in Aden. That the immense tract of land behind Guardafui should be practically unknown was not honourable to English explorers, but travelling there had been rendered almost impossible by the peculiar condition of Aden. The Adenites were a peculiar people. They had not many topics of conversation, and when an expedition was proposed, it supplied them with something to talk about and think of for a long time. They generally.

took a depressing view of what was going to be done, and they did not keep it secret. The consequence was, the Somali heard of it, and concluded that the travellers had not the approval of their Government, from which it was a natural step in their minds to consider it a point of honour to rob or murder them. Very few men had ever entered Somali-land without feeling a Somali knife or spear. In the spring of the present year he met at Trieste Dr. Philip Paulitschke, who was Professor of Geography at the University of Vienna, and who went into the Somali country with Dr. Hardegger. They succeeded in reaching Harar without any particular difficulty, and were able to go still further to the south-west. They told him that Mr. James's expedition had run great risks, and that all kinds of reports had been spread about their having no weapons, whereas they were perfectly well armed. Mr. James had brought out his gallant little party without a fight, and that was very peculiar in Somali-land. In the autumn of 1854, after he (Captain Burton) had explored Harar, a little Timbuctu in East Africa, he proposed to set out for the sources of the Nile, which were then supposed to lie somewhat north of the Equator, and to march directly upon them from Berbera. The reason why for 2000 years travellers had failed to reach the sources of the Nile was very simple. They went up-stream, and by the time they arrived at the difficult part of the journey they had expended their stores and lost very much of their health, strength, and energy. He need hardly say how that expedition ended. Lieutenant Stroyan was killed, Lieutenant Speke was very severely wounded, and, in fact, the expedition was completely broken up. He afterwards renewed his attempt from Zanzibar, and on that occasion was more fortunate. All this was told in a book, 'First Footsteps in East Africa,' that came from the press almost stillborn, except that it was subjected to the caresses of a certain genial journal which was then called the 'Saturday Reviler'; but when his Highness Ismail Pasha determined to annex Harar, his heroic friend the late General Gordon made use of it, and wrote him several letters on the subject, sending him a history of Harar in Arabic, which he proposed one day to translate. He had been telling a story of thirty years ago: his excuse must be that it was so old that perhaps it might be new to some who were present.

Mr. RAVENSTEIN said he hoped that Mr. James would include in his paper the name of Cruttenden, of the Indian Navy, who was really the pioneer explorer of Somali-land. He was the man who so long ago as 1848 stood on the top of Mount Airansit which bordered the great inland plateau and looked down over the broad valley of the Tug Darotr, which ran to the east. Those who remembered what he said about six months ago, or who had read his paper on the subject, would know that the whole interior of Somali-land until within the last few days might very properly be described as a *terra incognita*. It was the most extensive region in Africa yet unexplored, stretching away from the borders of the Indian Ocean almost to the Upper Nile and the Victoria Nyanza. The map before them was not merely a hearsay picture by a sporting traveller or an amateur, but was based upon scientific observations, and they must therefore feel most grateful to Messrs. James for having undertaken the expedition. The route from Berbera led into the very heart of the country, and Messrs. James had given the correct positions of places concerning which a great deal had been heard, and afforded materials for reconstructing the map of the whole country. They were fortunate in reaching the river Shebeyli and so interesting a region. Throughout the districts of Somali-land, the Galla country, and the Masai country there were scattered agricultural communities of a race strangers to the nomad masters of the country. One of these communities would no doubt be described in Messrs. James's book with much more detail than had been given in the paper. He had never before heard the name of Adone applied to those people, though the name of the Hawiya Somal tribe who governed them was perfectly

well known. They spoke a language similar to that used along the coast, by which he supposed was meant Ki-swahili. Other communities existed at the back of the Wébe, such as the Bön and similar tribes. Mr. Cust included them under the term of "servile tribes." Further south there were the Wa-tua and Wa-sanía, living under like conditions, but what language they spoke was not known. Those who had seen them and spoken with them stated, as Mr. James did, that they spoke the language of the pastoral tribes. Dr. Fischer said that the Wa-sanía spoke Galla, and Mr. Wakefield said the same, but they were black people, and it would be interesting to find out where they came from—whether they were relics of a negro population, the bulk of which had gone to the south, or negroes that had gone to the north. Many among them were no doubt escaped slaves. Mr. James's expedition had really rendered an immense service to geographical science. There was another expedition into the same region which had also vastly assisted in increasing our geographical knowledge of the country. Harar was a town which Captain Burton first visited, and it was from there that Sacconi, an Italian explorer, started with twelve men towards the south. He was not a man who had undergone the excellent training which the travellers of the Geographical Society received from Mr. Coles, and although he sacrificed his life as an explorer he yet rendered very little service, because he would not take the trouble of learning how to observe an altitude or determine a latitude. Sacconi stopped at a little rivulet which he called Sulu, which simply meant river. He (Mr. Ravenstein) supposed that a good many names on the maps were simply no names at all. Sacconi was murdered. About the same period there travelled south for commercial purposes a Greek named Panagiotos, whose firm had also an establishment at Kassala. He also was murdered; but a Frenchman who travelled in the service of the house of Bardey and Co. succeeded in coming back from the Ogadayn country. He, however, communicated no geographical information, and therefore his journey possessed no interest for the Society. Captain Burton no doubt would be delighted to hear that another expedition had visited some ancient ruins. Dr. Von Hardegger, a sporting man, asked Professor Paulitschke to accompany him. They left the coast at Zeila and proceeded to Harar, where they stayed three weeks and most carefully determined the position of the place. They made several excursions from there, and visited the little lakes to the west of that town, which Father Taurin had described. Near one of those lakes a French traveller had been killed, and that was really the fate of nearly every white man who ventured into the country. It was all very nice for apostles of gentleness to quote "Do not raise your hand," but he supposed it was necessary at least to show that the travellers could defend themselves if they were attacked. After these excursions Professor Paulitschke and Dr. Von Hardegger went south. In the country of the Ania Galla they came to an old ruined city called Bia Woraba, and would no doubt furnish a description of it. Professor Paulitschke had informed him in a letter that he had collected a vast mass of information, and it would at once be perceived that having a good route on the west side, Sacconi's in the centre, and now Mr. James's route, it would be possible to reconstruct the map. He could only add that geographers owed a debt of much gratitude to Messrs. James for having combined their amusement with such valuable scientific work.

Captain WHARTON, R.N., said he had come into contact with the Somalis down near Kisimayu, which was just on the Equator. Some years ago he was on board one of Her Majesty's ships making charts there, and the first thing he was struck with was the magnificent physique of the Somalis. He really thought they were the handsomest race of men and women he had ever seen. They were black, but those who had lived in Eastern countries would agree with him that they might be black

and comely. Probably not even the Masai were a more magnificent tribe. He went to Kisimayu to survey the place. He had no doubt that Kisimayu would be heard of some day, as it was the first harbour to the south of Guardafui. Some more journeys like Mr. James's would, no doubt, very soon open up the country, and then the harbour would be made use of. There is a small fort there belonging to the Sultan of Zanzibar, who holds the country, but being on the borders of this warlike tribe his orders are not always regarded by them, as he soon found out. He had letters from the Sultan to the governor of the fort, directing him to give every facility. His officers landed to commence their operations. He had taken great precautions not to hurt the feelings of the Arabs, and he hoisted the Zanzibar flags as marks; but when his officers were standing round their instruments going on with their work, they suddenly became aware that they were surrounded by 300 or 400 savages armed with spears, who said, "You must go; we cannot allow you here." The officers replied that they had come there by permission of the Arabs, but the answer they got was "You must go;" and the savages took the officers and their instruments and rifles and literally carried them down to the boat, which they pushed off, and then waved "Good-bye." That night the beach was alive with fires, and there were at least 5000 natives gathered together. He sent to the Arab sultan to know what was the meaning of all this. The answer was, "If you will give me the word I will fight them;" but he said, "No. If we cannot survey the country peacefully, I am not going to give you the word to fight;" because he would have had to fight too. In the meantime our survey went on to the water without any delay. After four or five days the Somalis got rather tired of sitting down on the beach before their fires and singing songs, and at the end of nine or ten days a deputation came on board to say that they were exceedingly sorry, that they had made a mistake, but that they thought we had come to take the country as another expedition had done a few years before, and that they were too good friends with the Sultan of Zanzibar to allow any one else to have it. There was no doubt that it was an exceedingly difficult region to travel through, but Mr. James and his brother had got more than half-way through it. Captain Burton thirty years ago only succeeded in getting a few miles from the coast, but he hoped that before long other travellers would find their way easier because Mr. James had not fired a gun at the natives, so that future travellers would no doubt be able to complete the journey.

Captain STEWART KING said he had lately come from Zeila, 120 miles south-west of Aden. It was a port in Somali territory, and had lately been taken under British protection, which extended from the head of the Gulf of Tadjurra to a little east of Berbera. Zeila was the port from which Burton started in 1854 on his expedition. Captain Burton's name, as Hadji Abdulla, was well remembered at the present day, and one person there told him that he had repeatedly knelt beside Burton in the mosque on Fridays without being in the least aware that he was a European. Captain Burton's description of the country was perfectly true at the present day. In his account of his visit to the Island of Sa'du-d-din, a mile and a half from Zeila, Burton mentioned several curious graves, and among others, one marked by a large millstone. He himself had seen that grave several times, and had been anxious to ascertain if there was anything in it; so he went there once with some natives with pickaxes and shovels to excavate. He was told there was a large treasure there guarded by a djin, and anybody trying to excavate there would certainly meet with his death. However, he said he would run the risk if they would point out where the treasure was. He dug around the stone and moved it, but found nothing. He then excavated a Galla grave a short distance off, and about three feet below the surface he came upon a flooring of concrete, on which was

the body with its head to the east and its feet to the west. It was so old that the bones and skull fell to pieces in his fingers. In another Galla grave he found pink coral beads and a woman's hair-pin made of ivory. The flooring of these graves must have been prepared previous to the person's death, as it would take several days for the mortar to set. There were no sides to the graves, but over them were heaped up conical heaps of stones, while outside were circles of loose stones. There was also generally a headstone, which about three or four feet above the surface of the ground was cut in the form of a cross, or had a cross cut on it with a chisel. There were also certain concave marks cut into the stone in parallel rows, reminding one of a game commonly played in the Somali country. No one knew what the meaning of these hollows was. Probably they represented the date of the person's death, as the language of the Gallas was unwritten. In one place, on the road to Ras Jibuti, where tradition said there was formerly an immense Galla city, there was a large knoll formed by loose rocks. It was not a natural hill, but the remains of some buildings. The stones were very large, with markings on them, all carefully cut with a chisel. The graves always ran east and west, somewhat resembling those of Somali chiefs, but pointing in a different direction. There was also some difference in the surrounding circle of stones, the Somali chiefs outside the outer circle having a number of stones ranged side by side, representing the number of persons killed by the deceased during his lifetime. At one grave near Zeila he counted sixteen. On his return to Zeila in August next he meant to further investigate the subject of Galla graves, as he believed that the relics found there would afford a clue to the past history of the people. The natives had told him that in the hill called Ailo about three days' march south-east from Zeila, there were remains of ancient cities, and substantially built houses, which tradition said were Persian. He hoped to be able to visit them. The whole country south-east of Zeila, inhabited by the Gadabursi tribe, had never yet been explored by a European. There was also in the hill Ailo a celebrated cave, which had been described to him as having a small entrance about three feet from the ground in the face of the limestone cliff. He had spoken to two or three men who had been inside it. They stated that they climbed up and entered with difficulty through the small opening; they then went down some steps and found themselves in an immense cave with a stream of water running through it, but pitch dark. A story was told of a Somali who once went into the cave and lost his way. In order to guide him out the people lighted fires outside, and he came out and told most extraordinary tales, stating that he found a race of men there who never left the cave, but had flocks and herds. On being asked what language they spoke, the native said it must have been Somali, or the man would not have understood them. Before many months were over he meant to explore that cave. He had been told that in the *Saturday Review* about a year ago there was a leading article on the concave marks in the stones, and he should be glad if some gentleman could give him some information on the subject. He had found Galla graves also in the Warsangeli country, far east of Berbera. M. Révoil in his book on the Somali country mentioned these, but the natives prevented him excavating there.

Sir Rawson W. Rawson said that within ten days a British steamer would be on its way out to establish a commercial business along the whole northern coast of Somali-land, from Zeila to Cape Guardafui. She would visit the principal ports, and collect the produce of the country. The gentleman who had undertaken this enterprise and would have charge of the steamer was Mr. Hay, of Liverpool, who was present at the meeting, and who no doubt, seeing the interest attaching to the country, would avail himself of every opportunity of collecting information with regard to the interior, and ultimately, perhaps next year, give the Society the benefit of his inquiries.

The PRESIDENT said he believed most administrations in Great Britain from the time of Queen Elizabeth to the present had had this in common, that they were glad to take any credit or glory accruing from explorations, but were averse to taking the responsibility for them. He did not mean to compare Lord Granville to Queen Elizabeth, for she allowed her explorers to go out without a word of warning, but Lord Granville seemed to have sent a message to stop Mr. James, and found how hard it was to stop the travellers of the Royal Geographical Society. He wished his Lordship had been present to hear how justified he was in imagining that there was great danger in trying to penetrate into Somali-land, and how successfully Mr. James had eluded Government pursuit and returned safely. He would also have learned how very dangerous it was to send open telegrams into the interior of Africa. He was sure they would all join in the wish expressed by Sir Rawson Rawson that the steamer might serve to open up trade. Now that there was a British garrison at Berbera confidence would be given to traders, and traffic with the interior would be promoted. They would all concur in thanking Mr. James for the account of his most interesting journey.

Journey from Quillimane to Blantyre.

By HENRY E. O'NEILL, F.R.G.S., H.M. Consul, Mozambique.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, February 9th, 1885.)*

I LEFT Mozambique on April 3rd, 1884, in the S.S. *Dunkeld*, arriving at Quillimane on the 6th. My stay at Quillimane was a short one, and as the *Zulu*, a small steamer, was prepared to proceed up the Quaqua, the morning of the 9th saw us on our way westward, *en route* for the interior. As the *Zulu* drew six and a half feet of water—probably more than any other vessel that has passed up the Quaqua—it was extremely doubtful how far we should get in her, and we were agreeably surprised to find that there was sufficient depth to take us up to the Dutch factory at the entrance of the Mutu river. A running survey, with a regular line of soundings, was made of this river during our passage by Captain A. Ewing of the Natal Shipping Company, and a copy of this, very kindly sent me by him, I have already placed at the disposal of the Council of the Society.

I will not delay or weary by attempting a description of the oft-repeated passage of the Quaqua to the Zambesi. Vast swamps, varied by tracts of low-lying and nearly dead level country of rich and fertile soil, but of a most uninteresting character, are all that meet the eye, whenever the country breaks into view from behind the fringe of reeds and mangoes that line the river bank. This portion of the delta is, nevertheless, fairly populated, and I was told that a thriving trade, chiefly in amendoim (*Arachis hypogæa*), was driven by the Dutch factory, and other petty trading stations established upon it. We left

* The paper is printed as abridged on reading at the meeting. For map of route see July No., *ante*, p. 496.