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Frontispiece

“ ‘Beer is my life,’ asserted Du, son of Zaka . . . ‘It makes me talk well, and also very happy.’ ”

AFRICA, I PRESUME?

By

ALAN REEVE

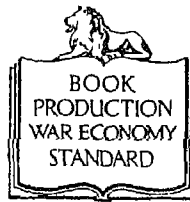
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Illustrations by the Author

THE TRAVEL BOOK CLUB

121, CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON, W.C.2

First published 1947



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ECONOMY STANDARDS

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
EBENEZER BAYLIS AND SON, LTD., THE
TRINITY PRESS, WORCESTER, AND LONDON
AND BOUND BY NOVELLO AND CO., LTD.
LONDON

TO MY WIFE
WHO IS WORTH TO ME ALL THE
CATTLE AND GOATS IN AFRICA!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WHEN the war ended, I was only one of a few hundred million who longed for a trip somewhere. Luckier than most of them, I met Messrs. Hillier, Boshell and Gallagher. F. N. Hillier, Publicity Controller of British Overseas Airways, changed a castle in the air into a flying-boat over Africa. Gordon Boshell and Joe Gallagher, feature editors of the London *Daily Mirror* and *P.A.—Reuter Features* respectively, assigned me to write and illustrate travel articles, thus giving some of the few hundred million a vicarious experience of travel to get along with.

The resultant articles and drawings were published in the *Daily Mirror* and English magazines. *P.A.—Reuter Features* syndicated articles to newspapers in the Dominions, Europe and elsewhere. Some of this published material is woven into the book.

Although I report at times on hotels and transport facilities, this book does not pretend to be a travellers' guide to a continent not yet ready for tourists. Rather, it is a highly personal narrative by an innocent who, suddenly transported from England to Cairo to the Cape, just wrote what he heard, drew what he saw and ate what he could.

Here and there I found unexpected kindness and helpfulness, which I have acknowledged wherever possible. My thanks are due, not only to B.O.A.C., but to East African Airways and South African Railways for travel facilities, and to Noel Sabine of the Colonial Office. Amongst those not mentioned in the book, but in devious ways exceptionally kind, were David Carnegie, Geoffrey Hutchinson, Major J. M. Japolsky, Kitty and Harold Jeppe, Lippy Lipschutz, E. E. Smith, E. A. Sweatman, R. E. K. Ward, Colonel Patrick Welch, and B.O.A.C. ground and flying personnel everywhere.

ALAN REEVE.

London, July, 1946.

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HURN TO CAIRO

CAIRO bound, our Dakota left Hurn Airport at 10.15 a.m. and rose above brown leafless trees and a landscape shivering with cold. Across the frigid English coastline a grey, wintry sea dissolved into a misty Sahara of clouds.

Cocooned like the other fourteen passengers in flying-suit, fur-lined flying boots, overcoat and blanket, I leant back in a rear seat and stared through a small window at the cloud horizon. The aircscape gradually changed from glaring, frosted flats and dunes to a majestic frozen Colorado of steep white cliffs and canyons.

Inside the plane—an austere tapering funnel of dark green metal—a narrow aisle ran from the cockpit door through closely-packed seats to the passengers' baggage, stacked high and tethered to the wall behind me with an untidy net of ropes and straps. I looked to make sure that my two air-weight bags had been loaded at the airport.

I carried twenty-six kilograms of luggage, six kilograms in excess of the free allowance. My "tools of trade" accounted for the excess—a portable typewriter, paper and drawing materials. Lacking the necessary clothing coupons, I had left England without the "well ventilated and easy fitting" clothing recommended by British Overseas Airways for a flying safari through tropical Africa. Instead, I brought a spare tweed suit, a dinner jacket, shirts, underclothes, ties, socks, handkerchiefs, pyjamas and dressing gown. One pair of shoes, newly half-soled and heeled, would have to last for the four or five months I planned to be away from the remainder of my austerity wardrobe.

The inclusion of a dinner jacket had been a moot point. A B.O.A.C. executive advised this, pointing out that as an artist, if not as a journalist, I might be asked to dine with important colonial administrators; without evening clothes I would be a pariah amongst mad dogs of Englishmen. My wife, on the other hand, considered that lugging a dinner jacket through Darkest Africa seemed a bit silly. But, I replied, it is a good dinner jacket, cost a lot of money and I haven't worn it during the war. So I followed the B.O.A.C. official's advice, and was to find it wise.

Folded inside my passport, which had been specially endorsed for the trip and also held transit visas for Egypt, the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Portuguese East Africa, I carried a wad of necessary

documents—certificates to say I had been inoculated and vaccinated for typhoid, yellow fever and smallpox, traveller's cheques, a sheaf of tickets to and from various airports on the B.O.A.C. flying-boat route from Cairo down to Durban, and a few professional credentials. I had left England at too short notice to amass personal letters of introduction, and fully expected to land in remote towns without these useful social lubricants.

At noon, I glimpsed through a cloud crater the pattern of French earth, like rubble of brown and green stones mortared together with green hedges. Later, the clouds thinned and the sun shone on glistening mother-of-pearl marshes. An aluminium tape of canal led us from France to the silver lamé Mediterranean.

We were flying at about 10,000 feet. The sun warmed my face through the window and my feet thawed a little. The plane joggled, and on the right strange vertical cloud formations towered above us and dropped like shredded cotton-wool almost to the sea. Were these the dreaded Cu-Nim clouds (Cumulus and Nimbus) I had been told about. Full of vacuums and vicious currents and Hell-let-loose, these lofty monsters will tear the wings off the unwary plane that blunders into their turbulent bellies.

I lunched from a packet labelled "Godwin's 'The Speedy Messenger,' 1638"—sandwiches, tomatoes, apple tarts, sweets, chocolates, a sausage roll, an apple and an orange. A drawing on the cardboard cover showed a man holding a sail being born aloft by birds to which he was attached by strings. . . . "An Author's Conception of Flying in 1638." (These snack packets were to be handed me on B.O.A.C. aircraft on other flights and I was to develop a sentimental affection for the ubiquitous "Speedy Messenger," and a salivary anticipation of his varied victuals).

Over the wild, rugged Sardinian coastline the Captain of the aircraft, a pink young R.A.F. officer with bashed nose and ginger wind-swept moustache, ambled down the aisle and, above the engines' din, yelled to each of us that we were to dine at the R.A.F. aerodrome at Elmas, near Cagliari. I pinched my nose, puffed my cheeks and popped my ear-drums as we dropped past the rocky grey pile of Cagliari and down into the balmy air of Sardinia.

A V.I.P. passenger (Very Important Person), a Turkish diplomat, was driven by special car to the transit buffet in the airport buildings, while the other passengers followed in an R.A.F. van. This was my first experience of the special treatment given to V.I.P.'s and C.I.P.'s (Commercially Important Persons). The former is a Service designation,

the latter a reciprocal B.O.A.C. gesture to commercial big-shots. I hope that by now such invidious distinctions have been abolished — they were unpopular, not only with B.O.A.C. personnel, who say that every passenger should be a V.I.P./C.I.P., but amongst the recipients themselves, who prefer less conspicuous privileges or none at all.

Later in the evening we reached Malta and the lights of Valetta, reflected in a black harbour like diamanté on black velvet. Just before dawn the red and yellow lights of Cairo appeared, and we came down on the flare-path of Almaza airport.



CAIRO A RIOT!

I WAS met at the airport by the stale mummified smell of ancient Egypt, sometimes called "spicy" by romantic travellers. The air was already warm, and broad pastel strokes of orange slashed the dark blue sky.

Egyptian immigration officers, with silver stars on the epaulettes of their khaki drill uniforms, interrogated the passengers and we passed down a counter to the congested customs room; three flights of aircraft had come in almost at once, and Almaza lacks facilities to cope smoothly with extra-heavy air traffic. A young Egyptian in European clothes pushed through the crowd and asked me if I was "Mr. Jones?" I was not. I heard my first Arabic word, a plaintive "backshish," from a porter. The polite reply to this request for a gift is "mafish backshish," which means "there is no present forthcoming"; but a seasoned fellow passenger dismissed the importunate porter with an abrupt "imshi!", the Arabic equivalent of "hop it!"

The passengers, all in rapid transit (they hoped) through the traffic bottle-neck of Cairo, were driven in an omnibus to the Air Booking Centre to arrange bookings on other air-

craft. For a while I awaited motor transport to the Metropolitan Hotel. "Are you Mr. Jones?" again asked the young Egyptian, still wandering around, and by now distraught. He reminded me of that frustrated character in "Hellzapoppin" who throughout the performance abortively pages the audience for the owner of a pot-plant, which eventually sprouts into a tree.

A B.O.A.C. car collected me, and we drove off in the dawn light.

"How far to Cairo?" I asked the Egyptian chauffeur. He grinned, nodded his head, and said "Yes." More "Hellzapoppin"!

The drive lasted about half-an-hour through built-up areas of flashy, tinted stucco buildings, with here and there dusty vacant lots. The streets were already filling with brown men in turbans, takaiyas and tarboushes, wearing multi-coloured nightgown garments (galibeyehs), flopping along the dirty roads on their way to work, hanging from the sides of small, noisy trams or squatting on their haunches on the pavements and in the gutters. After so many years of London's grey monotone, the pictorial richness of Cairo gave me graphic indigestion.

At the hotel I was awakened two hours later by a dusky Sudanese servant, wearing a red tarboush, and a broad red belt around his white ankle-length koftan, who clodded across the bare bedroom floor to give me a note from Owen Tweedy, B.O.A.C. executive, proffering help in Cairo.

In contrast to yesterday's breakfast at a Bournemouth hotel (a morsel of insipid cod) breakfast at the Metropolitan was a monument of taste: tomato juice, bacon and two fried eggs, sweet white rolls, jam, butter, coffee, a platter of purple grapes washed in ice, and a banana.

And in another way my arrival in Egypt on this Saturday, November 3rd, 1945, was a riot! Suliman Pasha, one of Cairo's main streets, sounded to me no noisier than it might usually be, as I strolled to Tweedy's office. But arriving in his room I heard the clamour of high-pitched Arabic voices outside, above the traffic din. Lifting the fly-net across the window, I looked down Suliman Pasha.

Two hundred yards away I saw moving towards us a yelling mob. Excited, robed figures ran around its outskirts, throwing stones and brandishing sticks. I heard the crash of shattered

window glass. Across the way, shopkeepers hurriedly put up their shutters. A flustered tradesman pegged a rope barrier across the pavement. A British Army jeep drew up outside the Y.M.C.A. building (where some months later a bomb was thrown) and three military policemen got out to await the onslaught.

Then a line of dark-skinned police in steel helmets ran past us. The looters dispersed down side streets.

Tweedy explained that rioting had broken out the day before, as a demonstration on the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. He advised me to be careful.

He also advised me to watch what I ate, not to wade into too many salads, dates, grapes and fresh fruit, and always to see that such food was washed. Most visitors to Egypt get an acute form of diarrhoea, colloquially known as "gyppie tummy," either through eating too much rich fodder, swallowing infected food, or the sudden climatic change. Only too often does "gyppie tummy" disorganize the schedules of visiting business men!

Tweedy—once a free-lance journalist, who travelled throughout the Middle East and Africa writing travel books and for newspapers and magazines—has forsaken the free life for the careful diplomacy of big business. But I fancied I detected a nostalgia for his old nomadism as we discussed my African itinerary. He considered I had given too little time to planning the trip and was too short on introductions. He prophesied frustrating transport delays. An excellent way to boost the sales of my book, advocated the helpful and practical Tweedy, would be for my friends to write letters to libraries demanding it on the shelves!

Unlike some British and American residents, Tweedy likes the Egyptians, who had been described to me as a decadent lot of cheats and grafters, almost beyond salvation. This uncompromizing description was applied particularly to the ruling class minority, which is said to perpetuate illiteracy and ignorance amongst the poor lest education endanger its feudal privileges. With the possible exception of parts of India and China, there is said to be more poverty, filth, disease and unhappiness in Egypt than anywhere else in the world.

I was to meet educated Egyptians, who hardly impressed

me as rogues. Indeed, I enjoyed their company more than that of some of their detractors and found their politics liberal and apparently sincere. But undoubtedly my first impression of Cairo was of squalor—sterilized by the sun, perhaps—but squalor, nevertheless, and abject destitution.

The artist in Cairo must learn the art of observing without being observed; otherwise he will be surrounded by a babbling crowd of persistent urchins, pimps, beggars and hawkers. The “feelthy peecture” racket, cleaned up to some extent during the war, is back again on the streets.

Other impressions of this exotic, erotic city of over a million creatures: the arguments, chattering, and gesticulations if a job has to be done, in the restaurants, the streets, the shops; the perils of negotiating pavements without stopping the arc of someone’s spit; the individual gaits of the galibcyeh-clad workmen, caricatured by their long flapping garments—loping, trotting, or flat-chested, flat-footed waddling, with sticks and umbrellas swung jauntily; the thousands of dilapidated blue taxis with white mudguards; the comic-opera traffic policemen at congested intersections—I noticed one inefficient fellow hopping from side to side as cars and lorries skimmed his trousers, protesting, flourishing, then holding up traffic in all directions and shrugging his shoulders at the consequent fortissimo of tooting; fellahin from outside the city, as numerous as the cattle they drive through the crowded thoroughfares, sepia cattle with snouts poked far forward and bones protruding through shining mummified hides; the showy, French-inspired architecture and the roughly mortared bricks and shoddy craftsmanship in even the largest flats and office buildings; the running yelling newsboys, the pavement cafés, the flies and the eternal dust; and gliding over the city the scavengers of North Africa, evil great grey kite-hawks with serrated wings.

On Sunday morning I bought two newspapers, the British *Egyptian Gazette* and the Arabic Nationalist *Akhbar El Yom*. The *Egyptian Gazette* described the “2-day disturbances,” including the riot I had witnessed:

“... Near the National Hotel, Camel Corps men, held in reserve, arrived at the scene with rhino whips in hand and Lewa T. W. Fitzpatrick, acting-Commandant Cairo

City Police, personally directed operations. The hooligans ran in all directions. . . ."

Who was this Cairo police chief with an Irish name? I made inquiries, and arranged to meet Lewa (Major-General) T. W. Fitzpatrick Pasha, a Roman Catholic from Ireland's Co. Wexford responsible for maintaining law and order in the largest city of the Moslem world.

I couldn't make head or tail of *Akhbar El Yom*, the tail page being at the front and the flowing Arabic script reading from right to left. Its eight large pages were cleanly printed, headlines and borders in red ink. A vigorous and technically excellent cartoon showed Attlee, Truman and Stalin sitting at a conference table, with War, Famine and Death waiting expectantly nearby. Advertisements, comic drawings and photographs, principally of Egyptian film stars in Western dress, made up the rest of the illustrations. I decided to talk to the editors of this lively-looking weekly who, I learnt, were the twin brothers Ali and Mustafa Amin.

"They are enterprising journalists," I was informed, "well-placed to get information because of their family. They circulate amongst the governing classes, and Mustafa is on excellent terms with the Palace. Their father was Egyptian Minister in Washington and they are anti-British only because they want Egypt's independence. *Akhbar El Yom* has two classes of reader, those who agree with its politics and those who read it to see what the other side is saying. They pay their writers better than most Egyptian publications and have shown considerable initiative getting overseas features."

Akhbar El Yom's circulation was not known. A more cynical acquaintance suggested a novel rule-of-thumb for gauging the circulations claimed by Egyptian newspapers. "Just as you subtract from your own age, when estimating the right age for a wife, dock fifty per cent and add seven!" But, he added, newsprint is restricted and *Akhbar El Yom* probably sells all the copies it can print.

THE BROTHERS AMIN

AKHBAR EL YOM is on the eighth floor of a modern office building at 43, Kasr El Nil Street. Brown sand covers the grained marble steps and floors of the high entrance lobby. I stepped into the one small automatic lift and was followed by several nightshirt



boys—not seeking “backshish,” but just friendly, curious and intent upon showing me the right way to my destination; probably few Europeans visit *Akhbar El Yom*.

On the carpeted floor of the newspaper’s reception lobby swarthy young men knelt counting out issues of the paper. (Until I learnt the circulation was over 100,000, I imagined they were checking returns from last week’s issue.) Skirting them, I made for a youthful male telephonist who, taking my name and eyeing me suspiciously, backed through an archway and along a passage. He returned to lead me to Ali Amin’s office. A beefy young man in shirt-sleeves rose from a desk, behind which hung a painting of King Farouk, shook hands and waved me to a black leather horsehair couch. A servant brought in two tiny cups of thick Turkish coffee and two glasses of water.

“They say you are the coming Northcliffe of the Middle East,” I told Ali Amin.

He looked pleased. “Then I suppose my brother is the Rothermere,” he chuckled.

Mustafa Amin came into the room. The twin brothers look alike as peas in a pod, as round, but not yet quite as bald.

As we talked, I noticed one or two subtle differences. Ali's nose was shorter and blunter than Mustafa's. Mustafa gesticulated and waved his hands at shoulder height. Ali flourished a paper knife, and laughed rather more.

"I can keep his appointments, and he can keep mine," grinned Ali.

"We failed in our compositions at high school; they were so alike that the teachers thought we copied each other," said Mustafa.

Both Members of Barlaman (Parliament), their similarity confuses the Speaker, and they are reported in the Egyptian Hansard under each other's names. When Ali was chief secretary to several Cabinet Ministers in succession, and Mustafa a journalist, the perplexed Ministers would hand Mustafa his brother's files and volunteer interviews to their own secretary. Neither brother has married. Ali shrewdly observed: "I want Mustafa to marry first, because if his wife makes any troubles, then I won't have to pay the price."

In 1930 the exuberant twins made an earnest effort to go their separate ways. Ali studied engineering at Sheffield University and Mustafa political science at Georgetown University in the United States.

"But I didn't make a diplomat," confessed Mustafa, "and he didn't make an engineer." Now, together again, they jointly publish "The News of the Day" (*Akhbar El Yom*) and during their first year say they have built up the largest circulation of any newspaper in the Arab world.

They proudly exhibited copies of the paper, and explained some of the lively joke drawings. One, for instance, showed a handsome young man and an ugly spinster, both in dripping wet clothes, standing in a police station.

"She is complaining that when the man rescued her from the river," translated Ali, "she wanted to kiss him in thanks and he dropped her back again!"

The artist, Rakha, has created a "little man" of Egypt, Ibn El Balad (Son of the Country) in striped scarf, galibeyeh and takaiya skull-cap. There is also a "Mr. Ass," in tarboush who like Low's "Col. Blimp" makes stupid reactionary remarks about current politics.

Rakha, stout and twinkling, tarboush set low on his forehead, greatly admires the New Zealand cartoonist David Low,

and shares with the nineteenth century French caricaturist Philipon the honour of once having been jailed for a critical political cartoon.

I also met an even plumper contributor, with heavy-lidded eyes, the "Nat Gubbins" of Egypt, and two shy, pretty girl journalists, Fatma and Horea. Horea, a brunette, said little, but the fair Fatma related how their old-fashioned parents had opposed their entrance to Cairo University, which became co-educational only a few years ago. At first "the boys called us rude names and wrote us love letters. In the lecture room there was always a Romeo not attending to the lecture but just staring at his Juliet." *Akhbar El Yom* was the first Egyptian newspaper to employ women journalists.

Both Ali and Mustafa write the editorials. On Ali's last visit to London he interviewed Bernard Shaw. Articles by Shaw and H. G. Wells have been published in the paper, which has correspondents overseas.

The twins were born in 1914 (Ali is the elder by five minutes), in the house of their great-uncle, Zaghoul Pasha, "a leader of the revolution."

"When we were six," said Ali, "he asked us to write in our diaries what we see and hear in his house. He loved writing and used to discuss politics. This was our political background. . . ."

Their politics the brothers term Nationalist and Independent. They are anti-Wafdist, and define the late regime of the Wafd leader Nahas Pasha as "the most corrupt in the world." When I suggested their policy was anti-British, Ali protested fluently: "I don't want Britain to think we are anti-British when we ask for our independence. We are anti-imperialist and pro-Egyptian. Most Egyptians who study in England come back to lead the Independence movement, because in English universities they are taught the value of liberty. . . ."

The Amins have ordered new printing machinery from England, suitable for colour gravure. They plan to publish a picture-magazine modelled on the American *Look*, and a daily paper; in Ali's office stands a model of their projected new headquarters, a U-planned, eight-storied building surmounted by two huge globes (rather symbolic of the buoyant brothers!). It will cost £70,000 and work was already started on the foundations. Partitions between the rooms will be pre-

fabricated and movable. Exhibitions, films and television will be shown in the special ground-floor studio. Distinguished guest-rooms, with bathrooms, telephones—and girl journalists available as interpreters!—are planned for the top floor.

Before long, I imagine, the ebullient bulks of Mustafa and Ali Amin will carry even greater weight both inside and outside the Moslem world.

The jovial Rakha asked me to the Cairo Press Club, where we drank whisky and soda with some intense young journalists. We were joined by the editor of a daily newspaper and a myopic gentleman who, unexpectedly, told me I might interview him. "He's very important in the Ministry of Social Affairs," someone murmured.

Not prepared for such a high-level interview and poorly informed on the complicated Egyptian political set-up, I nevertheless fired a gamut of spontaneous high-level questions at him, about education, female franchise, irrigation, industrial planning, town planning. He seemed somewhat taken aback but I gathered—the others interpreting—that the Government had great plans.

"You not speak French?" he inquired. "I speak French like Egyptian."

"I speak French like a New Zealander," I apologized. So we called it a day.



FITZ PASHA

I CALLED on Fitzpatrick Pasha at the Governorate, Cairo Police H.Q., and was received by his secretary, Major Tyson from the Isle of Man. In a police force of 10,000, which also includes the local fire brigade, forty "foreigners" hold positions. Tyson ushered me into a large room with towering green walls and the Pasha trotted towards me, greeted me in an Irish accent as broad as the River Nile. On his head, like an inverted cork, he wore a red tarboush. Colourful medal strips formed fours on the left breast of a white tunic.

We sipped sweet Turkish coffee and discussed the complexities of his job. I asked for a list of his orders and decorations, and the Pasha pushed bells and snapped Arabic orders into a small desk microphone. A uniformed official brought in a typewritten sheet neatly listing the C.B.E., O.B.E., D.C.M., plus eighteen other orders and decorations, including the Grand Comdr. Phenix de Grece (with swords), Order of Independence

Transjordanian, Com. Order Hamayoun d'Iran, Croix de guerre avec palme, Ordre St. George de Russia, the Mons Medal and Star. Before being commissioned at Mons, Fitzpatrick was a Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant-Major in the 18th Royal Irish Regiment.

Other officials came running in with statistics and an array of pamphlets written by Fitzpatrick. I mentioned the riots.

"Cairo's a safer place than London, I think myself," he asserted. "Of course, a drunken soldier staggering home to camp at night is looking for trouble."

He assured me he was fully prepared for any further disturbances.

I said I had noticed groups of white-uniformed police sitting on chairs at street corners and intersections, some armed with long staves and tin shields, others carrying rifles.

"Not rifles," he corrected. "Guns. They have a special type of gun which wounds but does not kill." Higher ranks carry revolvers.

"What about the traffic?" I asked. Even a greater danger than riots is the crazy fast-moving traffic, where every toot may be the flute at a funeral. There are 19,000 vehicles in Cairo alone, apart from the great daily influx from the provinces. The Pasha popped a monocle in his eye and read me the latest statistics.

"Only eight fatal accidents in October. Not bad." His great personal interest is in the improvement of traffic conditions.

He showed me his Air Raid Precautions handbook, recollected one or two serious raids. "It's extraordinary how cool and calm the population were; they froze, as it were, and there was no panic at all."

He talked about the appalling conditions of youngsters in the streets, the destitution and the poverty of Cairo, and read a crusading extract from his Police Guidance book: "Daily in Egypt we arrest hundreds of shoe-blacks, lottery ticket sellers, hawkers and beggars, with practically negative results, but do we suggest any remedy . . .?"

And on the subject of police salaries he was equally dissatisfied. Lower ranks earn £5 a month, conscripts 12/- and their keep. He continues to fight for higher pay. Police recruits are selected from army conscripts after their five years military training.

He called for Brigadier Fraser, in charge of the "vice-squad," who announced that prostitution had been largely cleaned up in Cairo. And he asked Brigadier Marco, a stout and cheerful Greek, to show me the narcotics museum.

"The Eastern imagination is great," smiled the Brigadier, pointing to a sealed glass cabinet displaying drugs and smuggling devices. Hashish and opium have been intercepted at the frontier in a variety of ingenious hiding-places—double-bottomed cooking pots and pans, hollow W.C. seats, weighing machines, sacks of pine powder, gear boxes, millstones, copies of the Koran. Cakes of hashish are hidden under the hair on the humps of camels. Marco indicated thick tin tubes which had crossed the border inside camels' stomachs (afterwards cut open by the smugglers) and other tubes, about one-and-a-half inches wide, which had been carried inside the anuses of small boys.

Hashish addicts smoke it in cigarettes, pipes and hubble-bubbles. It gives them an appetite to eat, unlike opium's dangerous by-product, heroin, which quickly wrecks the physique. Made from the top leaves and tender parts of hemp, hashish is grown illegally in Middle Eastern countries. A small amount is grown surreptitiously in Egypt, and there is some clandestine cultivation of the poppy, the seeds of which make opium.

I handled a small piece of hashish, a substance like brown, caked mud. "That little bit's worth a lot of money," said Marco, holding it in tweezers and applying a match. It flared, then smouldered. He waved it beneath my nostrils. The acrid, musty aroma reminded me of asthma-cure cigarettes.

Fitzpatrick Pasha accepts no credit for the narcotics bureau, which since 1928 has been the special love of his colleague, Russell Pasha. But he admits to being a man of action. His first appointment to an Egyptian post was when he retired as British Provost Marshal in Egypt twenty years ago to become Assistant-Commandant of the Alexandria Police. He had a close scrape during the 1930 riots. Wounded on the temple by a stone, he changed into civilian clothes and, head swathed in bandages, forced his way through the mob and reorganized his men to prevent the burning of the barracks. He received two other wounds the same day.

In the recent riots he led the tough Camel Corps into the

fray. He also commands a special squad of trouble-breakers, a mobile unit of sixty specially-picked policemen. He has never used tear gas on rioters, but had bombs thrown at him to sample its effect.

Before leaving the Governorate I asked him how safe Cairo would be for the expected influx of tourists. He led me to a balcony overlooking a dusty courtyard and barked an order. Out of a doorway and into the back of three grey lorries, with much confusion and bewilderment and carrying long forms to sit on, poured a jumbled mass of brown-skinned bobbies with rifles and tin hats.

The turn-out of his special squad displeased Fitz, who hollered at Major Tyson, who ran down the steps and bellowed at an embarrassed Egyptian police effendi, who saluted humbly from below. The fracas continued, but in the meantime a smart motor-cyclist who clears the way for the special squad had zoomed off through an archway into the street—where he may still be riding around to this day.

The Pasha promised to sit for me next afternoon in the grandest of his five uniforms, at his apartment in the exclusive suburb of Zamelik.

Fitz met me in the lounge wearing an open-neck shirt, check sports coat, flannel bags, tan shoes without socks, and said he was waiting for my sartorial choice before he changed. With almost childish delight he showed me a gorgeous ensemble hanging on the edge of a wardrobe door in his bedroom, his levée uniform for Palace functions—a high-collared white linen jacket with double row of brass buttons and an array of brilliant orders and decorations curtaining the front, thick gold epaulettes and lanyards, dark blue trousers with gold braid stripes, a ceremonial ivory-handled scimitar and silver-spurred boots.

He clapped his hands, Abdul a servant bore tea and hot scones into the lounge, and while her husband changed, Mrs. Fitzpatrick chatted to me in an atmosphere reminiscent of high tea in Dublin.

A homely, unaffected Irishwoman, and the only lady member of the local S.P.C.A., she complained in a County Cork accent about the appalling conditions and treatment of Egyptian domestic animals. She promotes flag days, and

campaigns for what appears to be a hopeless cause in a country where dogs, horses and mules are kicked and whipped as a matter of course.

The resplendent Fitzpatrick bustled in, and for an hour restlessly sat for his caricature, before a large portrait painted some years ago when his medal ribbons filled only two rows.

As Fitz's guest I visited two Cairo clubs one Sunday. At the Turf Club my host looked longingly at the luncheon menu, which listed sausages and mashed. He said the food at the exclusive Egyptian Mohammed Ali club was less Anglicized and richer, and nobly gave me a choice. Fresh from England's austerity fodder, I selfishly elected to lunch at the Mohammed Ali Club, where our elaborate meal commenced with poached eggs and shrimps in jelly, followed by a sauté of beef served with steamed celery, stuffed marrow, other vegetables and a highly-seasoned sauce. Eclairs stuffed with whipped cream floated in a thick sauce of chocolate peelings.

Dining with Egyptian friends I sampled further local dishes and particularly liked a sweet called Mehallabia, a sort of blancmange made from milk and sugar, sprinkled with nutmeg and served with slices of banana, which cleanse the palate of sweetness. Food in Cairo hotels and restaurants is not particularly remarkable, but at that time my ration-conditioned stomach, ignoring Tweedy's advice, was more interested in quantity than quality.

Restaurant service, too, is unstinted. One evening at the Metropolitan the head waiter and two captains between them showed me to a table, took my order, lit my cigarette and presented the bill. One Sudanese waiter removed and replenished plates, two others served dinner, another poured water and yet another served coffee. The wine waiter attended—nine waiters in all, included with a meal that cost, with wine and without tips, about ten shillings.

I also sampled Shephard's Hotel. Inside its Odcon-de-Luxe Egyptian interior and on the wide balcony gossips a cosmopolitan bunch of Armenians, Greeks, Maltese, Italians, Turks, Cypriots, Americans, English and, of course, a few Egyptians and Arabs. The international essence of Shephard's is distilled into barman Joe. Joe Ellinsky Shallun's high giggle

has tinkled with the cocktail glasses in New York, Cannes, Paris, London, Khartoum, Istanbul, Budapest, Bucharest, Vienna, Salzburg, etc., and he can talk suavely in Russian, French, English, Arabic, Greek, Italian, German, Spanish, Rumanian and Hungarian.

Drinks are dear in Cairo, Cyprien brandy being about the cheapest gargle. Cigarettes are slightly cheaper than in England and Egyptian matches the most dangerous in the world; flaming sulphur heads fly around like meteors. Free salted peanuts stock the bar counters. The tipping racket I found worse in Egyptian hotels than elsewhere in Africa. A ten per cent service charge is added to all hotel bills but waiters, chambermaids, valets, porters and the rest of them, fawn for extra tips, give bad service without them. Word got around by magic grapevine when I was leaving an hotel, and three successive boys knocked on my door, salaamed and said hopefully: "I your room boy, sah!" At another hotel, in Luxor, I ordered coffee and the bill listed seven piastres for coffee, plus ten per cent service, plus five per cent municipality tax, plus two piastres for the orchestra—and then the waiter whined for a tip. A Cairo hotel manager revealed that Americans are unpopular with his staff because as a rule they never pay more than the ten per cent service charge. More power to them!

EGYPT ENTERTAINS

EGYPTIAN husbands, Mustafa Amin told me, stay at home only one night each month—the night that “O.K.” sings on the radio.

“O.K.” is his abbreviation of Om-Kalsoum. It



is also a pun, as Om-Kalsoum is the great popular singer, the Gracie Fields of the Arab world. She sings in Arabic, and is reputedly worth quarter-of-a-million pounds. Her fee for a performance is said to be £E400. Over the radio, at concerts, in films, at desert gatherings, weddings and soirées, her voice enchants ecstatic audiences.

Ali and Mustafa invited me to join their party for an Om-Kalsoum concert. Ten o'clock one evening we made our way through the crowded lobby of the Ritz Theatre, on Sharia Imad El Din, Cairo's neon-lit Broadway. Except for the Arabic posters, the Ritz resembles any other faded theatre. Inside, the décor is in tired white and gold.

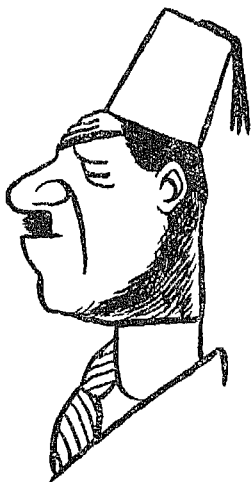
We filled a box in the rear of the theatre. I seemed to be the only European in the audience. Ali, who sat on my right, pointed out Cabinet Ministers and ex-Cabinet Ministers sitting next to clerks and workmen. Near us sat a dusky Nubian girl in black robes, in the next box a group of Palestinian Arabs. The women wore no hats, the men sported tarboushes and other Eastern headgear.

“Usually husbands never take their wives out, but this is a special treat,” shouted Ali, above the impatient clapping and uproar.

“Are you sure they're all wives?” I asked.

“You can see that; the men don't look happy,” chuckled

bachelor Ali. "Only twenty years ago, white net curtains screened some of the logs here. The women watched from behind."



A PALESTINIAN ARAB

The audience quietened as the red curtain rose, revealing a drawing-room set. Two rows of musicians in dinner jackets squatted on chairs across the stage. In the centre of the front row sat a small olive-skinned figure in a modern white evening gown—Om-Kalsoum.

During the opening bars, rendered for five minutes by a medley of seven violins, a flute, a guitar, a tambourine, and a string instrument propped on five legs, she inclined her coiffured head like a medium about to fall into a trance.

Then, standing and wiping her eyes with a large green handkerchief, O.K. sang a long, flat "ah!" Again "ah," and again. Excited chattering from the audience.

"'Ah' means pain and pleasure; it also means 'yes'," explained Ali. As she sang, the twins quaintly translated:

"Oh, when we met on the first day,
Oh, when you looked at me with your eyes,
The night ran away from my eyes
And I told my heart
This is love to me as much as mine to him.
My heart said 'yes,'
But I asked my head, 'Is that really true?'
And my head says 'ah!' . . ."

Shouts of "Allah, Allah," and pandemonium in the audience, which insisted she sing each verse again and again. I found it hard to hear her wavering voice above the din. Her mouth is elastic, and she lisps as if her tongue lies on her palate. But to the Arabic ear her voice has a superb melodic quality.

"The listeners are saying to each other how pleased they



“ O K sang a long, flat ‘ah’ !”

are," murmured the enraptured Ali. "And you see how she breaks her nerves on the handkerchief. Every night she tears one in her emotion."

At last, a long drawn-out note, a rattle of the tambourine, and the song was over.

"The shortest song she ever sang," observed Mustafa. It had lasted forty-five minutes.

During the interval Ali told me something of O.K.'s remarkable career.

"She was born thirty-seven years ago on the Nile Delta, the daughter of a poor peasant. Her father couldn't afford to send both her and her brother to elementary school, which costs two shillings a month. So he kept the girl at home and the boy taught her his lessons. Then the father discovered she had a beautiful voice, and urged her to sing to the peasant neighbours. But she refused until he gave her rice pudding, which she loved. Every night she sang to the peasants for a shilling—father got the money, she got the rice pudding.

"She learnt French by ear, and to read the Koran. Gradually she became successful, and brought all her relatives, even cousins of cousins, to Cairo, educated them and gave them land. She is very generous and very witty; her quips and puns are quoted in the newspapers.

"She has the highest decoration for ladies in Egypt. It is called 'Purity.' And" (with great deference) "the King went unexpectedly to a club where she was singing in the garden and decorated her. O.K. is not married. She lives in a big house on the Nile.

"When the present Government was elected, the people demanded food, clothes and O.K. on the radio!"

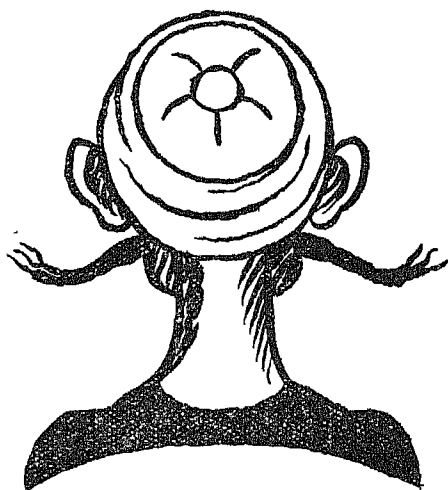
Om-Kalsoum sang two more songs. One, a lyrical Arab poem, the other the popular "Song of the Shepherd Girl," from her latest film. I had heard this near-Western melody sung in the streets. The effect on the audience was alcoholic



AN EX-CABINET MINISTER

and the listeners became progressively drunk with emotion. They waved tarboushes in the air. An Egyptian with a tooth-brush moustache closed his eyes, opened his mouth and wagged his head slowly from side to side. Another, smoking a cigar, walked down the aisle with hands cupped behind his ears. Late-comers arrived, girls from the night clubs. A blind man in a red-and-white turban was shown to a seat. O.K. improvized, and flummoxed the orchestra.

"Her mood is of sorrow and loneliness. Listen, a fellow is shouting, 'For the sake of Mahommed, sing it again!'"



A WORKING MAN

The concert finished in a furore, at two o'clock in the morning.

The twins, unexhausted, led me backstage. In her dressing-room we found the great lady surrounded by devotees, kissing her hand and chuckling at her quick, Arabic epigrams. A stammering admirer from Syria asked her for an autographed photograph, offering to pay for it.

My friends interpreting, I asked O.K. whether she ever sang the Italian method. No, but she liked to listen "before we declared war on Italy." (Laughter.) Her favourite singer was Melba, and she detests Bing Crosby and the crooning technique.

Her fan-mail is large and includes "too many love letters," but there is no Om-Kalsoum fan club.

"Do you sing from the head, the throat or the stomach?"

She placed her hand on her bosom. "I sing from the heart!"

Om-Kalsoum and other Egyptian film stars are said to earn Hollywood money. And the invariable ingredients of an Arabic film, I was told, are the belly-dance, a fight and music. Numerous film studios, mostly around the Pyramids, are busy working on this formula.

The doors of the Cinema Royale in Cairo had just opened when I arrived for an evening performance. I bought a back-stalls ticket and sat in a wicker chair beneath the balcony. A skinny tom cat foraged for food amongst peanut shells littered under the seats. A shouting crowd piled up in the aisle as the Levantine usher argued with three tough boys who claimed the wrong seats. Babies squealed, and a raucous overture blared from behind the curtains.

A Donald Duck short preceded a news film with French commentary and an Egyptian documentary about children's hospitals. The plot of the Arabic feature film blossomed into chaotic farce, too involved for me to follow. Its ingredients: a pneumatic mother-in-law, a comic with quivering eyebrows, a rich uncle threatening disinheritance, three fighting bridegrooms and marital misunderstandings galore. On the art moderne sets, cluttered with cocktail bars, lithe girls in flimsy dresses wagged loose hips in the belly-dance and chanted toneless Eastern songs.

I visited Badia's Cabaret, set behind its low-slung veranda facing the Ezbekiya Gardens, to witness the belly-dance in the flesh. My companion, a travel-blasé B.O.A.C. pilot, assured me the show was well up to Cairo cabaret standard.

Patrons danced on the stage in front of a jazz band, the inevitable dirty cat stalked across the footlights, then loud-speakers announced the first belly-dancer, a shapely brown-skinned dance hostess in spangled gauze dress and brassiere. A flea bit my ankle, worked its way up the calf. The dancer poised her hands before her face, clapped, and undulated her

hips and stomach. A small gold crucifix twitched between her breasts. Gliding behind a red spotlight, she turned her back and bombarded us with a battery of "bumps," "grinds," wriggles and shivers. The flea nipped my knee-cap. . . .

LIFTING THE VEIL

TO the romantic Westerner, Egypt suggests the Pyramids, the Nile and the Harem.

I stood on the balcony of a modern pent-house flat in Cairo's Garden City. Down below flowed the yellow Nile. The outlines of two great pyramids were smudged on the distant haze.

I turned to my Egyptian host and asked: "Have you more than one wife?" A delicate, though legitimate question, as polygamy still exists in Moslem Egypt.

Dr. Ragai smiled. "One wife is as good as four, and expensive enough!" He explained that, although an Egyptian may legally have four wives, he rarely marries more than one.

"He is required to be absolutely just to each wife. Favouritism would be hard to avoid. For instance, if one is fat and one thin, the fat one would need more material for her clothes—and more food!"

We were joined by Madame Ragai. Elegant, young, attractive, she is one of the beauties of Egypt, and an ardent feminist who prefers to be known by her maiden name, Doria Shafik. She wears smart European clothes and uses expensive perfume, had on a *décolletée* black evening gown with silver-sequinned skirt, and spangled veil over her unswept dark hair. She told me later the dress had been made by a local dressmaker, inspired by a Paris model. She wore no jewellery, only a tiny gold wristwatch and flower-wreath ear-rings hung from velvet bows.



Her voice is soft and low, her English less fluent than her husband's. We discussed the emancipation of Egyptian women. Fifteen years ago such a conversation with a married woman would not have been permitted. I asked who was the first woman to break the tradition of wearing the yashmak (veil).

"Madame Shari Pasha, in 1928," she replied. "She was travelling in the train from Alexandria to Cairo with her secretary, and suddenly said, 'What you think, we put off the veil?' And because she was pretty and of great family, people said nothing."

But women had to fight, because "many great men" opposed the idea.

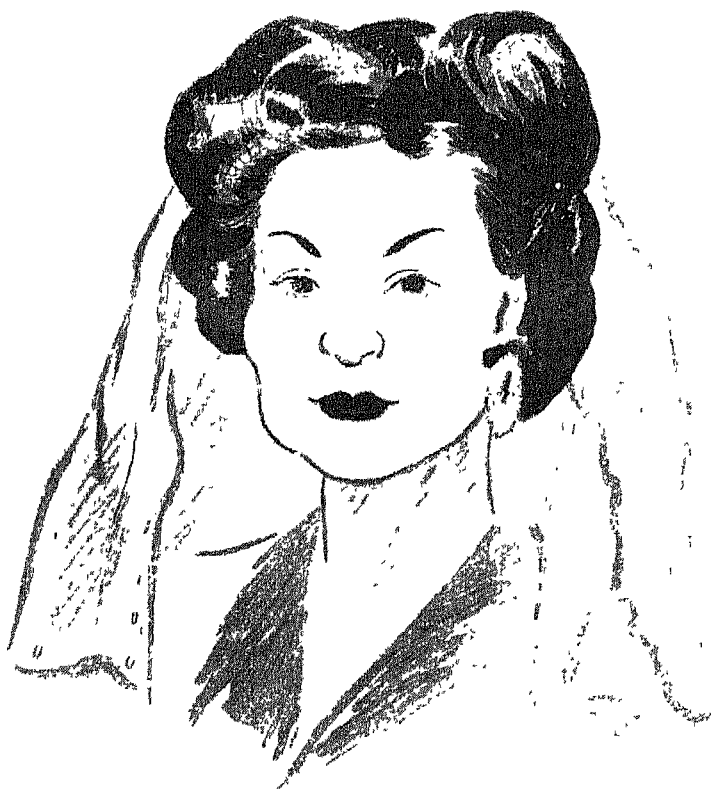
The poorer classes still cling to the veil tradition. Divorce laws, too, militate against women. If she is deserted, a woman may obtain a divorce. But the husband can divorce his wife without giving any reason. He just says "I divorce you" three times, in front of witnesses, then attends a religious court to obtain a judgment. The divorced wife may keep the children until the boys are seven, the girls a little older.

There are no women in Barlaman, nor have they a vote. The Egyptian Feminists' Union advocates female franchise and representation, but Doria disagrees. "I am not crazy to go to Barlaman now. I don't want to be chose by ignorant people. It is much more urgent to do everything about social life." Less than a fifth of the population can read, an even smaller proportion can write and, of course, social and economic conditions, particularly outside the cities, are appalling.

"The rich should be taxed more to provide adequate social services and improvements," protested the doctor. "You can still hire a fellah (peasant) for five piastres (1/-) a day although the law says ten. Yet a donkey costs twenty piastres."

"How do you propose to improve social conditions?" I asked Doria.

Her black eyes sparkled. "The only way I could—how you say?—do a revolution for women and all the people, is to educate the woman in the home to be a good wife, a good mother, a good housekeeper. This is a beginning, and after that..."



“Doria Shafik is a graceful example of the women of her class who . . . have discarded the traditions of the veil ”

So Doria will produce a popular monthly review for women, in Arabic. In *Bint El Nile* (Daughter of the Nile) she hopes, through organizing the public opinion of a growing middle-class, to influence the rich to build homes, nurseries, schools and so on.

She showed me her first publishing venture, *La Femme Nouvelle*, an elaborate quarterly magazine in French, with an upper-class circulation. I glanced through its colourful pages. It costs £E1, reviews the activities of emancipated Egyptian women in art, education, sport, the theatre and other fields, contains two photographs of Doria and several of Princesse Chivékiar of Egypt, first wife of the late King and a leading feminist, who sponsored the publication. A quaint mixture of sophistication, documentation and *naïveté*, with pages on fashion, poetry, cooking and society, the presentation and printing of *La Femme Nouvelle* out-vogues *Vogue*.

Doria's approach to Egypt's great social problems may be dilettantish, but she is sincere, and intelligent. Her father, a Chief Engineer on the state railways, disapproved of higher education for women. Nevertheless, she went to the Sorbonne, there became a Doctor of Philosophy and took two other degrees. For her Diploma, the first ever taken by an Egyptian woman at the Sorbonne, she wrote and had published two theses, on ancient Egyptian art, and the position of women in Egypt under the Islamic law.

In Paris she met and married Dr. Ragai, who is a lawyer. They have two little girls, each cared for by an Egyptian "nanny." She is a French language inspector in girls' schools, but picked up her hesitating English from seeing Western films (her favourite screen star is Greer Garson, "not very beautiful, but really charming.")

Doria Shafik is a graceful example of the women of her class who, in a few short years, have discarded the traditions of the veil. But she makes one very feminine confession. She admits, almost regretfully, that the veil was extremely attractive.

Forewarned before I came to Cairo of the superstitious belief in the "evil eye," and also wary of the "backshish" boys, I took care to sketch Moslems unobserved. But anxious to make some drawings of women wearing the yashmak, I asked a

Levantine acquaintance to procure a female model. He suggested his maid, who wore the veil.

He advised me not to pay or tip her.

"These people are trained to feel they are the property of their employers and will pose not as a favour but as an order. In any case, my maid is of rather higher class than many fellahin. Her family owned a little land; she is in reduced circumstances, but proud.

"We pay her £2 10s. od. a month and her keep, which is two or three times more than some wealthy Egyptian families pay."

We arrived at his apartment in Heliopolis. The maid, a pretty soft-eyed, bare-footed girl, was washing the marble floor. She demurred when asked to pose, said her family would shoot her if the likeness was published. Only when we explained the drawings would not be seen in Egypt did she agree.

She stood patiently for about twenty minutes, then said she felt tired. My friend and I drank coffee while she rested, cross-legged, on the floor. I asked him why she looked so unhappy, and he questioned her.

"She has suddenly been divorced by her husband, who went to live with another woman," he divulged. "He left her enceinte, and she had an abortion only a couple of days ago!"

The room-maid in my hotel, a plain Frenchwoman in the middle thirties, never smiled. Much of the day she sat in a hall chair near the lift, awaiting the urgent summons of room-bells and peering wanly into the grille doors of the lift whenever it passed. She was off duty for a couple of days, and while she collected my laundry next morning I asked her sympathetically if she was ill.

She burst into tears.

I stood there foolishly, gave her a clean handkerchief, proffered money, asked her in my clumsy French to sit down.

But she dabbed her eyes, scooped up the dirty clothes and left quickly. She was not on duty that evening and her personal tragedy, unlike that of the Egyptian maid, remained a mystery to me.

Yet, looking back on my two weeks in Cairo, the most strangely upsetting incident occurred after dinner one night with an Irish friend. The food was excellent, the wine mellow and the conversation all that my host and his guests could have wished. With our kindly host leading the way, we left his apartment about midnight and walked down from the second floor to the entrance lobby.

A tabby kitten limped past me in the dim light, and I bent to stroke it; but it lay on its side besides the wall, uttered two harsh, vibrant meowws. As I joked about this shrill Arabic cat-language, the caretaker came forward and lifted up the kitten by the scruff of the neck. It was dead.

"I trod on it in the doorway," apologized our host, quietly.

My second experience of "transport frustration," which someone described as "the sickness of the year," came just before leaving Cairo. (The first was getting transport out of England, an involved and maddening tangle of red tape.) My departure by flying-boat for Khartoum was unexpectedly delayed, leaving a three day vacuum in my pre-arranged schedule, into which I popped a few conscientious sight-seeing trips. So perhaps I should here record a half-hearted pilgrimage by jeep to the Pyramids of Giza—half-hearted because, having seen so many photographs and movies of the Pyramids and the Sphinx, I felt I knew pretty well what to expect. My Baedaker and guide was a U.S. Army officer friend, and enthusiastic amateur Egyptologist.

We stopped our jeep at a shanty called the Pyramides Buffet, 150 yards from the stepped slopes of the largest of the pyramids. Built in the Fourth Dynasty by Cheops, this pile of buff sandstone blocks covers forty acres. We stood in its shadow, looked up to a ridiculous little flag-pole just discernable at the apex. A few energetic mountain-climbers clambered up the great steps.

"Yank ride a hoss?" pestered a dragoman, and my friend refused in rude Arabic. Diving through a tidal wave of more dragomen, we walked around a corner of the pile and stared at other pyramids, and the back of the severe coiffure of the Sphinx, down the hill. Inside the adjacent tomb of an historical Prime Minister we studied hieroglyphics; the outlines

of three deer clearly chiselled on a wall proved that mating methods haven't altered much in 5,000 years.

"When will tourists come?" asked the caretaker of the tomb as we tipped him. He is not the only one of Egypt's 16,000,000 people who looks forward hopefully to a new and pacific invasion of their ancient land.

CAIRO TO KHARTOUM

THE black date palms silhouetted across the Nile at Rod-el-Farag sharpened in the dawn light to hard green as our launch chugged from the jetty and out to the great white Short "C" Class flying-boat swinging from a buoy in mid-stream. A B.O.A.C. officer in khaki shorts clambered over the broad, high wings, inspecting the four motors of the "Coorong" (from Calcutta, destination Kisumu). We stumbled up from the launch through a hole in her smooth flank.

I sat aft, in a comfortable port-side armchair in the smoking cabin perched in the graceful upward curve of the "Coorong's" tail, and looked down through the perspective formed by four arches to the passenger compartments amidships and beyond. The walls were lined with a smooth olive-green fabric, the ceilings with pale grey and escape hatches painted violet. A bookcase stuffed with yellow-backed "Penguin" books brightened the next cabin, and across its corridor the purser had pinned on the notice-board a map of Africa, with our route pencilled on. Green curtains sided the little windows, wall reading-lights lit each seat and an ash-tray grasped the arm of my adjustable easy-chair. On the folding table before me lay a copy of the morning's Egyptian Mail and a "Godwin's 'Speedy Messenger'" packet labelled "brunch."

We taxied slowly along the river, roared to a faster speed. Water splattered the windows, a stubble of felucca masts along the banks flashed past and we were over the Nile Delta. The silver setting of the Nile clasped a small emerald island; we banked, and the cultivated fields of Egypt hung on our left like lush tapestry spotted with dirty towns and dusty spidery palms. Crossing the sharp dividing line between cultivation and dead sand, we followed a drained jugular river sprouting dry wadis which dissolved into the jaundiced skin of the desert.

A typewritten "Flight Information" slip passed amongst the passengers gave the air speed as 152 m.p.h., ground speed 161 m.p.h., height above sea level 6,000 feet, above ground 5,500 feet, estimated arrival at Luxor 06.45 S.M.T., 08.45 local time. That day we were to span the 1,000 miles to Khartoum, where passengers would spend the night and I disembark for ten days.

Outside Luxor, "world-famed health resort and balm for tired bodies and nerves that are frayed," two towering ancient stone figures

with buster-cut hair turned their backs on us, condemning these new-fangled sky birds. A time-worn colonnade of lotus-topped pillars ridiculed the modern apricot façade of the Winter Palace Hotel, with its *terra cotta* balconies. The speeding shadow of our flying-boat expanded on the yellow Nile waters and we alighted gently on the river, for tea and sticky cakes at the hotel.

Beyond Luxor, the Nile curved up the horizon like an optimistic blue graph on yellow paper, and the green squares of cultivation bordering its banks faded into the distance. I dozed for an hour, was awakened by the appearance of another "Flight Information" slip which warned us that at 10.55 we would pass the historic Abu Simbil Temple on the west bank of the river, again in view. For ten minutes the passengers craned their necks expectantly, heads turning left—right—left—as at a tennis match, while we dropped lower, and crossed various bends in the river.

"Put lap-straps on" cried the purser, and I bent to buckle on my safety-belt. At that moment, apparently, we flashed past the temple. The unhappy purser later explained he thought we were going to alight.

A Scottish warrant-officer near me, whom I had noticed reading the Bible, had luckily glanced out at this vital moment. He described the temple as "four great stone figures in sitting posture, with hands on their laps and as high as the aircraft."

At Wadi Halfa, a cluster of crumbling mud houses, white beehive roofs and railway sheds just inside the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, we drank more tea under the veranda of the B.O.A.C. reception building, prettily set amongst lawns, flowers and palms. A marble slab outside an office divulged that "this room was frequently used as a rest house by Gordon Pasha and later was the residence of Kitchener." A witty passenger described the outside privy as also "definitely used by General Gordon."

The monotonous lap to Khartoum is one of the dullest air stretches in Africa. We flew in a direct line, and now and again crossed the ostrich neck of the Nile, islands distending its thirsty gullet. The passengers delved into their packages and swallowed meat pies, hard-boiled eggs and the like. Early in the afternoon the barren desert softened to greenish-ochre, the river broadened and the "Coorong" circled three times over the square houses of Omdurman, the roofs and avenues of Khartoum and the Y-junction of the Blue and White Niles, before touching down outside the town at Gordon's Tree.



PROFILE OF KHARTOUM

NOVEMBER in Khartoum is as hot as a broiling London August. But a cool breeze blows off the bare-legged British officials and their wives who sit on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, their backs to a sign "IN BOUNDS FOR OFFICERS ONLY."

Tilting their khaki topis, they clap for soft-footed Sudanese waiters. "Isma! Whisky and soda!" And staring through sun-glasses, past a mahogany tree in shady Kitchener Avenue, across the Blue Nile, they see a high water-tower rising from the native town of Omdurman. Behind a green-fringed island lie the low purple hills from which young Winston Churchill spied the oncoming dervishes of the Khalifa.

We arrived at the Grand Hotel in mid-afternoon, when residents were taking their siesta. The bar was closed and the terrace deserted. Sleeping white-robed natives, like bundles of clean laundry, lay under the mahogany tree.

A Nubian bell-boy, proud of his smart white jacket and green sash, showed me to my room. He switched on a huge spider-like electric fan suspended from the ceiling and pointed

to a thermos flask of iced water on the bureau. I tipped him an English sixpence, later learnt that it was not valid currency. (English shillings and florins are legal tender, but other notes and coins are that crazy mixture of copper, silver and nickel tokens, of limp and grimy paper lucre, circulating in Egypt. This is just one of the strange anomalies in the vast Sudan Condominium, where the Union Jack and the Egyptian flag must always flap from adjacent flagpoles.)

The hotel, owned by the Sudan Railways, differs favourably from Cairo hotels. The turbaned native employees are unspoilt, speak little English, and are pleased with the smallest tips. All telephone calls are free to the guests (in Cairo they cost 5d. each). The tariff is inclusive, and for not much more than £E1 a day I consumed early morning tea, followed by breakfast of grapefruit, fish cakes, bacon and eggs, tea, toast, butter and jam, a five-course lunch, afternoon tea and a six-course dinner. Keys fit locks upside down and ashtrays are mahogany bowls of yellow sand, sprouting cigarette butt cemeteries. Roasted peanuts in the bars are preferable to the salted Cairo variety. A Cyprien brandy-and-soda costs about 1/5, strong Eritrean beer 2/6 a bottle.

Residents assert living costs are the cheapest in Africa. Government employees (the bulk of the British population) pay no income tax and prices are strictly controlled. Fruit is abundant—dates, mangoes, oranges, melons, limes and bananas. Tea, sugar, butter, cloth and matches are rationed. Butchers sell meat by weight, not cut, and beef costs about 3½d. a pound. A live sheep can be bought for 10/-, a native cook hired for £4 a month and a houseboy for less.

So the visitor will find Khartoum a paradise, unless he arrives in the summer, when he will frizzle in an inferno. The local resident may well claim a few blessings to offset the climate. During the war he became excessively baked and browned-off; transport restrictions prevented him from spending more than one leave at home in six years. If about to retire, he is further depressed by the prospect of heavy taxation in England and the certain depreciation of his pension. "The poor fellow's going crackers," is a confidence I often received.

In Khartoum I first realized the handicap of carrying no impressive letters of introduction. I called on a few officials, who were polite, but not as hospitable as their lonelier col-

leagues in the bush were to prove. If anything, they suspected my political intentions as a writer. Too many transitory journalists, it was suggested, adversely publicize the work of British administrators by publishing unreliable bar-gossip.

Senior officials in the larger administrative centres could foster a more sympathetic attitude in visitors by un-stuffing their manner. In Khartoum the bar was my only social starting-post, and my new-found acquaintances included a South African journalist, an Egyptian architect, a Cockney engineer and a Scottish scientist. I became friendly with the cheeky little sparrows which chirped through the open shutters of my room in the morning, but not with the flying midges which, attracted by the light, entered at night in their thousands. A baby deer made friends with me in the charming little zoo, where tamer animals and birds are uncaged; it followed me around the park, snuffling at my hand—but that was cupboard love.

Social life, I was told, revolves around the clubs and the Grand Hotel, but whirlpools around the Palace that Kitchener built, with its popular occupants the Governor-General and his wife, Major-General Sir Hubert and Lady Huddleston. His Excellency's British A.D.C. (he also has an Egyptian aide) showed me over the three-storied Palace. The only relic of General Gordon's time is an oval pond. A stone tablet records the death of Charles George Gordon, December 26th, 1885, and below hangs a famous engraving showing the resolute Gordon about to be speared to death by dervishes on the steps of the former Palace. Bimbashi McComas, the A.D.C., led me through cool rooms lined with full-length portraits of Gordon, Kitchener, the late King George and Queen Mary, King Farouk and former Governors-General. That of the Egyptian King, a gift from the young Monarch, is the least technically successful, has two left feet and looks like a painting by a syndicate. A portrait of King George VI of England will soon be installed. The Palace is full of spiders and moths, which feed on several old flags splaying a balcony wall; but at least there are no scorpions.

The green steel bridge connecting Khartoum with Omdurman spans the river near the junction where the brown waters of the White Nile merge with the purple of the Blue Nile. In

Omdurman the House of the Khalifa, luckless successor to the Mahdi, is now a museum of dervish spears, guns, chain mail, swords, flags and other relics. A letter, written by the Khalifa to Queen Victoria in 1887, invites her to embrace Mohammedism and confidently adds ". . . if you do not feel inclined to come over here, you can remain where you are until such time God directs the Mahdi's army to move to your land and conquer you there . . ." Installed in the bathroom and above the deep concrete rectangular bath set in the floor are hot and cold water taps and a marble washbasin. Whenever the master had a bath, a chain of women filled the cistern above with buckets of water from another part of the building fifty yards away.

Teams of Sudanese play soccer now on the desolate battlefield of Omdurman. The town is an extended, unplanned spatter of low, flat-roofed mud houses, with here and there mud-and-manure walls enclosing the home of a native official. Bazaars are full of novel handbags and slippers of crocodile, snake and lizard skin, fly-switches made from giraffe's tails, wicker baskets of spices, herbs, dates. Craftsmen create exquisite silver ornaments, which are sold by weight. A delicate silver filagree bracelet costs as little as ten shillings. In the thick dust of the streets Arabs squat and gossip, their complexions ranging from the chocolate-brown of the nomad to the shining stove-black of the natives from the Nuba Mountains. Yet, despite the dirt and heat, robes look white and immaculate. The Sudanese, unlike their Egyptian neighbours, are clean people.

Khartoum is better planned than Omdurman. Groups of streets follow a Union Jack pattern, possibly more for strategic than patriotic reasons (a machine gun placed at the centre of several diagonals can cover a wide area). Parks and avenues are shaded with banyan, neem, mahogany and gum trees. Shop windows shelter from the sun behind long colonnades. The foreign population, 1,000 British and 9,000 Greeks, Syrians and Armenians, lives in brick and stucco houses set in lawns and date palms.

Few Europeans live in North Khartoum, the dock and warehouse centre. But here three English crooks, and an American seaman who killed a British gunner on a Norwegian ship in Port Sudan, languish in relative comfort in the Central Prison.

A third of the native prisoners are murderers but the Prison Governor, a likeable old-timer with a zest for his job, is tolerant: "When people get into a fight in this country, they don't know how to use their fists. Knives are their only weapons." He finds his Sudanese wards responsive to kindness and often lends discharged convicts money to set up businesses.

Governor West and his wife live on the high first-floor of a prison house enclosed by a dreary zig-zag of walls and buildings on the edge of the desert. Because many convicts are insane, the Wests are sometimes awakened at night by yelling and shrieking from below. The Governor's unique remedy is to appoint a "cusser" each day, who is freed from his cell and allowed to shout at the others; they argue back, expend their energy and are tired by night-time. I saw a "cusser" on the job, in a lane between an open-air block of cells. The old man ranted that someone had thrown a bucket at him, pulled up the back of his shirt and pointed at his dusty black back to show us where it hit.

West chatted in Arabic to a handsome homicidal maniac, who looked sane and intelligent; but he goes berserk about once a month and was jailed for scything off a couple of heads. Another crazy inmate had hammered a long nail through a sleeping friend's heart. We walked along several rows of cells and talked to various mad murderers—some interested, some complaining or drooling, others belligerent. I ducked to avoid a convict's spit, but West was not quite quick enough. (He once received the contents of a slop-bucket in his face.)

An ancient wag pointed at my beard, laughed and in pantomime shot a gun at us. Another prisoner sat with dignity on a mat, asserting he was King of Egypt. West summoned a little bloke to the bars: "This fellow thinks he's a train." The lunatic tooted superbly.

In the women's section a pretty dusky girl clutched the bars, peered out and chattered inaudibly. Eight other female internees (seven of them murderesses) were lined up by the wardresses. One had strangled her illegitimate baby because, West explained, the child would have brought shame upon the mother's village.

Segregated into three classes, most of the 480 prisoners are burglars: Class 3 are natives, whose short komices (shirts)

vary in colour to indicate their particular type of criminal record; Class 2, the educated crooks, effendis, are slicker and according to West, guiltier than the others, because they know better; and Class 1, European prisoners, comprises the American murderer and three British embezzlers.

The less abnormal prisoners work at carpentry, baking, basket-making, shoe-making, and weaving. West said that many of them experience a much higher standard of living inside than outside.

A civil airport south of the town, and a flying-boat alighting area at Gordon's Tree nine miles down the White Nile, carry heavy air traffic. Two hundred B.O.A.C. aircraft alone, flying north, south, east and west, pass through Khartoum every month. York planes on the fast England-South Africa service stop to refuel, but aircraft on other routes remain overnight and swamp the Grand Hotel with transients in unseasonable suits and felt hats.

At Gordon's Tree I looked in vain for the tree under which the General was supposed to meditate. There is little to see except a jetty, half-a-dozen B.O.A.C. launches, sheds, desert scrub and a strip of green bean plants growing in the silt of the river bank. Show-pieces at the civil airport are the shrapnel holes in the corrugated-iron B.O.A.C. hangar, result of a near miss by one of the few Italian aviators who ventured as far as Khartoum during the war.

The aerodrome has been claimed by the Town Planning authorities, who plan another airport near Gordon's Tree. The District Commissioner of Khartoum, Charles De Bunsen, a pleasant, square-jawed, pipe-smoking young administrator, mentioned the projected town plan of Khartoum. Ratepayers have elected a town council which, for the first time, has legal authority in such matters.

Like many other overworked members of the Sudan Political Service (which technically comes under the Foreign Office, not the Colonial Office), De Bunsen starts work before breakfast, at six in the morning. He works both Fridays and Sundays. Friday, the Moslem Sabbath, is observed by government departments, and commercial employees take Sunday off.

Two important rivals and religious leaders feature in heavy type on separate pages of the telephone directory—El Sayed

Sir Ali Mirghani Pasha and El Sayed Sir Abdel Rahman El Mahdi Pasha, a posthumous son of the Mahdi. Sayed Ali's four residences and two offices make less impression than the thirteen telephone numbers listed after the wealthy Sayed Abdel Rahman, including his General Manager, Assistant General-Manager and Treasury. But both have great religious influence amongst Sudanese Moslems; the son of the Mahdi is said to incubate lofty personal and nationalist political ambitions.

Their opinions have been courted on the controversial subject of Pharaonic female circumcision. Both the Sheikhs deplore the custom, which is still carried out in most parts of the Northern Sudan, and expect it to disappear with the education of Sudanese women.

Before leaving England I read about the custom of female circumcision in the Northern Sudan, and asked a doctor to describe the operation; but he confessed he knew very little about it, and it seems few people outside the Middle East comprehend what this barbaric mutilation of women means. A more general overseas knowledge of the practice is essential, if only to convince ill-informed critics of British "imperialist" administration that, before self-government can be granted to some colonial populations, certain customs ingrained in their social structure must be removed. Pharaonic circumcision is erroneously attributed by certain Sudanese Moslem sects to instructions given in the Koran. The practice is so general that, I was told, should the Government attack it too violently, the issue might conceivably crystallize into a fanatical religious uprising.

I called on an official in Khartoum who answered my questions frankly but said that publicity was not politically advisable. I reminded him that questions had already been asked about the custom in the House of Commons. He gave me a pamphlet on the subject, prepared by Sudanese and British doctors at the request of the Governor-General.

There appear to be two forms of female circumcision, the Sunna and the Pharaonic. The former and less harmful, a partial excision of the clitoris, is practiced in many parts of Africa, the Middle East and Indonesia, and appears to be sanctioned if not endorsed by Sudanese religious leaders.

in a proud stance beside an unexploded bomb which he and his A.R.P. squad in Alexandria dug up during the war. He also introduced me to Rum Adam, a long cool drink made from Cyprien rum, and to the two Khartoum night clubs, the "Gordon" and the "Great Britain."

Pukkary and I sat at a table in the "Great Britain" open air cabaret. An encircling colonnade of white pillars strung with red and green lights propped up the domed roof of deep blue Sudanese sky, and formed a classic backdrop behind the raised stage. We were joined by a bespectacled government engineer and his wife. A graceful brunette in transparent black lace dress strutted across the stage, eyes half closed, mouth wide open.

"If I've seen this act once, I've seen it five hundred and fifty-five million times," yawned the engineer. "That girl's Maurika and, bless my soul, she's got white tights on! All the girls are Hungarians. They came here six years ago on a forty days contract, but when war broke out they were classed as enemy aliens. They've been here ever since. Here's Kitty now, doing the same damn taps. She was seventeen when she came!"

I remembered having seen one dance act, "The Three Noveros," at a big London music-hall about seven years ago. The male Novero later came to our table. Like many dancers, he talks with body and hands; his English is strange. For a while, imagining he was telling a story about "three whores," I listened intently—until Pukkary explained he was discussing his plans in "three hours" time!

The engineer talked about the government-owned Radio Omdurman, upon which he and others "got cracking" at the start of the war, when the station started with one improvised transmitter housed in a tin shed. Medium and short-wave programmes are now broadcast from a modern transmission station. They cater for both British and Sudanese, and the evening programme of alternating English and Arabic opens with the reading of the Koran.

A South African ex-war correspondent with straggly moustache was beckoned from another table and introduced as Carel Birkby, production head of the Sudan *Star* and "a man of many parts." He described Africa as his "house," but has also worked in China, Korea and elsewhere, and written

travel books. His management worries alternate between inspecting the dark blue-and-gold uniforms of the *Star* messengers to co-ordinating the work of Greek, Italian, Czech, Yugo-Slav, British and Sudanese employees. Compositors and monotype operators cannot read or write English, a handicap that sometimes leads to "howlers": the November 29th *Star* appeared on the streets date-lined December 29th.

With Pukkary I sampled high-life in the other night club, the "Gordon." The same open air effect, the same tiled floor, the same bored patrons and even the same patient troupers; the Hungarians, split into two teams, shuttle from one night club to the other. Two acrobatic dancers, Barry and Jimmy, together run the "Gordon." Jimmy Kohn, "the living rubber ball," shows a little bounce when discussing his cherished plan to open a Khartoum cabaret in New York. But when? And how? It's a long, long bounce from the heart of Africa to the pulse of America.

Behind us, a glistening mirage of still blue water. On our right, the level brown line of the desert horizon. Gliding above, evil grey vultures. And ahead, a cluster of low mud huts, a white mosque and a swirling mob of chanting "dervishes," their swords and spears glinting in the sun.

Carel Birkby and I climbed out of our taxi. The drive from Khartoum had taken twenty minutes and we were in good time for what Birkby called the "fantasia."

When Sherif Yousef El Hindi, descendant of the Prophet Mahommed and a worker of miracles, died three years ago, he was buried here in the village of Burri El Sherif and an elegant mosque built over his tomb. Every year thousands of his followers gather from all parts of the Blue Nile Province to honour the holy man's memory with a great religious ceremony, which opens with an "arda," or display of knighthood.

Walking towards the largest circle of white-robed Arabs, we heard the frenzied dubbing of drums, shrill cries of women and children and shouts of "Hindi! Hindi!" On this congealed mass of bodies rested a layer of black faces, topped by another layer of white turbans, with here and there waving black arms stuck out like twigs in a great iced cake. Sandalled feet stamped up clouds of dust. Within the circle a ring of galloping horsemen added their yells to the barbaric clamour. A quiet

and reverently kissed his hand. We met the Khalifa's youngest brother, Hussein, a slim young Sudanese with the face of a chocolate saint. Hussein, schooled in Alexandria, interpreted; I asked the Khalifa if I might draw him when he was less busy. Yes, the Khalifa would be only too happy. He graciously gave me his card—Abd El Rahman El Sherif Yousif El Hindi—and invited me to tea on Monday at four-thirty.

Hussein guided Birkby and me across the courtyard, now jammed with dancing Arabs, and up the steps of the mosque. I offered to remove my shoes and leave them on the pile of sandals at the entrance; but our friend insisted "No: many great princes have been here and not removed shoes." From a deep trench in the floor of the quiet mosque—the grave of Hussein's father—subdued celebrants took pinches of sand and sprinkled it over their robes.

That evening I heard the drums of the faithful still throbbing across the desert while I watched a more restrained entertainment, an open-air rehearsal by members of the Khartoum Repertory Company. The players declaimed to a louder accompaniment, an unrehearsed cacophonous orchestra of crickets, bull-frogs, goats, donkeys, cows, and the clanking of the passing "Midnight Express," a night cart drawn by two fat and haughty camels. (Sewage has yet to bless Khartoum.) The Society has spawned no great stars; but several shooting stars shot across the black sky. Earnest amateurs rehearsed a scene from Noel Coward's "Present Laughter." (Coward, when he visited the town, was described as leaning against a bar, all "bronzed-off.") I listened to plain pale wives of colonial officials, a breezy general merchant, R.A.F. types, a tall, drooping, nonchalant producer, a lady school-teacher. One middle-aged player muffed her lines.

"*She's* the Civil Secretary's wife. She may be a Lady next year," someone whispered.

The eyes of the flâneurs lounging on the Grand Hotel terrace flickered as the erect, draped figure of Hussein swept into the lobby to collect his brother's guest. We drove slowly, in the family's Ford V8, to Burri El Sherif. The holy man greeted me warmly on the tiled porch. Hussein referred to his brother, the Khalifa, as the Sherif ("descendant of the Prophet.") The Sherif is profoundly versed in the Koran.



Khartoum the "Midnight Express" roars past the Gordon Memorial

I drew him on the porch; a retainer tilted and turned his master's head until the angle suited me. The Sherif sat very still, then looked solemnly at the finished drawing and politely said it was "near to perfect."

He launched afternoon tea with a glass of abri, a refreshing pink drink fermented from millet and blended with herbs. I sat on his left at the head of a long table. The mirrors of a tall ornate wardrobe reflected our party of five, which included Hussein and two native "courtiers" in European clothes. My host gravely cut square slabs of rich icing cake and poured tea into opaque white glass cups from a silver teapot. Turkish coffee followed, served in a small earthenware vessel, its spout stuffed with straw to act as a filter. I sipped a glass of limoon, a soft-drink made from green limes.

The Sherif asked what brought me to Khartoum. I explained I was flying to Durban in a B.O.A.C. flying-boat. Did he, as a learned Moslem, approve of pilgrims flying to Mecca instead of taking the arduous overland route?

He considered, muffled a belch. No, he had not flown there on either of his two pilgrimages, but he saw a great future in flying. Busy and wealthy pilgrims could thus save much time. . . .

"And you like my people?" he added.

"I admire their cleanliness, simplicity and humour," I replied, "but I dislike the ugly scars on the faces of so many of the children." (These tribal markings are carved into the cheeks and foreheads of young Sudanese with a razor.)

The Sherif sliced the air with his pink palms and spoke rapidly. "He says this cruel custom is dying out," translated Hussein.

What were the Sherif's sentiments about polygamy?

Well, the poorer Sudanese could not afford several wives. But he favours Moslems who own more than one house having more than one wife. A practical thought!

I was about to leave when the Sherif protested: he had a surprise for me, and pointed through an archway. Laid out on the floor, tables and chairs was a display of antique swords, spears, daggers and armour mingled with a bazaarish medley of modern praying mats, conical food covers and bedspreads of woven straw. The Sherif's museum.

Hussein jabbed a pronged spear in the air. "This was for

putting people's eyes out." He unsheathed several swords with gold and silver hilts, blades engraved with intricate scrolls. One sword had belonged to an Emperor of Abyssinia, a scimitar to a Sultan of Hejaz, a dagger to a King of Darfur. A servant donned an ankle-length shirt of chain mail spangled with silver stars. It once belonged to a Crusader, and the Mahdi himself wore it to battle against General Gordon.

After thanking him for the impressive display, I again took my leave, but the Sherif held up his hand. Would I please accept a small gift, suitable for air travel and specially selected for its lightness? He handed me an exquisite example of Sudanese craftsmanship, a square cushion-cover stitched with a design of soft, multi-coloured leather thongs.

"A custom of the Sherif," smiled Hussein. The custom brought to an unexpected and hospitable end my tea-party with the two descendants of Mahommed.

The future of Khartoum, and the Sudan, is not easy to project. 750 British government officials, assisted by educated Sudanese and some Egyptians, administer an area 1,300 miles long by, in places, 1,000 miles wide. Replacements and reinforcements are urgently needed, and from a circle rather wider than an old school tie, if an almost totally illiterate population is to be intelligently educated and made fit for eventual self-government.

With Britain's withdrawal from Egypt the political future of the Condominium becomes increasingly uncertain. Egyptians agitate for the "unity" of the whole Nile Valley. Educated Northern Sudanese want self-government now, linked with a loose form of union with Egypt. A closer fusing of the two countries is repellent to those who remember Egyptian misrule and exploitation in the 19th century.

When I suggested to Owen Tweedy in Cairo that I should visit a "primitive" airfield in the Southern Sudan, he thought I might collect interesting material in either Juba or Malakal. But he warned me of the current difficulties of getting air transport, not into, but out of the Southern Sudan. The B.O.A.C. station manager in Khartoum, too, stressed I might be stranded for a while in a dreary malaria-ridden corner of some southern province. Nor did the Sudan Government

enthusiasm over such a trip; strangers are not encouraged to visit this most undeveloped territory of the Condominium.

But I persisted, and the Civil Secretary's Office granted me a permit to enter a Closed District. The place: Malakal, administrative H.Q. of the Upper Nile province, reputedly the most uncivilized province in the country. The purpose: to spend "about four days there to make sketches and write short travel articles." B.O.A.C. arranged the transport and, it so transpired, my arrival and departure went according to plan. Those three days amongst the pagans of Malakal, with the possible exception of an equally short visit to Zanzibar later, provided the most pleasant span in my African journey.

KHARTOUM TO MALAKAL

*B*f train and river steamer, Malakal is four days south of Khartoum. By B.O.A.C. Lockheed, the 418 miles ship takes just over two hours.

I was the only new passenger to board a loaded Cairo-Kisumu Lockheed at Khartoum. We waited a few minutes in the airport waiting-room, while a traffic assistant dosed a woman with pills to prevent air sickness.

In contrast to the roomy flying-boats, the tapering dragon-fly interior of the aircraft was cramped and the furnishings stark. A Greek family, including two little bonneted girls who squealed and quarrelled for dolls and bread and butter, ranged over the only four armchairs. The rest of the sixteen passengers faced each other stiffly from two long blanket-spread forms.

We took off just before dawn. 6,000 feet below the Nile carelessly unrolled into darkness, a grey satin ribbon. Sunrise painted hazy gradations of yellow and orange on the cold china-blue sky, already decorated with still black clouds by Salvador Dali. An awning of lavender cloud stretched above us, flickering to scarlet in the waxing light.

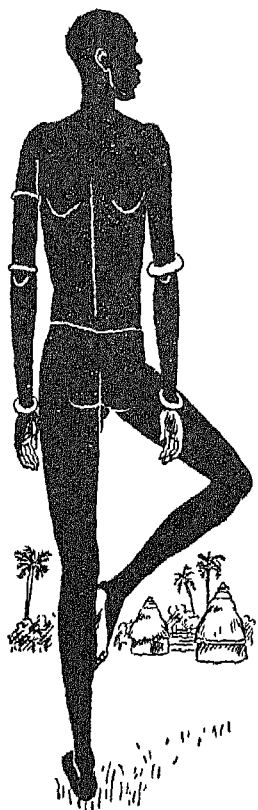
Two Polish soldiers wolfed breakfast. A youthful Colonel intently watched the arid landscape, peered at a map and scribbled in his diary. A fat Greek girl in pink dress gazed vacantly at the luggage rack.

"She's probably bound for Tanganyika to marry some old Greek," surmised an R.A.F. Flight-Sergeant next me. "Maybe she posted him her photograph in a night-dress . . .?"

We came low over the checkered green of Malakal and a circle of native huts girdled with purple paths. Three wrecked and rusted R.A.F. aircraft strewn the aerodrome and reminded us there are divers ways of hitting the ground; but the Lockheed skimmed across the White Nile and taxied softly along the runway.

I unbuckled my safety-belt and glanced out of the window to see if civilization had indeed stopped. It had. Scything the thick, yellow grass at the edge of the field were tall black native labourers. They wore no clothes at all.

Blushing, the Greek girl resumed her scrutiny of the luggage rack.



STORK PEOPLE

AFTER tea at the adjacent rest-house, a low wooden building with verandas enclosed by mosquito-proof netting and a line of black-and-white crows squawking on the roof ridge, my fellow passengers re-embarked and the Lockheed roared off en route for Kenya.

Left alone, I ate a large breakfast prefaced by a heaped plate of pineapple, and walked to the edge of the red clay road near the resthouse to watch the passers-by.

Most of them were black Shilluk tribesmen, with high cheek-bones, slit Mongol eyes and decorative raised knobs dotted bead-like across their brows. (I later learnt they are "trade-marked" thus when children. Holes are dug in their foreheads with a sharp-pointed razor, a mixture

of wood-ash and manure rubbed in, a band stretched tightly across the wounds and the skin allowed to grow again over the lumps.) The men wore short orange broadcloth "laus" knotted over their left shoulders and draped in front. An occasional long-legged dandy stalked, stark naked and unself-conscious, through the dust, corked spears and wooden shield poised on his shoulder. Erect, slender women in longer laus balanced bundles on their liquorice-ball heads. With proud reserve, these dignified people ignored the staring, white-skinned stranger. I might have been looking at a travel poster.

Then suddenly—wild commotion. The warriors scattered as if chased by six herds of elephants. Cause of the scurry was a station-wagon, driving slowly towards me.

It drew up alongside and I was greeted with a cheerful

"Will you dine with me to-night?" The driver introduced himself as W.E. ("Woolly") Woolveridge, Malakal station manager for B.O.A.C. Blue-eyed, with a third of his tanned face shaded beneath a vast ginger moustache, Woolveridge, an ex-wing-commander R.A.F., has been stationed in Malakal since 1943.

I told him I planned to write a "primitive airfield" article and asked if lions and elephants roamed over the runways.

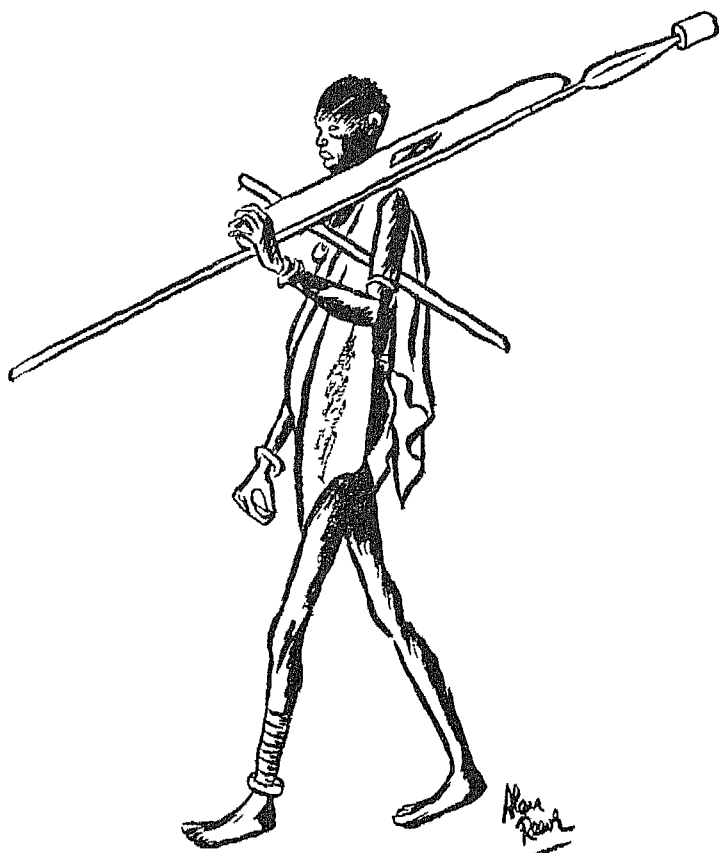
"We'll give you a line if you like, but it's not as primitive as all that. Hyænas kick up a racket around the resthouse at night and will probably keep you awake."

Woolly enthused about his last leave, spent cruising west up tributaries of the Nile in a private river steamer, shooting and fishing from the deck. "I've never seen so many duck in my life. They were like ticks in a dog's ear, and we had to throw stones at them to make them fly. Once I bagged eighty-seven ducks with my shotgun in forty-five minutes"

Shooting at everything in sight, in three weeks he potted an average of two crocodiles a day. "We got water buck, hippo and one python."

We drove to Malakal through the native village of Malakai, its huts enclosed by matting fences. Woolly explained the nude natives were mostly visitors from other parts of the province. The administration compels them to cork their spear-blades on town visits. Natives wearing red laus dye them by beating brick dust into the cloth. Women in blue robes are the cow girls, who milk cows mornings and are visited professionally at night by Arab traders allowed down from the North. At times as few as five British officials remain in Malakal, which means "high cattle camp" and became provincial headquarters in 1912. In all, about thirty government officials, some at remote stations, administer an area of nearly 100,000 square miles, and half-a-million Shilluks, Dinkas, Nuers and other Nilotics.

That afternoon Atton Attilio, obliging mission-educated Shilluk and trusted B.O.A.C. messenger, procured several native models for me. They posed on a lawn near the jetty. The news soon spread that an artist was sketching, and hurrying eager models, porcupined with spears, clubs and shields, and wearing their best laus, padded along the road from the



" . . . BLACK SIILLUK TRIBESMAN, WITH HIGH CHEEK-BONES, SLIT MONGOL EYES AND DECORATIVE RAISED KNOBS DOTTED BEAD-LIKE ACROSS THEIR BROWS"



Otor, a Shilluk

village. Someone with a camera had taught these city slickers that posing meant pennies.

I selected a beau with a five-piastre silver coin wedged inside his ear, his head shaved except for a top-knot of tight curls plastered with a bright orange substance. I asked where he got the dye.

Atton interpreted: "He make it with the dung of cattle."

A girl model excused herself: "She is going away to spit," explained Atton. Shilluks are chronic and skilful spitters. Possibly these natives, so close to animals in some ways, sweat through their mouths?

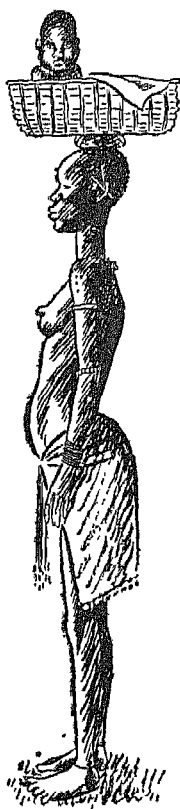
Both men and women wore beads, and aluminium and copper wire anklets. Several men stood balanced on one leg, like storks; they are supposed to rest like this for hours, because during the rains the ground is too swampy to sit on. Their laus served no modest purpose in the hot breeze. Nor was I, in shirt, slacks and borrowed sun-helmet, altogether Savile Row: my graphic exertions in the humid atmosphere worked up the tail of my shirt, which hung out.

A woman stood patiently for a long time with a basket on her head; only when I gave her a couple of piastres and the basket started yelling did I realize a baby lay inside. A pert young matron, an unusual knobbly alloy bracelet on her slender wrist (probably made in Egypt), posed with great confidence. I asked to buy the bracelet for my wife in England but she refused, protesting it was a gift from her husband, who paid twelve cows for her, four more than the maximum legal rate. Atton promised to buy a similar bracelet for me in the town for three piastres.

Forewarned, I dressed for dinner that night. Woolly called at the resthouse to collect me and was worried by my dinner jacket and black bow-tie, apparently not at all the local rig. He lent me a long black silk cummerbund and tugged one end, while I held the other on my stomach and twirled towards him like a ballet-dancer until my evening trousers were firmly belted. The complete ensemble of trousers, cummerbund and white open-neck shirt qualified me to look even the Governor straight in the eye through a glass of port.

A single stubborn stalk of sugar-cane stands sentry outside the gate to the Woolveridges' bungalow, capped with a flat

sleeping-out roof. Marie, my host's pleasant and charming wife, met us on the veranda where we drank high-balls with "Sherry" Sherwood, Inspector of Agriculture in the Upper Nile Province and Bill Clarke-Taylor, the District Engineer. A new face is one's fortune in lonely Malakal, and for almost the first time in the Sudan I found a friendly interest in my African trip, help volunteered and genuine regret I was not staying longer. Tipoo, son of the late King of the Shilluks, waited on us. Bare-footed, and draped in a white lau, he towered splendidly above the less regal guests, poured their whisky with an expert hand.



The King (or Reth) of the Shilluks had died a few weeks before at Fashoda, near Kodok, where Sherry is stationed about fifty miles up the river. The Government paid him £30 a month, and his enthronement in 1944 was said to be the first witnessed by Europeans. Although he ruled a highly organized society, several generations may elapse before the Southern Sudanese are ready for self-government as we know it; a Government school is being started in the province, but the only other education provided is by the missionaries in very elementary form.

During my African trip I heard many critical comments on the effect of missions on natives, particularly contrasting the relative "civilizing" techniques of Protestants and Catholics. I record a possibly inaccurate comparison given by a Malakal official which nevertheless typifies a viewpoint met amongst officials and settlers from time to time, and which visitors to Africa are bound to notice. . . . When a Shilluk wife has a child, she suckles it for two years, during which time custom prevents her sleeping with her husband. So the pagan husband buys another wife. But because missionaries forbid polygamy the mission-trained husband visits a prostitute, an alleged



“Tipoo . . . towered splendidly above the less regal guests. . . ”

reason for the rapid spread of venereal disease. The Roman Catholic missionaries, however, are said to wink an eye if the husband provides his wife with a hand-maiden (or concubine).

Quoting this particular example may please neither Protestants nor Catholics; but such vocal comparisons show that empire-builders who work in close contact with natives sometimes find the Catholic fathers more tolerant and practical missionaries.

Then of course, some African officials are downright Anti-All-Missions, like the Police Commissioner who told me all his worst criminals were missionary reared!

I averaged only three hours sleep a night in Malakal and ate only one meal in the resthouse. The rest of the time I spent in and out of convivial residents' homes and seeing the country. A local saying is "Calamity!" uttered solemnly in the tones of Robertson Hare; and my visit—with its urgent demands for information and models—brought calamity to the routine of the little community.

Clarke-Taylor (a musical District Engineer, who plays the guitar by ear and joins Sherry in occasional classical "musical evenings" at the gramophone) outlined the history of Malakal airfield, which in 1930 was an emergency landing ground only 600 yards square. Planes skidded all over the track. Then the Shell Oil Company made a few improvements, and in 1937 the R.A.F. built three runways. Taylor was called in later.

"We laid three 800-yard runways, two of stone specially quarried twelve miles upstream. In 1941 the runways were extended and surfaced with stone bedded in burnt cotton soil."

Other extensions were made under great climatic difficulties; airfield building in the Southern Sudan, where the dry season starting in November lasts only five months, is a heartbreaking job.

The airport handles perhaps a dozen north-south bound B.O.A.C. land planes and flying-boats each week. Before a flying-boat alights, the Nile is cleared of "sud," islands of papyrus weed which float downstream. B.O.A.C. launches, manned by Dinka sailors armed with hooks on long poles, remove the sud.

A sad footnote on the modest Malakal typewritten schedule of B.O.A.C. services indicates the growing unimportance of

the airfield, as larger long-distance aircraft fill the skies: "We have two Yorks every Sunday overflying Malakal, one South and one North." By now, several Yorks are doubtless overflying Malakal!

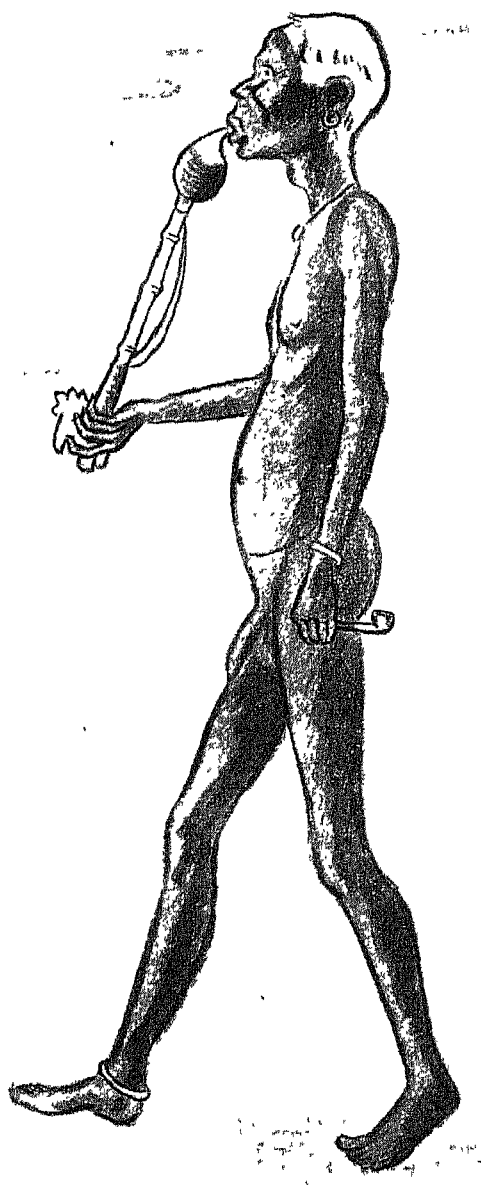
After lunch one day at Woolly's I complained to Marie Woolveridge about my native models who, whenever sittings were arranged, put on their laus and finery; I wanted a model *au naturel*. Marie said she would see what could be done, and left the room.

Five minutes later while, over coffee, Woolly and I played a dictionary-quiz game of his own invention, she reappeared in the drawing-room with a middle-aged guest smoking a briar pipe.

"This is Bill," she said. "He's a convict, and has two murders to his credit." Bill smiled broadly and sucked fiercely at his pipe, which was empty. A numbered brass tag hung on a chain around his black neck, but otherwise Bill wore no garments. I led him to the veranda and Woolly gave him a Shilluk pipe, a cumbersome bamboo creation with a holed gourd at the top and a hollow clay pig bowl on the bottom, which we stuffed with crumbled cigarettes.

When I had completed the drawing, the ecstatic Bill strode through the wire-netting doors and back to his work in a neighbour's garden, taking two pipes with him.

A waggish District Commissioner once christened a Southern Sudan village "Whisko" because it lay near the village of Soda. But the Village of Bum is named more literally after a onetime chief. Sherry drove me in his Chevrolet truck past the foot-police lines and the horse-police lines, north to the Village of Bum. The truck trotted over the rough tracks like a mule, through flat country covered with high dry grass. This is used to thatch the conical roofs of mud-and-manure native huts. Sherry talked to the villagers in the difficult Shilluk dialect, which sounds like a series of "u-ughs" pitched in various keys. A mob of pot-bellied youngsters crowded round the truck's headlamps, which reflected their grinning faces. Scraggy curs barked and we watched them warily. (There is always the threat of rabies in the Sudan, and dog-lovers go in constant fear of having their pedigreed pets shot during a rabies scare).



“... the ecstatic Bill strode ... back to his work ... taking
two pipes with him.”

The dusky villagers looked as if they spent the night in a flour barrel. They plaster themselves with wood-ash both as a decoration and alleged protection against mosquitos. The ragged hair of one dandy was bleached a pale yellow with cow's urine. A more elaborate coiffure swirled, like a stiff felt butterfly, above the head of another wairior. This style sprouts from a budding tuft on each side of the head and is trained over the years into a hairy swathc. Uncomfortable wooden head-props pillow the pates of butterfly stylists while they sleep.

On the way back, Sherry showed me a dinky river steamer tethered to the Nile bank, in which he covers his territory after the early May rains. I inspected the tiny stateroom, dining-room and two bedrooms; the steamer carries four passengers, and is fuelled from a tender stacked with wood and attached to its side.

During my last Malakal evcning, I strolled down to the jetty. In the twilight two fishermen were casting, a B.O.A.C. coxwain and a South African flier stationed nearby. What I mistook for a slow-moving clot of sud on the river became the snout of a lazy crocodile. A hippo snorted from the reeds on the opposite bank. The coxwain dropped a flapping perch into his basket.

"You never know what you'll get," exulted the South African. "There are three hundred and seventy classified varieties of Nile fish alone."

The Southern Sudan may be a sportsman's paradise. But I contented myself with smaller game, slapping mosquitos as I returned to the resthouse.

1-

MALAKAL TO PORT BELL

MY next territory, Uganda: Woolly and Sherry saw me off on the "Cordelia" (en route from Cairo to Durban). Sherry, who averages twenty-five days monthly on trek, was making an early morning start for Kodok. Woolly, an ex-Sunderland pilot, loves flying-boats, and always meets them when they call at Malakal. He gave me a Shilluk pipe for a souvenir; I also carried a gift loin-cloth of soft cotton, specially designed and sewn by Marie for sun-bathing wear. Atton, the helpful B.O.A.C. messenger and model procurer, appeared with the knobbly bracelet I had ordered, but refused to accept money for it "No, sir," said Atton Attilio, "you are a great artist travelling round the world." He gave it me as a present for my wife.

My sudden appearance inside the flying-boat, lugging typewriter, two overcoats, the Homburg hat I wore on leaving London, various presents including the barbaric pipe, and wearing an untrimmed beard, surprised the passengers. The only seat available was on a makeshift form siding the middle compartment, the only scenery visible after we rose a faded horizon through the opposite window. The "Cordelia" bounced about like a crazy lift but, what with lack of sleep, the heat, a stiff back and a stiffer hangover (the day before being Woolly's forty-first birthday), I didn't care much about missing any beautiful panoramas.

When I stood unsteadily and looked through the high window behind me, I noticed the Southern Sudan broadening into a strange marbling—slate greys, pale greens, dusty violets, and burnt browns swirling over a khaki base. This effect continued for many miles, relieved only by an occasional confetti-sprinkling of rusty trees and thatched pill-box huts, or an occasional straight road from which uncertain little paths trickled to far villages. The earth once broke into a sudden rash of chrome polka dots. Black specks on a few slimy water-holes I guessed to be cattle or game.

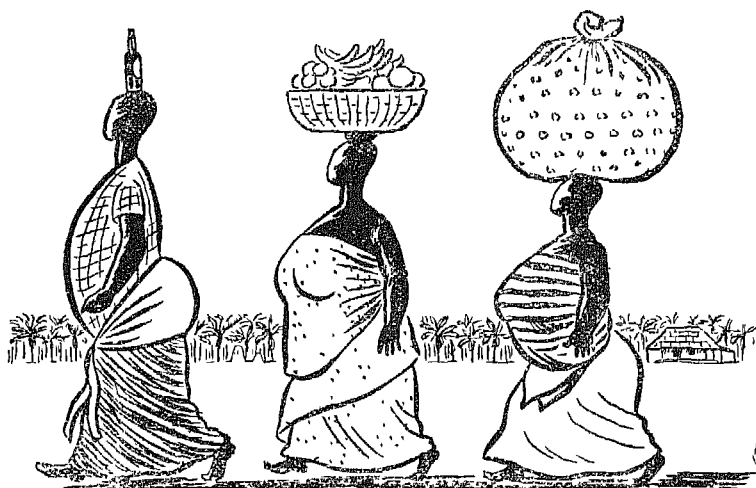
We were over that part of the Sudan where planes sometimes fly low to show passengers wild game at close quarters—there is a famous herd of elephants in the area—but, perhaps for two reasons, we kept our height. The flying-boat bumped enough as it was, and a rougher passage at a lower altitude would not have pleased at least one queasy traveller. And, I was later told, a B.O.A.C. directive forbids low

flying for game-spotting; a pilot can get into serious trouble if even one frightened passenger in the complement of twenty-nine reports such antics.

A peaky, grey-faced, heliotrope-shirted Indian sitting near me made frequent trips to the W.C. An hotel keeper from Mombasa, he asked if I was a doctor. I didn't say yes and I didn't say no. . . . The palms of my hands sweated.

A fast-moving R.A.F. Dakota raced past us as the papyrus-fringed Nile came into sight again at Laropi, in Uganda. We alighted on a river surface dotted with sud. While ground staff refuelled the flying-boat, the passengers, their coats off, and perspiring in the unhealthy heat, cruised up and down the dreary reach in two launches, found little to stare at except a few stony hills and a black man on the jetty.

The Uganda amscape, at first like a speckled oilcloth of scum-covered swamps, changed to lush cultivation and a variety of rich greens. I watched a midget white-clad cyclist pedal furiously along a vermillion road. The "Cordelia" flashed past a white lake steamer and alighted at Port Bell, on Lake Victoria. A beefy uniformed negro, his Bantu face in clumsy contrast to the fine features of the Nilotics, sprayed the compartments with sickly-smelling pyrethrum and a Health Officer inspected yellow fever certificates.



THE KINGDOM OF BUGANDA

FROM Port Bell I was driven seven miles inland to Kampala, through a gaudy "Wizard of Oz" landscape. Towering red ant-mountains serrated the sides of the road. The sienna walls of native huts, roofed with flattened petrol tins rusted-red and laid like overlapping tiles, clashed in dazzling colour cacophony with the deep green of banana plantations. Like a delicate tie-pin stabbing into a poisonous toadstool, a graceful grey crane perched on the overhanging thatch of an outhouse.

The bulky native women, cocooned in ankle-length dresses, looked like those weighted toys which, when shoved, swing back to the upright. Their round heads were shining blackberries balanced on multicoloured pumpkins. Scarlet-and-green dresses noisily encored the general colour scheme of this fantastic, unreal Kingdom of Buganda. And everything—the women, the bananas, the high tasselled crimson tarbushes of the men—seemed oversize in the fairytale landscape.

We entered the neat, clean town of Kampala, saucered between high hills. 3,800 feet above sea level and the commercial centre of the British Protectorate of Uganda (in which

Buganda is a largely self-governing province), Kampala's tidy streets and clipped hedges project English suburbia into the tropics. Even the atmosphere of the Imperial Hotel reminded me of a superior Brighton boarding-house. Nor were there rooms available. . . .

This was the start of my accommodation trouble in Kampala. Within a week I had shared an hotel bedroom with a surprised business man, slept on an Archdeacon's veranda, and dossed-down in the annexes of both the Imperial and the less select Palace Hotel.

That evening, in an hotel billiard-room, I drank warm Kenya beer and talked to a group of dull, sour Englishmen who had been uprooted from their respective Surbitons and incongruously planted in lush tropical soil to do business.

I had read that "the Baganda, the subjects of the Kabaka (King), are the most advanced and intelligent of all the people of Uganda. They have taken to European clothes, bicycles, cars, motor buses and many of the domestic amenities of civilization, and are clamouring for more and more education. . . ." But my companions, officials and business men, revealed that long-missionarized Buganda, shining pearl of Colonial administration, had lost some of its lustre.

"The Baganda have been educated just enough to become rogues," exclaimed a middle-aged colonial, twiddling a strip of sticking-plaster round his pipe stem. "Nobody likes them, not even the missionaries. They are getting cheeky and too smart for their pants."

He asserted that many people who had advised and educated the Baganda now suspect they have sewn dragons' teeth. Recent strikes and riots, followed by the assassination of the elderly Prime Minister, upset their confidence in the model kingdom.

A Scottish merchant took up the theme: "The so-called troubles were caused by a bunch of thugs trying to edge out a particular senior minister with the idea of getting certain jobs. The agitators were reactionary native land-owners who feared certain enlightened political measures aimed to distribute wealth more evenly."

Fifty-five years ago, differences between native converts of the Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries led to a

holy war between the two factions, and many Baganda became Christian martyrs.

"They all sing hymns on Sunday," continued the Scot, "but paganism is just under the skin. There are still plenty of witch-doctors—not only the benevolent herbalists, but the fellows who put a spell on someone for a consideration. Even the more civilized native pines away under such a curse."

Nor had my companions a good word to say for Baganda industry.

"They don't like work," said an engineer, "and are content to subsist on their banana patches. They won't rotate their crops because they prefer a staple food of matoke (bananas wrapped in banana leaves, steamed, pressed and eaten). Consequently there is bad erosion around here, and the soil produces less and less. The native wife digs and plants the bananas, while the husband drinks beer brewed from another type of plantain, the red banana with a purple stem."

And the women, alleged a district medical officer, are fickle.

"They swivel from one man to another. They don't want to waste time in child-bearing, so use dangerous native herbs, much stronger than ergot, to produce miscarriages."

The one kind comment on the unfortunate Baganda came from an ex-District Commissioner, who twinkled at me through his pince-nez.

"They're most certainly the least likable native race here. But, unlike other natives, they do love flowers."

The hotel's beer supply dried up and the party dispersed. A young Captain in the King's African Rifles volunteered to launch me in local society.

"This is the country of 'Bado Kidogo,' which is Kiswahili for 'What's the hurry?' So to-morrow morning we'll find plenty of people starting their day's drinking in the City Bar at eleven. See you then."

We pushed through the swing half-doors of the City Bar, walked past a row of cubicles draped with green curtains, and turned into a small lounge furnished with worn easy chairs and couches. A group of local residents sat over a table listening dully to a joke about a parrot swearing at a parson. The

Captain and I joined them, and a barefooted waiter with shirt-tails dangling over his torn shorts, brought bottles of sour beer labelled "Bottled Sunshine."

On the walls of the lounge, a long-haired lady knelt and embraced the base of a tree. Illuminated by a red sunset, another woman sagged in a canoe and plucked white water-lilies off a pale blue lake, from which a pelican snatched fish. Through a rectangular hole in the murals, and across the bar counter, an Indian barman scowled at the customers. The Indian publican frowned into a roll-top desk in a far corner. Outside we heard the chanting of a passing Moslem funeral procession.

I told the assembled celebrants I planned to go on safari in pursuit of a less sophisticated Uganda. They volunteered helpful suggestions.

Why not a trip to the closed Karamoja district in the North-East? The natives there were heathens, and notorious cattle rustlers.

"They're the toughest people in the country," I was told, "and a blot on the administration."

"Their cattle should be machine-gunned," someone suggested. "That'd make the chiefs good boys, and stop them raiding the poor Christians in the South."

The Watusi country was recommended, if I wished to see long-limbed men leaping off low ant-hills and over each other's heads. A barrier seven feet high is no obstacle to these lanky high-jumpers.

A jumble of mountaineering, angling, hunting and sight-seeing tours was suggested—to Lakes Nabugabo, Bunyonyi, Edward, George, Albert—to the Ruwenzori Range, the Murchison Falls and the Mufumbiro volcanoes in Ruanda-Urundi.

A newcomer arrived, and the conversation ebbed from my projected safari and lapped around the rugged rock of George Hall, general manager of the bus company and "uncrowned King of Kampala."

With the hospitable Hall, I later toured the town. He flopped on his wide-brimmed felt hat as we stepped into the brilliant noon sunlight and growled: "Where's your hat? You're on the Equator. Two seconds is long enough to lay you out!" He led me across the street to an Indian merchant's

store and insisted on buying me a white composition topi with adjustable head-band.

In a small curtained bar behind the counter, the Indian supplied us with a concatenation of gins-and-lime, which rapidly slid down our throats and that of a school inspector. Mission schools, stressed the inspector, should accent agricultural education and pay less attention to the three Rs

Hall drove me to the bus station and terminal. Hundreds of shining black natives crammed wooden forms, patiently awaited the buses to all parts of Uganda. Others queued passively at the ticket windows. Behind a high desk sat L. H. Dessai, the Indian station boss.

Flustered by the sudden appearance with a guest of the "King," so obviously a character, Dessai showed us over the terminal. There is no Colour Bar on Uganda buses. First-class seats are in front, but the natives prefer to ride in the cheaper seats. Because of the lack of spare parts and skilled maintenance during the war, many buses are laid up. Others are apt to break down in remote places and strand their passengers for long periods, as telegraphic and other communications are inadequate.

I started drawing some of the waiting natives, selecting as a model a broad-bosomed belle in bright cotton-check. She spoke to Dessai in the Luganda language. Hall led me away, and I asked him what she had said.

"She wanted your address, so she could come up and see you sometime!" he grinned.

My bedroom in the Palace annexe looked out on a Catholic church, across a sloping green lawn. One afternoon I noticed the church was beflagged. A row of onlookers lined a low hedge and peered into the grounds, where the good priests energetically conducted a fête. A crackling loud-speaker broadcast that a festive time could be had by one and all. Voices, in English and Luganda, coaxed the onlookers to "come and have a cup of tea and nice sweet cake."

"Ha-ha-ha! See the magic show of murder and mystery!" shrieked a gleeful barker. "Say, boy, what's the matter with you? I've just seen the show across the road. Boy, it's good! Ha-ha-ha!"

Intermittent jazz records were played, and an appropriate

Ronald Frankau song recording described neighbouring Kenya where "men are men, and women have wide-open spaces."

That evening a young Catholic priest, Batterssea-born Father Edward Callen, invited me to a children's concert in a school hall just outside Kampala. Ted Callen teaches mathematics at the school, run by the St. Joseph's Foreign Missionary Society, Mill Hill. The Catholic missions of eastern Uganda are in the practical hands of about one hundred Mill Hill Fathers; the missions in the west are run by the beloved White Fathers who, long beards and cassocks streaming behind them, are often to be seen speeding along remote bush roads on their antiquated motor-bikes.

Excited pupils and their buxom black Baganda mammies packed the school hall. We sat with white-frocked missionaries on easy chairs in the front row. A blond Dutch priest sucked a pipe stabbed into a matinee-idol profile. Next him sat a stout, shining-faced old Father who beamed benignly at me throughout the programme. I was told he had spent thirty years in a leper settlement and, now in a bad state of health, was about to retire to England. Ted said the concert had been produced entirely by the children. "The sixth-year class; they get all the prizes, and are very proud of themselves."

A lean native in a long white kanzu (gown) was invited to sit beside me and interpret. Newly appointed as minor chief to an island in Lake Victoria, he was congratulated by the others.

"You should go far," said Ted.

"How can I?" chortled the chief, "when I am surrounded by water?"

The curtain was drawn, revealing nine small boys squatting on the floor and swilling imaginary beer from a bottle handed around.

"This is the city life, and they are drunkards," giggled the chief in a high-pitched voice.

The audience shrieked with laughter as a child in a policeman's costume beat the roisterers with a baton.

In another scene, billed on the yellow typewritten programme as "Oh think of the home," a youth, playing the part of a decrepit old father, farewelled his wife and small son. The coast clear, a visitor in peaked cap and blue honeymoon

pyjamas cycled on to the stage. The erring wife knelt adoringly before him.

"Ze husband is away, and now a lad come in, and ze wife is very pleased to see him," laughed my interpreter. "Now he is seated in ze place of ze husband. He! he! he!"

When the child threatened to tell his father, the intruder scuttled away. The "old man" hobbled back, and hearing of his wife's flirtation, attacked her with a cudgel.

A double file of children marched from the wings for the next number, with Swedish clubs shouldered as rifles. They pointed their guns, stamped to a stirring African tempo, and marched backwards and forwards before a prancing sergeant. "Meat-a-nick, mcat-a-nick, meat-a-nick!" chanted the sergeant.

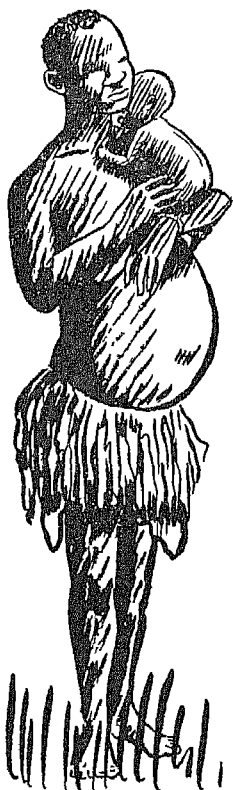
"It's a free made-up word," explained the chief.

A small black face peeped curiously through a slit in the backdrop. The Dutch priest stood, and gestured with his pipe. The face disappeared abruptly.

The white-teethed performers acted with aplomb and spirit. The number which caused most uproar was staged by two pupils draped under a blanket.

"The Kabaka has given somebody a horse, and it is being brought to show how interesting it is," the chief revealed.

A groom bounced on to the stage and ordered the spirited but unco-ordinated "horse" to dance. Then, on request, the tail danced and it wagged its head.



THE STINGY JOPADOLA

FATHER TED owns a dilapidated Chevrolet coupé. Due for a two-day break from his teaching, he offered to drive me on a short safari anywhere in Uganda. (In East Africa, the word "safari" is broadly interpreted, can almost mean a stroll around the block.) I said I wanted to meet and draw unsophisticated natives, and was anxious to get away from the pseudo-civilized Baganda, who ape Western customs, wear European clothes and fill too many churches.

Ted wiped his spectacles and his weak eyes looked worried. The trouble was, he said, to get far enough into the backblocks in the short time at our disposal. I might possibly obtain some unusual sketches near Tororo in the Buduma district,

130 miles east of Kampala and on the borders of Kenya. There he remembered seeing women in banana leaf skirts.

So, on my fourth morning in Uganda, we collected the necessary petrol tickets for the trip and rattled into the country in search of banana leaf skirts. Ted had gagged the aggressive seat springs with cushions; but the floor-boards rattled, the loose cellophane in the rear window flapped, the bonnet quivered and clanged, and every now and again the radiator cap flew off, releasing a geyser of steam.

A mile out of Kampala, the smooth asphalt changed to dusty red corrugations. We passed innumerable fat but fine-featured women balancing pitchers, baskets, bundles, bunches of green bananas and beer bottles on their heads, girdled at the waist with wide sashes slung low beneath protruding stomachs and drawn tight like string around a bolster. As we

bore down on them, they fastidiously lifted the front hem of their spotless skirts and, wary of the churning red dust, faced the fringe of the road. Other women billowed from the back seats of bicycles peddled by puffing menfolk. We passed itinerant road-labourers carrying cooking pans, rattan sleeping mats and water gourds. I tried to identify tribal types.

"Most labour is from other tribes, and these men are probably from the Congo," Ted explained. "You won't get the Baganda working for anyone else if they can help it."

The sky was a rinsed blue, with a few soap-sud clouds. We took a sharp turn on a hill.

"The natives call this Kata Bazungu, 'the hill that kills the white people.'"

Ted pointed out maternity hospitals, schools, training colleges, Catholic missions and a leper settlement. We passed a swamp (almost drained by the dense planting of eucalyptus trees), coffee and sugar plantations, and disciplined battalions of erect rubber trees standing to attention amidst the burgeoning fertility.

In Buganda the women cover their breasts, and it was not until we approached Jinja about fifty miles out of Kampala that we meet a few girls draped in soft brown dark-cloth and showing their breasts. Ted said that during last year's famine the people were more scantily clothed.

We stopped to peep into a crumbling little mud building placarded "Mukwano Gu Lubuto Hotel" ("The Friend of Your Stomach Hotel"). Therein one's stomach may befriend a cup of tea or curry puffs for ten cents (a penny), and cooked bananas for twenty cents.

We crossed a green steel bridge spanning the rapids near the source of the Victoria Nile which, from the plate-glass lake, runs north-west to Lake Albert, whence it continues its long safari to the Mediterranean. And as I associate my first visit to the Acropolis with the braying of a donkey from Athens below, so shall I remember Ripon Falls and the source of the Victoria Nile by the naked black man who bathed unselfconsciously just above these famous but disappointing cascades.

"There's supposed to be a lot of hippo about here," Ted remarked.

We drove through the wide main street of Jinja, past colon-

naded verandas and into an avenue where trees rubbed noses above. As we rattled into the less fertile district of Busoga, the clothes of the natives became dirtier, less colourful and more tattered. The women slimmed progressively. At a cross-roads we asked a youth for directions, but he skeltered off like a rabbit.

At each mile-post clumps of natives squatted waiting for a bus, and in the villages crowded the wide verandas that aproned the corrugated-iron shacks of the Indian factors. Inside the shops we glimpsed rolls of fabrics, print dresses, bottles of beer. The shopkeepers of Uganda—indeed, of all East Africa—are the British Indians and Portuguese Goans, indiscriminately labelled “Asiatics” or “Asians.” In the Protectorate they number 16,000 as against a native population of 3,700,000 and 2,000 Europeans.

I asked Ted if the natives were monogamous. He looked sidewise.

“A few of them,” he answered, and slyly quoted somebody’s remark about their being “very uxorious.”

In a thinly populated drought area between the Igana Mission School (where we were given tea by a Mill Hill Father) and Busia, the radiator cap bounced into the road. I retrieved it, while Ted prospected for water to fill the leaking tank. Luckily, 200 yards ahead he spied a group of thatched huts behind a cultivated plot spotted with red and white cotton flowers. We walked up a narrow path. A few stunted hens pecked at a scatter of millet spread out to dry before the largest hut, in the shade of which three Basamia women nursed their babies.

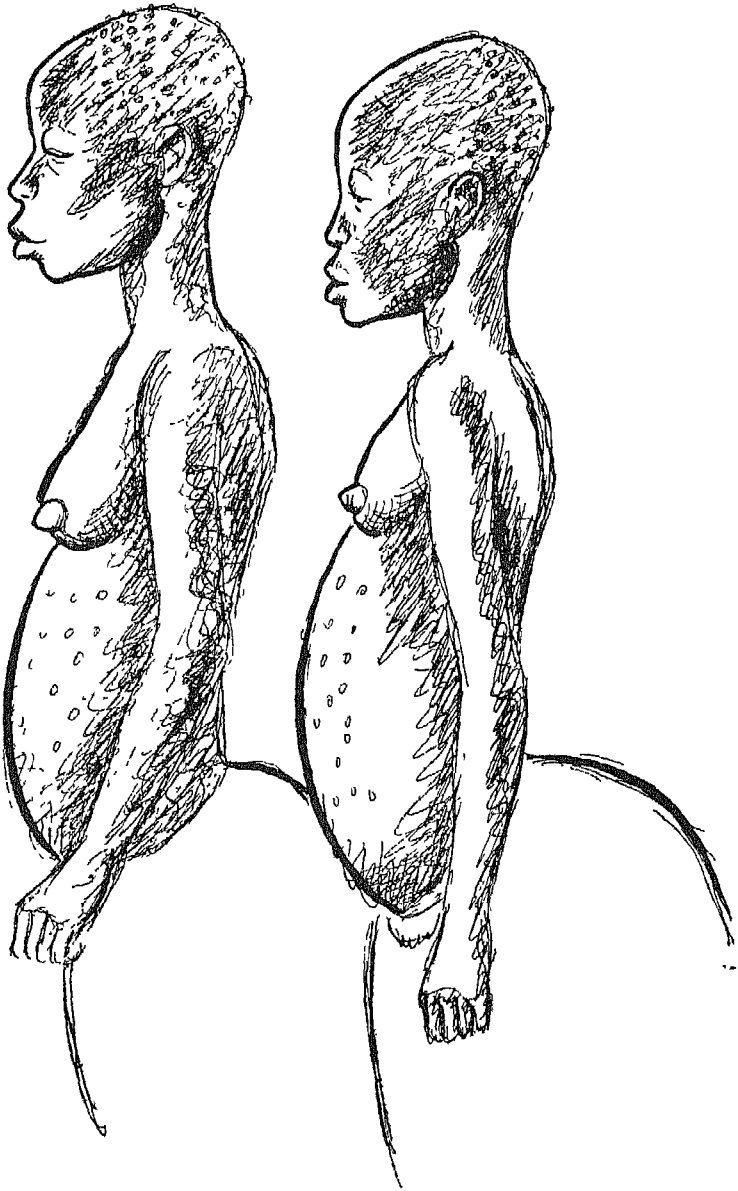
Ted greeted them, and asked for water for the “motorcar.”

“Ah, ah, ah,” replied the women, and the oldest, plucking a squalling babe from a wrinkled udder and slinging him under her arm, perched a clay pot on her head and went for water.

“That’s the stuff they drink,” grimaced Ted, when she returned and poured a filthy amber liquid into the radiator.

Our road now pointed at a distant hill and across a plateau sparsely sprinkled with trees and shrubs. A pretty girl knelt as we passed, and gave us a laughing greeting. Thus the local natives pay their respects to the chiefs and others they esteem.

“Look,” cried Ted, “a banana leaf skirt!”



"TWO MAIDENS, ABOR AND AMAL, TIMIDLY POSED FOR ME"

We slowed down to observe a woman wearing banana leaves, sewn as a skirt hung low on her hips. But, alas, the woman was pregnant and plain; the leaves were brown, dry and shredded, and a dirty yellow rag dangled beneath. Ted said the green leaves dry so quickly they should be changed three or four times daily.

We were now in sight of Tororo Rock which, from our viewpoint, looked like a reclining profile of George Washington. A deep gully twisted Washington's mouth into a smug grin. After resting at Tororo College and swallowing a canned-lobster lunch, we left to spend the night at a small mission twelve miles away.

The missionary, Father H. van der Steen—Dutch, slim and wearing an off-white cassock—received us. Staying with him was jocular Brother Bavo de Zeeuwa, who had come from Tororo to lay the foundations of a new church. Wearing shorts which exposed his bandy legs, Brother Bavo is very popular with the natives. He can joke with them in several native languages.

Ted explained the purpose of our unusual pilgrimage. But banana leaves, the missionaries said, were rarely worn any more in the district. They were regarded as degrading signs of poverty. Later in the afternoon, walking through long grass to several native houses, we confirmed this. Both men and women wore dirty cotton garments.

Surprised by European visitors, some women hitched their robes over their breasts and then, the modest gesture made, dropped them again. I criticized the artificial modesty, and the missionaries readily deprecated this aspect of their civilizing influence.

Two maidens, Abor and Amal, timidly posed for me. Abor's complexion was a lighter chocolate than Amal's, and the bushy little hair knots on her shining scalp grew wider apart. By native standards, she was the prettier of the two sisters. Amal's scalp bled. An area of hair had been roughly shaved off in preparation for her Catholic baptism next morning. I gave the girls cigarettes but my next subject, an old man named Oyo, declined, as he smoked only cheroots. The courteous patriarch brought from his hut low wooden stools he had carved from solid timber. We sat and chatted while his wife, a cheerful old crone, ground millet inside with a wooden pestle.

Neighbouring tribes think the people of this part of Budama, the Jopadola, rather a poor lot. Even the Christian Jopadola, the missionaries told me, are apt to sacrifice asses, goats and hens to the god Buru. A stingy but practical people, they eat Buru's sacrifices after killing them!

Inside their huts they keep pots of water and beer, as an offering to the smaller gods of the house and the forest. There are more women than men in the district, and each man usually takes three or four wives.

I was anxious to see the erotic dances of the women to the rhythm of drums beaten by other women. But white people seldom witness these spontaneous frenzies. The orgies usually start with a young girl falling into a fit and infecting the others with a kind of madness. They dance night and day, and are affected in a strange way, attacking with sticks and spears anything coloured red. They even try to spear the sunset.

As in other parts of Africa, the women must not eat eggs or chickens. For such delicacies are said to prevent child-bearing! And, with the exception of educated natives, the men eat apart from their women, who never sit on chairs.

At sunrise next morning a gala crowd of mothers and children was already congregated outside the thatched mud church for the baptismal ceremony. While Ted changed a tyre which had flattened during the night, I strolled amongst the Christians and made a few drawings, dispensed cigarettes to the models and greeted everybody "Arba!" (The greeting received nods, smiles and reciprocal "Arbas" but Ted later punctured my retrospective smugness by insisting there was no such word in the language. The local greeting is "Yogha"). As I worked, the natives bunched behind my shoulder and yelled with laughter when I drew identifiable objects such as bundles or babies. I asked Brother Bavo what they were saying. "'That man's got brains,'" he replied. "There's no native word for art, or artist."

As we drove off, a drum thumped and a row of boys assembled in double file outside the church. The ceremony was about to begin. I wonder will the unsophisticated Jopadola demand with next year's baptism a tall bearded man who makes marks on paper, doles out free cigarettes and utters the magic word "Arba!"?



SAFARI TO KABALE

EXCEPT for the railway in the east, which runs from Kampala through to Kenya and the coast, the 94,000 square miles of Uganda are serviced only by road transport. Before the war tourists relied on hire cars, or taxis at 1/- a mile, to take them to the bush. The best chance of getting away from Kampala, I learnt, was to cadge a lift from a

transient business man or on the lorry of an Indian contractor. The taxis had become even more ramshackle and unreliable than the buses, and were very expensive.

The frustrating transport situation appeared hopeless. I kept in touch with the Petrol Control Commission, the government Transport Officer, the army authorities and the Information Officer—but no lifts were available anywhere.

Then, over a "sun-downer" at the Imperial Hotel I met Major Peter Matthews, an eccentric Irishman with tousled auburn hair thatching a battered pink face. In strident Oxford accents he invited me to "raise two blankets and a camp bed" and visit him at his mining camp in the hills of Kayonza County, in the district of Kigezi on the borders of the Belgian Congo.

"There's a manager looking after the mine you'll be interested to meet," he said. "He's a famous white hunter. The district is noted for witchcraft. I'll get the pigmies to dance for you. And in Kigezi you will find the unspoilt native."

Deaf in one ear, Matthews talks with a slight stammer. At sixty, he has the vitality of a man twenty years younger. He proffered me a cheroot.

"That's a 'Ruwenzori Rocket,' made by the natives near my workings. They grow their own tobacco.

"I can't give you transport from here, but if you get to Kabale I'll pick you up there in three days and take you to the End of the Road, where we will have a twelve-mile walk to the camp."

He admitted he was already fretting to return to the "real civilization" of his mountain people. "After so many years living with Africans, I'm not fit company for Europeans!"

Matthews is known throughout the Protectorate as the "King of Kigezi." In the twenty years he has sieved the wild highlands in the far south-west, he has found much alluvial gold. Yet he is richest, I soon found, not in the elusive metal, but in the respect and adoration of the proud Bakiga highlanders who populate the densely-wooded mountains of the Kigezi district.

In the lobby of the Imperial Hotel is a notice-board with two sections, "I want a lift" and "I offer a lift." In the former space I pinned a notice saying I would very much appreciate transport to Kabale. The hotel receptionist called me over.

"There's a Mr. Greene driving to the Congo to-morrow, through Kabale," she said. "He's from England and is in the dining-room now. Why don't you ask him for a lift?"

So I spoke to Edward Greene, a British Ministry of Food official about to visit the Congo on a food mission at the invitation of the Belgian Government. He said he would welcome my company as far as Kabale.

Next morning a native chauffeur drove up to the hotel entrance in an ancient Chevrolet. Greene surveyed the worn tyres, glassless windows and tattered seats of the decrepit vehicle with dismay. He had heard about the rough roads en route. But his arrival in Kampala had unfortunately coincided with the Christmas holidays, and the available government transport was bearing school-children back to outlying Uganda homes. Greene had landed a typical East African taxi for his thousand-mile safari!

He doubted whether the taxi would stand the strain. He was right.

We were rather better outfitted than the car for a hot and tiring journey. Greene wore a cool seersucker coat and light cloth hat. I sported my new white sun helmet.

Eighty-two miles out of Kampala, after driving through a stretch of forest followed by rolling moors, and at some point crossing the Equator, we had our first meal in the Southern Hemisphere at the Kiwala Hotel. Overlooking Lake Nabugabo (where the location shots of "Trader Horn" and "Sanders of the River" were filmed), the hotel is set in prim gardens and reminiscent of a small Devonshire inn. The Canadian proprietress, Mrs. Phyllis Keeble, filled the front porch. Short, stout and jolly as an English bar-maid, she led us into a twee wee bar and poured two tankards of beer, calling the bald-headed Greene "my young man." Except for kerosene lamps and a carved Gothic seat, there was even an Olde English quality about the earth closet, hiding behind neat hedges in the garden.

After a light lunch, we continued south-west through scrubby savanna covered with ant-hills topped with long grass, like face moles sprouting tufts of hair. An old grey warthog ran ahead of the car for a quarter of a mile before he crashed aside into the brush. We passed three broken-down and deserted buses, and occasional natives driving long-horned

cattle. Members of the Bahima tribe, the natives resembled images of ancient Egyptians—straight noses, high cheekbones, wide flat eyes. We hurried through the dreary town of Mbarara, 178 miles out of Kampala, and spurred on to Kabale.

By now the natives wore skins. We were entering Bakiga country, which became wilder and hillier as we continued south. The smoky hair of a bush-fire fluffed the smooth brow of an old hill. The goat skins of the women hung between breasts as high and round as the hills—in pleasing contrast to the drooping dugs of the Jopadola.

On a lonely stretch of road half-way between Mbarara and Kabale our chauffeur frantically started to tinker with the instrument board. The car slowed to a halt. He opened the bonnet, and hopelessly dangled a broken fanbelt before us.

We resigned ourselves to a night amongst the lion and buffalo.

But fifteen minutes later a small van rattled to a stop beside us. Out stepped Ashoba K. Potit, an Indian miller en route to Kabale with a vanful of relatives, old and young. At his invitation, and leaving the chauffeur holding the fanbelt, we threw ourselves and our bags into the back of the van with Mr. Potit's relations, and continued on dusty safari with Mother India.

Twice the miller stopped to discharge duties and passengers. During an involved transaction with a native farmer, six half-naked women peered and chattered at us like monkeys, from bushes beside the road. I recalled Matthews' promise of unspoilt natives.

Eventually Mr. Potit mounted a hill overlooking the village of Kabale, and delivered us to the last green of a nine-hole golf course adjoining the White Horse Inn. Stepping stiffly from the van, we dusted our clothes, and a disreputable landslide of red dust sprayed the immaculate turf carpet. We waited for a foursome of British officials to finish their game, then Greene introduced himself and his dilemma.

Mathias, the District Commissioner, a sturdy man in white shorts, with clipped black-grey moustache and clipped manner, arranged to dispatch a lorry to collect our abandoned car and beleaguered driver. We checked-in at the White Horse Inn, a low building surrounded by satellite brick cabins thatched with stepped pyramids of papyrus reed. The same reed,

unweathered and lighter in colour, panelled the walls of the comfortable lounge, at the end of which crackled a log fire. (The evening air, though so near the Equator, is chilly at 5,600 feet) We skidded to the fire over a polished timber floor crawling with sleek, slug-like dachshunds. The tongue of an elderly dog hung down like a remnant of spaghetti, and at any moment I expected him to suck it up with a click.

Sphagetti, too, was on the dinner menu, as well as soup, delicious fresh trout from nearby Lake Bunyonyi, roast beef, brussels sprouts, spinach, potatoes and cabbage, a fruit salad . . . a typical pre-war English meal.

Greene left hopefully for the Congo next morning, and I talked to Mrs. William Adamson, proprietress of the hotel. Petite, her white hair stacked neatly in an elegant coiffure, and wearing tailored red slacks, she rolled off the names of famous pre-war guests, American Vanderbilts and other millionaires, Royalties, Rosita Forbes and other writers. She supervised the soft-footed, kanzu-clad native boys with genteel efficiency, summoning them in a high-pitched toot. She told me how the hotel had been understaffed during the war and how she and her husband, a tall pallid man with red-rimmed eyes whom I noticed pottering and putting on the lawn outside, had carried on under difficult conditions. After an excellent lunch, which included delicious griddle-cakes with syrup and thick whipped cream, I congratulated her on the cuisine. She thanked me briskly, and walked off to arrange a vase of carnations and daisies in the spotless lounge. An astonishing hotel to find in the heart of "Darkest Africa"!

I chatted to other guests, a doctor from Masaka and his wife. They invited me to drive with them to Lake Bunyonyi, six miles away. There we were met by other officials from the Kabale station, and with their wives, children and dogs, chugged in a launch to visit Dr. Leonard Sharp, who runs the Church Missionary Society Leper Settlement on Bwama Island.

Shades of Loch Leven! The still, deep lake, enclosed by soft green hills and spangled with thirty emerald islands, could have been in the Scottish Highlands. The Highlands of Uganda are said to offer the most beautiful scenery in East Africa. There can be no lovelier lake in Africa than the

drowned valley of Bunyonyi. We glided past and around the leper island, with a half-completed brick church on its highest hill, and approached a dream islet—the Robinson Crusoe ideal of so many of us—where Dr. Sharp and his wife lived. A verdant mound, about 300 yards long, rising from the smooth water. Sloping lawns framed by trees—cyprus, banana, eucalyptus, and other non-indigenous species—beds of English flowers, a vegetable garden and a tennis court of hard clay enclosed a house with hunting trophies hung in the porch. A flight of white sacred ibis, black edges to their wings, moved gracefully over us.

Mrs. Sharp, a pleasant, matter-of-fact, grey-haired Englishwoman, met us at the tiny jetty and insisted we stay for afternoon tea. While the others bathed in the lake, I entered the house to talk to her husband, who was propped up in bed with a bad attack of lumbago.

Dr. Sharp told me that before he and his wife came to Kigezi in 1921, the district was closed to Europeans other than officials. Their island was bare, except for a mud-and-wattle resthouse. The islands in the lake were once the refuge of the followers of Nyabingi, a witch-doctor who before the last war promised the Bakiga they would be bullet-proof, and started an anti-European rebellion.

The first Nyabingi was queen of a neighbouring district. Her spirit is supposed to pass on to other claimants, male or female. In Kigezi, witch-doctors have so often been mixed up with political trouble that the Government has its knife into them. Recently a female Nyabingi died in Kampala, where she had been deported. The natives now look for the spirit of Nyabingi to reappear in someone else.

Witchcraft is still under the surface, but Sharp believes it is dying out in Kigezi, largely due to missionary influence.

"Last year Christian natives brought some drums, hundreds of years old, to one of our churches. They were supposed to be the abode of the spirits of the tribe and sacrifices were made to them.

"The C.M.S. first started here as a medical mission. Then the Government built the hospital, and for the last sixteen years we have concentrated on the leper colony. A bad type of nodular leprosy is endemic to this area, and most of the lepers who come to us are in a deplorable state of neglect and

malnutrition. I carried on propaganda in the district explaining it was a dangerous disease, and highly dangerous to children. We got most of the serious cases. There are now six hundred here, including 150 children.

"We have three women and four men who are *not* lepers. They've come to help their husbands and wives. Some children are born here, but lepers are not very prolific. We have a home for these children, whom we take from their parents as soon as they are born. There is also a hospital and school for lepers, and a model village and cottages.

"We have just finished a survey, and thirty cases are going home, including many children. They have been cured by a combination of chaulmougra oil injections, good food, exercise and general hygiene.

"There are altogether four leper colonies in Uganda, a big C.M.S. place in the eastern province, and two smaller Catholic places in Buganda. The illness is such an appalling thing that it is only the knowledge of Christ that makes a difference to these people."

Next day I walked across a corner of the golf links to a group of administrative offices near the hotel to call on the District Commissioner. Busy for a while, he suggested I visit the gombolola* court then in session down in the village, and lent me an African clerk as interpreter.

Through the open windows of the court, a small square whitewashed building roofed with papyrus reed, a number of natives peered curiously inside. The Africans, not unlike the Irish, are a litigiously-minded people. The interpreter and I stepped into the court-room and the magistrate (a gombolola chief) stood and bowed from the raised mud dais, welcome scrawled over his sharp black face. He was nattily dressed in a creased brown European jacket, light grey trousers, mauve tie and striped collar. A heavy watch-chain swung from his lapel. Several minor chiefs sat around the room.

The interpreter explained our mission, and the magistrate

* Uganda comprises four provinces, Buganda, Eastern, Northern and Western each under a Provincial Commissioner. The Provinces are in turn divided into Districts, each in charge of its District Commissioner—and the Districts into several *sazas*, under Saza Chiefs appointed (with the exception of Buganda) by the British. *Sazas* comprise Gombololas, which are made up of smaller units, *Murucas*—very often little villages.

regretted there were no cases of particular interest that morning. An Indian had intended suing a man who assaulted him but, I gathered, his attacker had not yet been located.

We were about to leave when an African soldier, in Burma hat, khaki shorts and puttees, entered and slowly and solemnly made a complaint.

Before going to war, he had left his wife and mother in the house of his father-in-law. On his return three years afterwards he learnt his wife was living with another man. She had taken with her his personal property. He asked to be given back his five pots, a door, native plates and baskets, two hoes, one spear and one big knife.

As the askari spoke, my interpreter translated loudly, but when the magistrate and other chiefs started shouting at the plaintiff, I rather lost thread of the case.

A scraggy old ruffian in dirty skins, the complainant's father-in-law, ambled in. The magistrate cocked his head, looked out of the corner of his eyes and asked the askari—should the old man return his belongings, would he be satisfied?

"Yes," said the soldier.

"But," shrewdly added the magistrate, "could not at least one of your five pots have been broken when you were away in Buganda?"

"True," answered the soldier. "But I wouldn't mind that. It is only that my wife took away *all my property*, and married another."

The Greek chorus of minor chiefs asked him why he was foolish enough to leave his property with his wife.

But how, he replied, could he have anticipated her desertion?

The magistrate dug his elbows in the cloth-covered table and pointed accusingly. Why did not the plaintiff's father collect his son's property when the dowry was reclaimed after the wife ran away?

By now the askari's father and mother were in court, and the participants stood respectfully in a row before the dais, except the old lady, who fearfully faced me until orientated correctly by a chief.

The father mildly detailed the reclaimed dowry, one cow, five goats and a calf by the cow. He had asked his daughter-in-law to return to her husband, but she insisted on staying

with the other man who, it now transpired, was the plaintiff's brother¹. The father-in-law had refused to return the askari's property.

"What *was* your son's property?" the magistrate asked cunningly.

"My son was living away," retorted the old man, "so how could I know what kind of property it was?"

A muruca chief chipped in. "Then how could you claim the things you didn't know?"

During these discussions and arguments, my interpreter interrogated the witnesses as keenly as the judge, then bawled their replies to me while the judge politely waited.

The offending wife, a coy piece with fluttering eyelashes and head on one side, slunk vampishly into court. With assurance and aplomb, she handed a twisted wad of paper to my interpreter, who gave it to the magistrate.

Uncrumpling the paper, holding it at arm's length and swivelling his profile to the audience, the magistrate read the document out loud. It purported to be from the askari's father to the ex-wife. It stated that no property of his son was left with her, and she was free to marry again when she liked. The letter appeared to have been drawn up as a legal document.

Twirling his eyes and hands above the table, the judge listed all the items again—two hoes, one door, five pots, one big knife, etc. Then he summed up, the other chiefs raised their hands in unison, and the defendant was acquitted.

Shaking with laughter, her face in her hands, she ran outside to be congratulated by friends and, I presume, her new husband. Her father waved his arms boastfully, left in triumph. But the askari indignantly stood his ground and shouted his intention to appeal to a higher court.

On the face of it, the askari seems to have had a raw deal. His property was still probably with the ex-wife. His father, who could not read, may have been flummoxed into signing a document he did not understand. But the court kept strictly to the letter of the law. After all, the case may have been trumped up vindictively by the deserted soldier. In Uganda, higher courts exist to give, when necessary, wider and more liberal interpretations to such cases.



Girl of the Bakiga tribe, Western Uganda

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"This is incomparably the best district in Uganda," said Lionel Mathias, the thirty-seven-year-old District Commissioner of Kigezi, "but before coming here I had ten consecutive years in the most filthy stations." Like so many New Zealanders educated at Oxford, Mathias, who was born in Christchurch, looks and sounds more English than the English themselves.

His main duties during three years in Kigezi have been to promote "the political, economic and general welfare of the people. Then you've got the licensing, non-native court work, food and price controls and so on. The D.C. is directly or indirectly involved in everything that goes on in the district. We're teaching the Black Brother to run his own show."

Helping him to administer 300,000 natives are three Colonial Civil Service colleagues, the medical, agricultural and development officers. Very much overworked, Mathias urgently expected the arrival of an Assistant D.C. or "I'll go mad."

He rattled off a number of statistics about his district.

"There are fifty thousand tax-payers, and the chiefs collect the taxes.

"Only the physically-fit adult males over fourteen pay the eight shillings a year poll tax and five shillings a year native administration tax. That's about twenty thousand pounds a year in poll taxes, which is not enough for the district

"There are no very rich natives. Just over a head of cattle each is the average wealth, and about five sheep or goats.

"The population averages one man to one-and-a-half wives, and the girls marry between sixteen and eighteen.

"The crops are millet, which is grown for food, and beer, sweet potatoes, peas, beans and bananas.

"The Bakiga are the main tribe here. They are shorter, broader and blacker than the others, and a very moral people. Single girls in the family-way were once pushed over a local waterfall. . . ."

Together we drove around Kabale on a grand tour of official projects and good works. I noted that even the steepest hills were cultivated to their summits.

"The people are far too thick on the earth here," commented Mathias, "and the over-population is more acute than elsewhere in Uganda."

Down in the valleys he pointed out feathery papyrus swamps slashed and drained by transverse ditches. We inspected a

new tile factory, producing by primitive methods 30,000 tiles a month. Before baking, the clay is dusted with ant-hill, which tints the tiles red. He showed me experimental houses, with some walls brick and others mud.

"The district is growing tobacco for nicotine sulphate. Flax is being tried in the north. Mulberry grows very well here, and we're trying to get an expert to investigate the possibilities of a silk industry. We could compete with artificial silk because the Black Brother produces at cheap prices."

He enthused over the commercial possibilities in beeswax, which is transportable cheaply in a country where cartage costs are high. Tanning, too, may be an important new industry. We saw a tanning shop where natives experimented with black wattle bark.

We were joined at the local jail by an elderly saza chief. Behind a wall topped with broken glass a batch of khaki-clad prisoners waited to be searched for knives before they retired. Except for a couple of murderers awaiting trial in a higher court, the prisoners were petty offenders. Refusal to pay taxes earned one culprit a two months' stretch, and another received three months for owning a witch-doctor's cattle horn, and for pouring from it a magic mixture of clay and sand over the head and body of a barren woman to make her fertile. ("The lady is still barren," grinned the saza chief.)

A routine chastisement of children in Kigezi is whipping them with nettles. But one of the murderers had, in disciplinary excess, dropped his unfortunate son into a bed of nettles and stacked others on top.

Mathias invited me to sign the jail visitors' book, but discouraged my suggestion to write after the signature an appreciative comment—"Accommodation superlative," "Wonderful view," "Delightful company," or "Superb cuisine."

We returned to the hotel and waited twenty minutes for a drink. Mr. Adamson was in his bath and his wife ill in bed. Ordering drinks at the White Horse Inn is a ritual repeated with each order. The native waiters have no access to the alcohoard. The guest gives his order to the proprietor, who ambles to the store-room, unlocks the door, disappears therein, calls "Boy!"—and the drinks are at last served on a tray. The hotel has only a half-license, and I learnt that local

officials may tipple there only as guests of a resident. Even the little paradise of Kabale has its austerities!

My vexed problem of borrowing blankets for Matthews' camp was solved when Lieutenant Tommy Marsh, the military affairs officer, joined us. He offered to lend me camping equipment. And he kindly promised to put me on an army lorry bound for Kampala when I returned to Kabale from the mining camp in six days' time. I was due to catch a flying-boat at Port Bell for Mombasa on December 30th.



THE END OF THE ROAD

MATTHEWS arrived next day with two other prospectors. Major Rupert Cecil ("Sammy") Samuels and his partner Walter Stuart met Matthews in Kampala. He invited them to his camp for Christmas. They brought with them native boys, mining equipment and hopeful-glinting prospecting eyes.

Stuart, late of an armoured car unit in the King's African Rifles, I had heard of as a fabulous character in the North-

East Frontier campaign. A courageous and independent soldier, he was said to have camouflaged tents facetiously with drawings of rabbits and other animals, and painted nudes on the sober sides of reconnaissance cars.

"I'm just another one of those amateur prospectors looking for the elusive metal," he told me. But before the war he owned gold mines in Kenya.

On his own misleading admission, he was educated "not very much" in England, France and all over Europe. He talks eruditely, very slowly and accenting the consonants at the ends of his words. Reserved about his racial origins, he looks Russian and I would assess his age at just over forty. Gentle and sensitive, he is, like Matthews, passionately in love with the African bush, which he believes to be the only real civilization. I gathered he was once secretary to a Greek financier, has represented a Wall Street brokerage firm in the City of London, and for a very short time was a professional artist in England.

"I even painted the scenery for 'Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber.' My schoolmaster assistant bought carpenter's glue instead of size, and painting became progressively difficult, until the colour started falling off in great festoons. . . ."

He looks like a conventional conception of the artist—pale-faced, a thin, silky tuft on his chin, a fringe of hair draping his forehead. He rarely moves his head, instead swings his alert, pale-blue, owl eyes in a wide arc.

Unlike the enigmatic Stuart, who does not care to kill the wild life he loves, "Sammy" Samuels has rubbed-out forty-eight elephants. Quiet and soft-spoken, Sammy's mild appearance belies the hunter. He first started after big game when he came to East Africa twenty-five years ago as branch manager of a great trading concern. In World War I he held every rank (except sergeant-major) from private to lieutenant-colonel. During the last war, when stationed in Northern Ireland, he pleasurably recruited many soldiers for the British Army from de Valera's forces. He has promoted boxing tournaments in Mombasa, and once fought an exhibition bout with the lightweight champion of India. He coffee-farmed in Tanganyika, but now, as a mining engineer and promoter, is happiest looking for minerals.

Sammy, the seasoned hunter, dislikes the vicious buffalo,

and wherever possible gives it a wide berth. Last time he met a buffalo, his bearer was gored to death and Sammy's ribs pulped.

He admired Matthews, who has killed forty buffaloes since a wounded beast pierced his left side and carried him skewered on the horn until he shot it through the head with a revolver. Conversation with him and Sammy, although rewarding and productive of blood-curdling anecdotes, I found difficult because of their mutual deafness. Sammy wore a deaf-aid contraption earthen to a black bakelite box on his chest, Matthews cupped his deaf ear with a hand.

The morning we were to leave Kabale, Matthews reported Sammy in bed with an unco-operative gastric ulcer. So, leaving him to come on later in his truck, we packed Stuart's boy into the back of an overloaded station-wagon and, the three of us in front with Stuart at the wheel, started our fifty-mile trek north to Amahingo and the End of the Road. We chose the shorter but more difficult of two alternative routes. Stuart drove slowly because of the many right-angle corners and hairpin bends in a road which roller-coasted up and down the mountain sides.

"I used to do this on a motor-bike without any brakes," shouted Matthews, cheerfully enlarging on the dangers ahead. "We'll have to dismount for one hideous corner at the very top of this hill."

But Stuart's careful driving kept us on the road and soon we were in easier country.

"I'm glad we came across the men's way," yelled Matthews.

My mining companions chatted technically about rock formations, reefs and mining possibilities when passing sections of country Matthews had already prospected. One of many esoteric remarks—"I've dollied that buck until I'm tired and I've never got a spec."

Orange, blue and green lizards flickered up the foliated rock of the hillsides. Native women, their heads erect under gourds of millet beer, skipped away from our bumpers with a high-stepping scuttle. We passed a signpost pointing to Kampuga.

"That road goes down to the most witch-ridden part in the whole of Africa," said Matthews. Further on, he indicated a dense little wood between the round, tentacle-like ridges of a hill.

"I wanted to cut it down because of the excellent timber, but the natives protested. No native dares enter, as it is a sacred wood. Two witch-doctors are buried inside."

I asked him if he had heard of a new Nyabingi.

"Rumour and bush-telegraph report that a young girl is the reincarnation of Nyabingi. But, like John the Baptist, she must go into the wilderness before being accepted."

The Bakiga will stubbornly deny the existence of Nyabingi. But Matthews approaches the sensitive Highlanders obliquely.

"Knowledge breeds knowledge. You must pretend to know. Never ask them a direct question."

To some extent he has replaced the witch-doctors as a medicine man and, at his location, doles out elasto-plasters, milk of magnesia and other panaceas for the sick and injured.

We were now in very thinly populated, heavily wooded mountains. The road ended in a cluster of huts.

A court of waiting natives, adoration and respect in their eyes, shyly approached the King of Kigezi, dipping one knee in a curtsy worthy of Buckingham Palace. They placed chairs at a table in the shade of a thatch, and we ate hard-boiled eggs and sandwiches supplied by the White Horse Inn. The King tilted his double-brimmed tarai back from his forehead, folded his arms and received homage.

An old man with a stubbly beard proffered a bunch of bananas, another a gift of sun-dried grasshoppers wrapped in banana leaves. Matthews sniffed the package.

"These are a great native delicacy, and I promise you a meal of them. The grasshoppers land in swarms at sunset, and are caught in nets and baskets just before they move at dawn, when the sun strikes them."

"What will they taste like?" Stuart asked, without much enthusiasm.

"Delicious—a cross between shrimp, whitebait and red caviar!"

A round-eyed youngster carrying a short spear curtsied, and made an abashed request.

"He wants to be a baboon guard, a coveted job," Matthews bellowed. "These little boys have the time of their lives guarding my plantations from the baboons."

He told the youngster to accompany us and carry our coats.

The bearers lined up and a head boy, amid much chatter, apportioned the baggage. One lad took my suitcase, typewriter and camping equipment. Another handled a heavy wireless-set. Sixty pound bundles, the maximum legal weight, are nothing to these hardy Bakiga. Without apparent ill effect, they will carry more than 100 pounds on their heads. They strode ahead.

We skidded 2,500 feet down a native path into the Ishasha Gorge, and up 2,600 feet on the other side. Matthews, who once paced professional long distance runners at Stamford Bridge, set an exhausting pace. I fixed my eyes on the taut leather brace across his back (where his spine was once fractured) and watched the sweat form on the yellow shirt beneath. My own shirt quickly soaked through, and the adjustable band of my topi swivelled around a slippery forehead. I respected the tough physique of this amazing man, punctured and patched from so many war wounds and hunting accidents.

Stuart plodded behind on his short legs. As we proceeded, Matthews delivered a "Fitzpatrick Travelogue."

"Here a man-eating lion carried off a woman and child—there a raiding party from the Congo raped and pillaged forty-five years ago."

We came to a path bordered with flowers and lawns, and rested outside a sand-and-cowdung structure at the top of an incline, Half-way House. A bearer who had trudged far ahead with our bottles of cold tea was recalled, grumbling. Matthews placated him, assuring him he was so young and strong he couldn't fail to win a third wife.

In such devious ways the diplomatic Matthews earns the confidence and gratitude of his people. The wife of one of his servants brewed beer for younger sweethearts while her husband was away. Matthews advised the agitated husband to appear indifferent, gave him money to buy three goats as an advance on the dowry for another wife, and counselled him to court the prettiest girl in the village. The flirtatious wife soon mended her ways.

An old lady in pink-spotted cotton dress knelt before us. Her late chieftain husband, Matthews said, used to dispense justice by the simple method of chopping off heads and hands. A blind ancient squatting near her sensed there were also strangers present, and asked Matthews who they were. I

replied "Jambo!" (which means "welcome") and he smiled with pleasure. Matthews teased a boy weeding the grass nearby, and raised a big laugh by telling him there were so many jiggers in his feet he would get sacked. (The jigger flea is very common in Uganda. A female flea, it penetrates the skin, usually of the toes, making a black spot. As eggs develop in her abdomen, the spot becomes larger and a painful swelling occurs, which may become septic. Natives are adept at removing the flea.)

Again on our way, we crossed a frail log bridge.

"This has only just been repaired. An elephant walked across it!"

I congratulated him on the smoothly graded steps in the steep hard mud path.

"Not my doing; these are footprints stamped by elephants in the wet season. They like to shelter beneath the trees."

We strode along a lane sliced through high elephant grass, listened to the ratchet croak of white-tailed colubus monkeys. The pungent smell of a warthog hit our nostrils.

"We are now in elephant and buffalo country. Do you know what to do if we meet a buffalo?"

"Climb up a stalk of this elephant grass, I suppose." (There were no trees within half-a-mile.)

"Lie down, and stay absolutely still. And never shoot a buffalo if you are standing in the tracks of the herd. They will scatter, circle round and retrace their steps the way they came."

Three hours after leaving Amahingo we reached a wooden signpost, roughly lettered in black paint, confirming that we had reached the edge of Matthews' claim. A little further on, our host left Stuart and me in an old camp of thatched mud huts on top of Musolero Hill, 7,000 feet above sea level, while he and the bearers crossed a deep valley to his new camp on Rutoma Hill.

Exhausted, Stuart and I stared across at Matthews' white-washed house and terraced plantations a quarter-of-a-mile away. Uneasily, we realized that several times daily we would have to commute between the two summits, following a narrow and slippery track.

Stuart's boy set up a tin bath in a cobwebby alcove inside our hut. We bathed by the dim light of a kerosene lamp.

Mindful of jiggers on the dirt floor, I stepped from the bath into my slippers.

We crossed to the other hill, and Matthews introduced us to a long-haired, scoop-nosed Afrikaner, his manager Cornelius Peters Bezuidenhout. Bezuidenhout, who had been forewarned I was a writer and suspected he might be publicized, was shy, wary, but subtly flattered. He tinkered with the dials of the radio set Matthews had brought him from Kampala, was bitterly disappointed when he discovered the battery had been left behind at Amahingo. He found a weak battery, attached it, and wandered disconsolately around seeking copper wire for an aerial.

"Sometimes a little ting is very big to a man. Music, dat is half my life."

Faint German music spluttered over the short-wave.

"Dey are still singing over dere, are dey?"

Matthews' dog, Boy, a huge beast half-Alsatian and half-mastiff, whimpered at the music.

"Animals love music. I used to take a gramophone into de forest. The monkeys would gather around and snakes lie out on the branches. You can call snakes with any kind of music."

Boy had taken an immediate liking to Stuart, who has an uncanny way with animals. Matthews' black tom-cat stared fascinated as Stuart, without moving his lips, mewed and purred, then leapt on Stuart's knee.

"A leopard will probably get Boy," confessed Matthews. "He's almost too brave a watch-dog. He can't tell a leopard from a hyena, and would attack either."

"I teach my pups to recognize a leopard," said Stuart, "by beating them with a leopard skin, particularly the claws."

I sat in an easy chair next a bookcase containing some of Matthews' small library, mostly travel books. I picked out a well-thumbed little volume and held it to the lamplight to read the title, Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book*.

Our host poured us a round of Bourbon whisky—another and yet another.

"This is roughing it," he apologized, as a servant in khaki kanzu bore in hot hors d'œuvres, followed by an excellent soup, cold fish risotto, roast beef and vegetables, a savoury, stewed passion-fruit and tree tomatoes. After despatching

a bottle of South African Drakenstein hock, we relaxed over coffee, Cyprien brandy and "Ruwenzori Rockets."

Bezuidenhuit reminisced about the good old days when he was a white hunter, explaining that mining was only a temporary stop-gap for him. He spoke of his beloved Eturi Forest, not so very far away in the Belgian Congo, which he first explored just after the first world war and where he found many fantastic things, including black hyaenas, pigmy elephants, rare and unclassified birds, the fabulous bongo and the elusive okapi. He wishes to revisit the primeval forest and ride the fleet okapi, a strange creature with a giraffe's head and zebra stripes on its hindquarters.

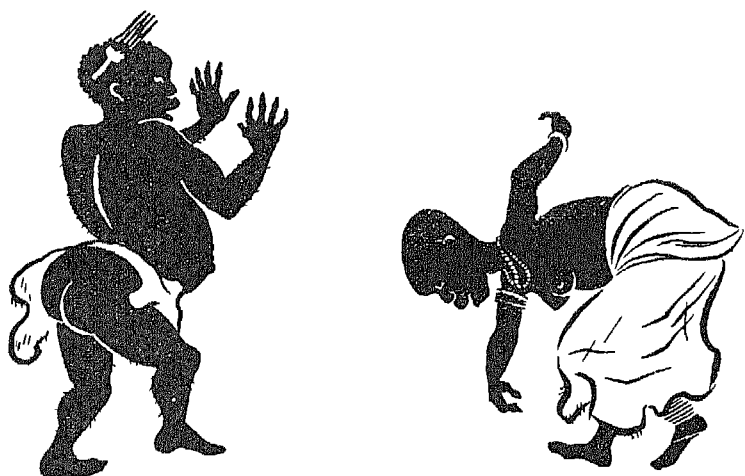
"It stands on one point, then jumps clear over the bushes so you cannot follow the spoor up."

Stuart talked about the dreaded and mysterious "garit," known as the Nandi bear, the terror of the brave Nandi tribe in Kenya.

"I had a boy who said he was attacked by one in the Eldoret Forest. It's the only animal they're afraid of, but if asked about it, they will superstitiously deny its existence."

No white man has seen this animal, and Stuart thinks it may be an expatriate gorilla, which would not be recognized by the natives in that locality.

A quick-moving native, swinging a kerosene lamp, led Stuart and me on the dark and perilous return to our hut. The night was filled with mysterious forest sounds. The racket of our crashing, stumbling passage must have been no less mystifying to jungle denizens. Reaching the hut, I turned to look at the thin red wafer of moon, banged my head against the low lintel, and donated a good old English expletive to the midnight cacophony of the African bush.



CHRISTMAS IN KIGEZI

WE woke to a breakfast of bacon and eggs, accompanied by a message from Matthews announcing that "real breakfast" was waiting across the way, which we politely refused. Stuart set off to view the alluvial workings two miles away, while I spent the early part of the morning writing a magazine article. When I followed Stuart later on, a small black "toto" (child) preceded me. Matthews had assigned him to shadow and chaperone me through the impenetrable jungle! Large, brilliant butterflies fluttered around us as we crossed a couple of streams and slushed over the logs paving the boggy track.

Bezuidenhuit guided me around the workings. A deep cut in a river bank exposed various strata—a top overburden, light grass and heavy grass and the yellow, decomposed laterite which was being shovelled into and washed down the sluices. The gold was contained at the bottom by a screen, little bars or riffles across the sluice box. The native labourers who watch this point are paid better than the others, as absolute honesty is essential.

Bezuidenhuit and I returned to the house, where he delved in a trunk, dug out worn photograph albums and envelopes of precious negatives, which he keeps to confound sceptics.

They varied in quality. The sun is so high on the Equator and the forests so dark that even professional photographers have difficulty in judging correct exposures. He displayed pictures of rhino, hippo, leopards, elephants, birds, fish, lions, furry pigmies and prop-legged native women. He thumbed a snapshot of a fuzzy baby gorilla: "Here is de best friend and most beautiful animal you could have."

"I wouldn't care to bump into its father," I protested.

"With de gorilla, you make danger for yourself. Stand still and there is none. He may come running at you, picking up a piece of tree or bamboo on the way. But then he drops the club, beats his chest, and makes a great noise. After a while, he gets surprised at your nerve, turns and goes. Never run. He will catch you with one hand and bite and tear you to pieces without using even quarter of his strength."

I hinted that such immobility might require great bravery.

"I respect bravery in a snake, a native or anything. But," the hunter confessed, "I am not a brave man. When it comes to saving one's own life, however, dat is another matter."

His father, a Boer farmer and hunter, taught young Bezuidenhuit to use a camera back in 1908. Next year he was blooded as a hunter. With eleven other children on horseback, his father sent him to show another Dutchman—President Theodore Roosevelt, then visiting Kenya with a museum and cinema expedition—how to catch a lion.

"We chased the lion till it lay down, then rode past to deceive it. Seven Nandis, who had agreed to kill the lion in front of the cinematograph camera, came dancing up with spears and shields. The lion became nervous, looked to see where he could jump out. He caught a native with his claws and pulled him under. Then the other Nandis speared the beast to death."

Self-styled on his visiting card as a "Professional Hunter," he has now been a white hunter for thirty-five years. In 1926, when he accompanied the then Duke and Duchess of York on safari in Kenya, the Duchess is said to have nicknamed him "Hoot."

"Where do elephants go when they die?" I asked Hoot the Hunter. He grimaced and shattered the famous myth.

"All over de place. I have found plenty of old, dying elephants, usually in swamps where they go to escape attack from the young elephants. Just as a sick human needs water, so an elephant goes to the river."

"What if I should meet an elephant on the walk back to Amahingo?" I asked

"At thirty yards an elephant will hear you and know from the sound exactly where you are, where he will break everything around him. But he has a favourite way of turning, either to the left or to the right, as you can tell from following his spoor. If he charges, walk towards him a few yards, step on his off side, and vanish!"

"But I am hardly likely to notice the spoor. . . ."

"The bull elephant, I have found, usually turns to the right. But a bull without tusks always turns to the left. He is the fiercest of all, a freak who grows to an enormous size.

"All this I learnt from the wild pigmies in the Eturi Forest. I was not a real hunter until I met them. The pigmy kills an elephant by creeping up behind him and jabbing an eight-foot spear under its stomach—here," Hoot patted his groin. "When an elephant turns, he bends his back legs and drops his hindquarters about four feet, so his own weight pushes the spear deep into the kidneys, a fatal spot.

"The pigmy is a wild animal. He either runs, or tries to kill you. One day in the Eturi Forest, I suspected a strange race lived ahead of me. I shot an elephant to see what kind of animal would eat it, and observed two pigmies, a man and a woman, slicing off big bundles of meat. I showed myself, but they fled.

"Later I came upon fifty of them at the elephant's carcass. I walked slowly towards them, smoking a cigarette. Again they fled, yet—my ears working hard—I heard no movement in the bush; the pigmy is a smart man, like a monkey."

Hoot killed another decoy elephant, eventually captured an old man pigmy and gave him salt, arrows and a special axe to chop honey off trees. The oldster clapped his hands, a native way of showing gratitude, and the confidence of the pigmies was won. They brought the hunter hundreds of ivory tusks found lying in the forest, and always told him when they saw a great elephant.

"The pigmy won't allow you to touch him. He jumps away,

because he thinks you are burning him. He is more closely related to the chimpanzee than he is to the actual native."

On our arrival at the camp, Matthews had sent out runners to invite the Batwa pigmies from the high forest ridges to come and dance in my honour—for cents.

"Who are the Batwa who are dancing to-morrow?" I asked Hoot.

"Dese are half-pigmies. About sixty years ago the natives went into the forest to collect rubber and caught some pigmy men. They needed pigmy help to penetrate deep into the forest."

To ensure this, the natives gave the little men peasant wives. In return the pigmies were bound to provide their fathers-in-law with meat and honey, and thus became their servants and the forefathers of the Batwa tribe, of which perhaps a hundred live tax-free in the Kigezi district.

"Dey are better with their spears than the real pigmies, and dey also use bows and arrows to shoot monkeys, pigs, leopards and all sorts of buck. One day I was walking in the forest with some Batwa when they saw four giant hogs. They spread out and put a net around them, which was better technique than the real pigmy, who stalks animals. They are cruel and will kill off anything. Women are their carriers. But the natives like them, because they've got a lot of jokes in them. . . ."

Murmuring "the Eturi Forest, that's heaven on earth," Hoot the Hunter nostalgically reverted to his favourite theme. He wants to produce a documentary film on the Eturi which, he promises, will "startle the world."

I sat next to Matthews before a table stacked with notes and coins. This was monthly pay-day. Mining labourers from the workings squatted before us. Fascinated porters, gardeners and house-boys and their wives stood beyond to watch the pay-off, free if they wished to comment on suspected injustices and irregularities. Hoot, sitting on our right, commented on their fascinated stare.

"It's surprising how money mesmerizes people. It's one ting dat doesn't mesmerize me. I want only enough money for my needs. If I get more, I give it away."

Matthews employs altogether about 140 natives, pays them

on piece-work. As a head boy called their names, the workers stood sheepishly and submitted their task cards. A muruca chief waited nearby to spoil their Christmas by collecting some of their money for hut tax.

"To show you how the system works, I'm giving some of them a bit lower to-day," Matthews told me, reading out the pay assessments. "No one knows yet what he's getting. Now watch the bomb burst!"

Uneven clapping and murmurs of disapproval. A tall boy with teeth filed like an ivory comb ("So he can spit better through them") rose, and protested his pay was inadequate. His co-workers clamoured.

"They're all giving witness he's a good worker, except that on pick and shovel he's no damn good. But he's not a bad lad."

And Matthews raised his amount. Another indignant worker complained, but lacked neighbourly support.

"He's one of the least willing. His pay stays cut."

To the protests of another, Matthews admitted: "He's a good boy when fit; and because he works the screen, he wins hands down."

A sack of coloured shirts and shorts was dumped at Hoot's feet. Matthews had bought these in Kampala to sell at cost price, so the Indian traders would not rob his workers.

Hoot, a reluctant barterer, grumbled: "I used to run a big store once and swore I'd never touch it again. Now look what I'm handing out!" The natives crowded around to examine the goods, feel the fabric with their pink-lined fingers and hang the garments before them to test fit. While Matthews was busy cussing a head boy ("There's a fellow trying a twist on here; eighteen pounds of flour missing. . ."), Hoot sold two pairs of white shorts for five shillings each. Matthews, too late, discovered they cost him seven shillings, and reclaimed them from the indignant purchasers.

"Now they'll think I'm trying to make a profit out of them," growled the little prospector at his flummoxed assistant.

That evening the baboon guards, their day's work done, gathered for wages, clutching crumpled pink tickets in small black fists. The children shivered in the cool night air. The lamp softly high-lighted cheekbones and round, naked stomachs. They whispered excitedly. Large eyes stared



Man of the Bakiga tribe, Western Uganda
(Matthews' head-boy).

intently at the table. Matthews joked with each toto and doled out coins. Dropping their wages into wicker bags around their necks, the young warriors faded into the darkness of the valley.

On December 23rd, the date set by Matthews for the dance contest between the pigmies and the local Bakiga, the celebrants started arriving outside our hut on Musolero Hill soon after breakfast. Matthews, Stuart, Hoot and I sat on camp-chairs facing the flat, grassy stage. Sammy, who had arrived the night before, recovered and none the worse for his gruelling walk, wandered festooned with cameras among the natives and machine-gunned them from all angles with a small ciné camera. I was armed with pencils, brushes, drawing pads, water-colours and a glass of water to wash my brushes in. A tray of tea was brought, and when singing started spontaneously among the Bakiga men I absent-mindedly rinsed a brush in Hoot's tea-cup.

Prompting coy looks from the younger girls, the men sang about a girl in the family-way. The women wore white and blue bead-strings, brass bracelets and thick coils of fine wire around their ankles. Some had safety-pins dangling on wire between their breasts. Circular bands had been shaved in their astrakhan curls, like the rings on a cricket cap.

New arrivals greeted their friends and relatives in a variety of ways. Social equals clasped hands, members of the same clan grasped each other high on the forearm and close relatives placed hands on each others' shoulders and rubbed cheeks.

Sammy filmed a Madonna-faced girl who suckled a twin at each breast. I sketched one of Matthews' head boys, with the broad forehead, well-spaced eyes and strong arched chest so typical of the independent Bakiga. He posed solemnly in a new shirt, a sign of caste amongst the unsophisticated hill-people.

The natives grouped into two rival



clans, the Musolero and the Kitawira, and the Musolero started a lilting song about a wilful maiden. Matthews translated as the menfolk sang:

We warned you, but you wouldn't listen.
 We warned you, but you wouldn't listen.
 We told you
 When you went to the water—
 Speak not to this young man.
 But wilful heart must have its way,
 Headstrong lass must have her way.

The women archly responded:

Who is the man who has wrecked your life?
 Girls won't tell.

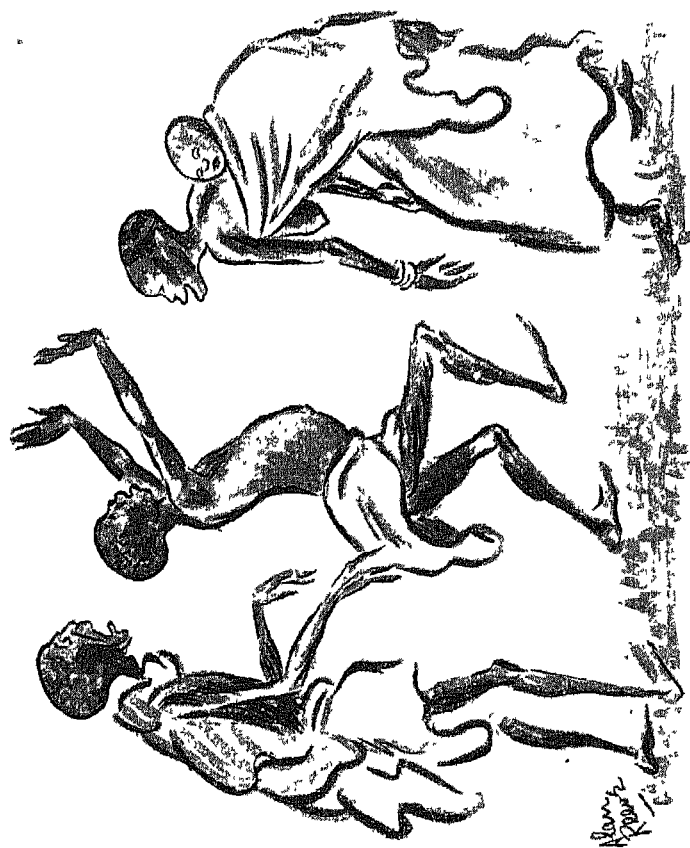
Matthews, who intends to register some of these songs on a wire recorder, quoted a working song chanted by his labourers as they wield their picks:

Hit hard
 Seasoned workers.
 Down below are girls with breasts like hot coals.
 Strike hard,
 Strike hard,
 Down below are fine fat girls, etc., etc.

A scraggy peasant rose to lead the Musolero people in a song about a warrior going into battle. Women stopped suckling their naked babies and added shrill notes, until the song became a form of madrigal. They bent forward and slapped their knees to the rhythm—"ick-a-waa, ick-a-waa,"—while their infants, now cradled in skins slung behind them, jogged and bumped, slept or squalled.

A party of thirty Batwa pigmies had by now straggled to the top of the hill. They waited at one side, under a black wattle tree. Hoot explained that in the eyes of some native women, the pigmy is handsome, intelligent and witty.

"What is the *Batwa* standard of feminine beauty?" I inquired, scanning our hairy and top-heavy visitors, none of them taller



"The men hopped, stamped, pushed before them with taut arms and flat palms."

than five feet. The flat noses, thick lips, protruding foreheads, small breasts and bandy legs of the women might charm a chimpanzee but certainly not a European.

"In particular, her way of talking, singing and dancing makes a girl attractive and expensive to buy as a wife."

Matthews pointed out that some natives call the pigmies "brutes" and won't sit, eat or drink with them. He instanced a Bakiga peasant who wanted to marry a pigmy woman. When his neighbours heard of this, they hauled him before the gombolola chief and accused him of wanting to evade hut-tax, which pigmies don't pay. But he swore he would marry the pigmy, and did. Now he pays his tax, is happily married and has four children.

The sturdy Kitawwira started to dance. The men hopped, stamped, pushed before them with taut arms and flat palms. To the thumping of a punctured drum they faced a slim line of women and pranced backwards and forwards. Their goat-skin garments flapped like wet laundry on a clothes line.

But the Batwa were not discouraged. The tiny women formed a semi-circle and between their bare feet placed empty oval wicker pots, which amplified the sound of their thigh-slapping. A pigmy with a long-pronged wooden comb in his hair strummed a string instrument, the *nanga*, and another plucked the strings of a small box harp with his thumbs. Both feet off the ground, the dwarfs jumped as if on hot coals, springing from the sinuous leg muscles which can take them up trees faster than a cat.

The three groups of dancers shook the hill-top. Dance after dance puffed lamely to an end, then quickly resumed lest longer-winded performers should catch our eyes, ears and favour. The *totos* leapt as high as their parents, while the very old men scolded and goaded the more virile to further efforts. The pigmies displayed the greater stamina and versatility. Two squat fighting cocks, yelling insults, crouched before each other and stabbed the air with short spears. A pigmy girl, her pate shaved, greased and glistening, proved beyond doubt to be the star performer. She peeled a dirty banana-yellow garment down to her hips and, bangles and beads rattling, gave us a graceful exhibition of curvetting, swaying and contorting that would make her fortune at Blackpool.

Matthews paid the star two shillings. To the other exhausted competitors, he doled out more backshish from a bulging bag—cents to the children, shillings to the adults.

After an excellent Christmas Eve dinner, Stuart, Samuels, Bezuidenhout, Matthews and I sat around the table chewing the cud and drinking brandy, gin, rye and hock. Stuart, who wears the taciturn expression of a Monte Carlo croupier, set the tone of the first part of the evening by observing that the kerosene lamp leaned.

"Note that all lamps handled by natives develop a lean. I can tell we are below the Equator because that lamp points South."

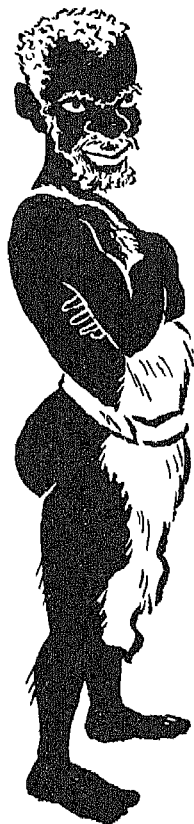
Sammy, twinkling at me, dryly, recalled two colleagues who once came hunting with him, to write a book about it. In the evening, while one typed busily away on an upturned packing-case, the other walked outside—and spotted a lion about to leap at him. He quickly lay down and the lion jumped clear over him into the hut. With great presence of mind, he scrambled to his feet and slammed the door shut, shouting to his mate: "*You skin him—I'll do the next one!*"

Hoot's contribution on lions was less frivolous.

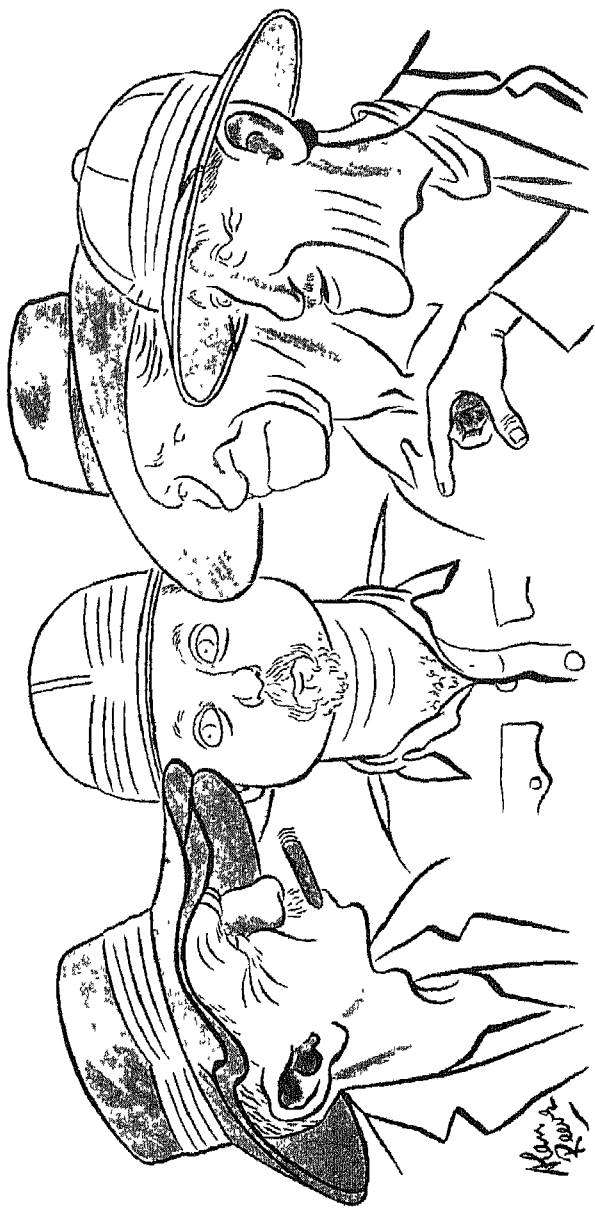
"The museums will not agree there are two kinds of African lion, but we Dutch hunters know. Dere is a small lion with a yellow mane found on the plains, and a big black-maned lion with a blueish body near the mountain

snow-lines. If you look at dis animal, it is like a tree-stump which has been burnt out."

Sammy admitted he had shot only four or five lions. He considers the soft-skinned lion almost too easy. He once captured one and sent it to the Edinburgh Zoo.



VINTU, AN OLD
PIGMY



At Matthews' camp: Matthews, Stuart, Bezuidenhout and Samuels

The conversation between the bush-lovers momentarily centred on the legend that all hyaenas are hermaphrodites, then switched to cannibalism, and whether man still eats man. I retailed one of Dr. Sharp's stories about a secret cannibal society discovered about three years ago by the Belgian officials in Ruanda-Urundi.

A woman complained that the society was going to eat her child, and a local chief was found among the culprits. People who annoyed the society were eaten, and women were only trusted as members and allowed to join if they ate their own children.

"I once shot an elephant for the Baamba people," Matthews reminisced. "When I was parcelling it out, an awful looking old man, covered with scales like the belly of a snake, hovered around the outskirts of the crowd and was beaten off by the natives. They told me he had eaten his grandfather, and to chew up a blood relative was considered very bad form. His skin disease may have been the result.

"Then there is another true story, of UBanga, the wife of a fighting warrior. Only warriors are allowed to eat the breastbone of an ox, but UBanga said 'It is *I* who bear the warriors,' and ate the forbidden delicacy. The witch-doctors drove her mad and she lived in a cave. Sometimes she inveigled a passing native inside to warm himself at her fire. Waiting till her guest dozed, she would thrust his hands into the flames and ravenously gnaw the burnt flesh.

"Her relatives took pity on the lonely UBanga and, during a wedding feast, sent her much meat. She ate it all and died of a surfeit."

All Uganda conversations lead sooner or later to Big Brother Kenya. The prospectors discussed some of the shortcomings of the Crown Colony, the political impotence of Kenya taxpayers "in their own country" and other controversial topics I was to hear more about when I reached Nairobi. The low bank price of gold (as against the black-market prices paid in Cairo and the high free price of gold in India) caused further grumbles before the evening ripened into folklore. Matthews decanted a legend heard from the Watendi people on the Tanganyika side of Lake Victoria.

"They say the sun was once a kindly person who shone all the time. The natives just scattered their seeds and in six

weeks there were crops. But there came a great hunter who shot everything on earth. Then, more ambitious, he shot at the sun. There was a far, faint cry, and he shot again. The sun slowly withdrew, and drops of blood fell. The people caught them in bowls—and this was copper. After that the sun only shone for half a day.

"They also say the sun is put to bed every night by people with tails, who live on the other side."

We talked until dawn. Matthews and I strolled outside into the chilly air. Layers upon layers of hills rose like cardboard cut-outs from the cool mists. The King of Kigezi pointed south-west.

"When I first came here, I heard that yonder lived Ndoyka, a snake-god dwelling in a high tower near a water-fall. I was told he was a vegetarian who left a track as wide as a barrel and ate the shadows of men.

"I set out to prospect for gold in the area, but the frightened porters refused to leave until the old men shamed them by carrying the loads. I discovered a 200-foot water-fall, but no Ndoyka. In the hills above I found twenty-two ounces of gold. I'm sure there's a devil of a lot of gold about, and I'm still searching the place.

"The forest was so dense that inside it I heard nothing, not even birds. To dry my shirt, the boys had to chase the sunlight filtering through the branches."

The morning of my return trek to Kabale the bountiful King of Kigezi saw me on my way for a quarter-of-a-mile. I protested that this was an unnecessary courtesy over such rough country. But he explained that Bakiga etiquette demanded such a farewell to departing guests. Otherwise, the natives would think me an unwelcome visitor, and I would lose caste.

I thanked him warmly for a remarkable Christmas, and plodded after the bearers to Amahingo. Hoot had advised me, should I meet buffalo, to run into the high elephant grass and clasp the stalks around me like a sheaf of corn; but although I cocked my ears passing through the danger area, I heard neither crashes nor snorts, only an occasional rustle in the grass, probably snakes.

When in Kabale, I had ordered an Indian taxi to collect

me at the End of the Road, so by evening I was back at the White Horse Inn. A hang-over of stodgy Christmas guests in dinner jackets, including a "life of the party" whose face melted like red sealing wax while he danced, filled the hotel. Two guests were deaf, but found no difficulty in hearing me speak; I still talked in fortissimo after my week with Matthews and Samuels.

Next day I returned Marsh's camping kit, and he put me on the front seat of the promised lorry, hired from an Indian contractor to transport native troops to Kampala. Some of the askaris, Marsh told me, had spent more of the war in detention than out; I might have rowdy companions on the journey.

As the lorry accelerated out of Kabale, the askaris, an untidy mob wearing a medley of khaki greatcoats, wide-brimmed hats, shorts, puttees and handkerchiefs around their heads, made the noise that all troops are known to make when in transit. Between me and the driver (a handsome half-caste in green pork-pie hat) sat Mr. Poojara, an elderly Indian civil servant in grubby white suit. He pumped me with personal questions, told me he was pleased to have company on the journey and looked forward to the "delightful conversations" sure to result. Having left six hours behind schedule, we roared along the shorter road to Mbarara at a pace that rattled my bones against the wooden seat in a staccato "Danse Macabre." We stopped for an hour at an Indian factor's in Mbarara, drinking cups of sweet tea and dunking biscuits. Mr. Poojara removed his shoes and rubbed his bare feet.

Late in the evening, four miles out of Mbarara, we came upon two cars drawn up in the centre of the road. The glare of their headlights revealed a twisted bicycle. A tall, stout man in knee-deep shorts stopped our lorry and introduced himself as Provincial Police Superintendent Le Geyt. He had just been called to the scene of the accident. Fifteen yards from the bike, and equally twisted, lay the corpse of a native cyclist. The wretched victim's skull had been emptied over the road.

Le Geyt borrowed a pencil from me, a torch from our driver, drew a diagram of the accident on the back of a cigarette packet, paced out distances and interrogated an agitated Greek motorist who said he was driving to Mbarara, keeping

to the left, when coming towards him on the wrong side he saw the cyclist—too late.

Mr. Poojara walked over to peer curiously at the body, as did an askari. The askari was instantly and violently sick.

A doctor summoned by Le Geyt drew up in another car.

"Hullo, Jock," greeted the superintendent. "It's nice of you to turn out. I'd have been back with him by now, but you see it's rather useless. He was a bit warm when I came."

"No point at all," agreed the doctor, looking at the body. He stooped and prodded a clot of brain with a finger, which he then wiped on the seat of his white shorts. "That's brain—quite clearly, that's brain."

"There's some more over here," called out the helpful Mr. Poojara.

The doctor drove off, and Le Geyt ordered the askaris out of the lorry. They refused to move. He shouted at them, and they jumped down, grumbling and blinking in the light of the torch, and straggled in single file back towards Mbarara. Le Geyt and I lifted the cyclist into the back of the truck, which then drove back to the township. Mr. Poojara and I returned in the superintendent's car, followed by the shaken Greek.

Having unloaded the corpse at the morgue, we collected the disgruntled askaris. But they superstitiously refused to continue their journey at night in a truck which had held a dead man, and made for a nearby camp to spend the night. Exasperated, the superintendent and I called at the home of the military affairs officer, John Roper.

Although now after midnight, Roper and his wife were not yet in bed. They had just arrived from Kampala in an ailing car which broke down every few miles. During one halt, a large lion had loomed out of the darkness and stared through the car windows before leaping into the bushes.

Le Geyt left me with the tired couple, who kindly revived me with a supper of three boiled duck eggs. I told Roper about my forthcoming flying-boat connection and, in the small hours of the morning, he miraculously procured a new lorry and driver. Into this the outraged askaris, their excuse foiled, were bundled, and Mr. Poojara and I started again for Kampala in driving rain—my first rain since leaving England.

PORT BELL TO MOMBASA

AT this stage of my route I was warned to expect uncomfortable seats on crowded through flying-boats, their pre-war complement of fifteen passengers increased by another fourteen, most of them packed on to forms installed along one side. The best the purser of the "Cambria" could do for me was a seat on the span bench, under the wing span in the third compartment forward and next a basket full of baby and rattle. The parents sat opposite, the cabin smelt of baby and talcum. Luckily, amidships is the steadiest part of an aircraft

We followed the heavily-wooded indentations of Lake Victoria, then flew east over water, our right float sliding along the blurred horizon. Above land again, goose-pimpled with pointed red ant-hills, like a giant nutmeg grater, I crossed the Equator for the third time in Africa. We passed toadstool huts grouped inside dense hedges, and made for the iron roofs and silver oil tanks of Kisumu, Kenya, where we spent the night at a pleasant hotel in which the receptionist smiled!

"You won't see anything much to-day except Kilimanjaro," said the captain of the "Cambria," a friendly B.O.A.C. old-timer in khaki shorts, as we progressed south-east next morning, on the 137-mile lap to Mombasa. A flying-boat addict, he started "in the racket" with Imperial Airways. "Even to-day, these are the Queen Marys of the air."

Convinced that passengers get more comfort, interest and fun from the slower flying-boat travel, he concludes that "only a few travellers are in such a hell of a hurry they can't be amused."

I complained about the early rising hours leaving overnight stops.

"In the freshness of the morning," he answered, "air travel is more delightful than in the afternoon heat. The storms come up then and it's not so smooth."

We rose to 10,000 feet, over forested highlands top-dressed with fluffy cloud. The Captain pointed down to the Kenya tea properties, strips and squares of thick brown fur-felt laid on the hills. The pale grey dome of Mt. Kenya appeared on our left and somewhere in between lay Nairobi. Further on, black cloud shadows blotched leopard spots on the tawny earth, burnt and charred by drought. The khaki hills were wrinkled like fingers immersed for days in water—but where was

the water? The parched earth, as if dropped from the aircraft, split into huge yellow cracks.

On a table of cloud stood the snow hump of mighty 19,320 feet Mt. Kilimanjaro, its top neatly sliced off by a sharp wafer of pale pink cloud. And now civilization—a curving railway line, roads, roofs, a winding river and many palms. A white line of breakers scraped the middle-distance ahead, and the tropical island of Mombasa appeared, tied to the Kenya mainland by an umbilical causeway.



KENYA ARTIFICIALIZA- TION

MY schedule provided three days in Mombasa for one purpose—to write overdue travel articles on Uganda commissioned by London editors, after which I planned to visit inland Nairobi. So, lest the colourful memories of Uganda pale in a newer gaudiness, I tried to close mind and eyes to this picturesque coastal town, and for a while kept to my hotel to write about Uganda. But I could not close my pores to the heat.

And my eyes clicked wide open when, in the lounge, I saw a large number of young *white* females, smartly dressed in print frocks and looking (how do they manage it?) frigid in the sultry off-season. Were these the alleged loose ladies of Kenya? I recollected tales about the alleged amorality of Kenya women ("Some blame it on the heat, others on the height of the Kenya Highlands," said a fellow in Khartoum), and looked again. But then a comment about Kenya settlers—was it Julian Huxley's—came back to me, "suburbia unrestrained." To the credit of the women's virtue and the discredit of the legend about them, I found no reason in the Crown Colony to dispute the apt phrase.

In the dining-room still decorated with Christmas streamers, the black waiters, willing but confused, served ash-trays,

butter-knives, tea spoons and glasses tardily, or in one deluge. The non-Kiswahili-speaking guest orders food from the menu by numbers. The room partitions are flimsy and quiet has been sacrificed for fresh air: the monsoon breeze blows through glassless bedroom windows, shuttered doors and along the corridors, which are placarded with notices reminding guests that silence must be maintained between noon and 4 p.m. (the siesta) and 10 p.m. till 9 a.m. The hotel manager discussed the difficulties of his trade in a town only just de-requisitioned by the Services, the scarcity of equipment and replacements, and the effect of heat on his memory. When I attempted to type my urgent articles during forbidden hours, he asked me to observe the rule of the hotel. My memories, alas, of a first-rate hotel in Mombasa are frustrate.

A chance acquaintance brightened the dullness of a lonely New Year's Eve. I had walked through the darkened main street in search of public celebrations. But the only apparent promiscuity was advertised in hoarse whispers from the shadows—"want a young girl, sah?"—and I returned to an empty bar. . . . There a white hunter joined me.

At least, he was once a white hunter. Now he trades overseas in crocodile, snake and python skins for shoes, slippers and ladies handbags, in leopard skins for coats, in ivory and other products of Kenya's wild life.

"There's a great demand for skins and hides in the United States, at very high prices," said the hunter. "And the price of ivory remains almost as high as in palmy days."

I told him of my Uganda Christmas with Hoot the Hunter; like Hoot, he grew sentimental about the old days, when he guided rich Americans around East Africa.

White hunting demands more than marksmanship and bushcraft, now the camera is replacing the gun. It also needs showmanship. White hunters often deliberately "bush" their clients to give them a thrill and something to talk about when they return home. Only too often they shoot the dead "trophies" that feature in sportsmen's snapshots. Americans have visited Kenya on hunting safaris without learning to shoot beforehand. But they are said to be generous patrons and Kenya white hunters want them back.

My acquaintance has a warm spot in his heart for the

"poor old soft-skinned lion," who is by no means the ferocious beast he's made out to be.

"There's very little danger from him, unless a maneater. He has a great sense of pride and won't run away if observed. He'll watch you out of the corner of his eye; but just keep on walking and, when he thinks he's out of observation, the old lion'll put his belly to the ground and slink off."

Recently three unhappy lions, frightened by native bush-fires on the mainland, retreated along the causeway to Mombasa. Bewildered by the ensuing shrieks and consternation, they killed a couple of natives before being shot by the station-master's son.

"The most dangerous snake in Africa," continued the hunter, "is the black mamba. It moves extremely fast and its bite kills in forty seconds. But few people die from snake bite here, unlike India, where snakes hang more around human habitation. The lazy puff-adder, which is short and thick as your wrist, likes to lie on cool concrete and sometimes people walking down steps at night tread on it and are bitten."

My friend, like Hoot, said gorillas put on an act, but are not as dangerous as reputed. He repeated a story I often heard in Africa, that gorillas kidnap and rape native women. (One such case quoted me in Uganda was of an abducted woman who returned to her village pregnant, but died before confounding biological science).

"What a pity you haven't visited the Congo," added the hunter. "You'd be astounded by the Eturi Forest. And the Belgians have no soppy Colonial Office principles about the democratic future of the native. They use an iron hand—which is why the natives respected the Germans in Tanganyika—and are exploiting one of the richest countries in the world with ruthless efficiency."

"You think you get the best results from natives by beating them?" I asked.

"The primitive native is absolutely honest and loyal. When he lies, it is usually to please or give an answer he imagines the *buona* (master) wishes to hear. He can't stand the sort of nagging "*memsahibs*" give him, and would rather be beaten when proved wrong. This is the best form of discipline, and he bears no grudge."

But, confessed the hunter, such treatment is no longer

effective with detribalized natives living in towns. Nor will the askari, back from the war, tolerate being whipped by the colonial white

Before leaving Mombasa for Nairobi, I saw a native beaten-up, my only experience in Africa of this waning technique. A drunk boy had caused trouble in his master's kitchen and was brought before him by a native policeman wielding a baton. The master then set upon the servant with all his strength, slapped and biffed him on head and face. The black man did not retaliate, but protested shrilly and with each expostulation was hit again and again, until the policeman dragged him away.

Employment exchanges have been started for Kenya natives to deal with a social problem that, at the time of my visit, was not yet resolved, the rehabilitation of 100,000 discharged askaris (230,000 altogether in East Africa).

"The African soldier wants to go home and sit on his behind as long as his money lasts," said a manpower official in Nairobi. "In six months, perhaps a year, he may want work; but his army training has been too specialized for civilian purposes. We are studying the demands of potential employers; for instance, there appears to be a need for electrical welders. To get a fair day's work from the African for a fair day's wage, he must be retrained on a wider basis."

He drily added: "The European must be re-educated as well."

So the Government, having discharged and dispersed the askari, plans to find him a job and, if necessary, train him for it when he needs employment.

The demobbed askari, the semi-educated and the independent detribalized town native, the African suffering from growing pains in his transition from the unsophisticated to the "civilized," is eyed by settlers less sympathetically than "nature's own gentleman," whom they say they respect.

"The native must be treated with courtesy and consideration," said a settler. "Even the askari will not be a problem if he is handled right. Look him straight in the eye; if he is difficult, resentful or belligerent, just a touch on the shoulder does the trick.

"And never pay the native too much. I once gave an old

servant a rise he hadn't asked for. He brooded for weeks, then came to me and said 'Buona, I'm the same man I was when you paid me less; so you've been underpaying me all these years.' Pay the natives more when they demand it, but not before."

"If you're generous to the natives, they think you're a sucker and lose respect," said another settler. He condemned the Colonial Office as incompetent and despotic, and for refusing to give settlers administrative responsibility and self-government.

"The Colonial Office is sold on a phoney conception of the native and his development. The native brain is not developed to the extent of ours. The limited African vocabulary reveals limited ideas." He hinted darkly that doctors specially sent to Africa to examine the brain of the native were withdrawn by the government before they were able to advertise some such verdict.

"Surely the wood-carving of some African tribes proves considerable originality?" I queried.

"Their art is representational and imitative," the settler answered.

The discussion expanded along lines that revealed to me the great cleavage between the 25,000 settlers, business and professional men, and others, who have made Kenya their home, and the 4,000 "pro-native" Colonial officials ("the bowler hat and pince-nez brigade") who administer the 3,600,000 Africans.

"The officials move around too much, often leaving a district just as they start to learn the language and comprehend local problems. Each official passes the buck to his successor. Cattle and goats raze the countryside, helping to create very serious erosion. The government should compel the natives to sell their poor stock, thus improving its quality and at the same time reducing a cause of erosion."

But this sort of legal compulsion would cause great unrest, maybe revolution. Native stock is their currency and capital. "Our money breeds," they say, arguing that cattle increase on their own, and very much faster than European money. Will the uneducated native ever be persuaded voluntarily to reduce his stock? If the settlers gain greater responsibility in administering Kenya, as they now demand, would they strive to educate the native when in the next breath they

condemn the sophisticated African as a "smart Alec"? Would a tiny white minority educate him in citizenship until he commands full franchise, and then outvotes them by 100 to 1?

Not only was I made aware of the cleavage between settler and official, but the settlers differ amongst themselves; and there appears to be little liaison between the settler, the business man, the missionary and the Indian.

The settlers dislike and fear Kenya's 60,000 Indians, or "Hindis." They accuse the Asiatic of not paying his taxes, having no stake or interest in the future of the country, exploiting the native, and sending his tax-evaded profits back to India. A colour bar, not as rigid as in South Africa, applies to both Indians and Africans; a hotel keeper told me not even the richest Indian merchant nor the most famous negro singer could stay at his hotel. His other guests would leave.

"The Kenya Indian is a very bad type and lives on the smell of an oiled rag," asserted a business man, at Nairobi's Muthaiga Club.

"If tax officials are too inefficient to catch the Indian on tax evasion, why condemn him?" I asked. "Why not go into trade and compete with him instead. Open up European chain and co-operative stores, and transfer your custom."

An ex-official agreed with me. "The settler has sold out to the Indian. While attacking him, he cringes to the Hindi for credit and a bottle of whisky at Christmas."

Thereupon the conversation developed into a heated local squabble—"it's the officials, not the settlers, who keep the Indians going"—and argument about the vices and virtues of specific Indians, officials and settlers.

Walking through the Muthaiga Club, a spacious country club a few miles outside Nairobi, is like flipping through the outmoded pictures in a *Bystander* of the 1930s. But the tweedy members themselves would be last to claim the club is typical of the Colony (what group is?) except perhaps in its hospitality to visitors.

In the club and elsewhere, without looking for or wanting controversy, I was drawn into political discussions. I insisted I had come to Kenya for a short time to write about two-legged and four-legged wild life, and that Kenya's political troubles, provocative and important as they are, were too complex a subject for a hurried visitor. And I couldn't draw

them, except in political cartoons! Show me an elephant, I asked, or a few black savages. Lead me to the strapping Masai, who cut the gizzards of their cattle daily, bleed them, sew them up, milk them and live on the resultant diet of blood-and-milk. But in Nairobi, as in Kampala, I had "bado kidogo" trouble, and some transport frustration.

Eventually, through the lively and helpful offices of the Electors' Union (for the settlers) and the Kenya Information Office I was delivered to game and native and, inevitably, to the doorsteps of settler and official.

In Nairobi, I sat at the press table in a corner of the hall housing the Kenya Legislative Council (the Leg-co). The Clerk of Court announced His Excellency the Acting Governor, a slim wan man with a lined face that looked incomplete without a monocle, who stepped to the dais and read the daily prayer. The thirty-seven members, including three Indians and two Africans, and three visitors at the roped-off end of the hall, sat down and the morning session opened with a row about the meaning of the phrase "end of hostilities," when the Government had promised to remove emergency wartime taxation, which still remained in force. A European Elected Member demanded its immediate cancellation, and another declared the Government's budget policy dishonest. But their Leader and others supported the Government. . . .

When the Leg-co adjourned for coffee, I spoke to a lady member, Mrs. Wilkins, her tanned head growing a wind-blown scrub of hair. "This country shouldn't be written about," she said. "It should be set to music."

"What kind of music?" I asked.

"Gilbert and Sullivan!"

"Or the Unfinished Symphony," suggested another member.

Monday night at Nairobi is as dreary as Sunday in a large New Zealand provincial town which, architecturally, Kenya's metropolis resembles: the motor markets, the brick and concrete office buildings, the sham Tudor façades, the clean tree-lined streets. Brown and black skins, and the silver dome and white minarets of a mosque, tint the picture a little. One Monday evening I explored the barren interiors of the big

hotels facing the main street, Toir's, the New Stanley, the Avenue, and talked to lonely pub-crawlers.

"The most inhospitable city in the world," groaned an Irish officer, stationed for the last six months at a military camp outside the city. "When I walk to town, I'm never given a lift. You're the first civilian I've spoken to. But *you'll* probably get a different impression as you're a writer, and will be entertained."

"My old acquaintances don't recognize me," complained an ex-military policeman, back home after three years in Europe and disgusted with the change in his friends. "The country was almost bankrupt in 1939, but now everyone's thoroughly spoilt. Girls go to the highest bidder. A bloody shame! What this country needs is a leader, like Winston Churchill or the Duke of Windsor. They both want jobs, too."

"The trouble with our future generation is they're spoilt by 'ayahs,' 'totos' and native servants from the word 'go,'" said a stocky man from the night-cart terminal. "Mind you, our boys can shoot magnificently, although they're no good on the range or at small-arms drill. We give 'em .22 rifles when they're babies."

"Too many two-twos and totos?" I observed. Poor sad forsaken pub-crawlers. I don't advise the visitor to feel Nairobi's pulse on a Monday night when, it is said, the citizens recuperate from Sunday hang-overs.

After ten weeks and some thousands of miles of African safari, during which holes expanded in my shoe soles and the seat of my slacks, I had seen no wild life except a crocodile's snout on the Malakal Nile and a wart-hog near Mbarara. I complained about my bad luck to Eric Sherbrooke Walker, an hotel proprietor visiting Nairobi.

"If you have an hour, I'll drive you outside the town," he kindly offered. "We might see some game in the reserve. It's not so plentiful since military camps were built around, but lions have killed sentries outside the camps and a leopard recently mauled a policeman in the centre of Nairobi."

About four miles outside Nairobi we slowly drove from the road across a stretch of plain prickling with whistling thorn bushes (the thorn spikes whistle shrilly in the wind), and

approached a group of Burchell's zebra. Although within forty yards, they continued grazing nonchalantly and we had a clear view of the broad stripes on their fat rumps. Nearby stood a number of Thomson's gazelles, lovely brown creatures, with white bellies. We walked towards half-a-dozen buffalo, until Walker relieved my tension by saying they were Gnus, hump-backed animals about the size of cows. More timid were the incongruous, long-necked, tapering-flanked Kongoni, which bounded away. We saw no lions.

In five minutes we were back in the neon-lit artificivilization of Nairobi, largest and most westernized city on my route from Cairo to Durban!

Walker, who runs the Outspan Hotel at Nyeri, 100 miles north of Nairobi, invited me to stay with him. He also owns the oddest hotel in the world, which sits in the branches of a wild fig tree in an adjacent forest. "Treetops" Hotel, with its high overhead, caters for the tourist who prefers shooting wild animals with a camera. For £10 a day he can spy on the most dangerous beast in the jungle, the rhinoceros. If he is lucky, Walker explained, he may see elephant, buffalo, leopards and hyaenas eating salt scattered over a wallow nearby.

Walker pays the Kenya Forestry Commission five shillings rent every month for the tree, and told me "All charges are remitted if rhino or elephant don't come within spitting distance." Thirty yards is considered a fair spit.

I promised to stay with him and also sit up the tree for a night after a safari to Kitui, where I was scheduled to stay with a District Commissioner.



KITUI PUB

WHEREAS the District Commissioner at Kigezi in Uganda admits he has a peach of a job on a pleasant station, and a fine type of native to administer, I was forewarned that neither Kenya's drought and famine-ridden district of Kitui nor the local

Wakamba tribesmen would provide such congenial writing material. An official telegram to the Kitui District Commissioner advised him of my impending visit and, with a bottle of whisky in my suitcase to compensate for the sudden imposition, I took a taxi to Kitui township, about 125 miles west of Nairobi.

Not far from Nairobi the taxi, a powerful 1939 Chrysler with only 53,000 miles to the detriment of its chassis, left the smooth tarmac and quivered over the ridges of a red murram road. I suppose, as native drivers go, my chauffeur went slowly and carefully. A natty negro, wearing a khaki topi with a feather in it, he told me he once drove a lorry for a Public Works road-gang on this road, and volunteered scenic information in imperfect English. His name, I roughly gathered, was Teita Hail, and he belongs to that class least loved by the settler, the semi-educated native who "shows off." He proudly flourished an English Grammar, and scooped his black nose into it at every halt.

"Ooo, look," he squealed, as we reached a capsized military lorry that had taken a corner too quickly for the health of its

inmates. Remembering the unfortunate Uganda cyclist, I clambered out to collect another cadaver. But a dazed native driver sitting under the dripping petrol tank said his six askari passengers were "broken and taken to hospital"

Seventy miles on our way, we overlooked a great plain budding hills of raw rock. "All over nobody here for thirty mills," cried Teita, waving both hands as we accelerated down into the unknown. "Hurrf, hurrf," he mimicked. "Dere are lion here at night." A tiny dik-dik hopped across the road ahead. "Ooo, very sweet" We encountered a herd of gawky giraffes, which pranced to each side of the road and ambled stupidly along with us. Our wheels crossed, but did not crush, a long silver snake; Teita reversed the car to inspect the reptile which, still very alive, raised its cobra head and spat at us. I warned Teita not to attack snakes with motor-cars. They could whirl around the axle and glide up through the floorboards to bite him. "Ooo!"

Nearing Kitui township, my driver asked leave to pay a social call on a "rich friend" shopkeeper. The friend away, Teita shook hands over the counter with his wife, a light-skinned Somali girl in print sari. "My rich friend has two girls even younger and offer me one," bragged the gallant Teita. "But I already married. I Christian!" Now in cultivated country, we passed many cattle driven by ragged herdsmen. "Wakamba very rich man; one-two hundred cattle for one man make ten wife."

A giant puce bougainvillaea and a Union Jack sagging from a flag-pole marked the entrance to Kitui administration headquarters. I walked into an office and was welcomed crisply by a tall fair young man. "My name's David Christie-Miller. I'm Assistant District Commissioner; the D.C.'s away on leave." A bachelor and a Cheshireman, Miller came to Africa in 1939 after taking a Colonial Office course at Oxford. He is charged with the unselfish idealism typical of younger Colonial civil servants. "You get landed in some awful dumps," he said, "but this one isn't bad." Like his Kigezi colleague, he led me forthwith on a grand tour of official activities.

White people may not settle in the Kitui reservation, which is about the size of Wales. A few of the local Wakamba are rich farmers, but on the whole they are a poor people. Christie-

Miller showed me a significant ceremony, the distribution of famine food. Several hundred natives were assembled in the shade of mango trees before a disused cotton ginnery ("built by a rich Indian who thought he was getting the Wakamba to grow cotton"). A mean and ugly tribe shrivelled by many years of chronic famine, the men drape themselves in filthy blankets, the women in black cotton robes. Twelve-bore cartridge shells and aluminium spikes pierce the women's ear-lobes. Some of them carry prosaic black umbrellas.

"Posho (maize meal) deliveries are irregular, and the people disgruntled," disclosed Miller. An Indian contractor transports the famine meal from the Kavirondo.

In the crowd I noticed an African albino, toothy, pink-skinned, yellow eye-browed. His head shook with nervousness, and I looked away. The natives scrambled for their posho, scooped from a sack by an Indian clerk and poured into a calabash held by the head of each family. A demobbed askari shoved forward and clamoured for an extra dole. "The askaris may be a problem here," said Miller. "They claim preferential treatment because they went to war."

We drove in Miller's truck to the government brick factory, worked by convicts. Miller indicated a tall native puddling bricks, his blanket spattered with mud. "That fellow has excellent morale value, because he makes the others laugh." I heard the eerie wail of a hyaena. Miller's Alsatian bitch, Diana, who was following us, whimpered. The convicts shrieked with laughter; the tall native, hand cupping mouth, was giving a realistic imitation of a dog fighting a hyaena.

"He's a professional animal imitator and mimics dogs outside huts at night. The owner thinks he's safe because his cur is on guard, then his goats are pinched. Every time there's such a robbery, this poor bloke is one of the first to be shoved in quod."

In the township, a scramble of shoddy structures with a mixed population of about a thousand Wakamba, Swahilis, Arabs, Indians and coastal natives, Miller talked to an aged Indian furniture-maker with pencil stuck in his turban. From the back of the truck Diana stared nervously at the Indian's tame monkey, gibbering at her from under an upturned cart. We inspected the primary school, only one in the district. High maize, planted by pupils, sprouted in front of the brick

building and I commented on the apparent fertility of the soil. The children, Miller explained, used manure, but their shiftless parents dislike this procedure, because it also grows weeds which must be removed!

Geoffrey F. Metcalfe from Devon, principal of the school, joined us and pointed out landscape features. On clear evenings both Mt. Kenya and Mt. Kilimanjaro can be seen. A round hill in the middle-distance, like a great hump of clay, has magic properties. "If you want to change your sex, walk around it three times. The legend has never been disproved because the Wakamba are too lazy to test it."

About 1,500 children attend the Native Council and Mission elementary schools, explained Metcalfe. There they learn their own vernacular, also Kiswahili, arithmetic, and how to wash their necks—if there is any water. After passing an entrance examination, they may attend the primary school and study the same subjects, as well as English, history, geography, and practical agriculture. They sit for an examination after eight years, but only a small proportion passes well enough to go on to secondary school elsewhere in the Colony. The 200,000 people of Kitui are the most backward of Kenya's civilized native districts.

"The askaris' children, particularly, are getting the idea there's something in education. But there's just not enough room for them and we can't get teachers."

I quoted my recent discussion in Nairobi about the supposed difference in brain quality of African and European.

"The African has, on the whole, a better memory than the European because he doesn't write very much. But he has the copyist outlook, is incapable of logical thought and, as a rule, originality. . . ."

"But the African wants to learn," interrupted Miller.

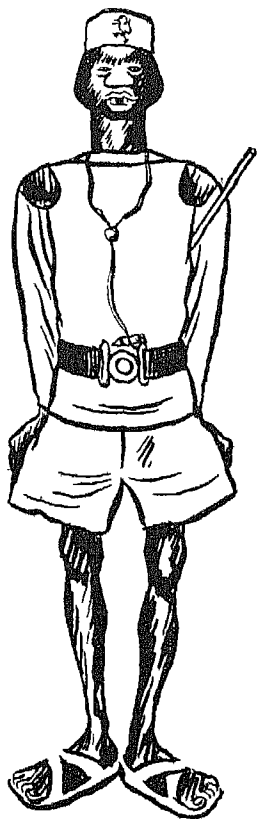
"He wants to learn like blazes. I have no trouble with class discipline. But they just haven't the application. The kids who come here are very keen and pleasant. Those of secondary class are on the whole less pleasant."

"A little learning is a dangerous thing," Miller commented.

"They get superficial knowledge; but there is no sense of tradition. "

Metcalfe showed us the football field, posho store, teachers' house and kitchen. Some of the children come from seventy

miles away. As there is no sleeping accommodation, they sleep in the classrooms. Their ration is $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of posho a day, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of meat and a little fat and beans.



THE CHUCKER OUT

The adult eats about 2 lb. of ugi (a mixture of maize meal and water) daily. If the Wakamba find a dead rhino, even a week old, they eat meat; sometimes the bow-and-arrow people sit up a tree waiting to turn an elephant into a poisoned arrow pin-cushion. But, although their land carries more cattle than it should they refuse to eat their capital.

"We tell them *grass* is their bank," said Miller. "But they say cattle and goats are their bank, and will do nothing about reducing stock."

Ironically, Europe has given Africa doctors and vets, who increase the numbers of people and stock, which in turn accelerate erosion. A cynic says that if the other great African scourge, the tsetse fly, didn't clear great areas of men and their animals, there soon mightn't be any Africa left!

Miller and I skidded down a steep path creased by erosion to view his vegetable garden near a river crossing, while Diana splashed in the pool. The district is fairly dry and

healthy, but a virulent type of malarial mosquito abounds during the rains. A disused official guest-house was built bordering the mosquito pool by a supposedly anti-social D.C.

A stream of elderly natives trickled down the path, gossiping and singing.

"I see the pub's just closed," said Miller, divulging there was only one legal native public house in the district, run by the Kitui Native Council. The lean, hungry and thirsty Wakamba swallow 140,000 quarts of beer a year, to them both

food and drink. At 30 cents ($3\frac{1}{2}$ d.) a quart, the pub's gross annual income is £2,100 and a net profit of £1,500 is invested by the Council in roads and schools. When possible, the natives make home brew. But water is scarce. And sugar, an essential ingredient, is cannily rationed by the administration. "Tell them there's a bag of sugar on a mountain-top," smiled Miller, "and they'd scale the heights immediately."

I arranged to visit the pub next day.

After dinner with Miller, he led me across the lawn to my bedroom, a circular thatched guest-hut. As he set a lamp on the table, I pointed to a live python at the head of my bed.

Miller took a running jump behind the door, but I beat him by a short neck. We peered at the creature, which coiled and uncoiled and hissed at us belligerently.

"You stay here while I get a stick," exclaimed my host, vanishing into the darkness. Diana appeared, but timidly kept her distance; even when her master returned with a long stick, pulped the python's head and pushed it outside, she avoided the snake. Miller's cat ate the corpse later.

The python was only a youngster, no longer than three feet. But I slept uneasily that night under the flimsy mosquito net, expecting a long, thick, avenging monster of a mother to drop from an overhanging branch and slide through the thatch. Before dawn, creaking and scraping at the door awoke me, but it may have been rats.

The Rev. John Shellenberg, fervent missionary, Mennonite and ex-mixed farmer from Manitoba, first came to Kitui with his Swiss-Pennsylvanian wife four years ago, to take over the Protestant African Inland Mission established in the district in 1915. (The Catholic mission opened two years ago.)

"There is quite a field here," he announced in a Canadian accent, as we sat on Miller's veranda discussing proselytizing problems. "I am only beginning to understand things.

"Our church membership of those in communion is six hundred, those preparing for baptism, about three thousand. There are thirty out-churches, which the elders oversee. When they have a vision, these people work. If they get the idea the churches will belong to them, they'll be really respectable. And, taking an average cut, they're very intelligent.

"But many bad things of civilization are coming in, and many things to choose from they have never tasted. We don't have to push the native, only guide him. I'm a helper, not a lord over him. When you're a lord, he expects you to do everything for him. I don't agree with the 'Big Buona' idea. I'm just a man, with men. We have that in Canada.

"A lazy lot? That depends on the altitude, and it's low and hot here." (Although 3,800 feet above sea level, Kitui is lower and hotter than the Tablelands around Nairobi.)

"I do believe this whole country could be turned into a garden, if these people were instructed to drop cattle and goats. They must be taught to do with a few cows that are high producers. They must stop clearance by burning.

"The Wakamba like to sharpen their intellect. You know this when you hear their proverbs, used in conversation."

Shellenberg instanced a native mission teacher who asked him for a raise. "Sensing my coolness, the teacher said: 'The warmth of the stone is known by the lizard that sits on it.' I answered, 'The stone of the Christian is Lord Jesus Christ. You must be pretty far away from him if you say it's cold where I am!'" The missionary chuckled. "I got him pretty good that time."

"What is your attitude to polygamy here?" I asked.

"The standard is one man, one wife, and we have no trouble with those who read the Testament. But some get to drinking, go to Mombasa and backslide. We don't permit drinking and smoking."

Shellenberg, a total abstainer, quoted a disturbing episode. "I have a neighbour who used to be a Christian, but last night he passed by my house, singing loudly. His wife says he has turned to drunkenness and spends four shillings a day. . . .

"But we just have to keep things together and pray the Lord He will help us."

In the public house at Kitui, noses do not bloom alcoholic red. They remain shiny black.

But the Wakamba are the most renowned drunkards in Kenya. Spilt beer streaks the blankets draped over their bones. And in the Kitui pub, as in an English village local, I heard that familiar lament: "The beer is too weak."

Before four o'clock opening I called on Jacob Maingi,

salaried publican and brewer, who delivers each day's takings to the Native Council clerk. (Teita came along to interpret.) Although a large "B" for "Barman" is sewn on his khaki shirt, Jacob's customers call him "Mongami" . . . "The bloke who stands here." The bar is the "Club," pronounced "Ki-lab." Licensing hours are noon to two, four to six p.m.

Jacob showed me over the brewery, a two-roomed tin shed reeking of musty honey, next to the public house. Assistant barmen, mixing sample ingredients, sprinkled two dippers of white sugar into a petrol tin, poured yellowish water on top. They swished the liquid with cupped pink palms. Then was added a mixture of water and wild black honey with dead bees still stuck in it, and strips of sun-dried sausage fruit from a nearby Miatiani tree, which is the fermenting agent. The muddy fluid was poured into large gourds ranged round wood fires inside the hut.

"The beer is boiled for two days," explained Jacob, "after which it is served, fermented and hot."

A ragged queue of impatient Wakamba customers had gathered. Jacob, looking at his watch, launched the afternoon session. I ordered a quart for the oldest inhabitant, Du son of Zaka. The lanky and wizened ancient admitted he had slept beneath the Miatiani tree since last closing time. "Beer is my life," asserted Du, blowing vigorously into a full calabash. "It makes me talk well and also very happy."

We were joined by Kichuba, another wrinkled alcoholic, grasping his little wooden stool. Stool-carrying, he told me, was a privilege reserved for the elders. "I become drunk every day. Everybody loves a drunkard." He swilled his beer, spat out a dead wasp.

In the small whitewashed "saloon bar," under a corrugated-iron roof, a row of "regulars" squatted and boasted about their many goats and women. A patron wearing a shapeless sun helmet stood unclad as he shook vermin from his blanket, then swirled it around his shoulders like a toga. Muvambi, son of MBeti, grumbled because the beer wasn't laced. Kikuli, son of Mutumbi, poured his dregs on the clay floor.

"Why waste your beer?" I asked.

Kikuli took a pinch of snuff. "The dregs are for my deceased father!"

"Why don't you drink with your women?"

Makau, son of Kibinda, quietly scratching himself, indignantly replied on behalf of Wakamba manhood: "Woman's job in life is to work. We pay for wives with good goats so we can sit and drink."

I tasted the brew, found it rather like a bitter ginger beer. As I left the "Ki-lab," the old toppers waved me a befuddled salute. The queue before Jacob's table had grown, and included a number of discharged askaris wearing military greatcoats, puttees, and a startling variety of headgear, straw hats, felt hats, tarboushes, tam-o'-shanters, berets. Nearby



IN THE SALOON BAR

stood the chucker-out, a bandy tribal policeman in red jersey and khaki shorts.

Before the war, tribal custom forbade the younger men to drink. But now the askari remembers the beer served him in Cairo and other foreign bars (and other stronger potions procured illegally). He resents the Kenya law which prevents him buying white man's beer and spirits. Half-castes and Indians may drink what they wish.

I discussed the public house problem with Father White, the Roman Catholic missionary who, dining at Miller's, was

not averse to sampling a treasured bottle of sixty-year-old liqueur brandy graciously opened by our host. His attitude was roughly in line with that of the dozen other European residents I met earlier the same evening. Accepting the Wakamba as natural drunkards, they believe drastic action would only increase the number of illicit bars and speakeasies, where the hooch served is even more lethal. Much better to let the Native Council use the pub profits for the community welfare.

One resident told me: "All marriage deals are fixed over drinks. The legal dowry is six head of cattle and thirty goats, but an old man refuses to hand over his daughter unless treated to beer by the potential son-in-law.

"If there is a good honey season, the natives use it to ferment home-brews and unfortunately the number of murders goes up. When these people get very drunk and fight they are apt to use the panga, a native knife sharp as a razor."

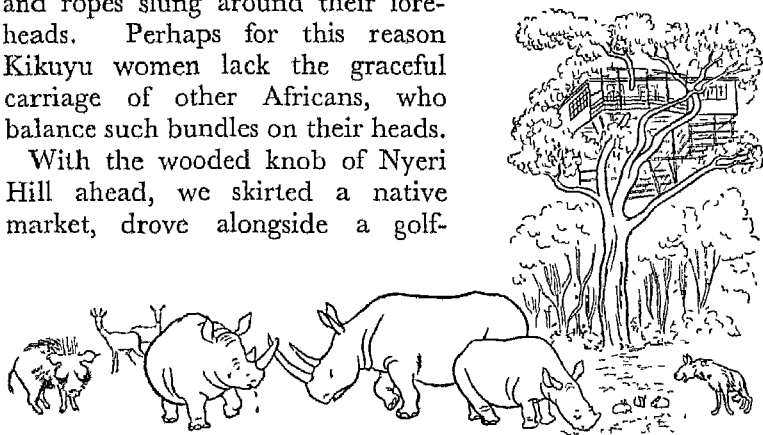
The Kitui pub conveniently faces the gate of the Detention Camp. But the most effective deterrent to a petty offender is instructing the barman not to serve him for two months. To the Wakamba tipplers, this is an infinitely worse punishment than jail for a year.

A NIGHT UP A TREE

ON the road to Nyeri from Nairobi, which twists and turns through the Kikuyu Reserve like a goat-track, I saw bad signs of sheet and gully erosion. unterraced hills with patches of red soil expanding through the smooth grass, goat-tracks scoured into deep gullies by rain torrents, river waters thick and brown with erosion soil. Approaching Nyeri, we entered one of the most fertile districts of Kenya, producing bananas, sugar cane, maize, millet, black wattle bark, and with a heavy rainfall. The natives are not compelled to terrace or rotate their crops. But here and there we passed a neatly paddocked small African holding set amongst trees, with bananas and vegetables planted in proper rotation, an indication of what could and should be done.

Teita, who comes from Voi near the coast and who also drove me on this second Kenya safari, is contemptuous of the local tribe: "Kikuyu no good at all. Dey stupid people!" The natives once wore goat and calf skins rubbed and made pliable with clay, oil and hard wear; their clothes are now westernized, the men wearing shirts and shorts, the women coloured cotton dresses with kerchiefs tied tightly around their heads. The males carry no burdens. The women stoop forward with great loads on their backs, suspended by straps and ropes slung around their foreheads. Perhaps for this reason Kikuyu women lack the graceful carriage of other Africans, who balance such bundles on their heads.

With the wooded knob of Nyeri Hill ahead, we skirted a native market, drove alongside a golf-



course and up a lane to Sherbrooke Walker's Outspan Hotel.

The Outspan is a group of stone and brown weatherboard buildings and little guest huts (bandas) of coconut matting, centred in seventy acres of tree-planted lawns facing across thick forest and bamboo country towards Mt. Kenya. Guests laze in deckchairs on private verandas or lawns: for the more active there is swimming, squash, billiards, ping-pong, riding, walks, polo, trout fishing and organized safaris, all in cool, fresh air only fifty miles from the Equator! I imagine the country-clublike Outspan must be the dream hotel of East Africa, mecca of honeymooners and home-away-from-home for rich tourists. Walker has ambitious plans and blue-prints for new main buildings, a cinema and shops.

The success that Walker, through work and imagination, has made of the Outspan, refutes the excuses of many other East African hoteliers, whose approach to hotel management is often archaic, independent and amateurish—particularly for a country where natural attractions invite a rich tourist traffic. The Kenya hotel trade is in a period of post-war transition, short of trained staff, with overheads increasing and its tariffs controlled; but (with two or three noteworthy exceptions) I found little *effort* to please and an absence of the subtler techniques of welcoming a guest. Indeed, hotel receptionists scowl at the new arrival. Are smiles, like tariffs, legally regulated? And must hotel rooms be placarded with stark, dogmatic notices: "THIS HOTEL ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY" for this and that, "IN BOUNDS FOR OFFICERS ONLY," "NO ALCOHOLIC DRINKS ARE SOLD BY THE BOTTLE," "MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS MUST NOT BE PLAYED BETWEEN 12 AND 4 P.M."? Rather, let notices advertise the amenities. What East African hotel keeper (except perhaps Walker) keeps a detailed card-system of the whims and preferences of his customers—whether they like iced water with meals, what room they last occupied and why, if they care for certain pictures in their bedrooms, their food fancies, favourite melodies and so on? Lest this technique seem too elaborate, here is an example of its intelligent use: would not a honeymoon couple, returning to the same hotel a couple of years later, be flattered finding on arrival two glasses of sherry on their table with a card from the management congratulating them upon their wedding anniversary?

But perhaps my comments are on too advanced a scale for a territory in which some up-country hotel keepers have yet to install septic tanks and decent sanitation, running water, electric light and un-holed mosquito nets.

Sherbrooke Walker, who knew America in the Golden Age of Prohibition when as a "merchant seaman" he ran whisky across the Atlantic, studied American hotel management. When he came to Kenya twenty years ago, he noted an absence of water closets in the Colony's hotels, a deficiency that helped convince him and his wife (née Lady Bettie Fielding, daughter of Lord Denbigh) there might be a future in the business. They built the Outspan and have been adding water closets and extensions to it ever since. An Oxford graduate, he was until the Great War private secretary to the late Chief Scout, Lord Baden Powell, who spent his last years at the Outspan and whose water-colours decorate a lounge. Walker's career with the Royal Flying Corps abruptly terminated when he was shot down in Germany; but in 1920 he fought with the White Army in Russia. Lean, white-haired, casual and distinguished, this unusual hotel keeper resembles one of those discerning gentlemen who knowingly sample whisky in magazine advertisements.

For our visit to Treetops Hotel, Walker was suitably outfitted in khaki slacks, white braces and open-necked blue shirt, a more strategic colour for animal-spotting than white. He carried a Rigby Mauser. We left Nyeri at noon and drove twelve miles across rough country to the edge of the forest, where we were met by sixteen-year-old Honor Walker, who hopes one day to be a white hunter and was armed with a .256 rifle. She promised to protect me from savage beasts. Her father, telling us to follow at fifty yards, stalked ahead with the native porters along a quarter-mile bush track to Treetops.

"Why keep so far behind?" I asked the pink-cheeked Honor.

She pointed to a rough wooden escape ladder nailed to a tree. "These ladders are spaced every fifty yards along the track. It would be too bad if all the party tried to scale the same ladder at once, with a rhino at our heels."

We progressed stealthily, in an atmosphere guaranteed to put the wind up any £10-a-night tourist.

"That's fresh rhino dung," whispered Honor, negotiating a pile of half-digested dirt and grass: rhinos must have stomachs as armoured as their hides. We rejoined Walker in a broad clearing. Above us, settled like a great, grey bird's nest in the fork of a tree, loomed Treetops Hotel. A steep, thirty-foot gangway soared to the first floor. Adjoining tree trunks were swathed in barbed wire, to discourage hungry and curious leopards. Native boys hoisted our luggage on pulleys through a trap door. We climbed to the first platform, stepped over a massive branch and up a staircase into the dining-room, to find Walker's younger daughter Susan spreading a long table with oranges, bananas, honey, cold meat, salad and beer.

A note left by the previous night's tenants, aircraft manufacturer Sir Geoffrey and Lady de Havilland from England, listed their bag: "A rhino cow and calf, two rhino bulls (one with a broken horn), a giant forest hog at the salt in daylight, two bush-buck, two water-buck, three hyaenas, a wart hog, several monkeys and a squirrel stealing food."

The five rooms on the second-floor were partitioned with bamboo walls and lit by electric light from two car batteries. A detached "Ladies' Room" perched out on a branch. The washrooms had running water, and high above the foliage jutted a crow's nest. Below, enclosed by the dense forest in which converging avenues had been cut, spread a couple of acres of parched grass and a scooped-out, dried-up wallow.

"If you watch animals from the ground, they are self-conscious and alert," said Walker. "But here elephants, rhino and buffalo, unlike leopards and monkeys, never see us, as they don't look up.

"If rhino are feeding when elephants arrive, they put up a bluff and charge—but never press home, as the elephant is two tons heavier. The rhino hate hyaenas, the buffoons of the forest, which snap at their heels."

We sat on cushions along the platform and talked in whispers. Even the click of a camera, or the breaking of a bar of chocolate, can be heard by animals 100 yards away. We did not smoke.

My host continued: "You first hear elephants' stomachs rumbling a mile away. But when an alarm is given, they keep them under control. I doubt if we shall see an elephant

to-day, as it is too dry, and animals now have to go forty-five miles away for water. Only a few passing beasts come for salt—ssh!” Walker peered over the rail. Our first visitor, a timid brown bush-buck with a white parson’s collar, stepped daintily into the clearing. Through de Havilland’s field glasses, thoughtfully left behind slung over the rail, I was able to count the flies clustered on its neck. It sensed danger, and tip-toed away.

“Come rhino, come rhino, come rhino!” invoked Walker, squatting against the wall, his arm around young Susan. A loud crackling in the bushes answered him. An evil, dirty grey rhinoceros with basement eyes and a jagged horn moved slowly towards the salt. It halted, sniffed a log and its erect right ear swivelled in our direction like a barber’s chair. We sat quite still. The rhino snuffed the salt, suddenly reared, and crashed back into the forest with its tail up, hips swaying like a Hawaiian dancer.

“The scent of the natives who laid the salt is still fresh,” groaned Walker.

A bush-buck cow appeared 100 yards away and stood motionless, chewing the cud, for fifteen minutes. Four black colubus monkeys, with bushy white tails and white beards, chased each other through rippling leaves. In the distance, human voices.

“Over there,” said Walker, “lives an old chief with eighteen wives.”

The light of a full moon silhouetted the tree across the clearing as our next caller puffed and snorted into view, a stupid old cow rhinoceros. A frowsy hyaena followed and lay down nearby. The rhino swerved nimbly, kicking up the dust, and faced its unconcerned escort. We hoped to see a drama—or a comedy—of the jungle, but the rhino stamped into the darkness with the hyaena loping and moaning after it—“whoo-ou, whoo-ou.”

In all, we saw six rhino that evening. Walker recognized a mother with a two-year baby. “That’s old Belinda. Her temper is nastier than ever.” We witnessed a jungle version of power politics. Belinda and her son, slobbering in the dirt, monopolized the salt. A third rhino, almost fully grown and lighter in colour, tried to approach, but was rebuffed by Belinda’s asthmatic snorts. The huge beast then turned its

grotesque profile, and whimpered. Further away waited a giant forest hog, high as a donkey. No match for the whimperer, the great hog kept its distance. On the edge of the clearing, two nervous bush-buck waited their turn at table, while several cheeky rabbits gambolled near Belinda's rooting nose.

We switched on a searchlight and the rhino scuttled off a few yards. A suppurating wound on Belinda's left flank explained her bellicose mood. I recalled a local warning, "A wounded rhino, like a lawyer, charges on sight."

Shooting is permitted in the area, and Walker fears an enthusiastic millionaire may wish to use Treetops as a gun platform. He gets two kinds of patrons: the real lover of animals, as interested in small game as in big—and the assiduous collector of species, who takes one look at a rhino, chalks it up and goes to bed.

Treetops has been completely rebuilt three times in its thirteen years. Baboons wrecked its flimsy structure during the war, when it closed up.

"We are often robbed by natives," complained Walker, "so we place a skull on the table when we leave, to frighten burglars away. Honor, is the skull here?"

"No, but there's one in your bathroom cupboard."

"That's a monkey's skull. Where's the man's skull. . .?"

Walker's most unwelcome callers, wild bees, swarmed from the iron stove one evening after the fire was lit. Only by blocking both ends of the chimney did he avert being stung to death in the air, or forced down to be gored by rhino on the ground.

Parties from Government House in Nairobi invariably attract large numbers of game, who must be socially minded. Lady Brooke-Popham, wife of an ex-Governor of Kenya, still holds the record entry in Treetops' Visitors' Book. It includes "40-50 elephants." Her husband had his money's worth when two rhino charged him at the base of the tree.

Lord Baden Powell stayed many nights in Treetops, sketching the animals. My bed in the tree was once occupied by the Duke of Gloucester. And Walker will never forget another and less satisfied guest who complained he couldn't sleep all night because the rhino and elephant made such a row fighting each other!

On our return to the Outspan, I met Mrs. Charles Fernandes, wife of a local settler. Slim and auburn-haired, Mrs. Fernandes, like her husband, comes from Yorkshire. In 1930 they bought 2,000 acres about sixteen miles north of Nyeri, at £2 an acre, built a farmhouse and almost immediately lost heavily on wheat. But in a district which also produces barley, cattle, pyrethrum and milk, Fernandes has since made his mixed farm pay. Last year his barley won the first prize of £100 in the East African Breweries competition; due to only twenty-seven inches of rain, this year's crop may not be so good. They own 300 cows and are developing a Fresian herd, selling their milk to a dried milk factory.

Mrs. Fernandes invited me to spend the night at the farm, and I promised to be delivered by taxi at tea-time. Walker lent me an Outspan servant as a guide; he sat next Teita in the front seat, with shafts of yellow sunlight shining through four round holes carved in the lobes and gristle of his black ears. Three miles from the farm, the car stopped. Teita, in disgrace, tinkered under the bonnet until I correctly surmised we were out of petrol. So the Outspan boy shouldered my suitcase, we hiked the rest of the way across country and sent back an Italian prisoner-of-war in a lorry, with petrol.

Mrs. Fernandes will be sorry to lose their several Italians, who are hard workers and skilled technicians. Most Kenya farmers employ Italian prisoners, dispersed from the camps but temporarily detained in the Colony due to shipping space shortage. The Fernandes' Italians are building a brick kitchen. They repair tractors and other farm machinery, and one carpenter has completed a wooden childrens' slide for a playground. Also helping the Fernandes is Daisy De Mare, who came as a governess to the younger children (there are three boys and a girl) and remained to learn farming.

The farmhouse, a thin row of weatherboard rooms linked by a wide veranda apron, fronts the distant Mt. Kenya across a lawn and past two old trees and a bougainvillea bush. There is no electric light, and privies are earth closets.

Neighbouring settlers have been killed by rhino and buffalo. Recently a settler, downed by a rhino, stuck his thumb in its eye. Whereupon it is alleged to have trotted away. The irate settler foolishly peppered the rhino's rump with a shot-

gun, thereby manufacturing a nasty wounded beast, still at large.

Before dinner Fernandes, who is pink, stocky and has a broken nose, returned from a race club committee meeting. Over a number of drinks we discussed the Colonial civil servants, the Indians, current English socialism, the necessity in Africa for heavy, high-powered cars, and British car exporters' failure to suit the demand. . . .

"We'd better change for dinner," said my host. "Do you mind getting into your pyjamas and dressing gown?"

Once again I recollected bawdy stories of Kenya's high life, and regretted my best silk pyjamas were in the Outspan laundry. Bathed and night-attired, I returned to the drawing-room, quickly swallowed a South African brandy and glanced nervously at the others. Fernandes wore a dressing gown, Daisy a white bath robe, over pyjamas. My hostess looked doubly attractive in a snappy pale blue nightgown, a gold ornament pinned to her bed-jacket. Then Fernandes explained that Kenya settlers almost invariably dine in night-clothes. Except for a draught around my bare ankles at dinner, I approved of this comfortable custom, which in the Fernandes' homestead was nothing except convenient. (A month later, in Johannesburg, I met the A.D.C. to the Governor of Kenya, who supports the fashion although, he confessed, dinner attire at Government House is more orthodox.)

Young Micky Fernandes, a polite and healthy youth home on holiday from school, woke me next morning. "Good morning, sir. Your driver's got a puncture."

So before breakfast Mrs. Fernandes and I visited Teita. He had repaired the puncture, but another tyre blew out. Then as he jacked up the car, it fell and mashed his hand. After which the car's generator stopped functioning!

Mrs. Fernandes bandaged Teita's hand skilfully, then took me to a wooden shed to show me a microscope and other apparatus used in artificial insemination; natives must not inseminate cows unless she is present to supervise. We walked through the "labour lines," a group of huts, including several new ones of brick and thatch. The ordinary "shenze" native dislikes modern homes and fireplaces, prefers a fire in the middle of the floor and fug under the thatch. A dozen small children squatted in the farm school, listening to tribal history read by a native teacher. Nearby the farm tailor makes clothes

for the fifty farm labourers and the Fernandes family. He is paid only for work completed, is delighted with a Singer sewing machine given him by Fernandes. A cobbler makes good rough shoes and does repairs on the same financial basis; his boss buys the cobbler's leather.

Fernandes joined us, and we walked across fields to the brick factory. He pays his labourers piece-work rates on bricks and tiles, as well as a commission on their total output. Natives dislike stamping on mud (who doesn't?), so young Micky's idea for puddling bricks was adopted; oxen, driven around a circular clay-filled ditch, do the job.

When Fernandes fought with the King's African Rifles in the Abyssinian campaign, his wife, like the wives of other Kenya settlers, carried on the farm alone, and had no trouble with the natives.

Like the farmers of the British Dominions or, for that matter, farmers anywhere, the settlers of Kenya Colony and their wives, if the Fernandes family is typical, are good people. They work hard, combat obstacles as diverse as drought and fluctuating markets, have an affection for their native employees, and at last are awake to the dangers of soil erosion. In the Highlands they have invested money in great areas of land that once belonged to the Kikuyu and Masai, and made them productive.

If and when the British Government's benevolent (but purse-light) colonial policy of preparing the African for responsible citizenship and self-government succeeds, what guarantee has the European settler of security of tenure? The settler wants self-government now, for Europeans. But the Government, with the interests of the native at heart and perhaps a slantwise look at South Africa, will not grant political and administrative power over the African to such a tiny and partial white minority. The future for the bonafide settler (not the Englishman who retires to Kenya and opens up a farm to keep a manager busy while he plays golf and polo) is indeed an "Unfinished Symphony," as the Leg-co member told me in Nairobi.

NAIROBI TO ZANZIBAR

EAST AFRICAN AIRWAYS run several services a week from Nairobi to the East Coast, and I boarded one of their de Havilland "Rapides" for the island Sultanate of Zanzibar, which is about twenty-five miles off the mainland and where the cloves come from. By now accustomed to the larger flying-boats, I felt strangely insecure in the light but safe little sharp-nosed silver biplane, its wheels in long metal bloomers.

We left Nairobi in the heat of mid-day, and the lightly loaded "Rapide" lurched uncomfortably into and out of air-pockets. The pilot, a handsome blond in shorts whose broad shoulders could be seen through the open cockpit door, seemed to have difficulty in keeping the plane level. Behind him chatted a talkative Colonial lady, but the other trim grey leather seats were empty and quiet. I glanced out through primly-curtained windows at a dull, dusty, brown suede Kenya, at buff sand and sand-castle hills. A draught below; a draught above, which chilled the nape of my neck.

A smooth bib of grass hung from the dense jungle running up the slopes of Mt. Kiliminjaro, its summit blotted in mist. The "Rapide" alighted on a short, bumpy, coffee-soil airstrip. We lunched at Moshi and rose again into sluggish mist like that potted stuff Hollywood spreads ankle-deep over cinematic Yorkshire moors.

As we noisily circled Mombasa harbour, I wondered if our motors disturbed the siesta presumably in full swing in the town below. At Mombasa we left our lady passenger, collected three Asiatics and, following the coast south at 120 miles an hour, overlook a division of coconut palms marching thirty abreast. They peeled off to the right to reveal a cream beach. The "Rapide" rested for a while at the homely grass airport of Tanga and then, with the receding Tanganyika coast a charred black line seared across dazzling satin sea, we skimmed further south to the magic coral isle of Zanzibar. Ahead, under a narrow shelf of cloud built for herald angels, lay the flat island—640 square miles of dark green felt piped with yellow. Then the white buildings of Zanzibar town, delicate filagree of arches and windows under rusty unpainted corrugated-iron roofs, loomed near. The pilot removed his earphones, put on his cap and we landed on a concrete runway.



THE SULTAN OF ZANZIBAR

"MY name's Stiven, A.D C. to H.E., but I'm really E.C.B.," announced a pale, diffident young official in a white tropical suit, as I stepped from the "Rapide" I blinked. He expatiated. His Excellency, Major Eric Dutton, Acting Resident of Zanzibar, had asked Eric Stiven (acting aide-de-camp and also secretary of the local Economic Control Board) to welcome me.

"H.E. would like to see you to-morrow morning at ten. And would you dine with him to-morrow evening?" Stiven continued. "His Highness will see you Wednesday morning at eleven, and we've put you up at the English Club." Advised by the Colonial Office of the impending arrival of a journalist, Major Dutton had arranged a programme for my three short days on the island, which included a hoped-for interview with His Highness, the Sultan of Zanzibar, a romantic figure even in his own fragrant domain.

I enjoyed the novelty of my first official welcome in Africa. Weary of a frustrating battle for transport, accommodation and facilities, I appreciated the kindness and planned help given me in this happy little Protectorate. Flattered, I warmed to Zanzibar immediately: although the spice island never fails to charm the visitor.

Stiven guided me to the customs shed, where I filled out a long immigration form, answering questions already put me on entering other East African territories—whether I had been in jail or had any aliases, how much money I carried, countries I had visited in the preceding ten years, whether I was married and so on. (Repeated form-filling seems an unnecessary complication for the off-and-on traveller between the adjacent British-administered territories of Uganda, Kenya, Zanzibar and Tanganyika).

With Stiven at the wheel of a new Austin with gilt crown on the bumper, we followed a narrow bitumen road to Zanzibar town. My escort waved to many people on the way, Asiatics as well as Europeans; the colour bar in Zanzibar is not as marked as in Kenya.

We slid into the scrambled streets of the town. Huge, carved, brass-studded wooden doors and decorative iron window grilles relieved the plain white façades of shuttered houses. Fringe-bearded Omani Arabs in untidy flat turbans, Swahili women swathed in brilliant kangas, and Indians wearing topis and tarboushes, thronged the bazaars. The winding, immaculate streets were too narrow for more than one car, but fortunately the island has few cars. Stiven told me that every street is brushed once or twice a day, and rubbish-bins emptied twice daily. Stopping at a door in the Residency wall, labelled "Visitor's Book," I punctiliously autographed the thick book resting on a table under a low rustic veranda inside.

We drank beer from pewter tankards in the bar of the English Club, maintained by the 250 European residents, mostly officials. I was shown to my top-floor room, the grandest of three bedrooms, with two French windows opening on to a balcony, and a beamed ceiling.

Next morning an official car delivered me to the Residency, a building in Modern Saracenic style erected about thirty years ago by J. H. Sinclair, architectural enthusiast, first Chief Secretary of the Protectorate and for a short time Resident. Sinclair rebuilt much of the town, which looks older because with slight innovations he kept to architectural tradition.

Living quarters in Zanzibar are rarely on the ground floor, because of the heat; a servant ushered me up a flight of stairs

to the Acting Resident's study. Major Dutton, dapper in white suit and yellow bow tie speckled with red, is a fluent and versatile Englishman. Botanist, architect and author, he talks well. He has written several books, including a volume on his explorations of Mt. Kenya with a party which named several peaks—one after the Major. On the subject of the Sultan's unofficial life, I found him reserved; in my search for human, personal anecdotes about this Moslem ruler I began to realize the Sultan is as much a legend in Zanzibar as abroad. I learnt only that every Monday Dutton and the Sultan meet to consider administrative questions, and every other Tuesday they drive together, Mrs. Dutton accompanying the Sultana.

We had morning tea without Mrs. Dutton, who gave a dancing lesson in another room. Late of the Russian Ballet, Mrs. Dutton, as Chairwoman of the S.P.C.A., channels some of her Empire-building energies into the care of animals. A monument to her enthusiasm is a solid stone combination drinking-trough in a playing field, designed to cater on different levels for the thirsts of cows, goats, cats and dogs, with a faucet for humans on one side. The Zanzibari, unlike other Africans, are kind to animals and even lead their donkeys to the sea for a wash.

H.E. sacrificed his morning to exhibit vistas of Zanzibar through the windows of his long dark blue limousine. Whenever we stopped, the chauffeur and a native servant in red-and-gold jacket jumped down and smartly opened both doors. We viewed Sinclair's onetime private house on the sea, now the property of the Aga Khan, who is a dear friend of the Sultan. Sinclair, Dutton claims, was one of Zanzibar's three great men. The other two were Seyyid Said and Seyyid Barghash. Early last century Seyyid Said transferred the capital of his great empire from Muscat to Zanzibar, founded the clove industry, and concluded the first treaty with the British to abolish slavery. Zanzibar was until then a notorious slave market. The quarter-million inhabitants of Zanzibar, the neighbouring island of Pemba and smaller islands, have since prospered on the export of cloves. Seyyid Barghash built many public works and seventy years ago was advanced enough to install electric light in his palace.

On open ground in a native district Dutton plans to build a great civic centre, "the beginning of our town planning." He intends to clear up blight areas and already many tumble-down houses and mud-and-wattle huts have been condemned. We looked at a row of new experimental houses in different stages of construction. Dutton had their façades painted in different colours and the thatched eaves set slightly out of alignment to avoid the monotonous duplication so typical of English streets. We walked into the vestibule of a nearly complete three-roomed house, where the women will sit, and bodies of the deceased be placed before burial (the great bulk of the island's population is Moslem). The window shutters are halved horizontally for privacy, and rooms ventilated through openings between walls and roofs. Concrete pillars support the roofs, and walls are a mixture of earth, coral and lime. A raised veranda fronts each house. Kitchen and privy are detached and in the back garden.

We drove along the main thoroughfare, nicknamed "Suicide Alley," which squeezed into a narrower shaft, unexpectedly pierced the side of a house and emerged into a pleasant park fronting the emerald sea. The crumbling ruins of an ancient Portuguese fort pointed at a fantastic iced wedding cake, the Government offices, known as the "House of Wonders," its high slim pillars supporting balconies wide enough to hold the whole population, and surmounted by an ugly clock tower. Before us lay a humbler crenellated structure, the Sultan's town palace. His scarlet flag stiffened in a monsoon breeze wafting the perfume of cloves from a spice warehouse beyond.

Basing the design on early photographs of the keep, the Major is rebuilding a corner of the old, grey fort in its traditional style, but for a practical purpose. The new rooms will become a club for women in purdah, who will also be able to gambol in complete privacy within a walled enclosure in the shade of a "peccul" tree, and play tennis, badminton and other games.

"Dammit, there's a plant I've never seen before!" exclaimed H.E. the botanist, as we drove through fine avenues of mango trees, passed almond trees with their large clustering leaves, orange and lichee trees, scarlet poincianas, banana shambas, high durian trees which smell like dead rats and

ylang-ylang trees (*cananga odorata*), which perfume the evening air. Dutton himself has introduced selected trees to the island. As a coconut fell near us, he remarked he had never heard of anybody being killed by a falling coconut. We passed coconut trees carved with the individual ciphers of their owners, and with steps notched up the trunks to the fronds.

"They are tree-minded, these people," said Dutton, "which is one reason why we're bringing in cocoa." This was news to me. Dutton disclosed that a mysterious disease, possibly the result of the natural exhaustion of the soil and known as "Sudden Death," is withering the clove trees of Zanzibar. The disease has fortunately not developed to the same extent in Pemba Island, which with Zanzibar before the war exported eighty per cent of the world's clove supply. The Sultan and agricultural officers agree with Dutton that a new industry must be launched. "Next year we are going all out on cocoa," said H.E.

We viewed a tall, tired old house with iron roof, where Dr. Livingstone once prepared for his safaris. Dutton hopes one day to turn it into a tourist museum. Since Livingstone's time, many celebrities—Cecil Rhodes, Gandhi, the Duke of Windsor, George Bernard Shaw, and Neville Chamberlain—have visited the beautiful island. The Government is anxious to stimulate tourist traffic, particularly wants cruise-ship trippers to spend a day ashore and money on trinkets, curios and antiques in the bazaars. "We don't want a big hotel here. It wouldn't pay. But a small one is projected." Dutton also advocates the opening of tea-shops and restaurants. His enthusiasms, indeed, are widely ranged, and extend even to a campaign for keeping the brass spikes on massive wooden doors brightly polished. "Here's a lovely job for somebody," concluded Major Dutton, who would like to remain in Zanzibar, "and with something in sight, just around the corner."

Searching the narrow, tangled streets for a shop that sold drawing materials (I was reduced to my last few sheets of drawing paper, had already tried unsuccessfully to replenish stocks in Khartoum, Kampala and Nairobi) I was stopped by an importunate Indian shopkeeper who asked me to inspect

his collection of jewellery, antiques, suitings and silk stockings. I bought no trinkets, but left his shop after ordering a white drill suit, made to measure at the local price of forty shillings, with delivery promised for the morrow. I don't know whether the Indian was a Parsee, Goan, Bohora, Hindu, Khoja or just one of the Hindi Sunni, principal races in Zanzibar's 16,000 Indian population. But his business ethics were another poor advertisement for the East African Indian character, which I heard disparaged continually throughout the territory. He delivered the suit to the club promptly, but on close inspection I found yellow stains on both jacket and trousers, thickly and carefully camouflaged with white chalk.

I needed this new and lighter suit, not only because the seat of my grey flannel trousers had been left behind on Uganda mountain slopes, but because of the sweltering humidity. My skin had started tingling and itching, signs of impending prickly heat.

That evening I wore my heavy black dinner jacket to the Residency and envied the Acting Resident's other guests in their light white mess-jackets. Stiven met me on the Residency balcony, where a table-lamp threw soft highlights on dainty little wooden fluted pillars with squeezed bases which frivolously pretend to support the roof. Douglas Barber, District Commissioner for Zanzibar, arrived with his wife. Barber is also Private Secretary to the Sultan, whom he described as the "grandest fellow." H.E. made his entrance, and Her Excellency, Mrs. Dutton, appeared in a long white dress. Over sherry, we discussed ballet and mepachrine—the yellow pills I had conscientiously swallowed in bulk since leaving Egypt, to ward off malaria. A course of mepachrine may affect different takers in different ways. It has been known to send allergic subjects into a manic depressive state, even temporary mental derangement. Most takers turn a brilliant jaundiced yellow but I fortunately finished my trip tanned sepia, without malaria and reasonably sane. Most East Africans I talked to in malarial areas take no precautions, except wearing long-sleeved shirts at night and sleeping under nets, and are resigned to the occasional bout of fever.

At the end of dinner we toasted the King, and the ladies left the men to dally over port while Dutton praised the

modern Dutch-Colonial architecture of Sir Herbert Baker in South Africa. We rejoined the ladies on the dimly-lit balcony, where H.E.'s conversation was accompanied by a backwash of waves from the beach below. Suddenly, over the balcony rail appeared two bright eyes, reflecting the lamp-light.

"Get a banana, Stiven," Dutton told his A.D.C. softly.

Stiven tip-toed away, returned with a banana, which Dutton held beside his chair. He continued talking quietly, ignoring the intruder. A wild lemur clambered over the rail, stealthily crept on all fours towards H.E. Grabbing the banana firmly, it hopped triumphantly back into the darkness, dinner secured.

I learnt the lemur comes every night to cadge.

Sketch pad under my arm, I set off in the late morning heat to draw the Sultan of Zanzibar in his Palace. With only three sheets of paper left in the pad, a very practical problem worried me, as I was anxious to make the best of the promised sitting. Would my wet and perspiring hands soak and buckle these last valuable sheets as I worked? Would the pencil swivel and slide from my slippery fingers? I dried my hands with a handkerchief, but in three seconds perspiration beaded them again.

I passed a briskly marching file of native troops in high tarboushes. "Eyes right!" ordered an N.C.O., slapping his rifle butt, and a row of black heads clicked towards me. Tickled by this unexpected honour, I doffed my sun helmet. The toy, comic-opera Sultanate of Zanzibar is, in some ways, reminiscent of the tiny principality of Monte Carlo.

At the white grille Palace gates a sentry saluted. I walked under a petal-pointed arch, across the veranda and into a cool hall hung with portraits of richly-draped Arabs. A servant in kanzu and crimson jacket showed me to an upstairs waiting-room. I noticed Barber's khaki topi on a chair and heard muffled voices from another room. I studied two faded, tinted photographs of the late King George and Queen Mary in coronation robes, dust thick under the glass, and framed Koranic quotations worked in gold.

Barber entered. "His Highness will see you now." He took

my sketch pad and ushered me into a narrow room lined with white linen covered chairs and overlooking an iridescent sea. The Sultan of Zanzibar, H.H. Seyyid Sir Khalifa bin Harub bin Thuwaini, G.C.M.G., K.B.E., rose and welcomed me to his country.

His Highness is tallish, slightly stooped, his flat turban a swirling blaze of blue, red and gold. The corners of his heavy-lidded, muddy-brown eyes pucker laughing wrinkles in coffee-coloured cheeks, horn-rimmed spectacles prop up quizzical eyebrows. He returned my bow and waved me to a chair on his left; Barber sat on my left like a shy child at a party. We sipped sweet sherbet from red glasses and bitter Arabian coffee from fragile pink-and-gold cups set in patterned silver holders. The Sultan, who speaks quick, lisping English, told me that Arabs drink dozens of cups of coffee a day. I inquired whether it was bad manners for a guest to accept more than three cups and he agreed that three was just the correct number. He himself also drinks several cups of tea a day, including early morning tea.

I asked His Highness if his chef stuck cloves in the Palace apple pie. The old gentleman's white beard quivered and his gaudy turban bobbed. He popped imaginary cloves into his mouth.

No, he eats no apple pie (he is a diabetic) but sometimes he sucks cloves as a substitute for smoking. He offered me Turkish cigarettes from a silver box. A heavy cigarette smoker, he dislikes cigars and has not smoked a pipe since, when yachting one day, a halyard whipped his pipe from his mouth and broke it. He regarded this, like breaking a mirror, as bad luck. He recalled the most pleasant amenity of his only air trip, from London to Alexandria by flying-boat, was permission to smoke.

He has visited England three times, for the Coronations of George V and VI and in 1929. On the first trip he sometimes wore European clothes but "on my other two safaris to England I never wear European dress. When we driving in London wearing Arab dress everyone look at us: very interesting!"

He hopes his subjects will not discard their picturesque costumes, although he concurred with Barber (who politely prompted the Sultan, invariably addressing him as "Your

Highness," a prefix I found myself incorrectly mingling with common-or-garden "you's) that native government clerks should wear suits. When he used to play polo and tennis, he changed into jodphurs and flannels because his long robes impeded movement. Most Zanzibar women remain veiled, draping their heads in the black bui-bui. He believes that sooner or later, as in Egypt and Turkey, they will come out of purdah. "Since I came to Zanzibar, I saw many changes, but we should go very slowly. The head of the family must, like myself, decide."

The Sultan's own views are modern and his young wife, who drives with him every afternoon and joins him on yachting trips, is said never to veil unless motoring past coffee shops patronized by conservative old Arabs. She promotes the emancipation of Arab women, has a modern flat in the Palace, and mingles with European ladies.

His first wife, who died a few years ago, represented the Victorian epoch of the Arab woman's world. She fed hundreds of poor people from the Palace kitchens and at her funeral everyone in Zanzibar, white, black, brown and albino, is said to have taken turns to shoulder her bier. Her son, Prince Abdulla, has been proclaimed successor to the Sultan.

"My son is always with me, and sees many things," said His Highness, discussing the Prince's education. English children, he thinks, become sophisticated at an earlier age than the Arabs. As an example of sensible training, he quoted two well-mannered children of Lady Astor, who expertly deputized for their parents when he visited the Astor's Scottish home on his last "safari."

I suggested we start the drawing, and servants moved our chairs around so the Sultan faced the light. He continued chain-smoking. Barber talked to him, kept his face animated by reading out for his approval details of a forthcoming trip to Pemba Island. Now and again the Sultan twinkled, bobbed and peeked over the top of the pad at the upside-down drawing. At last I showed him the damp and sticky result and he chuckled happily. We continued our conversation.

I asked whether he welcomed the new age of atomic energy. He pursed his full, mobile lips. "Very interesting: but would it not have been better for mankind if the discovery had never

been made?" He follows the B.B.C. Arabic programme and news bulletins, and his eyes lit up when I mentioned Om-Kalsoum, whose records are broadcast in the service. He was disappointed when I said that television, which fascinated him in London, would not come to his island for many years. He subscribes to the *Weekly Times*, *Illustrated London News*, and *Sphere*—and *Vogue*, for the Sultana.

The Sultan saw his first moving picture in Marseilles thirty-five years ago, a moral drama about a careless lady who retired to bed without extinguishing a kerosene lamp. A mouse knocked it over and lady and bedroom flared into flames. His Highness giggled at this recollection, extended his sensitive hands and vibrated them to imitate the flickering screen. He regrets not having seen Bop Hope and Bing Crosby in "The Road to Zanzibar" when the film came to Zanzibar. But like his indignant subjects he might have been sadly disappointed, because the island did not appear in the film.

His tastes, like those of other Moslems of the Ibathi sect, are simple and austere. A student of the Koran, he has a deep spiritual influence upon his subjects. Once when prisoners mutinied because of bad food, they marched from the jail to the Palace to ask, and receive, his moral and practical support. In 1903 he made the pilgrimage to Mecca with the reigning Sultan, his brother-in-law Seyyid Ali bin Hamoud.

Seven years earlier, on Seyyid Hamoud's accession, an usurper tried to grasp the throne. The British fleet bombarded the Palace, quelled the rising and gave the present Sultan (then aged seventeen, and newly arrived from Muscat) an uneasy forty minutes—he was in a house directly in the line of fire, with barrels of gunpowder stored beneath his apartments.

His picturesque and extravagant predecessor, Seyyid Hamoud, spent rather more than his income, and abdicated in 1911. The present Sultan, the Sultan's son and heir, and Seyyid Hamoud's sons (Pretenders to the Sultanate) are now on the Civil List. His Highness's income from the Government is 15,000 shillings a month. He grows cloves and coconuts on his own plantations, and signs cheques in shaking copper-plate English.

This year the Sultan completes thirty-five years of serene

and benevolent rule. While Zanzibar was under the threat of Japanese invasion, he declined a British offer of transport to a safe area and insisted on remaining in Zanzibar with his people. His cosmopolitan subjects respect His Highness as a gentleman "of graceful demeanour, the most amiable and beloved ruler that ever occupied the throne." Yet this fine old gentleman, who has been likened to King George V, confesses philosophically in his sixty-seventh year, "When you are fifty, you are at the top of the stairs, then you go slowly down."

With C. A. Bartlett, Secretary-Manager of the Clove Growers' Association and one of the world's clove experts, I walked through a clove warehouse; its fragrance can be sniffed half-a-mile away. Natives clambered ankle-deep over mountains of cloves, pouring and sprinkling further layers from open sacks on their shoulders. Graders quickly grabbed samples from each sack as it emptied. Bartlett told me there are 200 heads of cloves to one ounce, and I started to assess the number of heads in a pile fifteen feet high, soon lost myself in the trillions. And each and every clove is picked by hand! Labour is the dominating factor in the industry.

The unopened clove buds, which splay on stalks like clusters of pink baby fingers, are harvested from high bushy evergreen trees twice a year. The workers then remove buds from stems, spread them thinly over concrete and mats, and dry them in the sun until dark brown.

The spice is used, not only in cooking, but in smoking; shredded cloves are blended with tobacco and smoked by millions of Javanese natives. The effect is narcotic and soothing. Clove oil, a pale yellow liquid and very strong antiseptic, has many chemical uses and is an enemy of toothache. From clove oil a substance called "vanillin" is produced. An excellent substitute for vanilla, it flavours ice-creams, cakes, sweets and chocolates. Many cosmetics contain a distillate of cloves.

Some experts forecast the end of Zanzibar's clove industry within fifteen years unless the spread of "Sudden Death" can be curbed. Nor does Bartlett enthuse over the future of the projected cocoa industry. The Zanzibari have been picking cloves for over a hundred years, and he wonders if these easy-

going people will readily drop their tedious but natural inheritance for the unusual labour of planting and tending new trees, or produce cocoa at a competitive price.

On the other hand, Robert Williams, the Agricultural Officer recently transferred to the island after thirty years colonial service in Trinidad, likes the prospects of Zanzibar cocoa-growing. The Zanzibar white "Criollo" cocoa bean is of very high quality. For the next five years the industry must depend upon plants grown from the seeds of a hundred old cocoa trees already on Zanzibar and Pemba, after which the young freshly-planted trees will start bearing. The Government Agricultural Station and Stock Farm is growing cocoa plants in sheltered beds, and this year 5,000 young plants will be distributed to selected growers. At the Station, Williams opened several cocoa pods for me. They are about six inches long, shaped like a Rugby football and reddish-green in colour. He extracted the seeds from the white pulp. When washed dried and polished, they become exportable cocoa beans. I sucked pulp-encased seeds from some of the younger pods, found the pleasant, bitter-sweet taste quite unlike chocolate.

"We have to look for diversification in our cropping," said Williams, who realizes that dependency upon a single crop is economically and agriculturally dangerous. During the war export figures of copra rose to thirty-four per cent, and rice planting developed. He is experimenting with rotational crops on rice lands, cowpeas, sweet potatoes, maize, which increase the land's yield and fertility. Swamp land is being drained and irrigated for further rice cultivation. The Agricultural Station grows and distributes seeds and planting material of many crops, coffee, oil palm, banana, pawpaw, vegetables, maize, cassava. In the cassava plantation, Williams pulled up a long pale root, the raw material for tapioca. This also feeds cattle in the Stock Sheds, where selected African Zebu cattle (which store food reserves in the soft humps on their shoulders) are being studied, as well as goats and poultry. Williams was particularly proud of his experimental compost making, which answers two problems—the island's need for organic manure, and the disposal of household refuse!

The transient tripper who walks along the flower-fringed roads of clove-scented Zanzibar will sense happiness and

contentment around him. To me, friendly Zanzibar seemed even more remote from the troubles of the world than far Western Uganda. One day I intend to accept the Sultan's gracious invitation to return to his magically unreal little island in the Indian Ocean.

DEPRESSION IN DAR-ES-SALAAM

TWENTY minutes after leaving Zanzibar, my "Rapide" reached the grid-iron green and regimented palms of Dar-es-Salaam. With practiced hand I filled out the inevitable customs and immigration forms, brashly stating that I would stay only three days in the capital of the British Mandated Territory of Tanganyika. On the following Monday I was scheduled to continue by flying-boat down the coast to Lourenço Marques in Portuguese East Africa.

The only similarity between my stay in Dar-es-Salaam and the pleasant Zanzibar respite was, alas, the humid heat. I must have got out of the wrong side of the aircraft because, from the moment I left the airport, plans went amiss. Local residents, delegated by telegram to reserve an hotel room, had somehow blundered and once again I suffered from hotel famine. But for a last minute "wangle" by the B.O.A.C. station manager and the generosity of East African Airways pilots, who unearthed temporary accommodation in the New Africa Hotel, I might have slept on the beach. . . .

From the tiled balcony outside my room I looked down on an old German evangelical church, the flaming tops of flamboyant trees and the calm blue harbour. A stream of Indians flowed along the beach promenade, groups of girls



in filmy pastel saris walking a few yards ahead of their boy friends. The 32,000 Indians in Tanganyika outnumber Europeans by four to one. Like most of the larger buildings in town, the New Africa Hotel is a substantial relic of German colonizing days, its rooms high, spacious and airy. In the centre court, encircled by balconies, slender palms bear clusters of green coconuts. The architecture is simple, solid and surprisingly modern in appearance, but, like the town and its heat-fagged people, oh, so worn and tired.

My visit was too short to learn much about a territory of 360,000 square miles and five million Africans so, as in Mombasa, I commuted between my room, the "mess" (as the dining-room is called) and the bar, where I gleaned a harvest of gripes and disjointed information from the patrons, most of them government officials who play poker-dice for drinks. They were a friendly but sadly frustrated bunch. "East Africans had a tougher time during the war than the people in England," asserted an architect, tossing down a whisky and soda, a drink scarce in those parts. With no home leave since 1939, he grumbled about the intolerable climate, the overwork, and the boredom of unbroken association with one small group in the Civil Service hierarchy. An artist, less disgruntled, appeared satisfied with his moderate success painting portraits of rich Indians; racial discrimination is less rigid than in next-door Kenya. He gave me a few sheets of valuable drawing paper. A doctor opened his shirt to exhibit pink heat-rash under his arm-pits, and listed a few of the fevers, diseases and ailments that I, as a traveller through Africa, might possibly catch.

The commonest of all fevers is, of course, Malaria. Then about twenty-five per cent of people attacked by Blackwater Fever, a complication of Malaria in which the taking of quinine is a precipitating factor, die. There is no specific cure for Yellow Fever, but I was inoculated with a very effective vaccine before leaving London. The sickness starts suddenly with a high fever, and on the third or fourth day the patient becomes yellow and in a severe attack vomits blood. Within ten days he either recovers completely, or else becomes a cadaver. As the Yellow Fever mosquito is more widely distributed than the fever itself, health officers in African territories take elaborate precautions on incoming

aircraft, squirting the cabins with mosquito-killing insecticide before passengers disembark. A mosquito also carries Dengue Fever, widely spread throughout the tropics but not often mortal. It causes intense headaches and pains in the joints and bones. Tick-bite Fever, rarely fatal and very common in South Africa, is contracted by people camping-out on the veldt; in five days an ulcer, which develops a black centre, grows on the site of the infecting bite, and after headaches and fever a rash of spots like flea bites appears. Relapsing Fever, also carried by ticks, may take a more serious form; the doctor warned me not to sleep in native huts or on native camping sites.

The first symptoms of Sleeping Sickness resemble those of Malaria but fevers are more irregular. If treated in the early stages by certain drugs, a cure is guaranteed. "The tsetse fly is twice the size of the ordinary house-fly and has a hell of a stinger," said the doctor, who has been bitten by the dangerous fly that carries the sickness. Glands swell on the back of the neck and the patient tends to become comatose; after he reaches the later sleeping stage chances of recovery are slim.

Typhoid is common throughout Africa and there are several kinds of Typhus, rarely contracted by Europeans. Most people have a form of Amoebic Dysentery, which comes from swallowing infected food, milk and particularly water. For the duration of my trip I suffered from mild chronic dysentery. But the jigger-fleas luckily ignored my toes and I escaped many malevolent worms and flies—Hook Worm, Ring Worm, Guinea Worm (which usually appears in the leg or arm, grows up to three feet long and is sometimes wound out around a match stick), Mangrove Fly, Tumbu Fly (the larvae of which penetrate the skin to grow into maggots).

The European who wishes to avoid Bilharzia is advised not to bathe in the Nile or stagnant water, and to boil or stall all drinking water. The first sign of Bilharzia is a severe irritation of the skin, due to a worm—which originally grows in a water snail, and circulates in the water—piercing the skin. About four to six weeks later, a rash covers the patient's body. A characteristic symptom three months to two-and-a-half years after infection is the passing of blood, after the worm has matured in the blood vessels of the liver and migrated

to lay its eggs in the bladder. British troops who served in Egypt, East Africa, West Africa and other parts of the continent where the disease exists, refer to it as "Bill Harris." Half the people in the most heavily populated part of the Nile Delta suffer from Bilharzia, which is known to have existed in Egypt since the 20th Dynasty—that is, more than 3,000 years ago. Microscopical examination of the organs of mummies of that dynasty has shown traces of "Bill Harris."

There are other hazards—as diverse as Bubonic Plague and "Wajir Clap," caused by drinking water containing a high percentage of irritating salts, or as tropical ulcers and "Dobie" Itch, which is an infection supposedly contracted from badly laundered clothes.

But the cautious traveller in Africa is reasonably certain to escape most of these maladies, except perhaps heat rashes and dysentery, and stands little chance of contracting the commoner native diseases such as Yaws and Elephantiasis.

I gathered that most of the 3,500 German residents of Tanganyika had either been interned at the outbreak of war, sent to Germany or escaped over the border into neutral Portuguese East Africa. The territory became a German colony (German East Africa) in 1895. Britain accepted the Mandate after the Great War. A few years later some German settlers were allowed to repurchase their former plantations. The Teutonic imprint remains strong in Dar-es-Salaam; a senior official lives comfortably in the old German brothel near the Club, its ceilings still decorated with the original art. The Club, an impressive white-columned structure beyond a wide terrace, has been extended rather than altered.

The B.O.A.C. station manager received a telegram confirming that a seat was reserved on the flying-boat then en route from Cairo to Lourenço Marques and Durban. At noon on the Monday I waited in the B.O.A.C. building, my luggage neatly arranged at the end of the concrete jetty. The graceful aircraft, which only that morning had left Kisumu, skidded smoothly across the surface of the harbour, its prow cleaving up two great waves until it came to rest 200 yards from the jetty. It ejected passengers and crew into two motor-launches, which sped their cargoes ashore for glasses of lemonade and a leg-stretch.

The distressed station manager approached me. "Sorry, they can't take you!"

"You're not joking?" I said.

He was not joking. Somehow, somewhere, a mistake had been made. The aircraft had arrived fully loaded. I would now have to wait until next Thursday's flying-boat. And I had sacrificed my hotel room. . . .

This was by no means my first transport set-back. And I am afraid that the experience was only too typical of that chaotic first post-war year in British commercial aviation, when there were just not enough aircraft and trained personnel to carry both civilian and service passenger traffic. I was told that several thousand non-priority passengers were piled up in South Africa waiting to fly to England. Cairo's Almaza airport was a chronically congested bottle-neck, serving as it did Africa and the whole Middle East. "We're desperate, but doing everything we can," a priority official in Cairo admitted. As a transit passenger changing from flying-boat to Dakota, I was held up at Cairo five days on my return trip to England from South Africa; a fast passenger ship from Cape Town to Southampton would have taken me home more quickly.

Once a passenger managed to board a flying-boat, he was carried to his destination quickly enough, unless he had a low travel priority and found himself "unloaded" at some desolate spot because a higher priority passenger wished to board the full aircraft.

Needless to say, all applications for travel priority were carefully scrutinized and assessed by the government priority boards in London, Cairo and elsewhere. Business men usually got a No. 3 priority (No. 4 was Worse than Death), which sped them on their way with the minimum of unexpected delay.

Harassed B.O.A.C. traffic officers diplomatically coped with choleric passengers by disclaiming responsibility for delays and inconveniences. They pointed out that the Civil Aviation Ministry Priorities Board loaded B.O.A.C. aircraft and—with an envious look at American airlines' rapidly expanding services and a wistful glance back at pre-war Imperial Airways service—regretted that B.O.A.C. was nowhere near being a civil airline yet. Some admitted that a priority system should continue for a while in the national interest; but they wanted

at least a sizable allocation of seats allowed them on each plane exclusively for non-priority "first come, first served" customers.

An inconvenient result of inadequate airport facilities at Almaza (and other African airports) was that air passengers had to pack and lug all their baggage down to the Air Booking Centre for weighing-in, the day before departure. Then there were irksome customs restrictions everywhere, passport scrutinies and the transit visa demands of countries like Egypt and Portuguese East Africa. The dotted lines between the neighbouring British-administered territories of the Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Zanzibar and Tanganyika sprout into customs, currency and immigration walls over which the traveller must climb, if he wishes to stay a while in each area.

At night stop-overs on the African route, through passengers are often asked to share bedrooms with travelling companions because of hotel famine. Held back by dust storms on my return trip to Cairo, our flying-boat and two other aircraft alighted upon a surprised B.O.A.C. station manager at Luxor and decanted seventy-four passengers for the night! A local hotel welcomed this off-season visitation; but passengers are not always so lucky in other accommodation emergencies.

A B.O.A.C. traffic clerk contrived to procure me another bed in Dar-es-Salaam, in the annexe of a blowsy second-class Greek hotel, where I had to share a room. "We don't let rooms, only beds," said the receptionist when I tried to do better for myself.

Had I been forewarned of an extended term in Tanganyika, I would have procured transport 500 miles inland to one of the areas where the tsetse fly continues to spread desolation over the country. At Shinyanga scientists are investigating what still appears to be an insoluble problem, the eradication of the fly. Highly technical papers have been published on contemporary research with the super-potent insecticide D.D.T. In Zululand, South African government aircraft have been spraying D.D.T. over hundreds of acres in an infested game reserve, but results have yet to be collated. I was told by an ex-researcher that scientists are not much further ahead in combating the scourge than they were twenty years ago.

The extra few days in Dar-es-Salaam frittered away fretfully

in the melting heat. I passed the display window of an Indian photographer and, fascinated by his pictures of negroes riding bicycles before drawing-room backdrops and solemn squinting Asiatics sitting behind tables stacked with books, had a photograph taken in the new Zanzibar suit to send home to my wife. In the evenings I visited Chez Clo, a popular restaurant-bar specializing in bacon and egg suppers, or else walked to the New Africa Hotel, sat on the porch and watched small pale lizards crawl and flick over the ceiling, stalking insects. Their transparent bellies darkened with each new catch. "We like those house lizards," said Muller the manager. "They catch the mosquitos."

I was glad to leave Dar-es-Salaam.

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DAR-ES-SALAAM TO LOURENÇO MARQUES

THE Master of the "Cordelia" remembered me from a previous flight between Malakal and Port Bell. But I did not recall Captain Anderson nor the other members of the flying-boat's crew, a nuggety purser, a wireless officer with unpainted black eyebrows, a young First Officer seconded from the R.A.F. My principal memory of the flip from Malakal was a very bad hangover!

Airborne over Tanganyika on the long 1,500 mile flight to Lourenço Marques, I surveyed the load of tired and sweating passengers, who had not come ashore at Dar-es-Salaam. A corpulent man in the next-door smoking cabin tried to sleep, turned and twitched; other passengers read, or wrote letters on the felt-top tables. . .

But my contemplation was interrupted by a cascade of five small children who squirmed and squealed over my bench. A brace of tired mothers belted the brats, increasing the din. A pretty woman in slacks whacked her male child with one hand, soothed her little girl with the other. I rose and waded out of the battle to gaze through a window at the green plush cultivation of Tanganyika, worn threadbare by drought. We were skirting the coast; a coral reef stretched pale green under the dark blue ocean, like some drowned prehistoric monster with mottled arms outstretched. The mosquito wing of a dhow caught the sun.

"The roads in Tanganyika are good only for six months of the year," said a passenger travelling to Lindi on Economic Control Board business. "We have to send six months food to some districts before the rainy season sets in." The shocking road communications of the territory are notorious.

The "Cordelia" refuelled on the lustrous sea inlet at Lindi. An ancient launch, covered with a tarpaulin and manned by black B.O.A.C. sailors in white shirts, shorts and sailor hats, took us ashore. The passengers spread out for fifteen minutes along a ragged shore road. A group of bare totos stared, fascinated, at the white children playing cowboys and Indians under the keel of a beached launch. On the return journey to the aircraft, the white children enhanced their unpopularity by splashing water over themselves and other passengers.

At Cape Delgado we left the coastline for smoother flying, and mists blurred the mainland on our right—Portuguese East Africa!

"Many ships were sunk below during the war," someone said, hinting that Portuguese neutrality had had its Axis uses. The youngsters stopped assembling a jig-saw puzzle around my feet and, with fierce cries, hurled in my direction paper darts skilfully made from paper serviettes by the First Officer, down from the cockpit for a breather.

The flying-boat sailed down the coast to the island of Mozambique, circled above its pastel tinted buildings, the high walls and bare enclosures of the penal settlement, a fifteenth century fort—and slid down to the long jetty and beached house-boat at Lumbo, on the nearby mainland.

That night we dined and slept in the charming B.O.A.C.-operated Hotel do Lumbo. A cool balcony, enclosed by mosquito-proof netting, faces the jetty. The building (a converted slave-market) contains surprising amenities for such a remote spot—electric fans and standing suit-hangers in the "modernistic" bedrooms, immaculate bathrooms with hot water and showers, a well-stocked bar and an attractive white-costumed receptionist who is the wife of Alan Collins, breezy station manager.

In the evening I would have liked to visit the historical town and island of Mozambique, discovered by Vasco da Gama in 1498 and the cradle of the Colony of Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa). But no launch was available from Lumbo. Doubtless, when British aviation regains its stride, travellers at night-stops will be offered transport, guides and the opportunity to view their novel environment on the ground. I do not suggest that B.O.A.C. supplant the functions of tourist agencies like Cook's and the American Express, but a close liaison with some such agency is called for in Lumbo, Cairo, Khartoum, Nairobi and other African night-stops.

We were called at two-forty-five in the morning to start another long series of hops down the coast. Sleepy passengers gathered miserably in the dim porch and stumbled down the steps in drizzling rain. The lamp-posts on the jetty flashed past us like snails as we crawled along slippery boards to the distant launches. At four-fifteen the "Cordelia" rose out of the flare-path into a jet sky. I brushed the children off the bench and stretched out full length. The kids, after some whimpering, were rolled up in blankets in the aisle and Morpheus flew with us, southwards. I slept unmolested till dawn.

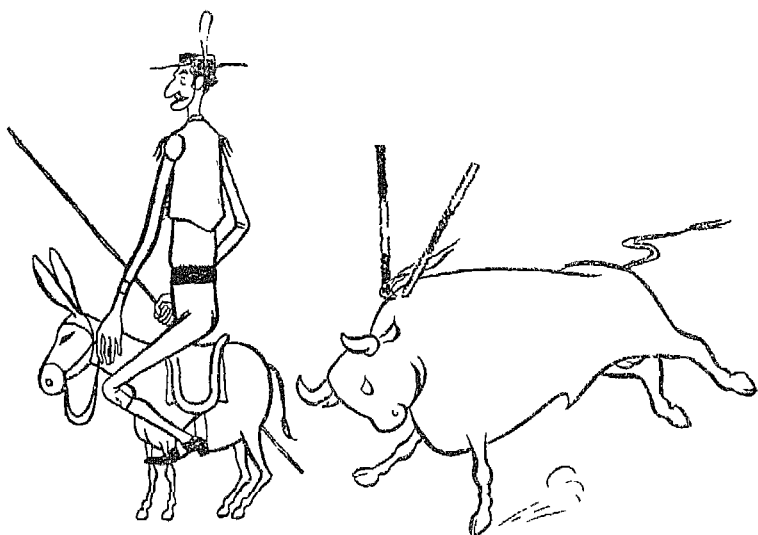
Portuguese East Africa in the rainy season dramatically contrasts the thirsty surface of other parts of the continent. I awoke to see streamers of rain weaving across the windows like tadpoles in a glass tank. The flooded Zambezi River formed a bronze question-mark in

water-logged earth. Streets of a damp town glistened, and we splashed down on the opaque yellow waters of Beira harbour. A very wet pelican flapped its wings on a sodden sand-bank.

"We're now over the 'great, grey, green, greasy Limpopo,' " quoted Barrett, our purser, after breakfast at Beira. He leant against the entrance of the cabin, smoking. A boy slapped a girl with a fly-swat and the smallest girl sat on my Homburg hat. The clouds opened their frothy mouth, and I saw the Limpopo River inlaid in a soggy forest, which soon dissolved into a broad plain sprawling west

"I try to make passengers feel this is my home and they're my guests," continued Barrett, absent-mindedly plucking a child from his hair. "We're selling air travel to the public, sir." But on certain bad sectors of the route heavy documentation and book work monopolize Barrett's time. After ascertaining the Captain's wishes as to the centre of gravity of the aircraft, the purser is then responsible for the correct distribution of the load. He has the care of all mails, freight and baggage, and compiles the ship's papers—Log Book, Load Sheet, Passenger List, Cargo Manifest, etc. He even lists details of when meals are served ashore and what refreshments are "uplifted" at different airports. Until stewards return to flying-boats, the purser must substitute whenever possible. He allocates the seats. Barrett likes to know all he can about likely passengers, then tries to seat them in an intelligent juxtaposition of mutual interests and destinations. And to give the aching backs of side-benchers a rest on long trips, he asks passengers in comfortable seats to change over with the martyrs occasionally.

The sienna roads and cliffs, the flaming red mud flats, the docks and quays and ships of sultry Lourenço Marques, loomed through the rain mist. I put on my sun helmet, grasped my typewriter and brushed up my Portuguese.



"A FEW LOURENÇO RE-MARQUES"

THE halcyon holiday season in Lourenço Marques, capital of Portuguese East Africa and "Africa's largest port, and the Tourists' Mecca—NEVER a cloud in the sky, NEVER a chill in the sea, NEVER a doubt in the sunshine, NEVER a pause in the pleasure, NEVER a care in the world," extends from May to September. So my arrival on February 1st disconcerted A. E. Campos, manager of the railways Publicity Department, one of whose jobs is to unveil "South Africa's continental holiday-land" for interested journalists. The town during the off-season is dead as a polar bear in a furnace.

Our conversation rattled like pebbles in a can as we lunched in the vast, empty Polana Hotel. Campos handed me advertising brochures, and painted bright verbal water-colours of sweeping Polana beach, described in a folder as "bordering on so tranquil a bay that even moderate boisterousness is unknown here. Never is the bather in any degree open to peril, and even the smallest child frolics with perfect safety at the ocean's verge." Lyrically he described the many seasonal amenities of a town that before the war was known as Africa's Monte Carlo—the fishing, yachting, golf, motor drives, night-

life, and excursions to Kruger National Park, the vast South African game sanctuary sixty miles north-west.

Thereafter our conversation continued on a higher level. Campos, a bachelor and son of an important Portuguese poet, is excellent company and speaks fluent English, although he fails to detect puns. They worry him.

“Off-season or not, I’ll have to make a few Lourenço re-Marques about your town,” I said. Puzzled, he asked me to try a few more puns, but missed them all.

I told him I had met British District Commissioners in East Africa, and wished to contrast them with a colourful Portuguese field official.

“Administrator Castelo Branco,” cried Campos. “He’s just your man!”

The eccentric Castelo Branco holds the Legion d’Honneur, fought and was gassed in the first World War, wears a monocle and administers the sub-district of Maputo from his headquarters at Bela Vista about thirty miles south of Lourenço Marques. The district borders on Zululand and supports 30,495 cattle and 43,226 negroes, as well as goats, sheep, pigs, donkeys and varied crops. It abounds in leopards, rhino, hippo, lions, jackals and, particularly, elephants. Delighted at the prospect of capturing in one bag elephants, lions and a Portuguese D.C., none of which I had hitherto seen in Africa, I warmly approved Campos’ nomination. He promised to organize an expedition to Maputo within a few days.

For a room and bathroom at the Polana Hotel I was paying £2 a day, but soon moved to a smaller room on the third floor, facing away from the sea and next a rumbling service lift, where I was permitted to type at all hours. For this I paid 145\$00 (145 escudos, about £1 10s. od.) a day, including meals, still more than I could afford on a limited budget: before leaving England I was allowed to convert into escudos only a small amount of sterling. Comparatively cheap in Lourenço Marques are locally made cigarettes (2/- for 50) and Portuguese wine, a bottle of pleasant claret costing about 7/6. Other drinks are expensive, and a taxi to town from the hotel is 4/-.

The Polana provided the snappy one-day laundry service of most other African hotels, and its Goan waiters and negro

servants were by far the slickest, most unobtrusive and best trained I met on the continent. The telephone in my room was an unusual asset and antique novelty. The bell would tinkle and someone chatter to me in Portuguese, then hang up; or else I would ring through to the switchboard, give a number several times, hear a lady telephonist say "'Uillo'" several times or just murmur "huh?" and fade away. Later the lady told me she attended Berlitz School to learn English.

A South African corporation built the hotel for half-a-million pounds. Subsidized by the Portuguese Government, it caters almost exclusively for big spenders from South Africa. "A stately edifice, with an interior as beautiful as the gardens outside," said one of Campos' brochures. Inside the building I felt like a microbe lost in Grand Central Station; but my main recollection is of the fresh, pre-seasonal paint smell from spruced walls and pillars and—that telephone!

One drives to town through wide verdant avenues lined with tiled, ornate villas tinted in delicate greens, pinks, apricots and creams. The jacaranda, flamboyante, oleander and other tropical trees and plants bloom in the gardens and parks. The town itself is a patchy mixture of tattiness and fruity architectural magnificence, with a "continental flavour". The older cobbled streets run into straight boulevards paved with mosaics. Prices of garments in shop-windows are inflated and prohibitive, and I wondered how the civil servants of the Colony, more than half the European population of 23,000, managed to live on their small government salaries.

Local bureaucracy collects a tax on verbosity. To write to a government department one buys special ruled writing-paper at 1/- a sheet, so the more one has to say, the more one pays. Each sheet must carry a stamp, which costs another 1/-. And if the stamp is incorrectly cancelled, the writer is liable to a fine!

Described as a territory of vast potentialities, Portuguese East Africa needs capital to develop its great agricultural and mineral resources. But an important source of current income is the export of "black ivory." Under an arrangement with the South African Government, the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association is allowed to recruit up to 90,000 natives from the Colony, who are transported under contract to work in the gold mines of the Rand. On their return home

they are liable to various taxes, deducted from their earnings over the period. And many more natives are said to cross the border to work in the Transvaal and mines in other territories. Their health is carefully supervised on mine compounds, but I was told that nevertheless they bring tuberculosis back to Portuguese East Africa. The negro has not the same resistance to the disease as the European and, says Dr. Manuel Prates, an eminent research doctor in Lourenço Marques, the spread of tuberculosis will create a new African scourge.

“Believe me, the entire African race is condemned one day,” exclaimed Dr. Prates, staring at me intently through spectacles shaded under a thatch of black eyebrows. “Tuberculosis is a most disturbing development.” But Dr. Prates’ special research is the too prevalent cancer of the liver amongst natives. One cause is believed to be the very high acid content of drinks such as I tasted in the native pub at Kitui, brewed from fruits, seeds, peduncles, the sap of trees, etc. The doctor, who has experimented with these beverages on small animals and written learned papers on the subject, may soon have something new to disclose to the medical profession. In the native hospital I glanced through his card system, in which all cases are listed under two headings—the organs of the body and the various diseases which affect them—and the diseases, with the organs in which they are found, from which one can tell the prevalence of certain diseases in certain organs. Significantly, cirrhosis of the liver fills many cards; and cancer, particularly of the liver, occupies a very large section. The doctor showed me sheets given to cadaver analysis, on which every organ is described with both his diagnosis and the microscope’s findings.

“I am alone, except for one assistant,” complained the doctor, who finds time to dissect a cadaver only every three days. Every remnant from the operating theatre goes to his laboratory where “I make a description of it.” He showed me a ghastly delicatessen of pickled and bottled organs. To make a microscopic slide, an organ is first set in hot paraffin by one of his trainees (pretty *senhoritas* in white coats). After the paraffin hardens, she slices the specimen with a machine like a small bacon cutter, and a fine wafer of tissue is ready for the slide, dyeing and microscopic examination.

Most gruesome section in the doctor’s department is that

given to coloured plaster replicas of tumors, tropical ulcers, frambocsia and other diseases, modelled realistically by the local museum taxidermist and copied from living and dead natives.

Because of the mentally sterilizing effect of the steamy climate, the doctor may not remain in Lourenço Marques after the duration of his contract, but he hopes to train enough assistants to continue collecting and tabulating data from which he will make deductions elsewhere. Dr. Prates is typical of other idealistic researchers working on tropical diseases elsewhere in Africa. Their constant cry is "Give us more money, more equipment, more staff."

"Excitement is added to the night life of the city by the casinos," vaunts a pre-war brochure. But to-day roulette and baccarat are forbidden, as is gambling for high stakes. Wilting patrons dally at boule and poker-dice in a dingy casino, and drop escudos into the fruit machines. I was reminded of a French municipal casino when, with an English and a Portuguese friend, I made a valiant effort one sweltering night to be gay in Lourenço Marques. A Spanish dancer clacked castanets and her white teeth in the cabaret, while my friends sipped lemon squash.

In the rowdier dens down the street we found more character. Our arrival at the Café Penguin synchronized with the ejection of a drunk Philipino sailor. We grabbed his table. A mulatto waitress with gold ear-rings swabbed up the spilt beer, took our order. Electric fans twirling from the penguin-painted ceiling stirred the humid air. Merchant seamen and swarthy Portuguese colonials cheered and hooted Maria Alice, from Lisbon, who sang sentimental songs in a husky voice. Her broad trunk, encased in tight pink tulle, sprouted thick white arms and legs, her snub nose and great eyes melted into a warm plump face. She danced, and her red shawl flickered. A five-piece orchestra scraped on a dais, near a fanlight lettered "Gambling Saloon, 1st floor." A cockroach crawled across the dance floor and up a pillar.

We found somewhat the same atmosphere at the Café Imperium where Maria do Rosario, also from Lisbon, waved her arms like fronds of sea-weed in the smoky fug and sang popular melodies, the customers joining in. The audience

was almost exclusively male, except for mulatto hostesses and a synthetic blonde visitor from the Polana Hotel, who sat being stroked by two suitors at a table.

“Zis ees not a proper bull-fight like in Portugal,” warned a waiter at the Polana, giving me a yellow handbill. I read:

“BULL-FIGHT on Sunday at the ‘Sporting Club!’ ”

“Big Show with Portuguese artists and a group of local toureiros. It will be run with 8 Bulls special selected for this fight. The 2nd part will apear the original group of comedians who will provide the light relief. They will be headed by the impersonater of Charlie Chaplin who will, as usual cause laughter. It will be a great afternoon of joy and emotion.”

Eager to experience the joy and emotion promised in the advertisement, I braved the ninety per cent humidity on Sunday afternoon, wakened a taxi-driver from his siesta and drove to the Lourenço Marques Sporting Club, where I sat on a wooden bench in the front row of a reed-roofed grandstand. A thousand white-clad senhors and their plump soft-eyed senhoras fanned themselves and stared down into an empty bull-ring. Across the small enclosure a crowd of “indigenas” (natives) filled the cheaper seats. A dozen little black boys perched on the top row like starlings on a telegraph wire.

The green-and-red flag of Portugal drooped over the oval arena, enclosed by a rough wooden fence and a higher outer fence of corrugated iron. On my right, two English merchant seamen, their arms blue with tattoo scrolls, their faces boiled a wet pink by the sun, swilled bottles of warm pilsener. Behind me a tanned young Portuguese discussed bull-fighting with a South African girl tourist.

“’Ere we started bull-fights last year only, for the first time in seven years,” he was saying. “They did not used to pay, because of immature artists and not the proper cattle.”

“Isn’t it a dangerous sport, Manuel,” asked the girl, “and cruel to the bulls?”

“Oh, oh, yes,” said Manuel. “Quite often people are injured. But we Portuguese do not kill the bull, like in Spain. Of course, there are those who think it cruel to make the bull suffer by letting ’im live to be in further fights.”

“Bring on the bull!” shouted the seamen. The brass band

struck up a military march. A group of soldiers in bright khaki drill and tan leggings clapped and whistled.

A bugle blared, and into the ring paraded a ragged file of bull-fighters. Those with scarlet capes slung over their shoulders wore white jackets, cloth caps and red sashes. Others wore green tasselled hats, short pink jackets and tight yellow trousers. They, Manuel explained, were the forcados

"They tackle the bull with their 'ands. I like thees, because it is even chances."

The picadores, in wide-brimmed hats and carrying long sticks, bounced behind the procession on the backs of skittish donkeys. The crowd laughed. The warriors circled the arena and retired behind the fence. The toureiros awaited the first bovine onslaught.

"The short man is Fernando Henriques, 'oo is a bus-driver. The other is Feliciano Antonio, a butcher," continued Manuel. "They were once professional bull-fighters in Lisbon. They get twenty per cent of the takings and pay the other performers."

Another bugle blast. The gates to the pens opened and into the arena, straight for Fernando, dashed a lean, wild, brown bull. The ex-professional stood poised, his cape held lightly before him. The bull lowered its horns and butted the air where the bull-fighter had stood a split second before.

"Watch the bull-fighter in action, 'is legs always moving, 'is body always straight," squealed Manuel.

"That fellow talks too much," growled one of the sailors.

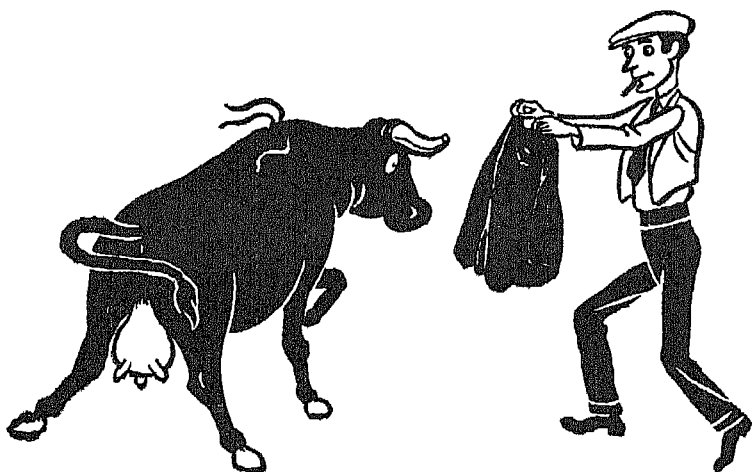
Other toureiros were now in the ring, wagging and flaunting their capes. The bull charged one after another, its horns skimming the trousers of the less agile as they scaled the fence.

Feliciano stepped nimbly before the bull, two long darts covered in pink, white and green paper shavings (bandarilhas) dangling from his finger tips. The angry animal closed on him. He lifted his arms and plunged the bandarilhas over the horns and into the bull's shoulders. The spectators roared approval. The victim bellowed. Bucking and twirling, mouth open and saliva whipping the air, it tried to shake out the barbs. Other toureiros planted their bandarilhas. Soon, a pin-cushion of flopping coloured shafts, with blood streaming down its back, the bull had had enough. The gates opened and it fled back to the pen.

Manuel explained to his perturbed guest that the bandarilhas pierced the skin only half-an-inch. “Salt is put in the wounds and the bull is sent to grass. The only cattle used again are those good in their first fight.

“And next come the apprentices. That’s where you laugh most.”

A large, black, shining and bewildered cow ambled into the ring, her horns enclosed in leather sheaths. She trotted over to the grandstand, listened to the band. Several young toureiros fluttered around her, swirling their capes. She pawed up the dust. An apprentice punctured her shoulder



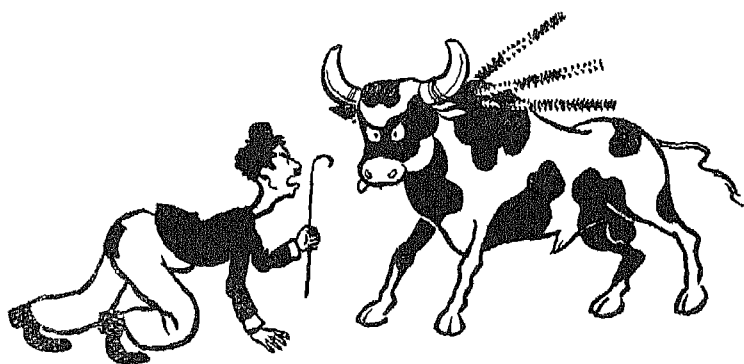
with a bandarilha. Enraged, she attacked the young man. They scattered; but one, not slick enough, was sent spinning by her swinging horn, and retired behind the fence in some pain.

“Now is a steeplechase,” giggled Manuel, as another bull sped across the arena and, anxious to go home, leapt over the inner barrier but failed to clear the outer. Spectators taunted it by banging against the iron fence. The would-be pegasus, prodded back into the ring, leapt out again. Only when stung by bandarilhas did it turn its attention to the fighters.

A line of forcados walked slowly towards it. The leading forcado thrust out his stomach and clapped his hands almost

under its nose. The bull lowered its horns and charged. The forcado flung himself over the horns, linked his arms around the beast's thick neck and hung on. The bull tried to toss him off. Another forcado gripped its tail and his colleagues piled themselves on the angry head until the star performer jumped off. This stunt, Manuel disclosed, was called a "pega" and was usually dedicated to someone in the audience.

After the interval appeared the "light relief." Two chairs were set in the middle of the ring. The "impersonator of Charlie Chaplin" waddled towards them, followed by two burlesque barbers and a page-boy in pill-box hat. The clowns



forced Charlie Chaplin into a chair, slapped him with an out-size paint brush and scraped his face with a cardboard razor. A young brindle bull rushed into the ring, saw the red cape tucked around Charlie's neck, and charged. The comics flapped their hands and ran, Charlie fell in the dirt, tangled in the cape. The bull swerved and made for a barber, who squirted its brow with a flit-gun. The animal paused, allowing Charlie to squat under its nose and drink a bottle of beer. The performers knelt and crawled abreast towards the bull, barking. The puzzled beast retreated. Charlie grasped it around the horns, the page boy held on to its tail and the barbers "shaved" its flanks. Finally, pushing one behind the other like a football scrum, the comics butted the bull backwards.

Hardly less fantastic, the next item featured two picadores

mounted on jittery donkeys. The donkeys, butted from behind, careered away from the bull like buck-jumpers, sending the riders sprawling.

A magnificent old black-and-white bull strutted on to the stage for the final number. A lottery ticket was pinned to the champion's back.

“Thees is a ‘bravo,’ a fierce bull,” yelled Manuel. “Look, the forcados are afraid to tackle it.” The spectators jeered at the cautious forcados.

Suddenly, from his seat in the audience the most clamorous of the critics leapt over the fences and into the ring. He flung himself on the bull's horns. Snorting, the animal reared and rushed around the ring, the bull-fighters after it. The amateur clung on, bouncing on the tossing head. The crowd was on its feet, roaring excitedly. The amateur, his shirt tails flapping, kept a firm head-lock until the others stacked themselves on the frenzied beast and released him.

Lottery ticket in hand, he bowed to the cheering crowd. Admirers clambered into the arena, embraced, shouldered and carried him to the grandstand. A fat spectator in the expensive seats leant forward, shook his hand and gave him a bank note for 100 escudos. The bull-fighters retired with scowling faces; and into an empty ring trotted a last and lonely bull.

“‘E is for the musicians and the public,” concluded Manuel, guiding his girl to the exit. “‘E is supposed to be a mild bull for curious amateurs, but thees one ‘as ‘ad several fights and can read and write.”

A sudden heavy shower sprayed the arena. Left to his own devices, the latecomer peered curiously over the palings at the dispersing crowds, monarch of all he surveyed until the next bull-fight.

Twice Campos telephoned to say our visit to Castelo Branco in Maputo was postponed because of heavy floods. The roads to Bela Vista were impassable. But rain, thunder and lightning did little to cool the air; I awoke every morning with head swimming, and sheets and pyjamas sopping wet with sweat. A heat rash marched steadily up my stomach and chest like a column of red ants. The African hotel-keeper who installs air-conditioning will double his fortune.

I continued hearing appetizing anecdotes about the picturesque Castelo Branco, who is well known in Lourenço Marques—about his exploits in the Foreign Legion, how he sings to his servants when giving them orders, how he laughingly relishes being called “Mr. White Castle.” I pictured the Administrator as a colonial Don Quixote, a Velasquez-ish Grandee of the tropical bush, his monocle flashing in the fierce mid-day sun. So when Campos at last finalized our expedition to Maputo, I packed a clean shirt and was down at his office in the rococo railway station before you could say “Castelo Branco.”

The thoughtful Campos eyed my immaculate white trousers with disapproval, shut the door, produced from his suitcase a pair of bright yellow shorts with diagonal pockets and turn-up cuffs, and told me to get into them. Fortunately they fitted. Suitable attired for the jungle, I accompanied him to a stone quay in the harbour. Administrator Castelo Branco was to meet us on the other side, at Catembe, and drive us through his domain to Bela Vista.

At the quay we were joined by a stocky unshaven Portuguese with bristling hair and teeth like a dredger-scoop, a green tweed sports jacket draped over his shoulders, Continental-fashion. We were introduced—I did not catch his name—and with other Europeans and a mob of natives clambered into a ferry launch. Campos, jerking his head towards the negroes sitting on either side of us, reminded me there is no colour bar in his country, the only distinction on the launch being that white men pay double fare.

Across the harbour, at Catembe, the three of us lunched in the beach restaurant. Campos' friend, talking excitedly in scrappy English, denounced the sissiness of local “cow-fights”; he had a habit of clapping his knees together to punctuate each sentence. I told Campos I had heard that some colonials favour breaking away from Portugal's remote control, expressed through a “dictatorial” Governor-General. They want a greater measure of self-government, even moot federation with their rich neighbour South Africa, which in so many ways dominates the colony. He condemned them as “traitors” and said they are in a tiny minority.

Our companion left for a moment to pay the bill, and I asked who he was.

“That’s Administrator Castelo Branco,” said Campos, shocked. “Why, didn’t you know?”

“But you said Branco would meet us over here. . . .”

“Yes, but he decided to cross the harbour instead. I introduced you.”

Branco returned to the table, at Campos’ request put in his monocle, and I re-focused. This tough, rugged official was nothing like my original conception of an eccentric Portuguese administrator, but once readjusted I looked forward to seeing him in action in the bush.

But, alas, it was not to be. We squeezed into the front seat of Branco’s truck and drove along a muddy road, past a lighthouse and through an avenue of slender casuarina trees, which rustle like the sea. Two miles on, Branco stopped at a small administration building to telephone his house, returned dejected and apologetic to say both his wife and cook were sick. Could I postpone my visit to Bela Vista for a day or two?

I explained that my African itinerary had been further disrupted because of the two previous postponements of our expedition to Maputo, and that I was booked on a flying-boat to Durban on Saturday. Sadly, I regretted having to cancel the safari altogether. Branco strengthened my decision by admitting I would see no elephants, because of the rainy season. Regretfully, Campos and I returned to Catembe where, as we solaced ourselves with a drink, the ferry launch to Lourenço Marques left without us but with our luggage on board.

The thwarted and dispirited Campos shrugged his shoulders!

I could have visited Bela Vista after all: the flying-boat arrived two days late. Alighting en route on the Nile at Malakal, it met a flight of ducks arising from the reeds, denting the starboard wing and several birds. (I wonder if the Woolveridges enjoyed roast duck for dinner that night?)

During the delay, I saw my only elephant in Africa, a big stuffed one in the sanguine little Lourenço Marques museum. I viewed the exhibits in the central sexangular hall, not behind glass cases, but fighting, eating, and licking each other on the floor all around me. Perhaps the most fearsome example of realistic taxidermy is a lion clawing the back of a falling

zebra, its teeth plunged into the striped neck. The bloody battle of the jungle continues behind glass in another section where, feathers flying, a crane drives its sharp beak into the breast of a hawk, and ferocious eagles slaughter terrified monkeys, gazelles, snakes and hares. Birds are magically suspended in motion, gliding through the air with no visible wire supports. A great albatross swoops to drag a squid from the sea; only on close inspection does one realize that the heavy superstructure of bird and prey is supported on a single slim squid tentacle tipping a plaster wave.

Museums usually depress me, but this animal Chamber of Horrors is worth a visit.

LOURENÇO MARQUES TO DURBAN

WHILE waiting to board flying-boats, I never failed to be thrilled by their arrival and graceful descent on to river, lake or harbour for refueling. The eddies of the white motor-launches as they skim out to the anchorage and return with a mixed cargo of anonymous passengers. The refueling, too, of the passengers with tea or lemonade as they sag into seats in the reception room, loosen their ties and gaze around at their strange and temporary environment.

Of course, the fastest way to travel to South Africa from England was by the Springbok service operated jointly by B.O.A.C. and South African Airways. An express airliner transported the hurried business man 6,800 miles in less than two days, half of it night-flying.

But the alternative and less direct route—from Hurn to Cairo by land plane, then a series of daytime waddles by slow Short "C" Class flying-boat down the Nile to Lake Victoria, across to Mombasa and thence down the east coast of Africa to Durban—remained infinitely more interesting for the traveller who, without flying as the crow by day and the owl by night, wanted a bird's eye view of the great African continent.

The flying discomfort I experienced on the route was due to abnormal congestion and my penalty for boarding aircraft at intermediate stops. Many travellers and B.O.A.C. employees will be sorry when these limping but roomy old flying-boats are withdrawn from service.

While the passengers of the "Caledonia" lunched on the restaurant-raft in Lourenço Marques and I waited to embark with them, Victor Hutchins, station manager, and Jorge Abreu, Portuguese traffic officer—both of whom had contrived to make my short off-seasonal stay in the town more than pleasant—gave me a luxurious souvenir Portuguese "Album Comemorativo"; and Jorge also handed me a smaller book of drawings of native types, which he had inscribed "Remember the Portuguese. They are small, but not a bad crowd."

We left the red cliffs of Lourenço Marques, shelving down to plantations of trees planted along the foreshore, the Polana Hotel ostentatiously monopolizing a promontory, and crossed breakers hem-stitching delicate white lace on to the blue satin of Delagoa Bay. A decomposing terrain unrolled into Zululand, where herds of tiny cattle squirmed slowly inside compounds, like maggots in bad meat. A green-white

patch of flamingoes mildewed the rim of a lake. And like flies stuck on curling fly-papers, animals (possibly hippos) dotted a muddy river.

The iron roofs of our first South African town heralded wide stretches of cultivation and afforestation, with deep firebreaks peeled through the packed trees. The passengers chatted excitedly as, 286 miles and two hours from Lourenço Marques, we reached the prosaic outlying bungalows of Durban. "Here is my home town," exulted the purser. The buzzing of the electric motors forwarned an alighting, the flying-boat glided in low over a railway causeway and came to rest on the harbour—in a new and man-made perspective of minor skyscrapers, which reached feebly into the air that had been mine for nearly four exciting months.

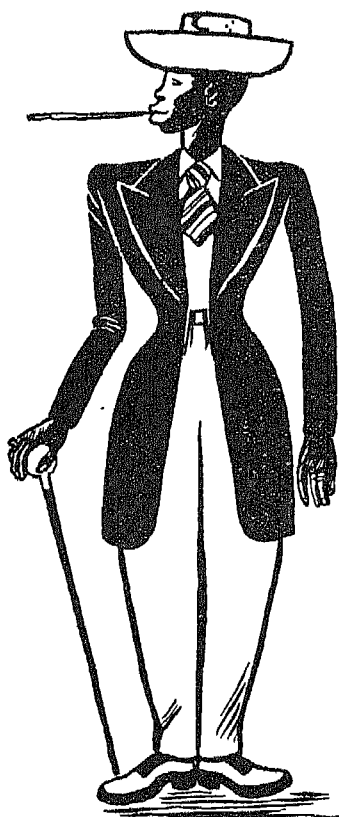
BI-LINGUAL DOMINION

THE white-skinned, African-born citizens of Durban and the Dominion of South Africa style themselves "Europeans" to distinguish themselves from the tinted, or black, "Non-Europeans." To-day, in the sunken eyes of the rationed, bona-fide European visitor, they have a plump and well-fed look.

Lounge suits, waistcoats and felt hats replace the sun helmets and drill fabrics of East Africa. Arriving ragged and tatty from my African safaris, I welcomed the excuse provided by the weather to wear a raincoat, which curtailed several acres of shirt-tail publicizing the gap in the seat of my slacks. Holes in my shoe soles sucked water from the pavement, which swilled around the socks. I was in no fit sartorial condition to impress urban Durban.

My South African itinerary was obvious and touristy, in the sense I planned to go down a gold mine in Johannesburg, look at a few sparkling diamonds in Kimberley and watch wine being made in Cape Province. I had no time to detour much from the beaten railroad-track which would transport me 2,500 miles, north-west to the Transvaal, south-west to the Cape Peninsula and the South Atlantic Ocean, and back to the Indian Ocean for a return flying-boat.

My passing impressions of Durban, Queen City of Natal, were of necessity skimmed, as were the turbans of the Indian waiters in the Marine Hotel. Their shrunk, white, disc-



like turbans and sloppy fashion of turning up their jacket lapels gave them a miserable left-out-in-the-rain look. For other reasons, the Natal Indian merits a depressed appearance. He has no franchise, although he is taxed on the same basis as Europeans. He may not occupy or own property except in certain areas, and is the object of extreme racial discrimination, particularly in this province, where the great bulk of South Africa's 250,000 Indians live.

Not only in South Africa, but in Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika and Portuguese East Africa, I came across other disturbing aspects of this Asiatic invasion. Living for the most part under better economic conditions than they or their parents knew in India, the African Indians are increasing rapidly and undoubtedly will become more vocal with the political emancipation of their mother country, to which they continue to appeal for sympathy and support.

Adjusted by now to the colonial idea that all menial jobs are done by coloured people, the sight in Durban of white men *physically* at work startled me. A white hotel porter lifted my baggage. A white railway porter politely carried it to the electric train (which completes the first half of the journey inland to Johannesburg) and accepted a tip, as did a white waiter in the dining car. A new complexion on African complexions! The suburbs of Durban, which spread out loosely over green hills, have an antipodean look. And the soft country around the city, streams, hills and woods, recalls parts of England. Only the Cape Coloured coach cleaner, who sold me a four shilling bedding ticket and later made up the bed, and the shrill screaming and whistling of native kids at the side of the track, reminded me I was still on the Dark Continent.

I had a compartment to myself, called a "coupé." A green leather seat faced a drop-down table, a narrow mirror panelled the door and a shining steel wash-basin and hand towels in a corner completed the self-contained atmosphere. A guard knocked on the door before claiming my ticket: "It's always best to knock first—it's safer." An equally polite waiter brought afternoon tea and said we were due in Jo'burg next morning after breakfast.

My other journeys on the State-owned South African railways were to be less secluded, hence less comfortable. The

most luxurious method of travel, I was proudly assured, is the famous weekly Blue Train, from Jo'burg to Cape Town. It provides coupés for one passenger, and compartments for two, together with valet service for suits and shoes, hot and cold showers, a bar and an observation car, and high-class catering. The air-conditioned Blue Train is a show-piece to rival the most opulent American express, except its speed on the route averages only about thirty-five miles an hour.

The American influence manifests itself in South Africa more directly; but a less tangible quality, perhaps to do with the rumbustious newness of the Witwatersrand, is suggested by the pioneering "Wild West" names of stations one passes just before entering Jo'burg—Dallas, Denver, George Goch, Jeppe.

Only sixty years old and with a population of 667,000, the "Golden City" of Johannesburg belongs roughly to the population group of Milwaukee and Pittsburg, and has many characteristics of American cities of similar size. Medium skyscrapers, with here and there a whopping big one. Thousands of neon lights blazing day and night. Coco-cola signs, soda fountains and American goods in the shop windows. Short city blocks laid out in grid-iron pattern and chaotic traffic congestion (there are likely to be as many as 50,000 cars and lorries, mostly American, circulating in Jo'burg and environs at any one time, besides trams, buses, bicycles and horse-drawn vehicles). A loud, blatant and vulgar city, it booms towards a "great and fabulous future" on the stimulating artificial wealth of gold. Money! money! money! "Land in central Jo'burg is more valuable per foot than in Manhattan or Central London," bragged a resident. "We are on our toes for doing business. The fact that we live at such a high elevation (5,760 feet above sea level) contributes to our great activity. It accounts for our bouncing gait and different tempo from other South African cities."

There are, of course, some characteristics exclusively African. Native women, hand-bags over arms and towering bundles balanced on their heads, weave through the churning European crowds. Native beggars squat on the sidewalks. Mine headgear and man-made table-mountains of disgorged mine dirt appear to dwarf the skyscrapers. But beyond the

native beggar a chromium automat faces the street. And, opposite a mine dump, American magazines load a book-stall.

The demand for the U.S. magazine *Life* far outstrips the supply, despite general displeasure over a wartime *Life* article on South Africa and although it retails at four times the price of its English competitors, *Illustrated* and *Picture Post*. Other American magazines are in demand—women particularly admire the advertisements. Comic magazines of the "Superman" type are popular, *The Fighting Yank*, *Wings Comics*, *Whiz Comics*, and so on. These feature wedge-chested supermen with collegiate faces, balloon biceps and thigh-strained tights, who leap down from the skies to bash the jaws of spies, crooks and other enemies of the United States: *Sok! Crak! Pow! Blam! Clunk! Bop! Bam! Aghh! Ugg! Wah!* and *Ya y y agh!* cry the evil opponents of the American way of life as they bite the dust until the next issue. Natives love these bloodthirsty comics. And the clothes taste of the native dandy, if not directly influenced by the American negro's zoot suit, parallels it in his choice of wide brimmed hat, long flared jacket and gaudy tie.

American comic strips boost circulation of South African newspapers and magazines, both English and Afrikaans. The bulky Johannesburg Sunday newspapers, *Sunday Express* and *Sunday Times*, feature "Bringing up Father," "Terry and the Pirates," "Katzenjammer Kids," "the Little King," "Prince Valiant," "Popeye," "Donald Duck" and other famous syndicated strips.

As in the other Dominions, motor cars and films spread the American idea. South Africa is the largest single export market in the world for American cars and South Africans, like Americans, change their cars every year or two. In 1939, of a total of 36,000 motor cars and car chassis imported, 29,500 were from the United States and Canada, 4,750 from Great Britain. Duties almost double the home price of the U.S. car by the time it reaches the South African buyer, but popular makes like the Chevrolet compete easily in price with cheaper English cars, and generally outclass them in local performance. Throughout Africa, I was told the same thing—the American car is the only vehicle for colonial conditions.

The U.S.A. automobile manufacturer, unlike his British counterpart, supplies a tremendous primary home market demanding a roomy, powerful car that also suits the Dominions and Colonies. But why do not British factory heads co-operate to bring out a special export model to fulfil overseas specifications? Would not British cars be considerably cheapened if manufacturers agreed to standardize parts, as in America?

"British tyres are of all sizes, and there is no cohesion between the manufacturers," an automobile agent told me. He defined other features required for South African conditions. "The body should be all metal, no wood; for some months of the year Jo'burg's bone dry when it's terribly wet at the Cape. Climatic changes in the Union contract wood until a car creaks and groans." He specified high clearance, hydraulic brakes "automatically balancing, which pull you up four-square," a powerful engine economical to run, a straight-across seat in front instead of the split front seat favoured by British designers. A dust-proof rear boot is absolutely essential to keep the ubiquitous red dust of Africa from permeating luggage and soiling clothes.

A farmer from the Karoo made sense: "The English spring their cars too stiffly; there's not sufficient give in the suspension. You need cushioning in your steering, too. My wrists get quite tired with English cars." He also stressed power, pick-up, high clearance, an all-steel body and standardization, adding that few country mechanics in South Africa understand English cars.

The go-ahead South African still calls the cinema "bioscope" but his taste in films is very much that of the average American. A few English films do well. "The Man in Grey" and "Madonna of the Seven Moons," both directed by Leslie Arliss (a South African), were good box-office, as were Noel Coward's "This Happy Breed" and "In Which We Serve." "Henry V" ran for only a week in Jo'burg and "Colonel Blimp" was also "too intellectual." A film distribution executive told me that a British super-production is likely to be about as popular in Jo'burg as a Donald O'Connor picture from Hollywood, although "Cape Town's reaction is more intellectual. They will take films with a message." He named a few outstanding successes, all American: "Song of Bernadette," "Rebecca," "How Green was my Valley," "Mrs. Miniver," "Anchors

Aweigh." South Africa is the biggest overseas governmental purchaser of U.S. technical and educational films.

Everywhere I heard remarks like "It takes the Americans to put it over," "They think of everything," "They're way ahead of everyone else," "You can't beat the Americans." A business man, contrasting English and American commercial correspondence techniques, admired the "highly personalized" American letters and the way they make their agents feel important: "You have to write to Britain for all the information you want, and this appears to be given grudgingly. British instruction books are meagre and piffling. America floods you with data, keeps you up-to-date and constantly informed." An editor praised official American propaganda during the war: "The Office of War Information people were a very enterprising lot here in Jo'burg. They had a big staff, and picked friendly types who made a point of knowing all the journalists in high positions. If you wanted an article, a photograph or anything else, they would get it for you very quickly." *

"I think that Britain can match America in anything she puts her heart to," said a department store executive, "but the American is always first on the doorstep. Even during the war, U.S. exporters started a detailed market survey by letter contact, including queries about births, deaths, population, and shops in certain areas.

"Britain cannot compete in the cheaper lines of dresses, and a lot of bazaar goods come from the United States. In the better-class goods, local retailers generally prefer to buy British. But when there was a shortage of supply from the Old Country, the South African demand went elsewhere."

South African housewives are becoming as mechanically-minded as the American. They want refrigerators (still called "Frigidaires"), washing machines and other domestic electrical appliances and labour-saving devices. "They are keen on innovations and will try anything," disclosed another business informant. "Britain has great goodwill; money is here, and the desire to buy. But the British must remember that South Africa is progressively-minded."

Two English commercial travellers, advance guards of Britain's export drive, discussed South African tastes and preferences.

"I believe there is a big swing towards high-class British goods," said one.

"But we shouldn't rest entirely upon the 'quality and durability' approach," added his colleague. "South Africans like an object for a short time, then change it for something different; this applies equally to furniture or handbags. They prefer novelty and style rather than quality. I think if we can *combine* quality with style and line, we'll have it all over the Yanks."

"Orders are going to America," said the other. "But that's because we won't promise the goods yet. Americans are guarantencing delivery when they know it can't be done. The British exporter is honest, and his promise can be taken."

"But the British exporter must brighten up his promotion," commented his friend.

Yet my overall impression in Africa was that American research, promotion and selling activities were routine rather than all-out. Focussing first on home and South American demands, the U.S. manufacturer had started no organized, concentrated effort to collar hungry overseas markets. Before the war the South African import trade was £90,000,000 a year; it now promises to be much greater. The eyes of a British Trade Commissioner popped as he visualized a great potential native market—"if only the eight million natives spend five pounds a year each on imported goods . . . !"

A British textile representative, talking about native tastes in fabrics, said the biggest demand in South Africa is for "blue prints," a white design on blue; strongest competition in that line comes from the U.S. Special patterns and colours are popular in certain territories. "Doctor cloth," a small all-over design, sells well in West Africa. A few yards of this gaudy material are hung in native huts to keep evil spirits away. In Buganda I noticed the women wore brilliant plain fabrics, sometimes spotted or striped; on the other hand, Swahili women on the coast favour equally brilliant colours but more intricate and elaborate designs. India meets much of this trade.

The United States is South Africa's most vitally important single export market because if gold, central pivot of the Union's economy, stopped having a future in American vaults, the growing industrial development of the Union

would be shattered. "The country would be reduced to its agricultural and pastoral resources," gloomily prognosticated a young British (as distinct from Afrikaner) South African, "and we might well be brought to peasantry and feudalism."

"Gold is the symbol of Capitalism. The United States, as the only large power standing firm on a policy of Free Enterprise, is a willing purchaser of our No. 1 commodity. Her political influence on our affairs is therefore profound. So long as gold occupies the key position in our economic make-up, there can be no possibility of our going Left or even Left of Centre as in Britain.

"Anyhow, there's little in the essential make-up of the Union that closely approximates the British Isles. Our economy, climate and geography, which is of continental dimensions, closely resemble those of the U.S.A. The Colonial Englishman as a distinct species is now virtually extinct here. A new generation has grown up with sentimental ties deeply rooted in South Africa itself. It is just as likely to be influenced by the American way of life as the British code. Its susceptibility is extraordinarily high, in fact, almost adolescent. American influences find an easy environment to take root in. I don't regret this. There's no reason why South Africa shouldn't follow any country providing that country sticks to decent democratic ideas and international principles."

One afternoon I was driven about forty miles on a criss-cross tour of Johannesburg's sprawling eighty square miles. "This huge city is gasping for space," said my guide, "because it was planned to last for only sixty years. Now it has greater vitality than ever." We passed tall apartment buildings north-east of the city and through an exclusive district where the homes of mining tycoons hid behind stone walls. We noticed Zulu houseboys, in ugly knee-length trousers, thick discs of painted wood inlaid in their stretched earlobes. Swerving west past a block of new film studios, we saw less pretentious houses behind hedges, laundry on clothes-lines, and entered a new suburb which eight years ago was a fruit farm. "The farmer is now very rich," disclosed my companion. "The cost of building a modest bungalow here would be £3,000, and land costs about £600 for an eighth of an acre."

Continuing out to "toffee-nosed Northcliff, Suburb of the Discriminating," we passed houses in the Spanish Mission style, their windows shaded with coloured sun-blinds, and other buildings, angular, all-window and designed in Scandinavian manner. "Refugee architects from Europe design these houses, but too much window is bad in a sunny climate." We stopped for tea at a road-house overlooking rolling farmlands from one of the highest points in town. Gardens and swimming-pool suggested California and, inside, the milk-bar on the dance floor, a cluster of U.S. machine-gun shooting machines and a weighing machine registering in pounds only, confirmed American influence.

Down in Westdene we came to smaller, dowdier houses, but many significantly with tin garages. In the native township of Sophiatown, double-decker trams laden with negroes and driven by white motor-men clanged past a row of shabby shops. White faces mingled with black in working-class Mayfair and, turning into Vrededorp's slum alleys, we saw Indians, Chinese, negroes and Europeans. My guide talked luridly of opium smoking and dens of vice. "Natives and Europeans live cheek by jowl only in the older districts," he admitted, "and a European who lives with a Non-European is completely ostracized." "But," I protested, "in London I have Indian friends and I know negroes elsewhere. If I visited South Africa in their company, I'd certainly continue to see them." "Then you'd be asked nowhere, man," he replied.

The slums meddled with skyscrapers in the financial district, and opposite the magnificent new Law Courts stood a humble fish-and-chips shop. The panorama from Observatory Hill extends from crammed residential hills in the east, through the smoke haze of factories in the industrial area across to a piled stack of concrete buildings, like a baby Manhattan. Just behind all this and still in the Golden City's heart range the "South African Alps," a barrier of mine dumps which have driven the bulk of the residential development north. These wondrous, vast pyramids of gold and silver earth, some reaching as high as 500 feet, look from a distance as ethereal and nebulous as the soft clouds above them.

Neon-lights above lobby counters in a big Johannesburg

hotel imitate the American idea. But the attendants behind the counters shine less brightly; and service fails to emulate the better features of American hotels. As in East Africa, I found an absence of the subtler techniques of guest-care. If South Africa wants tourists, such hotels must pull up their socks. No tourist returning home after visiting the largest city in southern Africa will enthuse about bedrooms with no running water, antiquated bathrooms, warped doors which require a battering ram to open, permeating kitchen smells, and elusive and indifferent servants. Admittedly, I landed a third floor room in an hotel which boasts about luxury and comfort on higher floors. But I grew weary of racing up and down three flights of stairs to answer telephone calls at a counter in the noisy entrance; the two lifts were usually out of order or busy carrying the other 499 guests. And, with so many people to telephone during my short stay in the town, I expended frustrating hours queueing in a stuffy little telephone lobby to give numbers to the only operator, a dull page-boy receiving constant abuse, which ran down his brilliantined hair and pimply face like water from a duck's back. If, in despair, I repaired to the bar to salvage my good humour, I found myself in a huge impersonal room with bare and shabby walls, a sea of pickled customers lapping around the edges of the oval counter. A mausoleum-lounge upstairs offered less consolation; and when I tried to get a taxi away from it all, the hall-porter would shrug his shoulders, because the hotel was feuding with most of Johannesburg's few taxis!

Hire-cars were, I discovered, the simplest form of transport, and I whizzed around comfortably in cars driven by "The Serviceable Sisters," genteel middle-aged lady drivers in wide-brimmed straw hats. Chatting with one of these ladies, I learnt that South Africans have very bad road manners. "Actually, there's only one more dangerous place in the world to drive in, Paris."

In pleasant contrast to the tip-conscious waiters in my hotel, the efficient waitresses at the Railway Terminal Restaurant were obviously hand-picked and leg-picked. An attractive and zealous blonde served me a four-course meal, including a tender fillet of steak accompanied by a dry white Witzenberg wine, and capped by a Van der Hum liqueur and coffee, for 5/3d. My indiscriminate Cairo enthusiasm for Food as

Food had long since waned, and I inspected the big South African menus choosily. Food, relatively plentiful for white people, is not rationed, although there have been occasional shortages of sugar, butter, cooking fats, tea, rice and particularly meat. There was talk of rationing sugar and bread, which is almost black. Once a week restaurants have a meatless day, when the resigned customer selects a meal such as *hors d'oeuvres*, fish, curried eggs, salad and ice cream.

In the more exclusive restaurants and clubs, food and drink are cheap by comparative overseas standards, even in the fabulous Rand Club. Here members pay from flimsy little books of perforated cash coupons; I finished my African trip with a wallet full of such half-used ticket books, purchased on becoming temporary member of various clubs in quick geographical succession. Conversation in the Rand Club is apt to be about making money by buying and selling shares. This gambling spirit is Johannesburg's theme song, one day may be her requiem. Lift operators quote current stock market prices as knowingly as financiers, and all have their fling in other ways, at horses, dog racing, poker. There are a number of illegal gambling joints in the city. It is common to play golf with a £400 pool, £100 a corner, at the two principal golf clubs, and billiards at £25 a point is considered a light flutter.

I was advised not to broach politics in strange company: but probing beneath the "easy come, easy go" atmosphere, I touched on a variety of conflicting hates and passions. The outsider who starts to lift the lid on South Africa will get severely scalded in a cauldron of boiling racial prejudices. I found even a simmering anti-Semitism, in a country where Jewish names like Beit, Barnato and Joel are history, and 100,000 citizens of Jewish descent strongly entrenched in entertainment, catering, retail and other activities. The die-hard Afrikaner brackets Jews, British and Non-Europeans into one inferior group. Nor is the South African of British descent immune from anti-Semitism. I heard Jews blamed for organizing natives into trade unions, and for all the old cliché reasons.

But a traveller is just as likely to hear anti-Semitic talk in New York, Sydney or any city (except Tel Aviv) where there has been an influx of European refugees. In other ways,

South Africa's racial problems are special and paradoxical. "There are more problems here per square mile than in any other country, including India," said a journalist. The traditional scrap between Afrikaners and English continues, with the numerical proportion between the two groups roughly three to two. (Canada has superficially the same racial problem with its French-Canadian population). Afrikaners are divided amongst themselves; the dissentients take a cue from Eire, hold it up as an example of a republic that has fruitfully broken away from Britain. Others, as was proved during the war, subscribe with Smuts to the British Commonwealth ideal. From Botha, through Hertzog, to Smuts, Union politics appear to have been a violent fracas reserved largely for the voluble Afrikaner politician.

The topical use of the word "Boer" (farmer), which is the general overseas term for a South African of Dutch descent, is not encouraged in the Dominion. Instead, "Afrikaner" and "Afrikaans-speaking" are used. (It was forcibly pointed out to me that "Afrikander" means only African cattle!) In the bi-lingual Dominion both languages appear concurrently, almost to the extent of absurdity; need office doors really be marked "PRIVATE" and "PRIVAAT"? Most Afrikaners I met spoke a guttural English, and there was an indefinable but recognizable kind of heaviness about their appearance. But, like Irishmen or Quebec Frenchmen, sensitive to outside comment, they prove far from thick-skinned in conversation. Innocent questions kindle them quickly and only careful handling with tongs promotes normal discussion. The austere Dutch Reformed Church is as powerful in the Orange Free State as the puritanical Catholic Church in both Eire and Quebec. But the Afrikaners I met lacked the wit and charm of the Irish.

The worst incidence of soil erosion in the world is said to be in South Africa, and largely because of this, bad farming methods, and the old Boer custom of splitting up property on death, 200,000 "poor whites" have been driven off the land to live in poverty. "Because of the overlord and servant impact between white and black, the natural process of working up and down does not exist, and the poor white is prevented from taking his natural place in society," someone said. Despite internecine antagonisms, the two million whites,

conscious of a generally higher standard of living, unite solidly in their ruling-class attitude towards the great Non-European majority of eight millions, continue to promote segregation and the "status quo." Even a Labour M.P. admitted to me, "if we don't maintain our European influence we shall go down the drain."

Visitors to the Union will notice a wooden rail jutting from the centre of each wicket in the Post Office; on one side queue Europeans, on the other natives and Indians. Two waiting-rooms on every railway platform are labelled "Europeans" and "Non-Europeans" respectively. Neither natives nor Indians may eat in railway restaurant cars, but bring their own food with them. (Yet Asiatics eat in restaurant cars in Indian-allergic Kenya). Johannesburg imposes a native curfew, and all negroes who cannot show a late pass must be indoors by eleven, after which the only Africans seen in the streets of this African town are watchmen, in khaki uniforms and carrying long sticks. Most natives are segregated in the reserves and governed by special and complex laws and regulations.

What I heard described by a liberal as "the cursed migratory system" attracts nearly 400,000 Africans from territories inside and outside the Union to work in the gold mines of the Witwatersrand ("Ridge of White Waters") with a consequent chronic breaking up of family life. However, the health and well-being of the native mine workers, who live in mine compounds, is well cared for during the term of their contract. They are better nourished than the average present day European, although a mushy menu of mealie meal, beans, vegetables and occasional meat, washed down with native beer, might not appeal on other continents. I saw these negroes in Jo'burg streets, wearing kaleidoscopic trousers tied navy-style around the calves. Gaudy patchworks of blue, white, orange, yellow and green, they are both practical and ornamental.



GOLD AND DIAMONDS

IN Johannesburg I heard rumours that the Orange Free State was on the verge of a great gold strike. Two months later headlines in the London papers announced the discovery of a new Eldorado at Odenaalrust.

But I went down a mine opened on the Witwatersrand plateau fifty years ago, now in the heart of Johannesburg. Robinson Deep, although still in full swing at over 8,000 feet below the surface, has disembogued its greatest riches. It has contributed a respectable share of the £2,500,000,000 worth of gold earned from the Rand since earnest production started in 1888 with a total of 171,789 fine ounces. To-day the mines produce about 12,000,000 fine ounces a year which,

at present gold prices, realize about £100,000,000. 70,000,000 tons of rock are hoisted from the depths of the earth every year, at a working cost of about £1 a ton. South Africa (the Transvaal) produces thirty-five per cent of the total world gold output, a proportion that may soon be considerably increased if the Orange Free State strike justifies optimism.

The Chamber of Mines organizes periodical tours of the gold mines. Early one morning, with a mixed crowd of local journalists and rubber-necks, two of them women, I was driven from the Chamber of Mines building to Robinson Deep along a road bordered by shops on one side, dusty mine-dumps on the other. Within a few minutes we reached a group of hangar-like buildings and mine headgear marking the top of a shaft. The sexes divided, and filed into two separate dressing-rooms, where we were outfitted with a complete change of clothing—old socks, high loose rubber boots, khaki shirts and shorts, overalls and greasy black sou'westers. I tucked the legs of my overalls into the top of the boots. The sou'wester extinguished my head like a candle-snuff. This hotchpotch uniform, garnished with my beard, transformed me into a grotesque member of a lifeboat crew, and amused the others. The women wore the same rig, with twisted turbans around their hair.

After waddling around on a cursory inspection of the sheds, listening to rowdy machinery, and looking at dynamos, cable-drums and droning cooling fans, we all packed into a steel cage, or "skip," hanging from cables above a shaft. Inside this we plummeted down 3,600 feet, at almost a mile a minute, a dark, cold, roaring descent, with water dripping on us from somewhere above and, strangely, no falling sensation except for the flickering lights of lateral tunnels as we dropped past, from which came the squealing songs of native workers.

We stepped out into a whitewashed lobby chipped from the rock. Natives in skimpy metal helmets pushed small trucks over a pattern of steel tracks, paid little attention to one of their companions wrapped in a crimson blanket, who was carried past on a stretcher. A white miner (one of the 40,000 Europeans who work in the mines and supervise the natives) told me he had possibly been hurt by a fall of rock. Tunnels cave in occasionally, but Robinson Deep is considered one

of the safest mines. (So honeycombed is the earth for a mile and a half beneath Johannesburg with thousands of tunnels and shafts that there are sometimes minor earthquakes, accompanied by fearsome rumblings, which quiver the skyscrapers above!)

The underground manager led us along wide cool tunnels to inspect fire and ambulance stations, after which another skip dropped us down to 6,000 feet to catch the "Blue Train," a mine tram powered from overhead electric wires; we rode on wooden seats in little linked steel carriages, with chains along the sides to keep us from falling out, to make a connection with a tram of different design. This vehicle, a sort of roller-coaster with stepped seats, sped us down an inclined shaft for another 2,000 feet. Our acetylene lamps, a row of fireflies in the dark, lit up hundreds of yards of glimmering, slippery tunnels as we stumbled through a series of solid iron doors; behind each door the humid hothouse temperature increased, until the heat became almost unbearable. Slanting stacks of logs, and thick support beams, many of them compressed by the jagged overhanging rock into broken, splintered shapes, lined the sides. We squeezed against the walls while workers pushed past trucks piled with gold-ore, then continued on through a maze of "drives."

The underground manager stooped before a low, wide cave, the entrance of a "stope" which descended steeply at an angle of forty-five degrees into the darkness. Beckoning to us, he started to slide down the loose rubble of quartz and dirt flooring the hole. Still clutching my lamp with one hand, I followed on my tail in short speedy skids, grabbing sharp slimy projections of rock and an occasional strut as a brake. The roof was too low to make even a crouching descent and I tore my free hand, shredded the seat of my overalls. I had not known such sweating, sweltering misery since my descent into the Ishasha Gorge at the heels of Major Matthews. Suspended like mountain climbers, we stopped for a breather and to watch two black boys, stripped to their glistening waists, squatting in the compressed space at the side of the stope and chipping ore from the reef with a heavy pneumatic drill. All is not gold that glitters, nor was there any glitter about this gold-ore, a just discernible filling in a dull rock sandwich. But I was too soaked in perspiration and self-pity

to be disappointed, or to sympathize with the poor women of our party, who bravely scrambled down behind.

A hundred yards and several days later we fell from the other end of the stope on to the floor of a level tunnel. I stood upright, sopping wet, legs weak and wobbling. The rest of the rubber-necks landed beside me, by now rubber-kneed. A negro passed round a thermos flask of cold water, before we staggered through further drives and finally rose again into dazzling daylight.

After a shower in our dressing-room, we felt better but not much stronger. The tour was not yet over. Now, guided by the General Manager of Robinson Deep, we viewed various surface mechanical attractions in long sheds. Conveyor belts bore the ore we had seen being mined below to crushers and grinders, from whence the pulped rock passed through a variety of chemical and other treatments until ready for smelting. At long last, inside locked gates, a smelter showed us the final product. He casually produced a glossy brick of unrefined gold from a safe and placed it before us on a bench. The brick still contained a small proportion of silver, weighed 1,000 ounces, was worth £7,500—and the mine lays eighteen to twenty such golden eggs a month. One after another my companions solemnly and with some effort lifted the bullion. Using both hands, I managed to lift it a few feet; the brick's uneven, velvety texture caressed the touch, its soft, rich patina glowed warmly sympathetic to the eye.

I liked it so much I slipped it into my pocket, and walked out, unmolested. . . . It is now my favourite paper-weight.

The diamond town of Kimberley, known as the "Godfather of the Rand" because some of the men who developed the gold industry were from the diamond mines, lies 309 miles and an overnight train journey south-west of Johannesburg. Waiting to meet me on the platform of Kimberley Railway Station stood Mr. J. H. B. Rousseau, Chief Clerk of General, Rates, Claims and Tourist, South African Railways and Harbours, his face shining from an early morning shave. He explained he was deputising for the Assistant Manager, and had set aside the day and a motor car for my convenience.

I bathed in the Queen's Hotel, rejoined Rousseau, and we made our way through winding streets which follow the

original impromptu pattern of the mining town. Kimberley spread over the plain like an epidemic when thousands of feverish diggers set up their tents in Griqualand West in the early seventies. It retains much of the atmosphere of that period, without the hustle. A shack with decrepit tin veranda still droops opposite the head office of De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, an unimpressive brick building fronted by a two-storied veranda. There, in an office someone might have furnished and equipped in Victorian days, Rousseau and I talked to the debonair secretary of the company.

I asked for permission to observe the various ways and means of detecting stolen diamonds on native workers leaving the mines. But the secretary punctured my idea. X-ray is not used, nor are the workers searched. Detection is much more prosaic. The natives sign on for three months work-cum-confinement, during which time they live a celibate life, cook their own food and sleep in dormitories within walled-in compounds adjoining the mines. Three days before their contract expires they are put in special detention, and fed constipation-preventing foods. Pre-knowledge of the detention is, in itself, reckoned to be sufficient deterrent to smuggling. Also, the unofficial disposal of diamonds is said to be very difficult indeed and, the secretary pointed out, European workers are not searched. In the De Beers Board Room he showed us a framed photograph of twenty-one diamonds taken from one boy's stomach, the biggest being three-quarters of an inch in diameter and their total value £1,067. 4s. 6d. Obsolete photographs of bearded gentlemen flank this strange exhibit, and I looked into the faded eyes of Sir Alfred Beit, Sir David Harris, B.I. (Barney) Barnato, S. B. (Solly) Joel and the remarkable Cecil Rhodes. Rhodes it was who amalgamated the individual diamond mining companies in 1888, thus giving De Beers monopoly control of the Kimberley fields.

The secretary stressed that all native miners are eager volunteers, and showed me photographs of selected candidates running ecstatically towards the camera. De Beers rewards honesty, awards a percentage of their value for diamonds picked up in the mines; lucky finds have earned workers as much as £75. But, of course, diamonds don't litter the various mine levels, but are embedded in the hard blue diamond-

ferous earth known as "blue ground." 100,000 tons of blue ground yields about eleven-and-a-half pounds of diamonds.

De Beers works only two mines in Kimberley at the moment, the adjacent Bulfontein and Du Toits Span. Rousseau and I drove to Du Toits Span past barbed wire barriers and through a gate automatically and electrically operated by a gatekeeper. An escort led us to big sheds full of noisy machines topping a 1,353 foot shaft. Remembering my nightmare experience sliding down the sloping stope in Robinson Deep, I didn't agitate to see the innards of this diamond mine, and accepted the expert's word that to the uninitiated the nether workings look much the same as a gold-mine. Instead, we made for a tin building as high and wide as Albert Hall, next a tailings dump of blue dirt, on top of which silhouetted lines of baby trucks dumped more dirt. An ancient lift bore us to a high bridge at the top of the structure, along which rumbled two rows of trucks loaded with blue ground from Bulfontein and Du Toits Span respectively. Braking the trucks, native boys tipped their contents through holes into the dusty, roaring insides of the building. Caught up in fast moving belts, the diamond-bearing rubble descends through a series of crushing rollers and washing pans until, masticated, the "concentrate" pours into other steel bins queueing up at the bottom. Sealed, they roll off to the distant pulsator.

We followed a party of trippers to the pulsator building. De Beers encourages sightseers. Rousseau was revelling in the tour, as he hadn't looked over a diamond mine for years. In the pulsator the blue-grey concentrate is mechanically classified into six grades. Diamonds make their first public appearance embedded in very thick petroleum jelly on top of inclined vibrating tables, where they finally desert the lighter, worthless pebbles that wash down to troughs. The forty-eight tables are divided into six sections, according to the weight of the diamonds. A white workman in the four-and-a-half carat section lifted a grate shielding the table-top; we looked down on a dozen small diamonds, unromantically like fragments of glass, gleaming dully in the grease. They were difficult to distinguish from pieces of mica and other valueless stones skipping down the slope. We saw four larger twelve-and-a-half carat diamonds stranded on another table after two-and-a-half hours operation; the grease was about to be

scraped into perforated pots where, steamed, it would run out and leave behind an opulent residue of diamonds.

In an adjoining shed the day's results lay on a bench. Here garnets, zircon, iron pyrites and soapstone, which also stick to the grease, are sorted from gem and industrial diamonds. Before us glinted the yield from two mines and 18,000 tons of blue ground . . . 1,800 carats from Bulfontein, 1,600 carats from Du Toits Span, altogether perhaps two large fists-full of precious stones. Yellower diamonds are found in the latter mine, and look rather like smooth hard fragments of translucent gum. The surface of Bulfontein gems, said a sorter, is nearly always imprinted with tiny lozenge patterns. Several opaque, rough-surfaced, grey stones with a slight sheen hid modestly amongst the spread-out gems; these were valuable industrial diamonds, in great current demand for tipping and crowning machine tools, prospecting drills and other uses. The biggest gem diamond in the day's wash weighed seventy-three-and-a-quarter carats. Whenever a very big diamond arrives in the shed, there is excitement amongst the sorters, who run sweeps and guessing competitions on its weight.

"I have a Du Toits and I wanta De Beer!" I punned thirstily; so Rousseau and I repaired for a moment to the hotel, on the next stage of our tour to the deceased Kimberley Mine, known as "The Big Hole" and a Wonder of the World.

From an observation platform, a few second's drive from the hotel, we looked quarter-of-a-mile across a tremendous blue-grey hole in the earth to houses on the other side. This great man-made funnel probes over 800 feet down to the placid olive green surface of a rainwater lake. "The real depth of the mine," said Rousseau, "is 1,200 feet. The perimeter is just over a mile, and its area thirty-eight acres." Twenty-five million tons of diamond-bearing earth were excavated from "The Big Hole" after the discovery of its site in 1871. As we gawped into the chasm, a native boy dropped a boulder over the rail. It bounced down the slopes and disappeared over the precipitous edge of the cliff. I had counted twelve seconds before the boulder, out of sight, hit the water with a report like a cannon.

Rousseau procured a special permit from De Beers to enter the Consolidated Buildings, a plain structure fronted by two cracked white Ionic pillars. These pillars are satirically named

"Gog" and "Magog" by the citizens of Kimberley, which is just another way of spelling De Beers Company. Although the building sometimes holds millions of pounds worth of diamonds, I noticed no elaborate fire precautions, such as sprinklers; diamonds cannot be destroyed by fire. A guard inspected our pass and we walked upstairs to a gold-painted grille, pushed a bell, were again scrutinized, and ushered through a steel door with a peep-hole into De Beers' sorting and valuing department. On one side of a deep room, its walls painted a pale pastel-grey, ran a strip of high windows. A long line of intent sorters sat in comfortable chairs, stooped over a narrow bench facing the light and peering at half-a-million pounds worth of "sparklers." A sorter rose to greet us from behind a brass rail.

"Once your eyes become attuned to the shine of the stone, it proves very dull," he admitted, grabbing some uncut diamonds from the bench and holding them under my nose like a handful of marbles. He told us it takes many years to train diamond sorters, who are selected young and paid well, although not as well as diamond cutters. The sorting office handles almost all the world's diamond output. The gems neatly laid-out before him on cheap white newsprint were one month's collection, worth about £50,000. Inspecting a diamond through a magnifying glass, I detected a flaw, a small black streak inside the stone. The average uncut stone loses fifty-five per cent of its original weight after cutting and polishing. Rare colours, such as amber, excite sorters more than size; but unusual colours rarely come in good shapes. I noticed the contrast between the yellow and the rare blue-white gems, which from some angles look almost purple. The sorter held a sample array of glittering cut diamonds arranged in a white plush case, in the indirect light under his bench. I admired in particular two large amber stones, which he said show at their best set in gold. White stones demand platinum.

Amongst a collection of freak stones, a rough industrial diamond contained a clear gem window set into its surface. One gem had a perfect "Y" engraved on it, "proving that the alphabet was known long before man!" Hardest substance in the world, the diamond is very brittle and splits with the grain; against the grain it must be sawn with its own dust, which is ground in by an oily, wafer-thin, revolving bronze

disc. "Candle-light shows up the beauty of diamonds best of all," said the sorter. But they are never sorted by night. Sorters need daylight to classify the hundreds of varieties of size, shape, purity and colour.

Talking later to a diamond buyer from Cape Town who was visiting Kimberley to buy what the trade knows as a "sight"—an arbitrary, pre-selected, take-it-or-leave-it assortment of stones—I learnt that De Beers sell the uncut gems to cutters, whence they pass on to the great diamond buyers, to dealers and finally to jewellers, who make a large profit: If a big dealer has cutting factories, he may also buy direct from De Beers. The large majority of diamonds, said my informant, are purchased by America; De Beers has a virtual monopoly of the world's industrial and gem diamonds, including those from the Belgian Congo and the Argentine, which they buy on a limited quota to create an artificial demand. In contrast to the shocking pre-war diamond slump the last three years have seen an unprecedented boom and, said the buyer: "This year it's colossal, unbelievable!"

Fifty years ago a young Irishman left Killarney in Co. Kerry to work as a compound guard in Kimberley. Seven years later, during his first visit home, he bought a little box camera and took his first photograph—of a thatched house by a Madeira lake—on the return voyage. Pleased with this picture, and others he took of workers living in the compounds, he sent home for bigger and better cameras. During his holidays he visited native tribes in the territory and took more photographs.

To-day, A. M. Duggan-Cronin has accumulated the world's most remarkable collection of photographic portraits of the major tribes of southern Africa. Housed first in his home at Kamfersdam, it overflowed the wall-space. De Beers, who in the intervening years had sponsored his travels further afield, presented a large brick house to the City of Kimberley and the photographer, and there the Duggan-Cronin Bantu Gallery was opened on his birthday, May 17th, 1938.

Duggan-Cronin, a voluble old gentleman with pink face, white wavy hair, blue eyes and a clipped moustache covering a long Irish upper lip, led me through the rooms of his gallery. The first room held an impressive cross-section of his best

"portrait studies," as he calls them, of native chiefs, as well as sensitive portraits of native women. "This is considered to be my premier Madonna," he said, as we stood before a Venda mother-and-child, taken in the North Transvaal. He stabbed his pipe stem at a sentimental picture of a Hottentot boy playing a mouth-organ, rather reminiscent of the famous "Bubbles" painting by Millais: "That's how I started." Hundreds of prints of this "Music Hath Charms" have been auctioned to raise war funds.

His portraits have a sharply cut-out appearance; he always carries a white backcloth on his long treks, which his black servant Richard unrolls and holds behind the bewildered subjects. Their dusky skins stand out in dramatic fashion against the light screen. Richard, a faithful retainer for over twenty years, speaks many useful dialects. He also helps to persuade shy natives to pose on occasions, and has himself taken photographs. Duggan-Cronin chuckled as he recollected his abortive attempt to photograph a baby, the Paramount Chief of the Thembu. The baby refused to stay still and howled like a fog-horn. Duggan-Cronin set-up and focussed his camera, then slipped into the bushes; during a momentary respite in the tears, the less alarming Richard clicked the shutter!

An old hand at gaining the confidence of the wilder Africans, Duggan-Cronin develops plates in a specially built hut to gain their interest. While he splashes about in the improvised dark-room, Richard collects useful information from the tribe.

I admired a magnificent posed back-view of six Venda women, standing still, gourds on their heads, and apparently about to draw water from a stream. "Native girls dislike being turned around before the camera," he observed. "They say 'Are we so ugly that the master has to take our back?' So I also pretend to photograph them front-on, but without any film in the camera. They are as pleased as children by the click.

"Persuading natives to sit is rather like bartering. The more you argue with them, the more adamant they become." However, usually surrounded by traders and missionaries, the Africans have learnt to know the value of money, and Duggan-Cronin always pays them. "I have infinite patience but I'm afraid they haven't. I'm after faithful records, which

must be sharp. And as far as possible I like to make them artistic."

In the Zulu-Swazi room I saw hundreds more "studics." Duggan-Cronin, who is helped financially by the Carnegie Trust, has collected many thousands of negatives, which are housed in De Beers' strong-rooms. "But when I started, people thought I was quite *non compos mentis* photographing the 'niggers'." Now many pictures invaluable record rites which are, or soon will be, destroyed by the impact of civilization. There are native youths being decorated with spots of many colours by tribal artists, during circumcision ceremonies. The artists first brush white clay over the boys' skins with a mealie cob, then imprint dots and circles with the necks of bottles dipped in mineral dyes and pot black. There are pictures of the initiates dancing, wearing grass skirts—and grass masks, as they are not allowed to look on girls during the rites. "I don't give you ten years before all the picturesque costumes are gone. Once natives, either boys or girls, put on a bit of European dress they won't take it off. It's a pity, it's a pity!" he commented, blaming the missionaries.

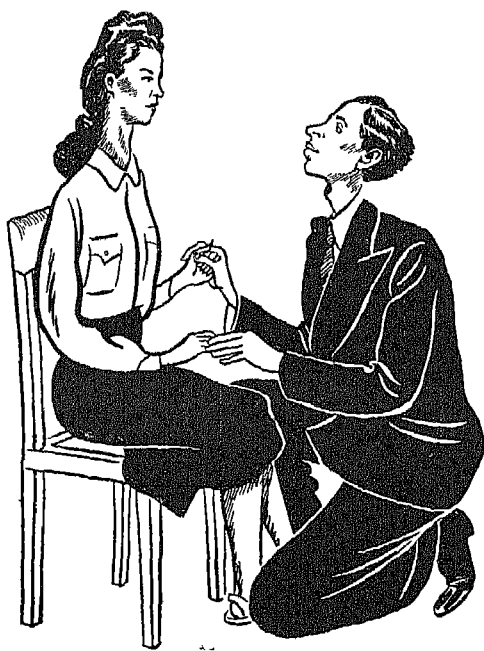
Perhaps his most valuable photographs are of the little yellow Bushmen, who as a pure race are now virtually extinct. Both men and women, but particularly the women, had great protruding buttocks (said to perform the same biological function of a camel's hump!). Amazing water diviners, Duggan-Cronin has pictured them drawing water through the sand with a reed. And their custom of burying water in ostrich shells plugged with manure has saved the lives of European pioneers stranded in the desert far from springs.

During the last thirty years Duggan-Cronin has photographed all the important diamonds found in the Kimberley diamond fields and admits "They are the hardest things in the world to photograph, because of the light." He gave me an autographed picture of a "typical parcel" of uncut diamonds of all sizes, glimmering on a black background and valued at £60,000. Before leaving, I mentioned the green flag, with an Irish harp emblem, on the flagpole outside his gallery. The old man twinkled: "I flew it in your honour—that's Irish blarney!"

The daylight half of the dreary 647-mile train journey

from Kimberley to Cape Town through the highlands of the Karoo shows the African landscape at its parched and flattest worst. It reminded me of some of the more barren areas of Kenya, where the desert chases the savanna over the horizon. We left scrubby veldt, crossed the thirsty Orange River and continued for endless hours through plains stubbled with dry grass like bristles on a pig's back. There were long waits in the hot and quivering air at dead stations and sidings, where ugly women and children with khaki skins, wrinkled foreheads and the pointed jaws of the Hottentot, shaded beneath stunted trees. We passed occasional whitewashed farms behind cactus hedges, the surrounding clumps of trees irrigated by windmill pumps. I found it hard to believe that this desolate Karoo produces some of the finest Merino sheep in the world. Leaving my compartment to the dust, soot and flies, I swayed through five carriages and across six open gangways to the dining-car for a meal.

Edwardian in appearance, possibly in fact, the dining-car was an old-fashioned affair, its roof propped up with slim fluted pillars. On each table stood a silver dish of bananas, peaches, grapes, and a pineapple. And four shillings entitled me to pea soup, fish, chicken, roast beef, crème caramel, cheese, coffee and as much fruit as I wanted. Next morning, forty-five miles from Cape Town, I swallowed a breakfast of melon, mealie meal, kippers, sausage, bacon and eggs, coffee, toast and marmalade! We entered lovely Cape Town through untheatrical railway workshops, grimy warehouses and slimy mud-flats. Derricks protruded from the harbour and, on our left as the train advanced, Devil's Peak slowly moved across the pile of Table Mountain until the long flat line of the mountain top appeared, unblemished, except for a wart on the right tip—the cable building. A white speck of a cable-car hung suspended against the sky, and wide suburban streets ran up the sides of the mountain into the lower tree-covered slopes. Past an old castle the train came to a standstill in Cape Town station, where an hotel porter shouldered my luggage and led me to a clean, quiet commercial hotel near the docks.



“GOD’S STEP-CHILDREN”

CAPE TOWN, to-day the Garden of South Africa, started its career in 1652 as a vegetable-garden. The Dutch East India Company invented the town as a sort of refitting and catering establishment to provide its scurried sailors on the trade route to India with fresh salads! About the same time someone planted a few vines, and within five years the first hogshead of Cape wine made its debut. Slave-tended vineyards were started in Constantia, Paarl and elsewhere in the Cape of Good Hope, and on the arrival of Huguenot refugees with viticultural experience, vintage Cape wines boomed in epicurean circles abroad. Wine-making, after weathering a nineteenth-century slump, has once again become an important South African industry. A little French blood still flows with Cape wines, but the bulk of the wine producers are Afrikaans-speaking of Dutch descent. Thirty years ago they organized themselves into the Ko-operatieve Wijnbouwers Vereniging van Zuid-Afrika,

Beperkt, more pithily referred to as K.W.V., or the Co-operative Wine Growers’ Association. At the town of Paarl in the balmy hinterland thirty-seven miles north-east of Cape Town, K.W.V. established its headquarters, a gigantic wine factory, where scientists and specialists supervise the blending and maturation of millions of gallons of wine. K.W.V. exported over two million gallons of light and fortified wines in 1939, as well as brandies, vermouths, liqueurs, unfermented grape-juice, and Eau de Cologne and other perfumes, in which pure wine spirits are an ingredient.

The palatability of Cape wines is assisted by the consistent weather; reliable winter rains slake the sleeping vineyards, which are then kissed in summer months by a faithful sun. My arrival in the Cape during the latter part of February synchronized with the grape-pressing season, the hottest month of the year and a suitable time to see wine-making. I had already tasted a variety of South African ordinary wines in the Union, some indifferent, others not always as invariable as their labels, but on the whole pleasant both to palate and pocket. So I motored to Paarl, a seventeenth-century ribbon development twisting for seven miles around the base of a granite knob known as Paarl Mountain. Terraced vineyards crawl up the slopes and layer the countryside with a fragrant green carpet.

From the outside, the K.W.V. winery looks like any other factory, chimneys trailing smoke over groups of long buildings. Inside, the great cellars vaguely resemble railway stations, except for the thousands of casks and vats holding wines of various types and vintages, the gloomy cobwebbed caverns of the sherry section and all-pervading sweet odour of fermented grape-juice. I trekked from one railway station to another, through lanes and terraces and avenues of casks. Hoses, used for blending and pumping, snaked over the floors, beneath which more oceans of wine filled concrete tanks. Barometer-like glass gauges reached up outside the larger vats to register the wine levels inside, Sweet Reds, Sweet Hermitages, Sweet Cabernets and other types, all last season’s pressings from wine-farmers and now kept in wood for checking and sampling. A row of three sprucely-varnished vats, dedicated to the last general manager of K.W.V.—Billy Miller, a 1906 “Springbok” rugby international—emulated the Three

Bears. The largest, labelled "Big Bill," held 4,600 gallons of Dry Hermitage. "Mrs. Bill" contained 2,090 gallons of Sweet White. And little "Baby Bill" was empty. But the pride of the K.W.V. cellars is a group of five enormous oak vats, each twenty-four feet high by twenty-six feet wide, with a total storing capacity of 230,000 gallons, enough to sink a freighter.

At a local wine distillery I saw lorries stacked high with plump yellow and purple grapes from nearby farms drive up for weighing. Coloured boys, standing to their knees in the luscious fruit, quickly shovelled it into the pressing-shed like so much sand, disposing of £1,000 worth of grapes a minute—that is, at London prices of £1 a bunch. The grape-juice, squeezed from pulp, pips and skins by machines, poured into open concrete tanks, where it ferments with a bubbling buff froth. A river of ochre liquid, the fresh juice of yellow grapes, swished along a trough at my feet and an overseer scooped up a glass-full for me to drink. It was a delicious, refreshing drink; but within twelve hours it would start fermenting, hurried by the heat. This wine is used only for distilling spirits, and high up in the building stands the distilling and rectifying plant, which produces 1,000 gallons of pure spirits every twenty-four hours. I sniffed a thimble-full of raw spirit drawn from a small tap, and the smell pierced my nostrils like a bullet.

Not far from the K.W.V. buildings the two brothers Kirsten farm ninety acres of fertile slopes and, more fortunate than some of their neighbours, are able to irrigate their grape plantations from a dammed stream in the mountain above. They grow grapes not only for wine making but for the South African table and export market. At "Vredenhof" squads of coloured people sort and pack the grapes inside a gabled barn, next the old Dutch Colonial homestead, with its teak windows and doors. (These chaste, graceful, whitewashed buildings help to give the Cape much of its charm and character). Skating on squashed berries strewn over the floor, I circled the packing-shed with F. J. J. Kirsten, a long-chinned Afrikaner, and watched men, women and children plucking red and golden bunches from wires above the benches, wrapping them in soft paper, laying them gently into boxes and stacking the fragile freight on a cart with pneumatic tyres. "This consignment's for Sweden," Kirsten told me.

‘It’s graded as choice, and will be shipped in special cool chambers.’”

I lifted a succulent cluster, weighing about three-quarters of a pound. “How much would you get for this?”

“About two pence,” Kirsten replied.

My first alcoholic drink of the day was a sweet vermouth, in K.W.V.’s herb-perfumed vermouth department. I found it indistinguishable from the Italian product. A concentrate of herbs, added to a light sweet wine, plus skilful stirring, mixing, draining and filtering, go to make a sweet vermouth. For a second drink I sampled a dry martini, made on the premises from K.W.V. gin and dry vermouth. An attendant, following my recipe, scientifically measured three parts of gin and one of vermouth in the only available vessel, a measuring cylinder graded in cubic centimetres. Lacking ice, he dipped the cylinder into a jug of water taken from a brine tank, stirred and served. Fortunately, I sipped only a couple of cubic centimetres, as half-an-hour later I started sampling K.W.V. products in earnest with the General Manager and the Assistant General Manager.

Professor W. J. Pretorius, the General Manager of K.W.V., looks more the professor than the wine-bibber. Pale, scholastic and bespectacled, he stood quietly beside me while burly J. F. Knott Craig, Assistant General Manager, presided reverently over a range of bottles. Executives of distilleries, breweries and wine-cellarers must tire of polite imbibitions with thirsty visitors. Not that my hosts hinted at such a feeling. . . . Craig, joking several times about the “liquid assets” of K.W.V., launched me with a sherry called Old Pale Fine Extra Dry. Although confessing I was no connoisseur of wines, I praised it as an excellent party sherry. “Only a small minority knows wine,” said Craig, “and it sets the fashion. But the taste of the ordinary man must be our determining factor.” Strengthened by his remark and the Extra Dry, I plunged into a less dry Fine Old Pale Sherry, also called Extra Dry Golden. K.W.V. export wines bear different labels in different countries. The line of empty glasses lengthened, Craig pouring the dregs from each into a container on the floor. I rocked with appreciation when we reached a soft Paarl Dry Red Burgundy, followed by a seventeen-year-old Sweet Hermitage, which I preferred to the twelve-year-old. Round about the Pure

Vintage Liqueur Brandy, Craig, a robust Afrikaner in spite of his Scottish-sounding name, explained why wine-growers are historically important people in the Union: "Civilization in South Africa went forward with a bottle of wine in one hand and a Bible in the other." Before I steered towards the door, he proudly and dramatically displayed another bottle, but did not open it . . . a present from a friend in the Belgian Congo: "Johnnie Walker Black Label" whisky!

A very good liqueur comes from South Africa, Van der Hum. To watch it being made I ill-advisedly visited Constantia, nine miles from Cape Town, on a Saturday, to find the premises shut. But without regrets: charming Constantia is one of the loveliest districts of the Cape, where vineyards have produced quality grapes and world-famous wines since 1685. Indeed, one falls in love at sight with Cape Town and its environs. Even the city itself, its backdrop of Table Mountain often laid with a tablecloth of fluffy cloud, immediately seduces the traveller.

Visitors from other parts of the Union are distressed to find no colour bar in Cape Town's public vehicles, in which they may have to sit surrounded by brown and black people! And at first I was impressed by what appeared to be a more liberal atmosphere, until I talked to a few Europeans and Cape coloured people. The coloured—known as "God's Step-children"—are an unhappy group of nearly a million mulattos of mixed European, African, Indian and Malay origin who live mostly in the Cape Province, and comprise half the population of Cape Town and the Cape Peninsula.

"Be careful you don't get an ice-pick in your liver," warned a young white Capetonian. "Don't walk through District Six unless you're with someone well-liked by the coloured people."

He was not the first person to bias me against Cape Town's notorious District Six in particular, and the coloured people in general. For my special benefit as a visitor to South Africa, the coloured had already been painted as a thoroughly bad lot, combining the most offensive characteristics of several races. I had been told about the "skolly," who wears wide trousers half-way down his calves, drags his cap over his eyes, walks with a hip-swinging swagger and carries a knife; the

“rooker,” who smokes the potent drug dagga rolled in thick untidy cigarettes; the pimp, the pickpocket, and the chocolate-skinned prostitute, whose most sought-after trophy is said to be an English petty officer.

But a broad-minded politician had admitted, “The Cape coloured are the absolute tragedy of South Africa. The wretched members of Parliament hardly ever lift their voices on their behalf. They are miserably served.”

I telephoned Benjamin Kies, a coloured school-teacher who, I was told, would give me an impassioned point-of-view on the coloured problem. I asked him to have a meal with me.

“That is not possible.” He explained that Non-Europeans may not eat or drink in European bars and restaurants, not even as the guests of white people. The management would refuse to serve us. We could talk either in the Public Library or at his home.

We met outside my hotel and took a taxi to a small wooden house in the working-class suburb of Woodstock where Kies, a tall, lean, coffee-coloured bachelor, lives with his sister. Outside, coloured children played with white children. Kies said that colour consciousness sets in only when the children are sent to different schools. After that, old playmates continue to nod to each other, but a distance develops between them. Social pressure forbids further intimacy.

Miss Kies, a pretty mulatto, gave us tea, rich fruit cake and delicious home-baked shortbread in the spotless parlour. Her brother’s library filled a glass-faced bookcase, overflowed on to several shelves and the top of the piano—Balzac, Chaucer, Spenser, Donne, Dryden—books on the theatre, music, philosophy, politics, economics, including “Das Capital.” I noticed an early Phaidon Van Gogh edition, on the back of which Kies said he did all his writing; Van Gogh prints decorated the walls.

On several occasions Kies, who went to Cape Town University on a scholarship, lectured to the University Literary Society. There is no arbitrary segregation at the University, where he found the European students mostly a “very bovine” crowd. But coloured medical students, for instance, must complete their training elsewhere; teaching is the only profession easily open to dark skins, and Kies took his Bach. of Ed.

and became one of the few coloured M.A.s. There are several coloured teachers' training colleges in the Cape, but graduates work only in the coloured schools, which are almost all managed by the churches and subsidized by the State. Thirty per cent of the coloured children get no schooling at all. And due to the poverty of their parents and early demands, particularly in the country, on their labour, the majority of the pupils packing overcrowded classrooms do not stay beyond Standard Four.

Kies, who was born in Woodstock twenty-eight years ago, went first to a Wesleyan Mission School. At twelve he became a Sunday School teacher, started "lecturing to the multitude" and was known as "the little black Jesus."

"Even in the churches there is segregation. There are some entirely separate churches for Non-Europeans, in others separate seats are allocated to them."

Coloured people may attend only Non-European cinemas. And there is a special film censorship board which, Kies alleged, banned "The Grapes of Wrath" because it showed "people of European extraction in reduced circumstances."

Terming himself an "independent Socialist," Kies preaches with passionate indignation against the colour bar and the "Herrenvolk" attitude he considers worse than in Germany where "the Jews carried their yellow patch; here your face is your brown patch."

"Almost the only Non-Europeans who have more than a mere smattering of education are the teachers," claims Kies, who looks to the coloured teaching intelligentsia for leadership in the emancipation of his people. He condemns those cautious coloured teachers and skilled artisans who, rather than hazard their few political advantages, prefer to isolate their special interests from the collective interests of the 8,000,000 "non-white oppressed" in South Africa.

"They forget that the overwhelming majority of the coloured people are in the same political, economic, social and educational bog as the African."

As for those of his people who accent their European background, forget the Bantu and ape the British: "There's nothing so terrible as the black Englishman!"

This trait of some of the coloured was touched on by Professor Edward Batson, head of the Department of Social



"A sad-faced young farm labourer had the yellow skin and heart-shaped face of the Hottentot"

Science at Cape Town University, when I talked to him about the problem.

“There are two kinds of hairdresser in Cape Town. At one end of the town they kink fair hair, at the other dark hair is straightened. Some Cape coloured are blond, but the majority tend to be darker. If a coloured person has blue eyes, fair hair and a pink complexion, he may not be distinguishable from a European. Undoubtedly such people marry as Europeans in other provinces and abroad.” But through an intuitive summing-up of several factors, Cape whites are more apt than other South Africans to detect mixed-blood in border-line cases.

Batson, a handsome, square-jawed Englishman who is the dead-spit of actor James Mason, came to the Union eleven years ago and for the first five years studied the coloured problem quietly. He then revealed his sympathetic and liberal attitude, backing it with incontrovertible figures.

He published a Survey of Cape Town showing that more than half the coloured families live below the Poverty Datum line—that is, with household incomes insufficient to provide “those quantities of food, clothing, fuel, and lighting and cleaning materials which are essential for the health and decency of the members of the household.” The Poverty Datum line in itself is so low a standard of living that expenditure is not possible on medicine, education, amusements, sweets, tobacco, stationery, newspapers. And yet another thirty per cent of the coloured people live *on* the line. The bulk of the population of District Six, a maze of squalid streets terracing a lower slope of Table Mountain, and of the Cape Flats, a filthy scatter of tin shacks fringing the town, lives in abject poverty under appalling conditions.

Most of the coloured workers are unskilled labourers. They clean the railway coaches and are the traditional agricultural workers of the province. The Malays particularly are excellent building artisans. But colour prejudice continues to squeeze them out of the better-paid jobs. Apprenticeship for coloured youths becomes increasingly difficult, while there is growing competition from European artisans. More and more doors are shut upon a new generation of youngsters; but the “she-been” doors remain open. (The shebeens, illicit drinking parlours, sell heavily fortified Cape wines and other more noxious mixtures.)

On many farms, coloured labourers are paid partly in tots of wine. "But if you want to encourage sobriety," said Batson, "you avoid a system like the tot system."

"I have formed a very high opinion of the coloured," he concluded. "As a group, their inferiorities are almost entirely the result of their economic status. They have some very good traits, and considerable artistic and imaginative gifts. They are a sport-loving people. Given a decent chance, the coloured man makes a good artisan, skilled and patient. Those who have obtained positions of political responsibility have intelligence and adaptability."

There was no question about the "artistic and imaginative gifts" of a group of coloured amateur actors I watched that evening in the hall of an Anglican coloured primary school. School desks were cleared away to make room for the players, who rehearsed several scenes from "The Tempest" with poise and confidence.

Two English artists who refuse to convene to the colour bar convention had promoted the production, together with a well-known producer and other unprejudiced Europeans. They had gathered around them a group of coloured school-teachers, booked the Cape Town City Hall and obtained the sponsorship of the South African Association of Arts. *The Torch*, a coloured newspaper, forecast that "The Tempest" would make history, theatrical and otherwise, and prove a revelation to a lot of sceptical Europeans.

Through the windows of the improvised rehearsal hall and across an area I watched brown-skinned youths wrestling on gym mats in another part of the building. The school becomes a Coloured Community Centre in the evenings, and youngsters are taught physical culture, carpentry, shoe repairing, art, music and other subjects by volunteer coloured teachers.

"The Centre badly needs money for equipment," said George Veldzman, coloured principal of St. Philip's, during a break in rehearsal. "The Rotary Club gave us £100, and the Frank Joubert Art Centre another £25. We sent a lot of letters to Europeans, but they produced only a few guineas. One purpose of the Centre is to attract the 'skolly' off the streets."

I made a few drawings of the actors, in an atmosphere so free from colour consciousness that I might have been at a



"September Peters . . . could in manner and dress have passed for an elderly gaffer in an English pub"

matter-of-fact meeting of the Little Nether Tooting Amateur Dramatic Society, England. The women wore smart print dresses, the men dark suits, quietly cut. Their complexions ranged from pale cream to a very dark chocolate. They spoke in pleasant academic English, without affectation.

“I know practically everybody else’s lines as well as my own,” said Miranda, attractive slant-eyed Catherine Pienaar, who sat for me with dignity while the lissom twenty-four-year-old Ferdinand knelt before her in a love scene from the third act. I asked her if she knew her racial ingredients, but she shook her head. “I don’t know exactly; we’re coloured.”

Ferdinand, George Cloete, was more knowledgeable about his antecedents. “I think my grandmother was coloured. My grandfather, who was very fair and had a long beard, had Dutch blood. When he got old, he went slightly silly, used to look in the mirror, argue with and curse himself. I have a slight tendency, too, to look in the mirror and argue. . . .

“My heart and soul are in the stage. If I had my way I would take it up as a profession. But there is no future in such a job for coloured chaps. I tried to get into the University Dramatic Society, but failed.” So a frustrated Ferdinand will continue in a teaching career.

Next morning Veldzman kindly lent me his office as a temporary studio, and I drew several other coloured types. One, a sad-faced young farm labourer with crinkled light brown hair, had the yellow skin and heart-shaped face of the Hottentot. Another, September Peters, except for his dark complexion and slit eyes, could in manner and dress have passed for an elderly gaffer in an English pub. When I asked the dignified old man where he worked, he replied. “At the present moment, my dear sir, I haven’t got a job. I was driving wagons on the railways for twenty-one years, and am now only by myself, as my wife is dead.”

Elizabeth Brink, aged ten, stared at me with large solemn eyes. Hands folded in her lap, feet just touching the ground, she sat upright in a chair much too large for her graceful little figure. Her shining black hair had been neatly plaited and tied with a pink bow, and a red sash twisted around her navy-blue school uniform. Tiny gold earrings pierced her ears. Like eighty per cent of her people, this attractive child is Afrikaans-speaking, but whispered answers to my

questions in fluent English. I had been shown some of her paintings, drawn with coloured chalk dipped into a mixture of sugar and water, and asked her what subjects she preferred to paint. People more than flowers, she softly replied, and people in streets rather than rooms.

Elizabeth's teacher, Mrs. Louis Maurice, was my next sitter. Anywhere but in South Africa Mrs. Maurice would be accepted for the charming and intelligent girl she is. Tears in her eyes, she gave me one of the most moving and sincere expositions of the coloured case I had heard.

She said she had German, Javanese and probably Hottentot blood, and "because my colour is light, I can sometimes go to the white bioscopes. But I will not smear my face with powder to get in. I must go as I am." She spoke contemptuously of the border-line cases who are ashamed of being coloured and try to hide it. "When they go to England, they talk about going 'Home.' I am proud of my Hottentot blood."

Too many coloured people, she complained bitterly, accept their lot. "Only a few of us are militant." She deplored the street-corner hooligans and "skollies," created by the Europeans. "Many of them have passed Standard Eight, but there is nothing else for them to do." Her brother had to complete his medical course in Scotland. "My husband wanted to do his B.A. in Fine Arts, but they wouldn't allow him. He couldn't work with white models."

Europeans promise her people the abolition of the colour bar, saying "your time will come." But the very fact I want better things now means I should have them. I'm not a savage! There have been so many reports on the coloured, but still every right is denied us. What we want is equality, equal pay for equal work."

The African, the coloured and the Indian now tend to unite upon a common platform. A Non-European Unity Committee demands that there shall no longer be one system of law and morality for the Non-Europeans and another for the whites. It asks for the practical application of ten fundamental human rights, including the franchise, compulsory free and uniform education for children, inviolability of person, and freedom of speech, movement and occupation.

Even though reaction may have sharpened, I detected a liberalizing of opinion amongst many South Africans, as does



"Elizabeth Brink stared at me with large solemn eyes"

Mrs. Margaret Ballinger, one of the three representatives for the natives, out of 153 M.P.s, in the House of Assembly. She admits her special job is to fight for the African rather than the coloured people, but she stands “four-square for a united front of all colours.” She is watching with interest to see if the returned soldiers organize to throw up a political-economic programme based on the development of the Non-European population. A returned soldier told me that in discussion groups abroad soldiers had debated many questions taken before for granted. There are great problems but some people, he felt, are facing up to them, realizing that the Non-European must be educated, considered as a citizen and, eventually, as an equal.

An equal—a political equal? A social equal? And there, probably, we have a lead to the whole coloured problem. The official and usual South African view is to regard miscegenation with strong disapproval, verging on horror. And the Cape coloured people may seem, to the white man responsible for them, an ominous projection into a coffee-skinned future for the Union and the continent.

Whereas I had trickled down through Africa, from Cairo to the Cape, like a ball in a pin-ball machine, I bounced back to England more swiftly, although by the same trunk route—train to Jo’burg and Durban, flying-boat up the coast, across to Lake Victoria and north to Cairo, and land-plane from Almaza to Hurn airport. This time the African aircscape reversed like film rewound on a cinema spool, and familiar places flashed past below in a blur.

When I mentally regurgitate the concentrated nineteen weeks and 20,000 miles of safari by air, road, rail and the seat of my pants, I find each sense has its special memories. Again I smell the cloves of Zanzibar, the exotic perfume of Doria Shafik, the pungent insecticide squirted inside flying-boats, the wine-cellars of Paarl, and innumerable East African privies. My eardrums vibrate with the chanting of pigmies, Arabs, Om-Kalsoum, the asthmatic snorts of Belinda the rhino, the sweet voices of a Baganda children’s choir, the belch of a descendant of Mohammed, and the hissing of a python in my bedroom. I feel the firm handshake of the King of Kigezi, the satiny texture of a gold brick, the bites of

fleas, mosquitos, bugs and other crawling things, and the fierce itch of prickly heat. In retrospect I taste platters of fruits—tree-tomatoes, pawpaws, pineapples, bananas, passion fruit, grapes, peaches, mangosteens, and my thirst is slaked with cool classes of abri, sherbet, limoon and Rum Adam. I can see again the serene beauty of Lake Bunyonyi, naked Shilluks striding proudly through Malakal, hysterical rioters smashing Cairo shop-windows, tears in the eyes of a coloured girl, a dead and twisted cyclist on the Mbarara road, Johannesburg's man-made mountains of gold, and the silver crest of Kilimanjaro escaping from the parched and troubled plains of the African continent.

THE END

