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The Second Circumnavigation of Lake Nyassa

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Source: *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of Geography*, New Monthly Series, Vol. 1, No. 5 (May, 1879), pp. 289-304

Published by: [Wiley](#) on behalf of [The Royal Geographical Society \(with the Institute of British Geographers\)](#)

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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
AND MONTHLY RECORD OF GEOGRAPHY.

The Second Circumnavigation of Lake Nyassa.

By Dr. JAMES STEWART.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, March 10th, 1879.)

Map, p. 352.

IN the paper which I have the honour to lay before the Royal Geographical Society, I wish as much as possible to avoid controverted questions, for the settlement of which we have not yet sufficient materials. The longitudes at the north end of the lake are like the slave trade arrangements at the south end, a little confused. Within the last two days information has been received from Mr. James Stewart, C.E., at present on the Mission staff, that recent observations had led him to shift the longitude at Mankambira's 24 miles further west. It would be a mistake and be specially wrong in me to express any decided opinion on this purely geographical question. Mr. Stewart is a careful observer, and in course of time we shall get information sufficient to settle the point. The map we found most useful (and the same may be said of Captain Elton's party) was that prepared by Mr. James Stevenson, and appended to his pamphlet 'On the Civilisation of South-Eastern Africa.'

The main points of difference from earlier maps in the one which I have had drawn for this meeting,* are three, which I put forward tentatively:—1st. The north end of the lake is moved westwards about a degree. 2nd. The River Rombashe is brought to within about 20 miles of the north-east corner of the lake. 3rd. The River Losewa is placed south-east of Kota-Kota.

I proceed now with the account of our voyage round the lake.

On Monday, the 17th September, 1877, the *Ilala* sailed from

* The map alluded to is the large wall-map hung to illustrate the reading of the paper. The inset in the corner of the map at p. 352 is a reduction of this, as far as the northern end is concerned.

Livingstonia Bay for the second circumnavigation of Lake Nyassa. Once before only had the north end of the lake been reached, but no landing had been effected. To Mr. E. D. Young belongs the honour of discovering the important geographical fact that the lake extends a degree and a half further north than was previously supposed according to Dr. Livingstone's observations.

The object of our voyage was twofold:—1st. To carry out the instructions of the Mission committee, received some months before, which were—to examine the north end of the lake with the view to the extension of missionary and other work—to become acquainted with the chiefs and the people on the shores of the lake, and gather such information about that almost unknown region as might facilitate the objects of the Mission. 2nd. To convey Captain Elton and his party, and also Mr. Cotterill and some of his men to the north end of the lake, and thus aid them so far on the journey they contemplated extending by land eastwards from Lake Nyassa to the coast. But for the second object we should have started on our voyage in July.

We were twenty-eight in all on board the *Ilala*, and this number of passengers, with wood for fuel, provisions, tents, baggage, calico, and other cargo, was enough for our small vessel. During the day there was little difficulty, but there was not sleeping accommodation for twenty-eight on board, and it became necessary therefore to land a portion of the party each night whenever that was practicable.

I had asked Dr. Laws to undertake the details of the sailing arrangements, which he managed admirably, retaining for myself the general responsibility and management of the voyage. We had on board an officer of the Union Steam-packet Company, Mr. Hoste, but the work practically of taking the ship to the north end of the lake and back again, lay upon two landsmen assisted by one seaman. We had also to find each night a safe anchorage and a suitable landing-place, and this along a coast on which only one or two harbours, chiefly Kota-Kota, were then known, and these not very well. This may perhaps explain some of the delay as well as the anxiety which harassed us, while we sailed along shores that were quite unsurveyed. For whatever we attempted or accomplished, there was one thing we felt bound not to do—to lose the ship. A seaman could afford to do that, but two landsmen could not.

On the afternoon of the same day on which we sailed, we reached Mpemba's—a chief whose territory lies off the mouth of the Lintippe (a small river flowing into the west side of the lake), and who had hitherto shown himself to be one of the most determined slave-dealers on the lake. Of all our immediate neighbours at Livingstonia, he had proved himself the least friendly. He refused the present sent at our first settling on the lake, and he behaved but indifferently to certain messengers who were sent to his place some six or eight months later.

We still possess a love token from him in the shape of a spear thrown at one of that party; and he still retains a portion of a truss of calico, some coloured blankets, and other articles, which do not by any right belong to him. Our mode of dealing with this chief, however, may illustrate our general method, namely, the avoidance of all violence; steady persistence in our own course of opposition to the slave trade; and following all up by efforts to carry on friendly intercourse, even though there might be a little unfriendliness exhibited on the other side.

Next day, September 18th, we held due north along the west coast, passing Rifu, the island of Benje, and towards evening we anchored in a small bay without any name, as it seemed to afford us an opportunity of wooding. We were here a little south of Lake Chia. Next day we proceeded still further northwards, and past the entrance to the just-mentioned lake. Great hopes were entertained that Lake Chia would form an important and useful harbour, being completely land-locked and commodious. We spent several days in examining it on our return, and our hopes were doomed to disappointment, as across the entrance there lies a ridge of rocks which gave us much trouble both at our entry and departure. Further examination may disclose a possible channel close to the southern shore, but that at present seems doubtful. We anchored for the night a few miles south of Kota-Kota in an ill-protected bay, which we should not have taken had there been any choice. No anchorage which does not give protection from the south and south-east winds is of much value. Three hours after sunset a gale from the south burst upon us with considerable fury. The ship began to drag both anchors, even though one of them was a very heavy one, suitable for a much larger vessel. The sea came tumbling in upon us with heavy thuds, and very shortly we had astern of us a stretch of grey rock, over which white breakers were flying in large masses. There was a little dim moonlight, which partly revealed to us the danger of our position. Every few minutes was decreasing the short distance that lay between us and destruction. Though loth to lose them, we slipped both anchors and put out to sea, to save our lives and our little ship. We had much difficulty even under sail and steam to get out of a very dangerous position, but we held on through a wild night of storm and confused sea, and got into Kota-Kota harbour next day at two in the afternoon, all pretty well worn out. Mr. Hoste's assistance that night was invaluable. The loss of our anchors cost us five days' delay, involving our going back from Kota-Kota overland, and carrying a boat with us and a party of fifty natives. We managed by sweeping over the spot to recover both anchors, to our no small satisfaction. Kota-Kota was at one time and may be regarded still, as the head-quarters of the slave trade on the south-western side of Lake Nyassa. It is under the government of a half-caste Arab whose

hereditary title is "the Jumbe." He received us in a perfectly friendly way, and is not the same man who ruled at that place a year before.

The town of Kota-Kota is a long rambling collection of huts, built on the slope of a slight hill, and looking down upon the lake. Its sanitary condition is very bad; its chief export is slaves. Large numbers of these were in the town at the time, and had become a sort of unsaleable goods on account of the shutting-up of the coast by the slave trade treaty with the Sultan of Zanzibar.

On Tuesday, the 25th, we crossed over to the eastern shore of Lake Nyassa, intending to make the River Losewa. By the map our course should have been north-east, by actual steering it was south-east. We crossed in about eight hours and a half, and found ourselves abreast of the village of Losewa, which lies at the mouth of a small stream of the same name. There is a small open bay, but no harbour. Our recent experience of nightly gales sweeping down suddenly upon us, made us anxious to get some anchorage where the ship might lie undisturbed, and wearied men obtain that rest and sleep so much needed in an exhausting climate. All our medical experience, both previous and subsequent to this, had sufficiently proved that night watches, and especially a whole night's work, were invariably followed by an attack of fever. And this fever is really, after all, the only difficulty and real obstacle in the way of Englishmen doing any amount of work, even in Central Africa.

An examination of the mouth of the stream showed that it was just possible to push the steamer into a quiet lagoon, where nothing short of a hurricane would disturb her. This was successfully done; and before sunset we went ashore to pay a visit to the chief, and examine the village of Losewa. He was called Kitepete, or sometimes, indifferently, Kungumanje. He was an old man, with heavy features, and a countenance ploughed deeply in all directions with the scars of small-pox. He wore the usual dirty Arab dress, and was only distinguished by two very fine ivory rings or armlets. Kitepete was by no means intelligent, and seemed unable to comprehend what was stated to him about the objects of the English. The interest in reference to Losewa consists in its being the port or landing-place from the western side of the lake for all slave caravans converging towards Kota-Kota; and it is also the point of departure for newly-formed and re-arranged caravans leaving the eastern shore of Nyassa for Kilwa, or any other slaving port on the coast. Its glories and prosperity seem to belong to the past; desolation, dirt, and decay now hold possession of the place.

Next morning before six we steamed out cautiously, and found ourselves shortly afterwards in the deep waters of the lake, well off Losewa village. We sailed along a bold coast with high headlands all day till between five and six in the evening, when we sighted the island of Dikomo, and after some little difficulty came to anchor in a small bay on the north-east side of the island. Here we were detained several days.

About this island great expectations were formed immediately after its first discovery. It was thought likely to prove a valuable station for missionary, commercial, or other purposes. Our visit dispelled the illusion. The island consists of masses of granite and quartz rock, covered with a very thin layer of these disintegrating rocks intermixed with a little pure sand. Vegetable mould is hardly to be seen, except in a few gullies. This is towards the eastern side; at the western side the soil is considerably better. Cassava grows plentifully, but it seems to be almost the only crop that does grow, and it is well known that cassava will grow in the very poorest soil. There were, however, a few cattle on the island.

The island itself is not more than 3 to 5 miles long and 1 to 3 broad. Local winds blow regularly at certain hours of the day with considerable violence. These caused us to shift from one bay to another, more frequently than we cared to do. At length the wooding was completed; a visit had been paid to Chitesi, the chief, on the mainland; the invalids were now recovered, and we proposed to cross the lake again to the western shore to visit Mankambira, the most considerable man on the upper half of the western side of Lake Nyassa.

We steamed round the north-east end of Dikomo, and then nearly west for Mankambira's territory. The sun had left us before we had made the land, and we found ourselves, an hour after dark, under a mountainous shore, with no soundings, but the roar of the surf not far distant. We therefore resolved to put to sea for the night, and bore away due north, keeping well off the coast. All that night and next day we steamed along the western shore, the mountains of which at this part come down somewhat abruptly into the lake. There are level terraces here and there, and occasional villages; the height of the mountains is from 2000 to 3000, or even 4000 feet. About 3 P.M. on Wednesday, October 3rd, we rounded a promontory, which forms the southern base of a singularly shaped mountain called by the natives Mount Chombe, but which has also been called Mount Waller, after the well-known editor of 'Livingstone's Last Journals.'

This mountain betrays even at a great distance its essential difference as a stratified rock from all the other masses of mountain by which it is surrounded. Black bands appear to run across its face, but these are due rather to differences of angle at which the rock lies exposed, than to actual diversity of colour in the sandstone of which it is chiefly composed. Coal has since been discovered near its base. The bay lying round its base has been called Florence Bay, and also Kitimbo Bay. It is large, and pretty well protected from the south and south-west winds, though exposed to those from the east. Here we remained a few days to wood, and some of us to recruit by a little rest, as thirty consecutive hours of work previous to our arrival had helped, as usual, to set up a little fever. Meantime those whose duties did not bind them to

the ship went to examine the surrounding country. One party ascended Mount Waller, and Mr. Cotterill found it to be close on 4000 feet above the lake, by the aneroid, or over 5000 above the level of the sea. A day or two later, Captain Elton with some of his party went in search of elephants, and in the short space of two hours was successful enough to shoot four. They were fortunate in getting close to the herd; and the correct theory and practice of elephant-shooting seems to be this—to pour in the heaviest broadsides at the closest quarters, and in the most vital parts, but at all events to keep pouring in three or four-ounce bullets, with charges of six, eight, or even ten drachms of powder. This battue gave the hunters a certain quantity of ivory, and the people of some of the neighbouring villages an enormous supply of food. One of the hunting party had a narrow escape from the bursting of an elephant rifle. I hope the day is not far distant when the African elephant will be turned to better uses, and when the valuable services and extraordinary sagacity of this animal will be some protection against the indiscriminate slaughter to which it is at present exposed. On this occasion was witnessed the fact, which has been often repeated and often denied, that the unwounded elephants will go to the assistance of one that is wounded, and urge and aid him to escape.

It was Wednesday, the 10th of October, before we were quite ready to leave Florence Bay. A heavy surf up till noon generally prevented communication between the shore and the ship. The afternoon was exceedingly beautiful even for Lake Nyassa, and the atmosphere wonderfully clear. Both sides of the lake were distinctly visible. At this point they generally are, if the weather is at all favourable; but in thick weather, from any position a little further south, the contour of the land would easily lead one to suppose that the mountains closed in to the north, and that the northern limit of the lake had been reached. This was probably the origin of Livingstone's mistake in 1861, when the northern limit of Nyassa was fixed at about lat. 11°. The western shore of the lake is here considerably varied by hill and valley, and the outline of the coast is broken by the wide sweep of Florence Bay, which is 8 or 10 miles across at the entrance. We anchored for the night in a small bay, for which we could get no name, as we found no natives, but which we called for convenience' sake "Deep Bay." It runs well into the land, and is fairly protected from all except easterly winds; a line of rocks or rocky islands, however, runs across a portion of its mouth.

We continued our voyage northward next morning; from this point the high land on the western shore of the lake begins to recede, and there is the commencement of that long plain which forms the north-west and northern termination of the lake. About half-past four on the same afternoon we found ourselves safely at anchor in a land-locked lagoon, called the Kambwe Lagoon. It had never been visited before.

On account of its safe anchorage and the friendliness of its people, and its convenient position towards the end of the lake, it is likely in the future to become a well-known place. The depth of water on the bar or entrance is not great. We found it only about 7 feet in the dry season, but a small vessel may lie safely there in any weather.

On the following morning we steamed still northwards, but shortly our course was changed to north-east, and shortly afterwards again to due east. We were now approaching the northern limit of the lake. The question was, could we find any river mouth, or bay, or estuary, which would afford a safe and convenient anchorage for the ship? From all we had heard, the region was one of frequent storms, and very destitute of shelter. We held along the coast as close as it was safe to do so, and at noon we made out a small river with a bar at its mouth, or what seemed like that. The ship's head was put towards the shore, and on examination we found 7 feet of water on the bar, and 18 feet inside. In a volume published recently,* I find the following note of our making the north end of Lake Nyassa :—" At about ten this morning Dr. Stewart became uneasy at seeing the east side close in with a high range of mountains (9000 to 10,000 feet), and a slight south-east swell rising. He said, ' If we could not get a harbour, we could look at the north end of the lake, and then steam back to last night's anchorage.' I agreed, but begged him to keep inshore more, so that we should not pass any shelter." My remark on this is, first, I do not know what else could have been done than to steam back to our previous anchorage, if no shelter could be found; but if this statement is meant to support a claim to the discovery of the Rombashe River as made by Captain Elton's party, I demur, and shall have something to say further on. The plain facts are these: We were getting jammed up in the north end of the lake, with the long stretch of 300 miles of sea behind us, over which the south-east wind often sweeps suddenly with great fury. To make an absolute promise as to what we should or should not do, would have been absolute unwisdom. I remember the occasion and the position well. I was standing leaning against the forward awning stanchion, looking anxiously, perhaps gloomily, at the line of coast into which we had as yet discovered no safe opening into which to thrust the ship. Mr. Young's rough experience a year before put us on our guard, and was not encouraging on a lake where storms are sudden and harbours scarce.

We did at length discover the small river of which we were in quest, up which we steamed 2 miles, and the name of which we afterwards discovered to be the Rombashe. It is difficult to convey to any who may now listen to this paper an adequate impression of the relief afforded us by this discovery of a practicable harbour for our little ship. The question was now settled as to whether such a place of refuge could be found

* Elton's 'Journals: Travels and Researches among the Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa,' p. 319.

at the north end of Lake Nyassa. The natives were in great consternation as we entered the river, and began driving off their cattle into the tall grass, in which they were completely hidden. The first village also was emptied of inhabitants. This was not surprising; for certainly never during any experience of theirs or of their forefathers, had so strange-looking an object as the small steamer *Ilala* ever come up their quiet river—almost to their very doors.

We had now fulfilled our voluntary promise. We had carried Captain Elton and his party 500 miles, done our best for them during two months, and landed them, without accident or loss of any kind, safely at a point on which white men had never set foot before.

Here we lay ten days during and after landing Captain Elton's party. Its latitude has been set down at $9^{\circ} 38'$ or $9^{\circ} 40'$ south. The trend of the lake from the Rombashe till it meets the Livingstone Mountains on the eastern shore, is east by a little north. The distance, as near as I could judge, was 18 miles, or perhaps 20 miles. Practically the Rombashe is the north end of the lake, and is the only harbour so far north as yet discovered. The breadth of the river is 150 to 200 feet. The banks are quite low, and in the wet season would be submerged at some points. The river itself does not maintain this breadth and depth for any considerable distance, but becomes divided a few miles further up into two or three channels.

We found the northern end of Lake Nyassa resting on, or forming a great plain, about 30 or 35 miles long, by 20 or 25 broad; the plain narrows towards its northern end, and loses itself among the hills.

According to information obtained from the natives, there is a small stream lying east of the Rombashe, called the Mbaka; and another to the west, called the Wila or Chi-wila. Both streams are easily fordable, and are apparently of no value as navigable inlets into the country. The people dwelling on the banks of the Rombashe and generally in the plain already described, call themselves the Malema, a subtribe of the Mchungu or Wachungu or Wasango, and extend for a couple of days northwards. Behind them to the north-east, and perhaps also to the north-west, there lie the Wakamanga, and further north Merere. The name Bachusia was also used, probably for a tribe touching those already mentioned.

The name of the chief was sometimes Mbungu, sometimes Makula, sometimes Malisaka; and he could not repress a smile on my suggesting that he had a fourth, as he really had—and that he was not perhaps the real man after all. The relations of the mission party with the people on the Rombashe were perfectly friendly for the first eight days. The chief sent us an ox and various other presents, and these were acknowledged by return presents from the ship. After that some difficulty arose which has never been satisfactorily explained, but a collision was avoided.

From the first, however, a considerable diversity of opinion existed

between Captain Elton and myself as to the character of these people. They were the wildest looking savages we had yet met. The men wore not a vestige of clothing, and many of them had their bodies smeared with black, white, and red paint, which gave them a most hideous appearance. The women, however, were better cared for than among many other tribes. Captain Elton's view was that they were an exceedingly simple and unsophisticated people. Their subsequent dealings with him did not verify this. They declared themselves unwilling to carry any burdens; asserted that they were warriors and not porters; but if porters were wanted they would try and get some from the hills behind. They reduced the loads which they did accept from 60 to 20 lbs., insisted on making their own stages, and the day after the start the greater number of them deserted. In consequence of this difficulty, Captain Elton sent back even from his camp on the river, a large quantity of stores and material intended for the journey, for which carriers could not be found. We saw with astonishment several boatloads of stores and provisions returned, to go back with the ship. These included such essentials as biscuits, coffee, sugar, flour, candles, sardines, oatmeal, pepper, a variety of pots and pans, water buckets, and numerous other articles. There were also guns and ammunition. It was in vain that we remonstrated and pointed out the danger that would arise from this arrangement. We produced no impression. On Wednesday, the 17th October, at noon, Captain Elton's expedition started for the Zanzibar coast. We beheld them depart with the gloomiest forebodings, though little was said, as there seemed to be a fixed determination to carry out the projected journey. We thought they would encounter serious difficulties from the character of the people among whom we had come, and also that scarcity, if not starvation, must overtake them. All this unfortunately was more or less realised; and the death of Captain Elton has thrown a gloom over the whole journey. It is impossible to speak of him as an explorer, except in terms of the highest admiration and eulogy. His activity, energy, wonderful tact, determination, courage, and perseverance, all fitted him remarkably for the work he had chosen.

From whatever cause, our relations with the Chungus were getting a little strained. I do not wish to express any theory on this subject, though I hold one. It is enough to say that after we did discover the state of matters we were in no hurry, but remained three full days; and in reply to the inquiry when we should depart, I stated that we should go when we found it convenient. Our most trusty headman held very strong views on this subject, and refused to go with me through the country, and generally indicated that we ought not to protract our stay. I was exceedingly anxious to avoid anything approaching even to a collision, though we were well armed and ready for any attack; but so little display did we make of arms, that I think the natives believed we had none at all. There was not the slightest reason why we should

have had any fear. We were in an iron ship, in a deep river, within 2 miles of the broad lake itself. We had sixty barrels ready, and nothing but the extreme anxiety not to leave a wrong impression on the minds of these poor people led us to act as we did, though strangely enough we have been accused of panic and flight. We had no objection to fighting *per se*, and if it were necessary for dear life. But every reason induced us to try a pacific method; accordingly after waiting three days, or in all ten, we steamed out of the Rombashe on the evening of the 21st October, and held on by the clear light of a full moon and on a glassy sea till about midnight, when the *Ilala* quietly glided again into the lagoon of the Kambwe.

Eight days were spent in this harbour. The people were exceedingly friendly, especially the old chief Kalonga, who brought us as a present a young bull and a tusk of ivory. The ivory was meant to induce us to give him medicine, or *mankwala*, to fight the *Maviti*.* We told him the English had no medicine except courage to fight their enemies with, and we declined to take the tusk of ivory he brought, because we would not deceive him by giving him a useless medicine in return.

Resuming our homeward voyage, for 20 miles south of the Kambwe we found the shore low, well wooded at intervals, with belts of *Palmyra* palms stretching inland for some distance. The coast itself consisted of miles of sandy beach, occasionally interrupted with reedy patches. Groups of people were observed from place to place looking at the steamer, and villages were seen at frequent intervals.

Twenty miles still further south the low undulating hills gradually increased in height, and approached the shore till they formed the prominent headland south of which lies the indentation to which we gave the name of "Deep Bay"; 8 or 9 miles further south lies Florence Bay.

The coast for 55 or 60 miles south of Florence Bay, as already described, is steep; rounded hills from 1500 feet to 2000 feet and upwards come close to the edge of the lake. The openings in this line of hills are too slight to form good harbours, and those tried were found to be rocky at the bottom, with deep water close inshore. An exception must be made in reference to Kuta Bay, about 30 miles south of Florence Bay. The people gathered in large numbers as the ship dropped anchor; there were numerous villages on the shore; many of the people wore good native cloth, and clothing generally was the rule. In this they offered a great contrast to the perfectly nude dwellers on the Rombashe. They file their teeth, wear large pebeles or lip-rings, and large ornaments in their ears; beads also were apparently plentiful.

There were numerous canoes, and long stretches of hundreds of yards of excellent fishing-nets drying on stakes on the beach. The people

* Called by Dr. Laws, in the paper following this, *Mangone*.—Ed.

seemed tolerably well off, but here as elsewhere the dread of the Maviti beclouded their lives, and they had converted a rocky island, separated from the mainland by a channel about 100 yards wide, into a granary. Every square yard of its broken surface was covered with rude conical huts forming grain stores. A small number of people were also living on the island. Three miles north of the village of Kuta, there lies a curious mass of rock called by the natives Bowe; and close by, a small stream called the Furunika falls into the lake. The people were perfectly friendly, and the headman sent a goat after us, a whole day's journey down the coast.

Twenty miles south of Kuta Bay the coast-line gradually opens out into a pleasant valley, and forms two small bays with fairly good anchorage, to which we gave the name of "Double Bay." There were two or three villages, but they were deserted. Three men were seen on the shore. I went off to meet them, and try and induce them to come on board with us, and show us Mankambira's village. Greatly to my surprise I succeeded, and at sunset the same evening the *Ilala* anchored off the Lueia River, in front of Mankambira's town. A crowd of two or three thousand people assembled on the beach to watch the steamer coming in.

Next morning we visited Mankambira. His friendliness and impatience were equally manifested by his sending off in a canoe, the previous night at ten o'clock, some bananas and pombe, or native beer. We found him surrounded by his headmen under a temporary shade, erected on the beach. He is a tall, spare man, of about seventy, with a quiet and somewhat dignified manner; but, judging from his voice at times, I should think both temper and energy were concealed under that quiet manner. Our meeting lasted a considerable time. We made the usual statements about the English and their objects, and specially those of the Mission; said we had often heard of the chief Mankambira, and that he seemed more like an old friend than a stranger. We gave him a handsome present. This contained, among other things, a good dressing-gown, of light but brilliant material, which apparently pleased him greatly. He put it on, and wore it during our stay. His town was very large, and contained a vast number of temporary huts (*msassas*), occupied by people driven in from the surrounding villages by the war with the Maviti. A double, and at some places a triple stockade, several miles in length, surrounded the town. Several days were spent in wooding, and various conferences were held with Mankambira. The conversation always converged to the point whether we would give him *mankwala*, or medicine, to destroy his enemies, the Maviti.

At this place I left the ship, for the purpose of making a journey on foot down the middle section of the lake shores. My object was to examine the coast-line, with the view of ascertaining whether it offered any more advantageous site and harbour for the Livingstonia Station

than the one at present occupied. The distance traversed was 100 miles of latitude; but the necessity of one time going inland and at other times approaching the coast, made the distance actually travelled a great deal more. Dr. Laws was to take the ship to Kota-Kota, wait there, and wait my arrival. I had no white man with me, but two or three faithfuls in William Koyi from Lovedale, Sam and Chimlolo from Livingstonia, and about ten native carriers.

We left at noon on the 6th November, and early in the afternoon arrived at Marenga's village, on the southern side of the point of land called Misangi Point, which forms the southern projection of Mankambira's Bay. This village also was surrounded by a triple stockade of enormous strength. The distance between the stockades was from 30 to 60 yards, and at certain places the interval was filled up by growing jungle. We made our way through one narrow opening after another till we had passed the third barrier.

Numbers of people came to look at us, and I sent a messenger to Marenga to say I had come to see him, and wanted to stay all night in his town. No message arriving, and the darkness beginning to set in, I directed the men to set up the small tent we carried with us. We set a watch, and slept comfortably and quietly among these beleaguered Anyanja. Next morning Marenga came with his brother to see us, after having previously sent a large present of pombe and fowls.

We had the usual talk for an hour, and I then started on the march southwards. It is impossible not to feel the sincerest pity and commiseration for these poor people. They are kindly and hospitable in their own rude way, more hospitable to strangers than I fear we ourselves are, or should be to them, were they to come amongst us unrecommended as we did. But whether the times be quiet or troubled, in European cities, or in triply stockaded villages on the shores of Lake Nyassa, human life goes on in certain fixed daily forms.

As we passed along through this town built amongst jungle growing to the very doors, the men and women were all busily engaged at their morning occupations, and the children running about at their play. Some were clearing the ground for new temporary huts, and others were erecting these fragile dwellings. Some women were grinding the *ufa* or cassava meal, and others drying it, and at the door of one hut a woman was seen seated quietly suckling her infant. Provisions did not seem scarce, pombe evidently was abundant, and though besieged, the inhabitants were evidently holding their own.

We continued our march till noon, when we reached a village with a double stockade, belonging to a headman called Katonga. The people here might be said to be almost driven into the lake by their relentless foes, the Maviti. The stockades ran thirty yards into the lake itself, and the greater number of the huts were actually built on the sandy beach. In the evening we reached the valley of the Luvno, or Ruvno—which is

a rich but swampy plain 4 to 5 miles broad. In the wet season it must be wet enough. Something of the humidity of its soil may be gathered from the fact that in this driest and most parched season of the year, we passed through more than one field of maize in ear, tall and strong, and fresh looking. We found here the village of Kanyende, also stockaded, half hidden in a grove of large trees, and halted for the night under the shade of some of them outside the stockade.

The valley of the Ruvno, though small, is wonderfully beautiful, and better days are surely in store for it, when peace and order shall reign instead of constant war and turmoil. Through this valley, there is probably a good entrance into the country to the west.

Four hours' march, partly over slight hillocks with light sandy soil, brought us to Jua's village, close to the lake. We passed a good many small streams, some of which drain into the valley of the Ruvno, and others flow into the lake:—1. Tiaga, small and reedy; 2. Lifupa, 10 to 12 feet broad, and reedy; 3. Kungwe, 15 to 20 feet broad, sandy bed, scarcely 6 inches of water, water itself very good and sweet; 4. Kadura; 5. Vuma.

We found Jua's village in the same condition as the two just described. We started again at 2 o'clock, rounded the base of the prominent mountain Kawirwiri, or Kowirwi. The lower slopes of this mountain, though somewhat rough, present landscapes of great beauty.

We camped in the woods, and started before daybreak next morning for the longest and most trying day's march of the journey. The greater part of the way led us through deep sand close to the beach. At 10.30 we crossed the Luambaze, which at its mouth we found to be a stream about 2 feet deep and 30 feet broad. The mouth is obstructed by a bar, inside of which there was a greater depth and breadth of water. We camped at noon behind a rocky promontory, whose name I could not ascertain, but which is conspicuous by a solitary Palmyra palm, behind which lies a large lagoon. Here we found two hot springs, of a temperature of about 180°. The water is clear and good and pleasant to taste, not sulphurous, and perhaps slightly chalybeate.

The following day brought us to the banks of the Loangwa. This is the largest river we have passed; probably the largest between this and the extreme northern end of the lake. Where we crossed it, at some short distance from the mouth, the breadth of the channel was about 70 yards, bottom sandy and level, with many reedy islands; the water at this period was only knee deep, but a vast volume, from the appearance of the banks, undoubtedly fills its channels in the wet season.

Leaving the Loangwa and proceeding southwards, we crossed a considerable plain lying between the path and the lake. It is 6 or 8 miles long. During the day we crossed numerous small streams: the Kambisa, the Kwalezi, Kabula, Mapanda, the Machete, Chikalo, Ka-Kumbi, Inyi.

Tuesday, 13th November, was our last day's march before reaching

Kota-Kota. We left our camp at 6.30, and struck inland, ascending to about 400 or 500 feet, and at 8.30 we looked down into the valley of the Bambarre, a small stream which falls into the Sinjeri. At 9 o'clock, we reached the Bua River at its confluence with the Sinjeri. This latter is a brisk-flowing stream 15 to 18 feet wide, with 5 or 6 feet of water in the wet season, but only a foot to a foot and a half in depth when we crossed it. The channel of the Bua is 60 yards wide, with level and sandy bed, the water in the dry season is knee to waist deep, the banks steep and high: judging by water-marks, the depth must be 12 to 18 feet when the river is in flood.

There we made a long halt to rest and roast two wild pigs that had been shot, and at 12.30 started again. An unsuccessful chase after a herd of buffalo immediately after crossing the river varied the commencement of the march.

At 3.30 we crossed the Kasangazi, a stream with its channel deeply sunk between high banks, but which was completely overshadowed by tall trees and overarching palms, which met above, and formed the coolest and most delightful resting-place which the fancy or imagination of wearied travellers in the torrid climate of Africa could picture or desire. There was cool water to drink, and plenty of room to walk about in the shade, and gentle slopes on which to rest, untouched by a single ray of the burning sun. We halted for forty-five minutes, but would gladly have stayed forty-five hours. It was necessary to reach Kota-Kota, and this we accomplished by 8.30 in the evening, the last two hours of the march being performed in the moonlight.

From the height above the village we saw the *Ilala* lying quietly at anchor some short distance from the shore, and walked through the town of Kota-Kota as quietly as possible, to avoid the noise of the idle and curious crowd which always gathers on the arrival of travellers, by day or night. We hailed the ship, and got a prompt response; paid our porters, and gave them a little present; went on board, and were glad to find Dr. Laws and all with him in fairly good health, though there had been a little fever.

Next morning we paid a farewell, and very pleasant, visit to the Jumbe. The friendly relations of Jumbe with our people seem to have continued uninterrupted till last October, when a change came over his feelings. By the latest news he had suddenly altered, and this alteration coincided in date with the arrival of certain Arab traders from the coast, who probably wrought on his fears, and filled his mind with falsehoods.

Arab traders, however friendly and helpful they may have been at times to individual travellers, even of our own nation, have been an unspeakable curse to Africa. Their footsteps may generally be tracked in blood and fire, and in the tears and misery of the unhappy natives; and their policy or method consists essentially in the obstruction of

everything which interferes with their diabolical traffic. Even giving them full credit for all the assistance they have occasionally afforded, Central Africa has no worse enemy than the Arab trader.

From Lake Chia we sailed southwards, and after one long day's steaming arrived, shortly after dark, at Livingstonia on the 16th November, to the great relief of our friends there, and to find that a party had been despatched in search of us under Mr. James Stewart, C.E., the storm that had nearly proved fatal to us, having been felt with great severity at the south end of the lake.

Conclusion.—Regular steam communication on any of the African lakes will be admitted to be a valuable factor in the civilisation of these regions. Before our journey there was a doubt whether the voyage to the northern end of Nyassa could be undertaken with regularity and safety. That question depended on the discovery of one or more practicable harbours, and on the character of the country and people round the northern end. Previous to our voyage nothing definite was known on these points, but all doubts are now dispelled.

By the discovery of the Kambwe Lagoon and the Rombashe River, in addition to the other intermediate harbours on the western shore, communication may be regarded as now open, and shortly the distance will probably be accomplished in forty-five to fifty hours, instead of ten days or two weeks as formerly, when we were groping our way through unknown waters.

Though not exactly asserted, it would appear as if the geographical results of this voyage were claimed by the exploring expedition whom we conveyed. But I claim the discovery of the Rombashe on behalf of the Livingstonia Mission, the river having been first sighted at a distance by Mr. Young in 1876, and first entered by us in October, 1877, up to which time its name even was unknown. Along with this there is the discovery of the Kambwe Lagoon, five hours' voyage further south, which will afford, equally with the Rombashe, safe anchorage in time to come.

I wish to bespeak the favour of this influential Society on behalf of the efforts of our missionaries generally to make us better acquainted with the geography of Africa. By the labours of this humbler class of explorers, whose investigations are carried on for immediate practical purposes connected with the civilisation and christianisation of the country, the details of large areas, amounting to hundreds of miles, are gradually and accurately laid down; previous errors are corrected; and by patient and continued observation, large blank surfaces are filled up with as much accuracy as human effort and instruments can effect. Our own Livingstonia Mission has already in part, and will shortly have, I hope, the entire region lying on both shores of Lake Nyassa carefully observed and the map completed. At the commencement, Mr. Young took up the work left by Dr. Livingstone. It has since been and is now being further carried out by Dr. Laws and Mr. Stewart, C.E.

Men connected with these humbler expeditions need a little encouragement. Some of them do not enter the country merely for a time. They give, so far, their entire lives to it. They nail the flag to the mast, and frequently refuse to lower it till the mast itself comes down.

I notice that an extensive scheme or programme for the development of the Lake Nyassa region has been laid before another important Society in London. It is merely a proposal as yet, but its main features are, the placing of steam launches or larger steamers on the River Shire and Lake Nyassa, and, I suppose, the formation of a company to effect this. The training of elephants at this stage, though important, can hardly be regarded as an essential factor in the progress of African civilisation. Regarding this scheme I have simply to say, if it is intended as an original proposal:—It is too late. The thing is already done. The difficult feat of making the egg to stand on its end is already accomplished.

Such as it is, steam navigation already exists by the *Lady Nyassa* on the Lower Zambesi, and by the *Ilala* on Lake Nyassa. This latter vessel will probably be replaced shortly by one still larger. There is only one broken link in the chain of communication now between the London docks and the Rombashe—that is, the 70 miles of the Murchison Cataracts on the Shiré. By the steam-packets of the Union Company or the British India Company, it is possible to sail now from this country to Zanzibar or Quilimane, and thence, by the two small vessels already mentioned, to the north end of Lake Nyassa. Five years ago the journey on the river and lake had to be made by canoes. This is one of the fruits of the Livingstonia Mission.

But I wish to connect the work of the Royal Geographical Society with the doings of the Livingstonia Mission in accomplishing these results, thus: There was a time when Lake Nyassa was a name merely—nothing more than an ill-defined and uncertain sheet of water on the map of the African continent. The Society's labours, by encouraging geographical research, tended to dissipate that uncertainty, and promote a striving after precision and accuracy in further efforts. These, again, were linked on to more direct enterprises, of a civilising and a christianising kind. And the result is, the existence of a European settlement, regular communication, and the presence of the merchant and the missionary round the shores of a lake, of which five years ago even the northern termination was unknown.

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