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THE SCOTTISH GEOGRAPHICAL MAGAZINE.

SOME ACCOUNT OF SOMALILAND:

WITH NOTES ON JOURNEYS THROUGH THE GADABÜRSI AND
WESTERN OGADEN COUNTRIES, 1896-1897.

By ALFRED E. PEASE, M.P., F.R.G.S.

(*Read before the Society in Edinburgh on Dec. 16th, 1897.*)

I. HISTORICAL.

ALTHOUGH Somaliland is not far off our highway to India and the East, and its northern coast has been within twenty-four hours' sail of the nearest British station ever since H.M.S. *Volage* captured Aden in 1836, it is only in comparatively recent years that we have been able to obtain any reliable geographical and ethnological information with regard to what may almost even yet be described as the Unknown Horn of Africa. Unlike other parts of northern and north-eastern Africa, it seems to have possessed so inhospitable a character, that the explorers of ancient, as well as of modern times, have been alike warned off. It would have been curious, however, if that most remarkable of travellers, Burton, having once cast his eye on this land of hidden mystery and interest, had not made an attempt to lift the veil; and still more strange if he had not, at least partially, succeeded where he attempted. He obtained the countenance of the Bombay Government in 1854, who permitted Lieut. Stroyan, I.N., and Lieut. Speke to join the expedition.

Burton's original idea was to march from Berbera to Harrar, and thence south-east to Zanzibar. At Aden the authorities considered the task one of the most extreme danger. So it was decided, in the first place, to court the goodwill of the Somalis by sending Stroyan and Lieut. Herne to the annual native fair at Berbera, and Lieut. Speke was sent to Bunder Guray with a view to finding out how the land lay beyond the

maritime chain, and to trace, if possible, the course of the Nogal Tug. Speke failed to get beyond the mountain zone. In the meanwhile, Burton, on the 29th of October 1854, started as an Arab merchant, and, on the 9th of February 1855, returned to Aden, having accomplished the journey from Zeila to Harrar, and from Harrar to Berbera, and was ready for the larger undertaking. On April 7th, 1855, the second expedition was ready to start, when all their plans were frustrated by an attack of the Somalis on them at Berbera, in which Stroyan was killed. Speke and Burton were wounded, but escaped in a marvellous manner to the British gunboat. Burton's *First Footsteps in Africa* remained the first footsteps, as far as Somaliland was concerned, for another generation. But his book remains the most fascinating and reliable record that we have of such parts of Somaliland as he visited. During my first journey I went, in the company of my wife, Mr. E. N. Buxton, and Mr. A. E. Leatham, over a great portion of the country traversed by Burton; and we can testify that Burton's relation of the conditions of life and habits of the people, as well as his geographical observations, is so excellent and so little affected by time and political changes, that those who wish to have information with regard to the country between Harrar and Berbera, and its inhabitants, cannot do better to-day than read his account.

We have to come to 1891 before anything like Burton's original idea of crossing the Horn was accomplished. In this year Robecchi made his way from Magadosho to Barri, and, after two attempts to reach Harrar, passed by Milmil across the Howd to Berbera. The first laurels, however, were won by the brothers James, Mr. Lort-Phillips, and Mr. Percy Aylmer, who in 1885 reached Barri, and for the first time saw the Webbe Shebeyli—an expedition that gave the most fruitful results.

1881. Révoil visited the Mijertins.

1885. The Jameses, Aylmer, and Mr. Lort-Phillips reached Barri. -

1891. Robecchi's expedition.

1891. Baudi di Vesme went by Milmil to the Upper Webbe Shebeyli.

1893. Captain Swayne reached the Webbe Shebeyli at Imé.

During the last two or three years Lake Rudolph has been reached by several English and Americans, from the north; and by others, including Count Teleki and Chanler; from the east.

The Somalis of the east coast, and certain tribes in the upper regions of the Jub, or Webbe Genana, are more difficult to deal with than those of North Somaliland; and were the whole list of ill-fated expeditions that have tried to penetrate from the eastern seaboard to be mentioned, the tale would be an appalling one.

During the last year three Italian expeditions have been destroyed near the coast or in the interior; whilst in recent years several Italian explorers, even in those regions which Englishmen and others have crossed without much difficulty, have lost their lives. But the ill-success of the Italians, though due in the main to the dangerous nature of the countries they have attempted to penetrate, and of their inhabitants, is partly the result, I think, of the want of those qualities which are

possessed by most of our fellow-countrymen—qualities difficult to describe, but which include patience, tact in dealing with, consideration for, and generosity to, natives, combined with what is not a British monopoly, courage. Perhaps, owing to poverty, the Italians have at times been driven to acts of plunder, or at least to a want of generosity to the natives; but no one can charge them with want of pluck and perseverance, and we must recognise the great discoveries they have made. To them we owe much of our present geographical knowledge of the interior. Signor Böttego's last work, which cost him his life a few months ago, consisted in solving the problems relating to the southern Ethiopian Highlands, and the country lying north of Lake Rudolph. He has fixed the course of the Omo; he has explored the western shore of Lake Rudolph; and has defined the hydrographic features of the Sobat system. He discovered the lake Abba Pagade, about ninety-five miles in length, which he has named Lake Margharita. The Omo flows through the walls of mountains that Dr. Donaldson Smith found himself unable to cross. Lord Delamere, whom we joined for a while in the interior, is now in these parts, and no doubt will bring back some further important information with regard to what lies beyond Lake Rudolph, or Samburu, to the west. Still more recently, within the last few weeks, Mr. H. S. H. Cavendish has returned home after an extraordinarily rapid journey from Berbera, *vid* Logh, the Genana, and Lake Stephanie, to the northern shore of Lake Samburu: thence he marched down the western side of the lake, and has added to our knowledge of these regions by successfully continuing his march, beyond the Turgoll river reached by Signor Böttego from the north and by Count Teleki from the south, to the southern extremity of the lake. Thence Mr. Cavendish continued his journey by way of Lake Baringo to Mombasa, discovering a new lake by the way. During his journey he made some interesting discoveries, among which may be named the recent extinction of the Teleki volcano, a remarkable salt crater 1300 feet deep, 100 miles east of Lake Stephanie, and a coal bed west of Lake Samburu (Rudolph).

II. POLITICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE.

As you are aware, the greater part of the Horn of Africa was, until this year, an Italian sphere of influence and nominal protectorate; though a small strip of the northern coast, from Zeila to Bou Ziada, with most of the hinterland down to lat. 8°, formed, from 1889 till this year, the British Somali Protectorate. With the acquiescence of the Italians, or at least without their objection, the British influence penetrated far south of lat. 8°, and the British authority was often welcomed in the settlement of native difficulties, with at least the tacit consent of the Italians. I have no wish to bring into my paper any debatable question of politics, and will only remark that I personally view with great regret the fact that we are permitting our prestige and influence to suffer severely in abandoning the natives to the tender mercies of the Abyssinians. The natives have long looked upon us as their best friends and protectors:

we have prevented them from acquiring arms and ammunition, and, having deprived them of all means of self-defence, have abandoned them to their hereditary enemies, thereby recognising the ridiculous claims of Menelik to an immense region that never was part of the empire of Ethiopia. All we have gained in Somaliland has been without bloodshed and lavish expenditure, and it can only be from ignorance of the situation that Her Majesty's advisers think it worth while to purchase the goodwill of Abyssinia in the Nile valley by permitting the armies of Menelik to raid, ravage, and plunder our friendly neighbours, who have till now delighted to call themselves British, and whom we have rendered impotent to save themselves. If, as is rumoured, we are abandoning a large area of our existing Protectorate, the result will be most disastrous to British influence in these countries. Though we cannot say till we know the exact nature of the agreements concluded this year between Her Majesty and Menelik, there is enough to justify the apprehension that we have agreed to hand over a large portion of our Protectorate to Abyssinia, and that there is no effort to be made to save the Zeila trade from the ruin which must overtake it on the completion of the French railway from Harrar to Djibouti. To appreciate the deplorable effects of such a policy it must be remembered that, owing to our attitude during the hostilities between Abyssinia and Italy, we are associated with the Italians in the native mind, and have already shared with them the loss of prestige consequent on their defeat at Adowa and its results.

The British Somali Coast Protectorate is administered from Aden, under the Government of Bombay, by Assistant-Residents at Zeila, Bulhar, and Berbera: these three officers are the only British resident in Somaliland. A small force of Bombay infantry is stationed at Berbera and Zeila, and there is also a native police camel corps. Three qualities of cloth *tobes* take the place of money in the interior, "Khaille," "Bafto," and "Merican": enormous quantities of this material go into the interior, and none of it is of British manufacture. On the coast, and for some distance beyond, the rupee is fast displacing the trade dollar (the Maria Theresa), though the latter is retained largely as a standard of value in native trade, and at Berbera is equivalent to Rs.2.2. Hindustani is the language of the Courts, and of trade on the coast.

Berbera is the seat of Government, being the most accessible, and the only good, port on the coast. Berbera was taken from the Egyptian Government in 1884, six months before the fall of Khartum: in 1889, Dec. 13th, British jurisdiction was declared over the Somali coast.

Before the occupation of Berbera by the Egyptians there was no permanent town, but an annual fair was held. Lieut. Cruttenden, of the I.N., remarks that in 1847 he saw "three ostriches walking quietly on the beach a week after the fair; and lions are commonly seen at the town well during the hot weather." Captain Swayne told me that, about five or six years ago, he had seen elephants near Zeila, on the shore. Burton, in his day, pronounced Berbera to be the key to the Red Sea; while the Somalis have a proverb to the effect that, "He who commands at Berbera holds the beard of Harrar in his hands." I will

not take up your time with any description of the trade of the country, but will content myself with the remark that the trade, even under the present inactivity, and almost discouragement it receives from the home authorities, is a paying one.

The colour of the Somalis varies a great deal. Tribes such as the Habr Toljala and Dolbahanta, in the east, are very dark. The Ogaden are lighter, and, in the far west, are remarkably fairer. A Habr Toljala may be all but black: a Mellingour Ogaden a pale, light buff. The Somalis are a purely nomadic people, each tribe moving about within definite boundaries, as pasture, water, or rain may lead them. There are no settled towns, or even villages, unless a few mud huts, a *kouba*, and a school at Hargaisa, and such places as Aubahadleh, constitute a permanent village: such permanence as there is about them is due to their being Mullah settlements, where a few children are taught the Korân, in the precincts of some saint's tomb, or by an individual or *hadji*, who is regarded as a holy man. There is no resident Kadi in the interior; any questions beyond the authority of the greybeards have to be referred to Berbera, Aden, or Arabia. Some Somalis are traders; others, on the coast, are sailors; and hundreds leave their country to seek wealth as *sidi* boys, or at any job, from coaling, driving a garry, to valeting at Aden—often to revert to their pastoral and looting life with their own tribe.

The political institutions of the Somalis are few and simple. The Korân is their law, civil and commercial, and regulates their social relations. Each tribe is independent of the other; a few of the larger tribes have Sultâns, the smaller tribes or subdivisions (*Rer*) have each their Agal or headman. The affairs of the tribe and the orbit of its circulation are arranged, by general debate and agreement, by all the men of the tribe.

Their social life and economy is equally simple. During the intervals of peace the pasturing of the *gale* (female camels), camels, and flocks is their sole occupation. Save the duty of defending these from looting, the chief work falls on the women and children; whilst the men sit under the trees with only one subject for thought, conversation, and song—that of looting, and their own exploits retrospective and prospective.

The men often seek matrimonial alliances with women of neighbouring tribes, with the object of securing protection from their neighbours. As often as not the lady is looted; but, as a rule, accepts her fate very philosophically.

The *haria* or village of a Somali *jilib* is as easily moved as a camp of tents. Their huts, *gurgi*, are simply bent boughs covered with skins and mats (*herios*). The mats are made of grass and bark, and form the covering or saddle of the baggage camels when loaded. All that pertains to the making, removal, or putting up of the *gurgi* is the care of the women; you may often see them standing under the trees, with a long strip of bark going in at one corner of the mouth to be chewed, and coming out at the other in fibre ready for plaiting. Their ropes are made from bark or aloe pounded into fibre. When a site for

the *karia* is selected, the women place the huts in a semicircle, whilst the men cut the thorns for the *zariba*, and handle them cleverly with a long stick called a *hangol*, which has a hook at one end and a fork at the other. The inner circle of the *zariba* is made into pens with thorn fences for the live stock.

The food of the Somalis is meat alone—almost always mutton or goat; on great occasions they indulge in camel. Their drink is milk, usually camels' milk, occasionally cows', though they never eat beef. The Midgans, an out-caste tribe, who are their slaves, shoot with the bow and poisoned arrow; they camp and feed apart from their masters; they often, alone of all Somali natives, have dogs; they eat all kinds of four-footed game, and I have known them devour a lion I had killed. The poison on their arrows is made from the root of the Wabé tree.

The Somali spear-heads are made by the Tomals, another out-caste or helot tribe. In most tribes (not Esa or Gadabürsi), each man carries two spears (pl. *uarmo*), a larger one (*warran waine*) for stabbing, and a smaller for throwing (*haughto*).

The prosperity and importance of a tribe is, in the main, measured by the number of its ponies; on these depend success in looting forays, escape from pursuit, and the possibility of recovering their own camels when looted.

The Somali is a born fighter and marcher. His eyesight, vigilance, familiarity with the country, and walking powers, fit him for an ideal camp-follower. The adaptability of this people is marvellous.

The Somali is vain of his personal appearance, devoting much time to cleaning, with the *athei* stick, his beautiful teeth, claying, curling, and frizzing his hair; and he invariably carries himself with a grand air. The old men shave their heads; the middle-aged wear their hair short and curly, shaving their heads from time to time; the young men wear their hair in frizzed-out mops parted in the middle, and manage to change it into a russet colour by keeping it in clay.

Somali names are native or Arabic, and most men have a distinct nickname: Benderig (Big Stomach), Dibi (the Ox), Waraba (the Hyæna).

The Somali women have been described as of the Venus Kallipyga order of beauty, and are by European standards remarkably deficient in good looks.

The matron wears her hair in an indigo or black net of cotton, which is most unbecoming and distorts the already unshapely head. High cheek bones, large flat heads, heavy features, round faces, fine large eyes, and, of course, beautiful teeth, characterise most Somali women. Such beauty or pleasing form as they ever possess is soon worn off by hard marching, toil, child-bearing, and child-carrying; and the plump, round-faced, smiling girl soon withers into a skinny, worn, and wrinkled hag, though maintaining an extraordinary degree of vitality and strength in her skinny, sinewy frame. The voice of the women is almost always pleasing—it is soft, musical, and plaintive. As amongst all followers of Islam, the sexes are more separated in sentiment, but the bond of friendship between man and man is stronger, than with us. Kissing is unknown amongst the Somalis.

The girls wear their hair in mops of string, the hair being tightly plaited into hundreds of little tails, and, of course, plentifully smeared with *ghee*. It takes about a fortnight to dress the hair, but once done it is done for good.

The strings of blue beads, and great masses of amber, or occasionally of silver, make handsome necklaces, which set off the rich brown colour of the necks. Bracelets are also worn, and, like Arab children, the little Somalis often wear armlets and anklets of metal or silver.

The Midgans, helot hunters and servants; the Tomals, helot blacksmiths and shoemakers; and the Yibbers, are out-caste tribes representing the aboriginal race of the country.

III. ORIGIN OF RACE AND LANGUAGE.

The origin of the language, like the origin of the race, is wrapped in mystery. There are those who consider the Somalis to be of North African Berber origin, and point to the name of Berbera as an indication of this. The name of Berbera, however, if indeed it is derived from any settlement of strangers, is more likely to be due to an occupation from Berber in the north-eastern Sudan. Perhaps the old theory of Sir R. Burton is the most correct one—that they are of Negro-Hamitic descent, and “nothing but a slice of the great Galla nation Islamised and Semiticised by repeated immigrations from Arabia.” Such a theory is in the main in harmony with the Somali traditions of their Arabian descent, and geographical and historical conditions do not conflict with it; moreover, the physical type of the people agrees with it. The origin of the Gallas is another question altogether. Whether they are a part of the same race which pushed into South Africa from the north and are now represented by the Kaffirs, or whether they are a half-caste Abyssinian race, need not here be discussed.

Somal, or Somali, is a name that has only been in use to describe the dominant race in the Horn of Africa since the beginning of this century. Sir R. Burton (1856) says that the Somalis call their country Barr-al-Ajam. The old maps name the country Asha and Hawiya. The derivation of the word Somal has puzzled people. Major Abud, whose authority must carry great weight, leans to that which has been suggested by the language itself. He says, “The Somal are a hospitable race, and, as milk is their staple food supply, the first words a stranger would hear in visiting their kraals would be ‘So-mal,’ *i.e.* ‘go and bring milk.’ I have heard it suggested that the other word for milk, ‘liss,’ may account for the termination ‘lis’ in ‘Somalis.’” As a matter of fact, “So-liss” is not used in a command to go and bring milk, or to go and milk a camel for a visitor, but only in ordinary conversation, and “Somal” is the usual command in bidding any one to go and bring milk for the refreshment of a stranger. In any case, there is nothing indicative of the origin of their language or race in the name Somali or Somal. Sir R. Burton has a note on the name Somal, where he alludes to a traveller who asserted that Somali was derived from the Abyssinian “Soumahe” (heathen).

Another suggested origin of the Somali race is India, and it is said that several ruins of temples, such as that found at Sheikh, in the Golis range, are similar to the temples of the Deccan. There are numerous Hindustani words in use among the Somalis, but they might all probably be traced to their dealings with East Indian merchants on the coast, the present adoption of Hindustani in the British Courts of justice, and the employment of Indian servants, clerks, and troops by the British representatives in the country.

In Major Abud's and Captain Cox's work on the genealogies of the Somal, the following passage occurs in the preface, and few have devoted more time and ability to collecting the descents of tribes which till now have been handed down from generation to generation by memory :—

"It will be noticed that the Darod and Ishak sections claim descent from certain noble Arabs—in the case of Ishak from the cousin of the prophet Mohamet himself; but such claim has only been recognised in order to obtain a starting-point, and it is not intended that the genealogical question should be taken as proved by the assumption, though the Somal declare that proof is in the hands of the priests at Wahat, a village near Al Hautah (Lahej), in Arabia, and that this proof was treacherously sold by Ibrahim, nicknamed Sambur, 'Big Nose,' son of Sheikh Ishak bin Ahmud. Captain Hunter, C.B., C.S.I., states in the preface to his Somali Grammar that he made many attempts to get this proof with no very great success, but that he did succeed in obtaining a table under circumstances leading to the belief that others were concealed for the purpose of extorting money from the Somalis.

"The object of such concealment is obvious, as, if the proof were forthcoming, the Sómál would be regarded as 'Shuruf,' or descendants of the Prophet, which would necessarily be galling to the present claimants of the honour in Arabia and elsewhere, who now look down on the Sómál as being of a lower race."

According to the Somalis, the two races inhabiting the country now called Somaliland are denominated Asha and Hawiya, from the former of whom the present Somalis spring. The Hawiya are not allowed to be Somalis at all, and are stated to be of pagan descent. The real Somalis are the Darod (Ogaden, Dolbahanta, Mijertin, Marehan, etc.), and the Ishak (Habr Toljaala, Arab, Habr Gerhajis, Habr Awal, etc.). The Aysa (or Esa) Gudabürsi and Hawiya are not counted as Somal by the Somalis themselves.

IV. THE GADABÜRSI COUNTRY.

The Somali coast is reached from Aden either by chartering a native *bugalow*, or by taking a passage on one of the small cattle steamers, owned by Parsee firms, that make the voyage almost weekly to Zeila, and, touching at Bulhar when the surf will permit a landing, proceed to Berbera, where the cargo of sheep and cattle is taken on board for Aden. On each of the four occasions when I crossed the Gulf of Aden our party numbered three or four, and it was worth our while to charter one of these boats for a direct crossing. The first time,

although warned of the difficulty of landing anywhere but at Zeila or Berbera, we were successful in getting ashore at Bulhar. From thence we started, on January 14th, 1896, with a caravan of about fifty camels, and an escort of about twenty rifles, for the Gadabürsi country, leaving the Elmas mountains on our right and passing through a beautiful and luxuriant bush and grass country till we reached the Durdurhaat valley. Within three days of the coast we came upon a herd of about forty elephants, but as they were all cows and youngsters they did not tempt us out of our course, and we continued our journey northwards along the northern edge of the Bur Maado and Simodi ranges to Aliman. We found all this country thickly inhabited by the Gadabürsi, and here alone, in Northern Somaliland, we had the companionship for days together of a running stream.

No part of Somaliland that I have visited is more beautiful than this tract of country, watered by an almost perennial stream, now lined with great trees festooned with the *armo* creeper, now with the high green elephant grass or luxuriant jungles, and guarded by woody and rocky mountains on the left hand and on the right. Between the Tug or Wady and these hills the country had a park-like appearance, with its open glades and grassy plains. But the new and varied vegetation of Africa was not the only object delightful to the eye: countless varieties of birds, hawks, buzzards, Batteleur and larger eagles, vultures, dobie birds, golden orioles, parrots, paroquets, the exquisite Somali starlings, doves of all sorts and sizes, small and great honey-birds, hoopoes, jays, green pigeons, great flocks of Guinea fowl, partridges, sand grouse, were ever to be seen on every hand, and, while the bush teemed with Waller's gazelle and dik-diks, the plains with Sømmerring's antelope, with a sprinkling of oryx, our road up the Tug was constantly crossed by the tracks of lions, elephants, leopards, the ubiquitous *hyæna*, and other wild beasts.

On the 19th of January we reached a bifurcation of the Tug. We took the northern valley, marching up the dry bed of the Araweina Tug, leaving the Durdurhaat river, which now disappeared in the deep ravines of the high mountains to the south. On the 20th we reached Aliman, one of those places marked so large on the map that the unwary traveller might expect to find a walled town. But Aliman is but a very dirty-looking pit, at the bottom of which is some black and very nasty water. At Aliman we separated from Mr. Buxton and went south through the mountains until we struck the Durdurhaat river again: keeping the river-bed as our road, we wended our way through mountainous country, the ravines through which we passed often covered with forests of *hasaaden*, a giant species of the candelabra euphorbia. On the 25th of January we emerged from the mountains, and on the 27th we reached the Great Harrowa valley, a sea of jungle stretching between two parallel ranges far away into Abyssinia. We had seen no trace of inhabitants since leaving Aliman, the whole country being burnt up and destitute of pasture.

After a few days' rest we made our way through the chain of hills that bound the northern limits of the waterless Howd, and camped on

the edge of the Marar prairie, within view of the isolated rocks known as Jifa Madir and Jifa Uri. For the first time in my life I saw the game as I had heard it described by African travellers; thousands of Sømmerring antelope, hartebeeste, and oryx were in view. Every day we saw ostriches, quantities of bustard, the hills behind were tracked with elephants, and, though game was almost too plentiful to call it a sportsman's, it was certainly a naturalist's, paradise. Any morning or evening it would have been easy to shoot any number of *aoul* (*Gazella Sømmerringi*) from our camp, they were so tame. Here our scouts brought in news of both Gadabürsi and Midgan *karias* being in the neighbourhood, and we soon opened up communication with them.

The Gadabürsi, in whose country we had been for some weeks, have the character of being amongst the wildest of the Somali tribes; they, and the Aysa and Hawiya, are not recognised as pure Somalis by the Darod and Ishak sections, those other tribes of the race inhabiting the east and south who trace their origin, the one from Sheikh Jiberti bin Ismäil's son Darod, and the other from Sheikh Ishak bin Ahmad, a cousin of the Prophet's. The Gadabürsi are descended from the Sämärōne, and Gadabürsi is but a nickname. The Gadabürsi probably number some 40,000 spears:—

Rer Makahil	12,375
Jibril Yünüs	3,450
Adan Yünus	2,590
Nur Yünus	9,940
Mahomed Āsa	9,320
Habr Affan	5,600

Scarcely anywhere else have I seen natives still wearing skins. The Gadabürsi we met still observed the custom of the ostrich feather, wearing one in the hair for each man killed, and not being permitted to marry till four feathers could be worn. The guide we secured wore seven by right, and confessed to two having been won by the murder of two men asleep under a tree, and these he pointed out with pride and satisfaction! Unlike the tribes east and south, who carry two spears, the *warran waine* and the *haughto*—a throwing spear and a jobbing one, the Gadabürsi carry one large stabbing one, as do the Aysa. Except for being somewhat wilder, rougher, and inferior in appearance, they do not differ very much in their customs, language, and habits from their neighbours.

The remainder of our journey was made along the northern edge of the Howd, and we returned to the coast *vid* Hargaisa and Argan, by the Jerato pass through the Golis range, under the magnificent mountain of Gan Libah (alt. 5200 feet), and across the maritime plain to Berbera.

V. SECOND EXPEDITION: WESTERN OGADEN.

The second expedition I made with my wife in the company of Sir Edmund Loder, who had been my companion on several former occasions

in the Sahara, the Tunisian Djereed, and the Aures ranges: we crossed the maritime plain and the Golis range to the north of Gan Libah through the Jerato pass.

We spent a week, before crossing the Howd into Ogaden, with Lord Delamere, who was preparing for a much more important journey to Lake Rudolph. We occupied our time mostly in "pig-sticking" the old warthogs on the Ooanouf plain; of these there were quantities, giving excellent runs, but often going to ground in the deep earths under the ant hills. I mention this, as on several occasions we galloped an animal that was new to us to ground, one of which I sent to the coast to be shipped for Aden and London; but it died on the voyage. I think it is identical with the Aard wolf of South Africa—the Somali call it *Waire*, or *Waira*—an animal that has long been a puzzle to zoologists, but is now, I believe, regarded as the solitary representative of a distinct family, *Proteles cristatus*. I should myself be inclined to class it with the *Hyænidæ*. After having our Christmas dinner together we left Lord Delamere, and, following practically the route of the two Jameses, Aylmer, and Mr Lort-Phillips, in 1885, we crossed the waterless Howd in seven days, reaching the Darror pool on New Year's Day 1897.

Darror pool figures in most maps; it is nothing but a depression in the bush of some two and a half acres that holds the stagnant water of the last rainy season till the middle of January, after which it is usually dry. Therefore, any one who takes this route across the Howd should make inquiries of the natives as to the condition of the pool before starting, for, needless to say, any miscalculation as to water is a most serious thing in this country. We had some seventy camels and sixty souls, besides horses, milch goats, and sheep, and therefore water was of the greatest importance to us. You are perhaps told that you will reach the water in six days, and when the sixth day comes and no water, you march the seventh day with considerable anxiety. At Darror we found about three inches of slimy water, round which the Rer Ali Ogaden had their *karias*. There were some 400 camels standing in the pool, natives wading it, women washing their *tobes*, and our delight at seeing the water was somewhat tempered when we realised that for many days to come we should have to drink it and cook with it. By repeated boilings, skimmings, precipitating with alum, and filtering, we obtained a fairly clear and tasteless liquid. It is a curious fact that the natives never suffer from typhoid or enteric fevers as a result of drinking this foul and putrid water, even though they use it for months together.

From Darror, after loading up a week's supply of this nectar, we made a short journey north, to a district where lions were numerous, and where we first came on rhinoceros tracks. Thence we worked our way south for hunting, through open plains covered with *dhur* grass, and through fine forest and jungle, and then, bending north and west, we made Awaré. Before getting there, the presence of birds and wheeling buzzards and hawks over the trees, proclaimed the welcome news that there was water in the pool.

On the 19th of January we reached Milmil. There were but few natives in the neighbourhood, but they informed us that an Englishman

was three days distant, having been to the Tug Sulul, and that he had come away after having had two of his men taken prisoners by the Abyssinians. This was unpleasant news, as we had made up our minds to go to Bourka, still farther west. We sent some of our men on to see if they could find the Englishman, whom we knew must be Mr. Greenfield. They returned in a few days with the news that he had gone back to the coast. Subsequently we had the true version of Mr. Greenfield's adventures; instead of anything having occurred that would make our course more difficult, we found that he had, after rescuing his men and making friends with the Abyssinians, extracted a promise from them that they would show kindness to any people of "his tribe" they might meet. However, with such information as we had then, we decided to make for our original point, but taking every care to avoid any Abyssinian posts.¹ We marched from Milmil and camped in the Fulful valley, and then in the Deghabour Tug, which comes down the Jerrer valley: the natives here were in a pitiable condition, having been recently looted by the Abyssinians. Thence we marched by Sabatti Waine, an isolated hill near which Lord Delamere was badly mauled by a lion some two or three years ago, one of our deputy headmen pointing out the spot with a grin of satisfaction, and exclaiming, "I there when he bite him." We continued down another Tug running west, and camped at Berdahalleh, where there is good water; then we marched for four days across the Tug Fafan and the Sibi desert, till we reached the Tug Sulul at Horoabdulleh. Here we found Grévy's zebra very numerous, and, in spite of all our scheming, ran up against the Abyssinians.

As an instance of how a little turn of bad luck may lead you into Queer Street, perhaps it is worth while to relate the circumstances of our meeting. I had left camp at daybreak to hunt, taking with me as usual my two native *shikaris*, and my pony and *syce*, and had hardly got out of sight of camp, when an unusual scene presented itself. I saw some hundreds of cattle and sheep coming down the Tug in a cloud of dust, and I asked my *shikari*, "What does this mean?" He looked, and said, with a voice full of meaning, "Habasha"—adding that the cattle were Somali loot. Then he added with glee, "See, the Habasha have seen us, and are running away"; and I saw two Abyssinians with rifles, going their best pace on foot into the bush. My feelings were in direct contrast with those of my men, who only saw an immense windfall of loot, and vistas of beef and mutton for two months ahead. My second *shikari* had been in the service of the last Arab Sultan of Harrar, and spoke Amharic and Harrari, and I ordered him on to my pony, with directions to overtake and reassure the fugitives; he did his best, but failed. We then drove down the cattle to camp, and sent our men to track the fugitives, knowing that they would make their way to the Abyssinian post at Melka Deghahamadou, and assert we had looted

¹ Whilst camped at Gagab (Milmil), we saw a most beautiful meteor, which fell as if from the centre of the dome of the heavens to the eastern horizon, leaving a broad track of fire, which did not entirely fade for something like a quarter of an hour.

them. In the meantime we had the cattle and sheep watered, and, without listening to our men's appeals to take at least some of the plunder, we had the whole sent under escort to Melka Deghahamadou, my second *shikari* going as interpreter. All's well that ends well; on our return to camp the next afternoon I found Mrs. Pease in the most friendly conversation with two Abyssinian military guests, whom she was regaling with the best our stores could afford.

What we foresaw had happened: the soldiers had informed the officer that we had looted them, but within a few hours their lie was proved by the appearance of every head of cattle and sheep. These Abyssinians were all armed with the Italian magazine rifle of 1894 (part of the loot of Adowa), and each carried 100 rounds of ammunition. They were very proud of their weapons, and certainly our men's Sniders, rifles, and carbines were a sorry contrast.

Our visitors were very dark, cheery little men. One of them, who had been perforated by Italian bullets at the battles of Macalle and Adowa, gave us an interesting account of his adventures. The Abyssinians call themselves *Kristâns*—the Gallas of these regions are pagans; the Christianity of the Habasha, as far as I could learn, is little more than a licence to indulge in drunkenness and vices forbidden to their Moslem neighbours. The only signs of curiosity that they displayed with regard to ourselves were excited by the seal I put on a letter addressed in Arabic to the officer, and by my wife's butterfly net. They asked how the lady wore the latter, and displayed almost childish delight on being presented with a stick of red sealing-wax and seeing it used; they, however, explained that no doubt the "Lion of Judah" had some like it at Addis Abeba.

From Horoabdulleh we continued west across several ranges of stony hills, and without anything noteworthy occurring except the discovery of a very distinct crater of an extinct volcano, in a valley strewn with lava. On the 6th of February we reached the Dahato valley, and saw for the first time the Bourka mountains looming blue beyond. But several circumstances forced us to abandon all hope of penetrating this practically unknown country. In the first place, it would be necessary to leave the greater part of our caravan and camels in the Dahato valley, as four miles beyond our camp the fly-country began. In most seasons the fly extends as far east as the Tug Sulul; but this year, after careful inquiries of the Mellingour Ogaden, we satisfied ourselves that there was no fly east of the Dahato river, and, on making the well-watered plain, we found it peopled with numerous *karias*, and with herds of camels, sheep, and cattle, in the green grass. So accurately do the natives know the limit of the fly, that here, within about three miles of the dreaded pest, the people felt absolutely secure, whilst beyond, none but a few gum hunters on foot ever penetrated. In the second place, even if we had had the time to collect donkeys—which share with mankind one quality at least, that of being fly-proof—or camels that we were prepared to sacrifice to the fly, we hardly liked to subject my wife to the choice of being left alone with our main camp, with unknown risks from natives and Abyssinians, or of facing the probable discomforts of a meagre

equipment such as would be necessary if we went in on foot. Again, we had not been forty-eight hours in the valley before our messenger on our fast-trotting Aden camel, whom we had sent to the coast with our mail seventeen days before, turned up with a most alarming letter of recall from the Aden authorities, urging us on no account to go west of Milmil, and ordering us to put ourselves at once in touch with Berbera, and to avoid the Ogaden and the Milmil-Hargaisa route across the Howd. With the same message came a letter informing me that I had been a candidate, and a telegram to Aden that I was elected as M.P. for Cleveland. The emotions that the last astonishing piece of news aroused were put for a time in the shade by the alarming despatches from Aden and Berbera. The least we anticipated was that Berbera was invested, and Hargaisa occupied by Ras Makonnen. This eventful mail determined us to march at once, and turn our backs on the promised land, and to leave to an indefinite future the attempt to explore the blue mountains of Bourka.

Before alluding to our return journey, I may mention that there was a Galla town within an hour of our camp, and that the Somali natives here were most friendly. They, like all the Somalis of this side, are curiously light in colour, few being much darker than a pale *café au lait* tint.

We had no adventures till we got to Milmil, where we found ourselves in some difficulty, owing to the fact that we were not to take the Hargaisa route, and the water-pits at Awaré and Darror had long been dry. Besides this, we had been expecting a supply of provisions for our men—with camels we had sent to Berbera some weeks before—and supplies had run out. We did not like to abandon this little caravan to the tender mercies of the Rer Ali, who had swarmed in from the Awaré and Darror country, and who were not showing themselves well disposed towards us. Fortunately our camels and stores turned up, after some days' anxious waiting, and we struck across the Howd, making Awbahadleh in nine days without water. As an instance of the endurance of Somali ponies, I may mention that during these nine days of long marches in hot weather, with little time for pasturing, our five ponies had water only twice, viz., one and a half buckets each on the third day, and two buckets each on the sixth day, and, except for a tucked-up appearance, they were not appreciably weaker at the end. On reaching the western watershed of the Golis range we considered we had carried out our instructions, and were practically in touch with Berbera, and we took a week's rest in camp at Argan, where I had been the year before. The Golis here run out, and finish with several valleys running west; the last ridges of the range end somewhat abruptly, whilst beyond are a few isolated hills and rocks, or *koppjes*, with broken plains towards Hargaisa.

Like most Somali expeditions, ours had been made chiefly with a view to making as complete a collection as we could of the varieties of Somali big game. Our bag included:—Greater Kudu (*Strepsiceros koodoo*), Lesser Kudu (*Strepsiceros imberbis*), Swayne's Hartbeeste (*Bubalis Swaynei*), Clarke's Gazelle, *Dibatag* (*Ammodorcas Clarkei*), Waller's Antelope (*Litho-*

cranus Walleri), Sæmmerring's Antelope (*Gazella Sæmmerringi*), *Gazella Spekei*, *Gazella Pelzelni*, *Oryx beisa*, Klipspringer (*Oreotragus saltator*), *Golass (Madoqua Phillipsi)*, *Guzli (Madoqua Guntheri)*, Baira Antelope (*Oreotragus Megalotis*), Wart Hog (*Phacoherus Æthiopicus*), Rhinoceros, Grévy's Zebra (*Equus Grevii*), Somali Wild Ass (*Equus Nubianus Somalicus*), Golis Baboon (*Cynocephalus Netcho*), Elephant, Lion, Leopard (*Felis pardus*), Serval (*Felis serval*), Cheetah (*Cynalurus Guttatus*), Striped Hyæna (*Hycena striata*), Aard Wolf (*Proteles Cristatus*), Spotted Hyæna (*Hycena crocuta*), Jackal (*Canis pallidus*), Wild Dog—*Yea* or *Yei* (*Lycæon pictus*), and smaller animals, game-birds, hares, mongooses, varieties of rock-rabbits, etc.

VI. GEOLOGICAL.

I am too ignorant of geological knowledge to venture on a description of the geology of Somaliland, though we made one or two discoveries of some interest. In a paper of Dr. Gregory's in the *Geological Magazine* (Decade IV., vol. cxi., No. 385, p. 289, July 1896), based on the collections made by Mrs. E. Lort-Phillips, Miss Edith Cole, and Mr. G. Percy V. Aylmer, there is a good summary of the general formation of the country between Berbera and the Golis; but unfortunately it leaves out any particular account of those western and south-western parts of the country, between Gan Libah and Bourka, with which I am most familiar, for the very good reason that probably no one qualified to describe it has ever been there.

"South of Berbera there is a low plain of recent marine deposits mostly covered by blown sand and soil. Eight miles inland is the first of a series of east and west ridges which form the Maritime mountains; these extend for about twelve miles. Then follows the 'Inland plain,' which is a continuation of the Coast plain; it ends abruptly at the height of 1800 feet at the foot of the north scarp of the Somali plateau." This plateau is reached, towards the eastern end of the Golis range, by the Sheikh pass, at the height of 4000 feet, and at the western end by the Jerato pass, just west of Gan Libah (5200 feet).

"East and west of the Sheikh pass the north edge of the plateau is much higher, rising at one point to 6819 feet.

"To the south of the Golis the plateau descends gradually across the Howd to the valley of the Webbe Shebeyli.

"The Maritime and Inland plains are both occupied by alluvium, marine and subaërial. Through these rise three ridges; the first two are formed of limestone. That at Bihin is unquestionably Lower Oolitic and no doubt Bathonian. That at Duba may be a part of the same limestone, or a later one, possibly Neocomian in age."

The highest and farthest inland of the three ridges consists of archæan gneisses, and is an outlier from the main Somali plateau. The Somali plateau consists, in the main, of a mass of gneiss and rocks of the archæan series. The archæan series is penetrated by pegmatite dykes of the same type, but coarser in grain, than those of British East Africa. It is capped by two rocks of two series: (1) red and purple unfossiliferous

sandstones often passing into impure hæmatite; (2) some limestones associated with beds of chert, probably of Neocomian age.

"It is most probable," says Dr. Gregory, "that the Jurassic rocks of Somaliland are part of a band which once extended eastward into the Indian Ocean, and may have been part of the hypothetical continent of Gondwana Land, or Lemuria. This continent was probably separated from Equatorial East Africa, but was connected with the Cape."

In the valleys running west out of the spurs of the Golis, in the Argan district, I found some fine beds of marble in one or two of the rivers. The existence of marbles I have not seen noticed before. Another discovery of some importance was that of a valley some fourteen miles west of the Tug Sulul, called Durie Waine (Big Dirt), in which was a sharply defined extinct crater, with large beds of lava down to the black igneous rocks of the river bed. The diameter of the circle of the inside of the mouth of this crater was not more, I think, than 100 feet, and the depth of the inverted cone about thirty-five or forty-five feet. The vegetation all round the western side was most luxuriant, and bushes grew in the bottom of the crater, but on the hillside of the crater the soil was of a curious powdery nature, with but a few bushes, and those very sickly.

In the next valley, amongst white cliffs, we found a deep perennial spring of very sulphurous water. The name of this district is Duriedufân, which is rather suggestive of its condition: *durie* means dirt, and *dufân* grease left round the mouth after eating, which, when the proximity of the crater is considered, makes it, if not a very picturesque, a very appropriate, name.

This is the first notice, I believe, of the existence of any volcanic rocks in this region, and, though we were approaching the volcanic regions already known to geographers and geologists, the fact that volcanic action has been discovered so far east and north is probably of importance.

VII. ARCHÆOLOGICAL.

There are several archæological puzzles in Somaliland on which I have not time to dwell. There are, as far east as Eik, ruins of stone-built towns, probably of Galla construction. Mr. Seton Karr has made a very interesting collection of palæolithic implements made by a people that possibly lived 300,000 years ago, to quote Sir John Evans. It is said that these implements, the use of which is not clear, are peculiar in being as perfect as the day they were made, owing to the absence of any wear from river action.

VIII. CONCLUSION.

In conclusion I may express a hope that if this little corner of Africa is responsible in any degree for the Prime Minister's charge that "Africa is the plague of the Foreign Office," the day may arrive when the British connection with it may prove to be one of those blessings which are often temporarily disguised. I fear there is a tendency at home to deny its

value, or at least to underestimate it. But I believe that—like the upper valley of the Nile, which is now rightly regarded as a most important region, and which a few years ago was not considered worth securing—these parts may come to be regarded as of great political importance, with reference not only to Aden, but also to the Egyptian Red Sea littoral and the northern part of British East Africa. I feel confident that water may be found, as in the Sahara, by artesian wells, in all the Tugs of the maritime and inland plains, and that the date-palm and other cultivation could be rendered possible, whilst the soil inland is undoubtedly richer. Much could be done to foster a trade which already yields a surplus to the revenues of Zeila. Somaliland is capable of producing and exporting vast quantities of sheep and camels; the latter would be most useful in supplying the present scarcity of transport in India. In the absence of a railway, the route from Lake Rudolph to Berbera is the best transport route from the inland regions of northern British East Africa, the whole distance being practicable for camels and free from fly.

Yet in view of the policy being pursued at this moment there is little ground for any hope that anything will be done to promote our interests, or those of the natives. If the Indian Exchequer, under the stress of present calls upon it, is unable to bear the burden of the responsibilities that pertain to the administration of Somaliland, the Protectorate might be transferred to the Colonial Office, whilst retaining the services of those trained officers that only India can provide, and who have performed their difficult task hitherto with magnificent success. That we should give up a portion of our territory to purchase some more important advantage elsewhere is a comprehensible policy, but in any case any one familiar with Somaliland, its people and its possibilities, can only deplore the prospect of the imminent ruin of British trade and influence, and of the brave race who have been taught to look to us for protection and will look to us in vain.

THE CLIMATE OF CANADA.

By Professor R. F. STUPART,

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(*Read at the Meeting of the British Association, Toronto, 1897.*)

IN the Dominion of Canada, a country embracing one-half of the continent of North America, we naturally find a very diversified climate: on the Pacific coast, with the ocean on the one side and lofty mountain ranges on the other, it is moist and temperate; while on the east side of the Rocky mountains, on the high, level plateaus of the North-West Territories, and in Manitoba, is found a climate with large extremes of