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CHRONICLES OF KENYA

7541

CHRONICLES *of* KENYA

BY

A. DAVIS

Author of "*The Native Problem*,"
"*Umbandine*," "*Microcosm of Empire*," etc.

AND

H. G. ROBERTSON

*A people whose common ties are small,
Who, mixed with every race, are lost in all.*
(Paraphrase, Crabbe)

*The friendship of five free Dominions is
worth more than the allegiance of fifty
subservient races. Herein lies the strength
of the British Empire.* (Jenkyn)

CECIL PALMER

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This book, "Chronicles of Kenya," is a work of fiction. All the characters in the book are drawn from the authors' imagination. Care has been exercised to avoid the use of names or titles belonging to living persons. If any such names or titles have been used in the book, such usage has been inadvertent, and no reference to such person or persons is intended.

FOREWORD

By

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDWARD NORTHEY,
G.C.M.G., C.B., F.R.G.S., F.Z.S.

I HAVE been asked to write a Foreword to these parodies of Kenya life and politics, which I do with some diffidence, not sure to what extent I am myself lampooned !

But I knew both authors in East Africa as editors of local newspapers, and, though I do not necessarily identify myself with any of the views expressed, I am satisfied that the object of these bold and caustic sketches is a worthy one, and of good intention ; they reflect, I think, actual conditions and settlers' opinions, some humorously put, others in more serious vein.

There is truth and instruction to be gleaned from these pages, which I recommend to all those who are interested in the Colony. Kenya is commonly recognised to be a most difficult country to control and administer. It contains a settler class of very high intellectual and social standard, colonists whose aims are patriotically British.

Yet the place teems with difficult problems

of racial, social, and financial origin. With these, successive Governments and Governors have striven to cope, and not without success; for, despite the difficulties to be overcome, or mistakes made, there is a record of steady progress, bringing increased prosperity alike to all—Europeans, Arabs, Indians, and African natives.

EDWARD NORTHEY.

WOODCOTE HOUSE,
EPSOM,
3rd July, 1928.

PREFACE

FOR its population and dimensions Kenya Colony has been receiving more than its ordinary share of public attention. Not undeservedly so, because of its picturesque conditions of settlement and its complicated political problems. "*Ex Africa semper aliquid novi*" still stands good.

Kenya's earlier days and Kenya's present conditions are worthy of such master pens as were wielded by Mark Twain, Bret Harte, O. Henry, in quaint material and rough-hewn humanity. Without possessing the genius of such character-delineators, one may only crawl feebly in their footsteps. Kenya presents new and modern material of the Western type, leavened with a good deal of the East, so, rather than such good "copy" should be entirely lost and wasted, an attempt has been made in the following articles lightly to depict Kenya's problems and characteristics in sportive strain.

Yet the book has its moral and its purpose ; it is for the reader to discover their implications.

The sketches have been written from time to time over a period of some busy years ; pressure

of other occupations and journeyings delaying completion of what was aimed at. Under stress of other work the clever and facile pen of my friend and colleague, Mr. H. G. Robertson, widely known throughout Kenya as "Rab," has been enlisted to get the book completed. The whole, if properly digested—or digestible—yields a fairly true picture of this "Colony in the Making."

A. DAVIS.

MOTIF

Past Governors of Kenya have not found the Territory a bed of roses. Each Governor in his turn has had his difficulty to grasp the "atmosphere"—the political atmosphere—of the Kenya Highlands. Some have succeeded better and quicker than others. A Governor of Kenya has proverbially no sinecure in endeavouring to avoid the Colonial Office, Scylla, and save himself from the Settler, Charybdis.

I

THE NEW GOVERNOR

SIR HECTOR MOLYNEUX arrived at Nairobi in 19—, having recently been appointed Governor of Kenya Colony and Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in East Africa. He came with a long and distinguished Colonial Office record. Fifth son of an old country family, he had been educated at a Public School, went up to Cambridge, and managed, by a close attention to his studies, to pass his B.A. degree, after which he entered the Colonial service, receiving an appointment in the Treasury at Tabiago. By seniority in course of some years' service he had risen to become Assistant Treasurer, and later was translated to a similar position, but with higher emoluments, in the Madras Presidency. After some twelve years' service in India he was translated to West Africa, where he gained a perfect knowledge of the Hausa and Ashanti peoples. Raised to the dignity of Colonial Secretary, during which period he had acted as Governor during the absence on leave of his chief, he had rendered such faithful service

—if he had never done a great deed, he had never committed a foolish one—that the dignity of C.M.G. was raised to K.C.M.G., and, following the retirement of the Governor of Kenya Colony, he was selected as his successor.

His appointment, with its accompanying high emoluments and dignities, created quite a flutter at the place of his birth and among his people, while Lady Molyneux received congratulations innumerable from her various friends and acquaintances, most of whom had some vague idea that Kenya was on a par with the numerous native territories of India and West Africa, possessing that small sprinkling of European residents engaged in official duties and others in commerce, with a scattered number of planter families to make the position nice and sociable.

Sir Hector, however, had gathered some more accurate ideas of the place of his translation. He had been informed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that it was a high testimony to the qualities he had efficiently and tactfully exhibited during his official career that such an important post in the patronage of the Colonial Office had been entrusted to him. "The administration of Kenya (said the Rt. Hon. Cabinet

Minister) demanded peculiar qualities. In the first place, the territory contained some three millions of natives, tribes and peoples now in the course of development from the stage of simple savages to industrial peasant units. He had understood from Sir Frederick McClintock, who was controlling a company with a chain of trading stations from Mombasa to the Lakes, that the main prosperity of the land depended upon up-raising the native African. These natives were the chief producers of hides and skins derived from their great herds of cattle, so many of which annually died of disease that the hides alone were of importance. Also the cultivation and export of maize and beans were means of industry which had to be further encouraged and developed. He had observed that by some influence which he (the Colonial Secretary) could not fathom the growing settlement of Europeans had synchronised with a relative check to native production. Sir Hector must always bear in mind that the policy of His Majesty's Government was that of a trustee for the natives, and unless the natives showed progress it would place the Government in a very awkward position in its relation with the Church and the missionaries, from which source it looked for and enjoyed full political

support. The next factor to be carefully watched and judiciously handled was the Indian population. These British subjects—as recently emphasised by his colleague, the Secretary of State for India—were the first pioneers of the land. The Uganda Railway, conceived and paid for by the British Government, would never have been built without the aid of these Indians, who had contracted and laboured, during its construction, as coolies and clerks under the supervision of the European. Hence they were in the position of claiming to be the real pioneers of the country. To-day they held the strings of finance in the commercial world and were the largest property owners in the colony.” Having thus outlined the chief factors to be handled in the administration of the country, the Colonial Secretary added that it would be necessary also to refer to another, perhaps a minor, factor, which had to be taken into consideration—that was the British settlement. The Colonial Secretary was peculiarly equipped to estimate the political position in Kenya, for he had visited that sphere during its Protectorate stage when it was known as British East Africa, some twenty years earlier. He had travelled throughout the country then, and found the British settlers quite a superior lot of men,

but rather aggressive in their claims for consideration, having regard to their very small number among such a big population of native Africans and Indians. The effects of a tropical climate and the sun's actinic rays upon their constitution necessarily limited their industrial activities. Having, figuratively, blessed the future efforts of the new Governor, the interview terminated.

Sir Hector subsequently was requested to attend a conference with the Permanent Head of that Colonial Department peculiarly dealing with affairs East African. At this interview the discussion was not quite so impressive and formal ; the two dignitaries even smoked cigars together. Mr. Percy Allnutt, C.M.G., an Assistant Secretary of State, had graduated in that Government Department and had for some years been attached to the East African division, handling and recording its affairs. His knowledge of Kenya was unsurpassed. He knew its trade, its finances, population, statistics, what sort of grass grew there, the traffic on its railway, the number of officials employed, and he had frequently met Church dignitaries, shipping magnates, and several leading Indian merchants who had been passed over to him from the Colonial Secretary because of this superior knowledge. It was true he had

never visited the country, though his ambition was to do so. He had all the newspapers filed and occasionally read them, though again he mostly relied upon cuttings, germane to his office, selected by one of his trusted clerks, who lived in Putney. When a high political question arose, or a crisis loomed in affairs, the Permanent Secretary's counsel was considered the ultimate in Cabinet conferences. He always remained the confidential man to the various Colonial Ministers who came and went. Consequently he was rightfully regarded by Sir Hector as the most valuable adviser on the territory he was about to govern. Seated in a chair at the handsome broad desk in his office, a desk innocent of any business papers, but with a Debrett and *Colonial Service List* at the farthest edge, out of reach, he gave to the new Governor of his best wisdom. "You have just come from the Colonial Secretary," he said, "and while the Chief is a man of great mental qualities and a brilliant politician, yet you should understand that—due to his compelling political duties, comprising Cabinet meetings, delivering speeches, and visits to his constituency and the Continental resorts—he has really not much time to acquaint himself with the details of every colony or dependency he controls.

Consequently, though on broad policy his wit will always carry him through, the speciality in handling my department rests with me. He has doubtlessly informed you of the broad line of Government policy, though you will find you have a good deal to learn in working this policy out. For instance, take the native trustee idea, the corner-stone of British policy in dealing with these native territories. In the case of Kenya I may advise you definitely, Sir Hector, in official confidence, that the phrase is one conveniently coined to meet the idiosyncrasies of those who are the most active on East African affairs in London. It sounds equally attractive to the Church (which is Conservative), the Liberals, and Labour Party, hence it is a portmanteau word embracing all things. In effect, however," he said, with a knowing smile between the puffs of his cigar, "you dare not enter Kenya Colony with that phrase on your lips. The case will be sufficiently met if you introduce occasionally some legislation which has on the surface some benefit to the native. Strictly between ourselves, Sir Hector, the native need not give any trouble so long as you work him through his Chiefs and Headmen. The only native you will see at Government House is the house-boy. And similarly with regard to

the Indian—probably an Indian cook. Your social and political associates will be well-bred, but somewhat breezy, residents of the inner circle representing the British landowner and the legal classes. You see, Sir Hector,” continued Mr. Allnutt, warming to his subject, “as every London and Manchester authority seems to have decided—supported by such high African authorities as Sir Alfred Thomson, the great explorer, and Sir Cuthbert Wilson, the great traveller and author—Africa is for the African. Their millions are bound to tell in the long run, I think; but meanwhile—at least in Kenya—the British settlement which has taken place, somewhat to the embarrassment of the Colonial Office, has proved a wedge in the block of ebony, cracking, if not shattering, the whole edifice built up by a succession of well-meaning philanthropists dating back to the days of Livingstone. The British settler to-day has still a great respect and fear of the powers wielded by Downing Street. That respect must be maintained, though our Home influence must not be unduly forced to an issue. You will not find Government House, Nairobi, quite a bed of roses.”

Sir Hector listened to this advice and admonition with chastened appreciation. He recalled

his experience at Tabiago and Bombay. There also the British civilian element had proved rather troublesome with their criticism and demands; but with tact, yielding in word and unyielding in spirit, he had always managed to tide over these periodical outbursts of assertiveness. Though accepting the counsel so frankly offered and making a note of it, coming from such an old permanent official, he had little doubt that his long administrative experience would pull him through successfully.

About a week later he departed to take up the duties of office, having selected as aide-de-camp a wealthy officer of the Guards, and enlisted the services of a shrewd young friend of his to act as private secretary.

So the good ship the *Llandudno Castle* hove into sight at Mombasa, with His Excellency the Governor and Lady Molyneux and their suite on board.

The full arrangements for his reception had been wirelessly to him in advance of reaching port, which, with a few changes, born of his past experience of similar occasions, he had graciously approved. At Mombasa he was met by a little crowd of officials headed by Mr. Lothby, the colonial secretary, also by the Nabob of the

Coast the Alikali of Ukuba, representing the Arabs and Swahilis, Sandersammy Patel, the political leader of the Indian Conference, Krakbar Sundeyee, the leading Indian merchant, Silva da Costa Souza, representing the Goan community. Also were present, Mr. L. K. Smith, the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Netherby, manager of the railway, and one or two others. Outside, a motley crowd of natives.

His Excellency felt himself thoroughly at home from the moment of landing. This reception was Tabiago, Bombay, and the West Coast of Africa all rolled into one. Graciously he shook hands with the white-clad and helmeted officials, decorated with the familiar gold official buttons. He was adorned with the same familiar old garland by the Indians, the natives kowtowed, and the palms, oleanders, mango-trees, and all were there. Any previous doubts of difficulties in administering Kenya vanished as he lunched with his wife at Government House, and later was escorted by native troops to the railway station, where the Governor's coach awaited him and his suite to take him to Nairobi.

During the twenty-hour journey up-country he saw nothing much to interest, except wildebeeste, kongoni, and other wild game. Only one bit of

cultivation around a feeble looking homestead was to be observed en route. The following morning he found the air strangely sharp, upon which he discarded his white uniform for some warmer civilian garments. Upon approaching Nairobi he donned his decorations and official Governor's uniform, while Lady Molyneux dressed herself in the latest for the occasion. The Governor's party was ready for the capital.

On Nairobi station platform a carpet was laid and a real group of superior officers awaited the train's arrival. All the Legislative Councillors were present, a motley-looking lot of men, all garbs and sizes, crowned with double-brimmed hats in various stages of decay, and some in tweeds and khaki helmets. Then there was the Mayor, apparently very ill at ease. Some of the Councillors were white and some were black ; and the thin crowd of people at the background formed rather a motley group of uneasy demeanour.

As the carriage stopped, His Excellency stood erect, pleasantly smiling, on the saloon platform. The National Anthem was played at the salute, after which His Excellency descended. Following many introductions, the Governor and his party were motored to the Court Square, flags here and

there marking the festive occasion. Several addresses were delivered: one from the Municipality and another from the Freemasons, the Jewish community, the Indian community, the Swahili community, the Arab community, the Goan community, the Somalis. One from the Kikuyu Chiefs, also the Kavirondo Taxpayers' Association, the Church Missions, the Scotch Missions, the Latter Day Adventists, the British Israel Society; the Convention of Associations, the Horticultural Society, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; the Jockey Club, the Hunt Club, the Athletic Society. In fact, the Governor, becoming fagged, thought it would never cease. The A.D.C. Guardsman, in full Grenadier uniform, looked very uncomfortable under the blazing sun, with his huge busby hiding the whole of his countenance. He endeavoured to stand at attention without scratching his face, wet with perspiration. The private secretary soon became loaded with addresses and presentations, from an elephant's tusk to a carved ebony trunk, within which he seemed to wish to stow the lot. Her Ladyship, seated, tried to keep smiling, though a tired look often flitted across her matronly countenance. The crowd in front were standing in groups of changing density, petering out as the proceedings

became wearisome. One adventurous person was perched on the roof of a three-storey building facing the square, and half the people were watching him, expecting every moment he would fall. After receiving the endless number of addresses, the Governor made a speech.

He said how delighted he was to come to Kenya, which position as His Majesty's Representative had been the one great ambition of his life. From what he had observed during his journey from Mombasa, there was room enough in this delightful colony to house half of England. It was when the train passed the one homestead on the three hundred miles' delightful route that he realised the full force of the White Man's Burden. Here was a man—he presumed not a lady settler (laughter)—who fully exemplified the indomitable pluck of the British. He saw before him all the types of that British settlement—and he believed there were other farms and homesteads farther along the line—which had founded towns and colonised Africa to the Great Lakes to the glory of the flag. He also felt greatly honoured at receiving the submissions and presents of the Indian and native communities. He would treasure these as heirlooms in after years. He was a mere stranger to the land at the moment,

but he had studied its problems very closely before venturing to take up his responsible position. He was simply the figure-head of that great father to his people, His Majesty the King, to whom he would in due course report the universal sense of loyalty which had been exhibited to him, His Majesty's humble deputy. He would not protract the proceedings any longer; no doubt (with a sly glance at his melting aide-de-camp) all were tired and hot. He would never forget this great occasion, nor would his wife, who was as delighted as he with the country. He would do his best to promote the welfare of all classes, and he was agreeably surprised (glancing at the deputation) to observe how well organised society was in this youngest colony of the Empire. He then departed to Government House, three cheers having been raised to the new Governor.

That evening a banquet was given in his honour, coloured people not admitted. The chief speaker was Major Logan-O'Shaugnessy, who at a previous caucus meeting of the Convention of Associations had been advised what kind of statement was needed to prepare the new Governor for what he was in for and what the country demanded of his powers. The result of this speech exceeded expectation, for the gallant Major was a born and skilled

orator, and not only went for effect, but had some peculiar ideas of his own, very apt to creep in, rather embarrassing to his supporters.

The dinner was held at the New Stanley Hotel banqueting hall, which could easily accommodate 500 or 600 people. There were about 250 people seated at the long tables, with the Governor and other celebrities supporting the Chairman at the head. His Excellency appeared affable, though somewhat nervous; he rather felt like a Nabob might feel without his black slaves, captured by pirates, and about to be made to walk the plank. His thoughts harked back to his interview with the Secretary of State, who had insisted so commandingly on the paramount importance of the native, and here he was, on the first night of setting foot in the capital, having to make a public speech with the enemy around him and not a decent savage within sight. Even his own officials seemed to be hand and glove against him as they drank cordially with his hosts. Old official as he was, he smelt danger, and behind his forced smiles an uneasy look lurked in the corners of his eyes. He had an instinct that he was snookered, more especially as he had been privately warned to look out for fireworks.

After the inner man had been satisfied, champagne

and other wines well stowed away by men accustomed to it and who were out for a real treat, the toast "The King, God Bless Him," was proposed by the Chairman and drunk with musical honours. All eyes were then turned to the head table, and the new Governor braced himself to meet the occasion.

Major Logan-O'Shaugnessy then rose to propose the health of their guest, His Excellency, Sir Hector Molyneux. He said "they all knew the distinguished career of His Excellency in the King's Service (cheers). His Excellency had served in many capacities, and in many lands, and now he had been sent to Kenya; that colony which he understood was on the Black List at the Colonial Office (derisive laughter). He was sure his friends had misunderstood him; he meant that Kenya was classed as a Native Territory in the files of the Department (more laughter), but he was confident that His Excellency had not been so easily hoodwinked. He knew that the British settler was not as black as he was painted in England. As one of the oldest pioneers of this country, he could recall the earliest days of British settlement. In those pioneer days, the British Government was keen that the land should be occupied and colonised, for at least one important reason: that

it would justify annexation and occupation and give some work to do for the British official. It was in those very early days that land was given out in large tracts to the few adventurous optimists who were lured to these remote parts at the risk of their persons and money. He was one of those adventuresome people who were caught (laughter) ; he had mapped out a province, been satisfied with a district, and had been reduced to a humble corner in this paradise. Since those early days of easy land, men and their families had come in increasing numbers and diminishing grants. Money and energy had been expended by those who followed, until to-day the settlers were spread all over the land. Before the advent of the European settler, the country was an uneasy and shifting mass of tribesmen, wild beasts, and jungle. Slaughter and killing was the main industry. To-day the lion lay down with the lamb—and the lamb was sometimes very comfortably tucked inside. If he may be permitted to pursue this metaphor, since those days, the settler was the lamb swallowed by administration. It would not be loyal to His Excellency if he did not inform him, speaking on behalf of the settler, that the lamb had turned. He had turned to gall and had given indigestion. The country to-day was on

the verge of ruin. During the past eight years public expenditure had increased out of all proportion to the capacity of the country to pay. On paper, revenue showed a corresponding increase, but that paper did not deceive him or his friends. Land had risen in value and towns had increased in size, but the whole apparent progress was deceptive. He had worked out a few figures and was positively aghast at the result. It was not to be expected that the present price of produce on the overseas market would be maintained. It was reasonable to expect a slump some time in the future. Based on this legitimate assumption, he foresaw that in two years time the place would be bankrupt. He saw his friend the Treasurer smiling, but facts will out and are stubborn things. They had been blessed with many Governors in the past, all good, if mediocre, men. He would not dare to class their latest arrival ; that remained to be seen. He could assure His Excellency that provided he worked with the settlers—the real creative inhabitants of the country—he would find no more loyal friends and co-operators than themselves. If, however, he trusted 'the old official,' and took bad advice from those clad in antiquated harness, he would probably discover himself up against a stone wall of dissatisfaction

and resistance. He recognised that these were rather bold words with which to regale a new Governor who had been sent to govern ; but if it was drastic medicine, he was sure this medicine, if taken as cheerfully as he proffered it, would do the patient good. All past Governors had suffered from the dose of treacle administered them upon arrival. A little brimstone added might be reminiscent of a place which had often been compared with political Kenya, but also it would equip the new arrival to withstand better what he would have to undergo. The people in England could not see the houses for the trees. From their distant angle of view they saw black, not perceiving the numerous small clearings in this remote constellation which boded a change in the planet. It was only through these nuclei of civilisation that the black man could be gradually leavened. Tackled direct from Exeter Hall to Mission, the progress would have been as slow in effect upon the man as it had been in all other parts of British Africa. If these nuclei of light and civilisation were fostered the miasma would clear itself. But, friendly as the settlers were disposed to be to the Administration, he would not be doing his duty or executing his mission if he did not warn His Excellency that ' barnacles ' had to go (loud

cheers). Red tape had entangled the archaic and spent cogs of the official machine. 'Sympathetic consideration' was a by-word in Kenya, the stock phrase of a late Governor whose incapacity was only exceeded by his mild benevolence. Even the excuse of another chief of Department, that 'he did not preside over a community of plaster saints,' was becoming stale when telegrams took longer to reach their destination than railway trains—and the movement of the latter was not too rapid (loud cheers). The people of this colony had long been groping amid the miasma of official circumlocution. That miasma had to lift, the clarifying process had to be begun, and he trusted that His Excellency had the mandate to clear it. After delivering these friendly words of advice, he would now wish His Excellency the best of luck in his adventure." This speech was concluded amid uproarious cheers, and the health of His Excellency was drunk with champagne and amusement, everyone curious to see how the new Governor would take the baiting and the advice so freely tendered.

Sir Hector Molyneux, who had been advised of the intention by the speaker openly to criticise the official Administration, was not really prepared for this patronising, minatory attitude so cheerily

adopted by Major Logan-O'Shaughnessy, punctuated as his speech was with the applause of the assembled company. As the Major proceeded to deride and instruct the Home Government and the Colonial Office, all the old superior official within him winced and protested. What, after all, were these few men to the British Government, compared with the millions of black native subjects, who looked to the Flag for their education and progressive advancement, and on whose principal behalf he had been appointed to administer the territory? What would the Aborigines Society think when they heard of and read these sentiments uttered before His Majesty's Representative; what would the Missionary Societies think? What capital the Labour and Socialist Party in England would make of it! And, above all, unless he maintained his dignity and authority, how would his hitherto unstained record fare at the Colonial Office. All these and other questions arose within him. He had to protect his official colleagues in Kenya from these aspersions on their capacity. So the new Governor braced himself up to reply. He made a few notes of dignified protest against being made the subject of attack on this the first public occasion of his official appearance. He made notes of patronising reference to the

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ebullition of spirits of post-prandial eloquence. But, when he rose to reply, and saw the number of hard-headed men of class and culture, among them scions of British nobility, leavened with bronzed faces of the typical British pioneer adventurer, he realised that any assumption of offended dignity and bitter retort—hé, a stranger in the land—would render his position more ridiculous. So he said : “ My lords, honourables, ladies, and gentlemen, I arrived to-day in this remarkable country, and must plead ignorance as to many matters with which you are all perfectly conversant. I cannot yet pretend to know the inner working of your minds, but hope to be informed as my period of office becomes more advanced. I need hardly say that I was not prepared for such an enthusiastic reception [loud cheers], and have duly swallowed the medicine, with a chastened spirit, which the gallant Major has administered. My object and policy here is to hold the scales as evenly as possible among all His Majesty’s subjects. After all, the native is a legitimate part of the land, and is entitled to receive prior consideration as the earliest inhabitant [question !]. We must accord him full justice [cheers]. On the other hand, British settlement has made the Colony what it is [loud cheers], and, as far as I can, that also will

have my serious attention. The Indian element is another factor in industry and politics. These people also must receive the consideration they deserve [loud cheers]. It is too early after my arrival to announce any definite policy, or suggest any revolutionary measure of administration. My able friend and colleague, the colonial secretary [cheers], who has on various occasions administered this territory as Governor's Deputy, with success born of experience, will be at my right hand, and I also rely upon the honest co-operation of others in official service, men whose loyalty and efforts do not always receive the appreciation they deserve. My lords, ladies, and gentlemen, I will not attempt at this early date of my presence among you to make a long speech, or make any rash promises, and will conclude in saying that my best efforts will be directed to administering this country impartially to the best advantage of all races and the Empire in general" (loud cheers).

This statement, which revealed a large measure of dignity, patience, and tact, was well received, and the new Governor started on the same career of difficulty and qualified success that has been the common lot of other Governors of Kenya.

MOTIF

Kenya's political conditions—a European island or oasis amid an ocean of savage African aborigines—has developed a peculiar dual political influence: the one, that of the established and legal government, controlled by the Governor and his official executive, and the other, the unofficial settler element, which stands in relation to the Government as the Opposition in the Houses of Parliament in England. The rival political body to the Government is the Convention of Associations, at whose opening session even the Governor himself commonly presides. The unit of the Convention is the local association, a kind of provincial, parochial committee composed of the settler individual. Some associations consist of a fairly large membership; others are merely elementary organisms.

II

THE TIMBORA ASSOCIATION

A MEETING had been called of the Timbora District Association. This was a newly-formed body in a remote valley cut off from easy access to the main slopes of the Great Mau by the extraordinary twisting of its formation, with big barrier wooded hills towering like enormous buttresses towards the higher plateau of the Rift Valley Escarpment. The road to this locality described many ups and downs and doublings, until it rose with broken but steady gradient to the valley-head, a kind of cul-de-sac, some eighteen miles from its opening. The nearest point to the more settled parts was "round the corner," so to say, just a three-mile walk over the steep slopes, so that the quickest way to reach civilisation was to walk there, leaving your car about twenty miles down the road.

Timbora was a new settlement, some half-dozen farmers at most; but due to its remoteness—a kind of side-wash from the ocean of settler political activity—the settlement had no direct connection with any of the numerous district associations. (All these associations were centres of "high politics,"

and settled the affairs of the country, sometimes world questions, by a show of hands of two to twenty members.) Deeply touched by this isolation, these remote six people of Timbora—really four, for two took no interest in politics—really one, for the other three never knew why or how it happened—formed an association of their own under the title “The Timbora District Association.”

As explained, the strength of the association rested in this one active member. He had in other days, before he met with financial disaster, been a most active and verbose member of a flourishing association in the busy settler world, an association boasting of at least twenty subscribing members, with fifty more who did everything except subscribe. In his superior knowledge, fiery zeal, and irrepressibility, he soon came to the front, and only missed becoming president by one vote, and that of a member who was as tenacious of his vote as he was lax in his subscription. With all this past glory and explosive gas behind him, he could not for long sit quiescent in his lonely eyrie at the top end of the valley. So he boldly proclaimed himself an Association, with the passive consent of the three who never knew how it happened, and the other two who took not the slightest interest in politics.

His first step was to have circulars printed announcing the formation of the Timbora Association. This momentous event was announced in the Press of Nairobi, and the affiliation of the new association was requested of the Convention. This request was readily granted, for the Association of Associations (as it was comprehensively termed) hailed with enthusiasm the adherence of as many district associations as could possibly be invented or devised throughout the scattered communities of farmers and settlers and lawyers of the land. Having received the imprimatur of the "parent" body—the parent, if they only knew it, of a stillborn child—Major Sloperson of the Territorials ruled his society with a rod of iron and brooked no opposition. Seated in his mud house, he boldly proclaimed himself president, and only the dog dared to bark. He then formed himself into a committee of three, naming himself and his nearest neighbour, with the right to co-opt the third, pending an enquiry with regard to his name. He then took a tot of whisky, had the log fire lit, and sat down to think out a full scheme to improve the P.W.D.

For the P.W.D. was the special butt and *bête noir* of the settler community. Where criticism of the circumlocutory methods of every Government

department was rampant, that of the Public Works Department, which touched every nerve of the community, from the state of the wide-flung roads to the expensive cost or utter neglect of an official building, was a special anathema. Nothing ever went right with the P.W.D., and, as fate would have it, the Chief of this much maligned department was a man who fancied himself the most superior of any superior person ever made by the Great Creator. Secure in his official seniority of office, the more the settlers grouched and complained, the greater the complacency of this superior individual, whose fluent pen showered coals of burning fire upon the heads of his assailants, who withered under the blast until the next meeting. But that is another story.

So our friend of Timbora braced himself for the conflict at the next meeting of the Convention of Associations. He took a prominent place in the great hall of the capital, where sat this mixed congress of mixed spirits. He moved as follows: "That in view of the extremely high cost of the Commissioner's residence at Tsavo-Tsavo, estimated in the Budget at £600 and costing £6,000 to complete, and in view of the inadequate expenditure allocated to the bridge work at Kachiliba, budgeted at £500 and expending £10, with the consequent failure to complete

the necessary structure, this Convention of the District Associations petitions the Government (a) to appoint a Special Commission to enquire into the workings of the P.W.D., (b) appoint a special committee of this Convention to watch the proceedings of the said Special Commission, and, (c) appoint three of its members to the said special committee of which the mover shall be chairman and convener, and, (d) send a copy of this resolution to H.E. the Governor and another copy to the Secretary of State for the Colonies." Having caught the eye of a new arrival in the country, who had been chosen as a delegate to the Convention because he seemed to be the one man in the district who had sufficient means to leave his farm for these proceedings, and who wanted to say and do something on behalf of somebody or something, and eagerly seconded the resolution, our friend from Timbora spoke for an hour and a half in support.

When the congress woke up and the proposal was about to be put to the vote, a keen-faced, legal delegate appointed by the Nairobi Debating Society rose to ask the Chairman whether the resolution was in order. "Though having every sympathy with the protest and admiring the zeal and eloquence of the mover, he considered that the Convention in passing such a resolution would

stultify its own previous proceedings. Was it not in 1912 (or thereabouts) when, in the course of the usual condemnation of the P.W.D., the proposal to construct a bridge at Kachiliba was declared a most unnecessary and extravagant proceeding? Such a bridge, with perhaps six travellers a month passing that way, however useful it might be as rapid means of crossing the donga for herds of game, perhaps chased by lions, leopards, or the like, was of little service to such districts as represented by most of the other members of the association. The then proposed expenditure was condemned, and this appeared to him a legal precedent more or less binding upon that court—he meant that meeting” (applause). Lieut.-Col. Tompson, late of the Blues, spoke next. “He begged to remind the learned delegate that since this resolution appeared to have been passed—before his time—he had heard that quite an important settlement had taken place in the vicinity of Kachiliba. It was only the other day he saw in the Press [there were two newspapers in the country, always called “the Press,” as, owing to extreme rivalry and every person taking both papers, settlers were never certain which paper the quotation came from] that the wife of a settler in the vicinity, whose name was new to

him, had a second daughter, and there were, he was sure, other pending cases " (laughter).

Then replied Major Sloperson. He said " he was not to be side-tracked from his purpose, nor would that meeting be, by a story of twins (astonishment of his supporter, Lieut.-Col. Tompson of the Blues), neither would his legal friend from Nairobi come it over him or the meeting with his precedents. They were all straight farmers, and he knew that those of his association whom he knew, and who knew him, would strongly desire that he press his point against the P.W.D. The Director of Public Works was a personal friend of his, he admired him for his talent ; but he and others for whom he spoke would support his contention that they wanted something done and not the finances of the country being wasted on a lot of lazy natives who took snuff all day, slept all night, and did nothing else " (loud applause). He was continuing in similar strain when the Chairman, knowing his vocal powers, said, from a point of expediency, that as they were all agreed on the subject (some feeble protests), he would put the resolution to the vote by a show of hands. Passed. And the member for Timbora returned to his eyrie to report to his association—or his surroundings—the great work he had done for his district at the popular assembly.

MOTIF

During the war period currencies ran amuck. Some, like the dollar, soared; and others, like the mark and rouble, got swamped. The Kenya rupee, linked to the Indian currency, was on the buoyant side, and sterling suffered in comparison. As most of the Kenya people were debtors to the banks, or to financiers, and were paying their debts in rupees, which had risen to a high premium, the position became intolerable, so there was a demand on Government to stabilise and fix the legal currency. The 1s. 4d. rupee was pegged at 2s. when it stood in the market at 2s. 4d. and 2s. 8d. But shortly after stabilisation the rupee fell back again to about its original value, resulting in those who had borrowed rupees at 1s. 4d. having to repay their rupees in florins (2s. sterling). This reversion to original value resulted in great hardship to the borrower, exciting a storm of verbal protest and columns in the Press against those responsible for the pegging of the rupee at 2s. Had it been left alone (like in India) currency value would have righted itself back to 1s. 4d. automatically. But, in effect, currency experts are extremely rare, even in Europe. In Kenya not such a one existed: result—shoals of them.

III

THE CURRENCY QUESTION

THE world was at war, and very little peace reigned in Kenya. Apart from the fact that the Germans were rooting up our rails at "nowhere" places—coming from nowhere and disappearing to the same nebulous locality (all happening in the wilderness between Coast and Highlands)—apart from the sweeping out of the towns and districts of capable men, leaving the incapable in the stores to reap a rich harvest, working double shift with the satisfaction that they were "doing their bit"; without reckoning the fact that sugar had gone up, and the confusing experience of being surrounded and hectored by majors and colonels of previous humble acquaintance: in addition to all this, more exciting still, was the fight over currency.

It happened thuswise: the Kenya coinage was based on the silver rupee, a coin stamped for East Africa but linked with the Indian currency by inheritance and tradition. Gold having disappeared from circulation, the value of silver seemed to have risen, and with the value of silver

the value of the silver rupee increased. It stood as a legal fiction at 1s. 4*d.*, but rose in exchange to 1s. 6*d.*, and then went higher and higher. The tradespeople were in that delightful position that they costed and sold their goods at the 1s. 4*d.* rate of rupee, receiving 15 rupees to the £1 sterling, and bought oversea at the 2s. 6*d.* rupee rate of exchange; namely, only paying eight to the £1. By this process profits increased so rapidly that they became positively embarrassing to the accountant. The Government also. Their taxes and licences, framed at a 1s. 4*d.* rate, became, in fact, 2s. for each rupee they collected. The banks housed the rupees at their official value and sold them in exchange at 50 per cent. above par.

Now, this Alice in Wonderland finance couldn't last for long. In theory, if a sixpence be accepted for a shilling by everybody no person could rightly be said to suffer. But Kenya's commerce was essentially oversea, inwards and outwards.

The farmer or producer regarded himself as a special victim, and set down the whole movement as due to the profiteering storekeeper. He argued thus: "The rupee we buy our supplies with in Nairobi is worth 2s., and 15 of these 2s. rupees go to the £1, therefore we give the storekeeper 30s. for every equivalent to £1 sterling we spend.

Now, when we sell our produce oversea for sterling we only receive 10 rupees for the £1, thus we lose 10s. on every pound we spend or receive."

"But," replied the storekeeper, "your calculations are wrong; the position stands thus: 'If an article is sold at 2 rupees, which equals 4s., and you receive 4s. for your produce (at market rate), where the grievance?'"

"You go to Hades," retorted the producer. "You buy your goods oversea, giving 15 rupees to the £1, and sell these goods to us at 10 to the £1, while we pay you 15 rupees and only receive 10!"

Storekeeper: "But, my dear man, if we pay 15 rupees for a £1 and charge you only 10, surely it is in your favour!"

Nearly coming to blows over the matter, the expert in currency (self-styled) would step in.

Expert: "Please, Mr. Storekeeper, think a bit. It is as plain as a pikestaff that the exchange is in your favour. The £1 sterling is of legal equivalent to 15 rupees; consequently, when you buy for £1 and only pay 10 rupees for the fifteen, and charge my friend here 15 rupees for what cost you 10 rupees, you must make 5 rupees on the deal, apart from the trading profit you impose."

Storekeeper: "That's where you experts fail

to grasp the position. I buy £1 worth of goods and pay in 10 rupees, being the rate of exchange. Now I put on my trading profit and charge my friend in rupees accordingly. Where the undue advantage? ”

Producer: “ That’s not putting it fairly. If I sell you five cows at £1 each (which I am not likely to do), and receive 15 rupees for each £1 (according to law), and you exchange the cow for another £1, which you can purchase for 10 rupees, look at your profit.”

Expert, explaining things: “ My dear Mr. Producer, that’s where *you* go wrong in your turn. If you sell a cow and receive 15 rupees, and he sells that cow again for 10 rupees, you score and he suffers. If you both buy or sell cows at £1, and the exchange goes up or goes down, the bargain is fair. The world’s exchange is quite independent of that cow or that £1. Fifteen rupees is £1. But the world says it is worth £1 10s. Now here supply and demand comes in, and I crave your patience. England wants money and borrows it of Spain. At once sterling falls in exchange and the Spanish dollar rises. But suppose Spain will not lend, then the more she holds her money tight the more sterling is offered her. Now the Swiss franc . . . ”

It was somewhat on those lines that the argument travelled, with numerous eccentricities of outlook and conclusion.

And while the exchange question filled columns in the Press, with all kinds of wild remedies, the rupee continued to rise to the increasing embarrassment (and profit) of the local supplier, for he did indeed profit for a time by converting his sterling into 15 rupees, while all the time the £1 was only costing him 10. Months were wasted in controversy as to what should be done, and the Government was pressed to order a Special Committee (as it was called) to consider remedies.

On this committee sat the leading business men from the Chamber of Commerce, the bank managers, the highest Government Treasury official, the most eminent legal authority, with the Governor as an *ex officio* member. And they met, debated, pondered, and argued. The first idea that caught on was that Kenya should change her currency from the silver to the gold standard, with 20s. to the £1. This was almost accepted, until it occurred to one member that gold was unobtainable, having been all cornered by Britain, India, and China. Kenya could not compete in this market. Then it was suggested that the currency be based on the Bradbury and that all

DK

rupees should be called in at their official token value of 15 to the £1. But against this was the objection that the possessors of rupees worth in the market 2s. 4*d.* (for it had risen again) could not reasonably be expected to surrender these at 1s. 4*d.* They would have to be compensated. This was out of the question, as the Treasury was empty. So numerous sittings were held, and columns of reports appeared in the newspapers. A satisfactory solution appeared more remote than ever.

Ultimately it was decided to send the whole matter to Downing Street for Colonial Office decision.

In London another committee of experts sat on the question. The biggest Imperial authorities on silver and currency and banking and exchange were summoned in conference. These experts sat and sat, and eventually (the rupee having then risen to 2s. 8*d.*) decided to make a direct cut at some mean, pegging the exchange value at 2s., as this was decided to be the lowest possible value in ratio to the price of silver likely to happen for years.

So the edict went forth—and then the real fight started. At the outset the rupee further strengthened and nothing much was said; but later,

when the rupee started to fall from its high estate and went slowly, but surely, back to normal, the storm burst. The mortgagor—three fourths of the settled lands were under mortgage—discovered himself in that unhappy position that he had borrowed the 1s. 4d. rupee and had to pay back 2s. for each 1s. 4d. he had borrowed. For instance, a purchaser had bought a property on terms for £2,000, which, expressed in rupees (the currency of the land), was 30,000 rupees; ultimately, at the conversion and fixation of the rupee at 2s. (or one florin, as the new rupee was termed), he discovered he owed (or had paid, as he claimed) £3,000. Thus mortgages rose 50 per cent. in favour of the mortgagee, and overdrafts at the bank likewise. And many high protests and discussions were aroused. For instance, the arguments ran thus:

Debtor: "This official conversion of the rupee at 2s. is a disastrous job, and ruinous to me and the country."

Creditor: "I beg your pardon! I fail to see where I have benefited. I sold you property worth £2,000, which meant to me 30,000 rupees. Now, suddenly, this rupee of *mine* (not yours) rises in market value to 2s. 8d. and has now been knocked down by the Government to 2s. Where do I score?"

Debtor: "But that is not correct. You are not stating the case fairly. The legal value of the rupee when I purchased your property was 1s. 4d., or 15 rupees to the £1. You now receive £1 for every 10 rupees, and thus net 50 per cent. over its value, which I have to pay.

Creditor: "But, man alive, surely if I sell my property for 30,000 rupees and the rupee rises in value, why should you claim this benefit? If the property you purchase increases in value and you make £500 on the deal, will you pass this profit over to me?"

Debtor: "Well, I can't argue with you over it. All I know is that I have now to pay 50 per cent. in excess of what I bargained for. It may not be your fault or your doing. It's that fool of a Government who caused this."

Creditor: "I can't even agree with you there. Did not we, the people of Kenya, ask for some fixation of the rupee?"

Debtor: "Well, it's those so-called experts. Hullo! Here comes Mr. Expert."

Expert (genially): "I suppose the same old argument—currency! It takes an expert in exchange and currency to understand the question. All you people work in a vicious circle. Now, really, the whole question should be reduced

in terms of exchange. The rupee bought more goods in the European market than its standard equivalent in sterling. India was supplying Britain with more goods than Britain could pay for; she became a creditor nation, and, as she could not get gold, demanded more paper. Now, in Europe, during the war, paper was cheap (converted into money), and the belligerent nations did not mind how much paper they printed if they could obtain supplies of grain, rice, and raw materials from India. That's how the silver rupee rose in value. Now, later, India herself had to borrow, and the price of European manufactured goods increased in value, so the rupee again fell. You gentlemen dealing in rupees had to follow the market. That the experts sitting in London were wrong in their diagnosis is not at all unprecedented. It is true I know what I am talking about and you fellows don't. I may go wrong, too, but you are not sufficient judges to know whether I am wrong or not. The world's exchange cannot go wrong. It is purely mechanical and automatic. For instance, take the Swiss franc and the Spanish dollar. . . ."

MOTIF

It arose over the Indian question in Kenya. Rumours were abroad, pointed by parliamentary debate, that the Highlands of Kenya, settled by the European, his wife and family, were to be dominated by Indians—the Legislature swamped by their vote. The settlers took keen alarm. Stern resistance was prepared. The Imperial Government found it had to deal with the situation before it became serious. Representative settlers were invited to England in order to confer with the Colonial Secretary. A via media was discovered: result, the famous White Paper and dual policy. But the White Paper scarcely pleased anybody. Settler resolve had been side-tracked; Indian claims had been shelved; and the Africans saw little in it for themselves. But the crisis had been met. The diplomats had triumphed.

IV

THE REVOLUTION

THERE are many grades in revolutions, from great French and Russian revolutions that shake the world in their vast repercussions and reverberations, to the peppery and hectic explosion of the small American Republic. The English character does not lend itself to either sort. On the rare occasion that John Bull gets down to it, a revolution, or attempted revolution, becomes a very serious business, all the more deeply founded because of its long-pent storage, patience, and restraint.

It was a revolution of so profound a character that nearly happened in Kenya, inspired by the vital principle of safeguarding the future of Kenya colonists of to-day and European generations of Kenyans yet unborn. Organised in the British way, it was dispersed and the crisis disposed of in the British way. The great issue was whether Kenya Colony should take an Eastern or a European orientation. If this resistance had not occurred, the whole future of Kenya would have been imperilled, boding future racial strife and

an upheaval of much graver consequence than the disturbance of that moment.

The affair arose over the Indian question. Under the leadership of a typical Indian agitator the claim for citizen equality was worked for all it was worth. All the world was kin, he said; "black was white and white was black, east was west and west was east. Mentality was only skin deep. There were black cows and white cows, but all gave the same quality milk. A torn cloth and a pair of trousers both hid the same nakedness. Asia was the cradle of all faiths, and the same Aryan blood ran in both Asiatic and European." The qualifying fact that such assertions, if aggressively put to a European by a *babu*, would have had unfortunate results, did not affect the justness of the argument.

That the two races have different histories, live different lives, and think on different planes that never meet, is not considered by the Asiatic. And the British Government and people rather sympathised with the Indian attitude. Do not Indians come over to England for study, and have they not the right to vote by residence and marry English girls, home opinion asked? What, it wondered, was the matter with Kenya? True, these marriages had a tendency to get into

the papers in some weird cases of alimony, desertion, polygamy, or otherwise, but the white woman was at fault. Why should not such an experiment in social and political cohesion be carried out in Kenya, one of the distant Imperial estates? It might be acknowledged that the millions in India were not deemed fit or prepared to receive self-government, but Kenya was different. There the European element was too assertive; it should be levelled down to the Asiatic, and thus placate India for the sake of the Empire at little cost to Britain. Thus ran the thought of many people in England.

Promoted by agitators in Kenya and introduced into high political quarters in the capital of the Empire; misunderstood by the Press, and voted by the Government a nuisance to be got rid of along the lines of least resistance; the Indian question developed, until the settlers of Kenya got desperate, in fear and dread lest, on the ground of expediency, they and their homes would be sacrificed and merged into the new doctrine of racial equality, a sop to India. So, like the suffragettes before them, they decided upon direct action.

Meetings of protest were held all over the country and resolutions passed opposing the

grant of votes to Indians. The Europeans, it was hotly contended, were established on the land with their families; not an Indian farmed in this farming country; they were simply petty traders in the districts and crowding only in the towns. Characteristically, no threats or attempts at violence against the offending Asiatic were suggested; it was ill-digested Home opinion that the settlers were opposing. So they set about things in true British revolutionary style. No lynchings or burnings, no shooting or mobbing. Their methods were just as deliberate and orderly as those exhibited in England some years after by the private citizen at the period of the General Strike in defence of the right to survive.

An Inner Council was formed by leading settlers. There was a determination to resist, passively or actively, any imposition of an unpopular law. The few thousand European settlers practically held and occupied the Kenya Highlands in all directions of the compass. The police in the Colony were scant and isolated. The only regular armed force were the King's African Rifles, composed of natives and officered by Europeans. The officers, holding the King's commission, would do their duty, but with an ill grace against their own countrymen, their own class, and, with rare

exceptions, sympathising with the principle they were up against. (The natives were never inclined to oust the white master for the Asiatic.) A large proportion of the protesting settlers consisted of ex-military and naval men, still bound by their oaths of service. To pit native soldiers against self-proclaimed loyal British Europeans neither threatening mob violence nor contemplating treason was unthinkable within the Empire, and through influential channels South Africa had expressed its sympathy with the protesters. Could such repressive action be taken?

So a British General, one of several resident in Kenya, was given command; he visited all outlying regions, and plans were adopted to make a demonstration in force if necessary. Precisely what these plans were has never been revealed outside the charmed inner circle of the political leaders. Report had it that if political equality had been ordered from England and forced through the Legislative Council by means of the official majority, meetings would have been summoned throughout the districts. Some, if not all, of the *bomas* (magistracy headquarters) would have been seized and the District Commissioners held in friendly custody. Then passive resistance and no taxes.

This extraordinary state of affairs, reminiscent in a small way of the Boston tea-chests, naturally created a good deal of talk and discussion. No overt act had been committed, publicly proposed, or even hinted at. There were no young bloods to force the issue, for the simple reason that very few of the young settlers and no hot-heads had been consulted or let into the secret. All that was known was that names were down for action when required. It was essentially a movement of greybeards. There had been no threats to the authorities, though doubtless the Governor and his council knew what was going on. In fact, the leaders of the "revolutionaries" sat at the table of Government House and discussed everything touching upon the Indian question except the plans the leaders had in the back of their minds. The tall, lean *generalissimo* of the proposed forces toured the various districts with his "staff," and had his own private discussions with the leading local settlers.

Many people, especially the official element, ridiculed the whole scheme. What could five hundred or a thousand settlers do against the British Empire? they questioned. If there were any trouble, a company of bluejackets from a battleship (which happened to be in port) would

settle the whole affair. Or perhaps a regiment of British soldiers would march through the country. The settlers were not properly armed. Those who happened to be retired officers, some on the reserve and others still on the active list, would not dare defy His Majesty's authority. That a handful of settlers should attempt to hold the country and defy the Government was ridiculous. Along these lines ran the apparently plausible argument of those who did not think.

But there was the other side.

The only force in the country physically capable of arresting a body of Europeans was the King's African Rifles. Would the local Government despatch native troops to arrest Englishmen? Would the Colonial Office sanction such a step? If they risked it, and armed resistance was offered, with casualties on either or both sides, what would British Colonial feeling be? Moral support from South Africa had been promised. There had been no rioting or attempted violence. Any such conflict would arouse the whole community, exasperating those who were at the moment doubting and lukewarm.

As it happened, about this time a naval contingent had been invited to Nairobi and entertained. Officers and men fraternised freely with the

settlers. If a naval force were summoned, what would their feelings be when employed to coerce their own loyal and peaceful countrymen for the purpose of endowing Asiatics with a controlling vote in a British Colony! Such an order would have been awkward, and possibly not effective. Stranger still, what would the world—more especially the British world—think upon hearing that a military expedition was to be despatched against a body of loyal and otherwise peaceful Britishers, who had declined to hand over political control of their adopted, and in many instances native, land to Indians? In these days of increasing Colonial independence that also seemed impossible. And the settlers had despatched their emissary to Australia too, an old settler in Kenya whose family had official connections in that Dominion—the Australia of the Japanese peril!

Just as one always goes nap on British common sense, so did the Home Government act. The leaders of the movement were invited to London, the Colonial Office promising that there should be no action during their absence. And there at the seat of Empire government the whole matter was debated and decided at a round table; not altogether satisfactorily to the settlers, but the Indian menace of domination was removed. Hence arose

the famous White Paper, which many people in Kenya afterwards regretted they had accepted. This ruling could scarcely be final. But that is another story. The revolution was ended, and the skeleton force controlled by the tall, wiry General behaved as other phantoms do when they are ignored—disappeared into thin air; the scoffers said hot air.

MOTIF

Safari parties have been a big feature in Kenya. Dignitaries and wealthy people from many parts of the world have sought recreation, excitement, and notoriety by going to East Africa to shoot elephants, lions, and other big and savage game. Some make the enterprise a picnic, as a corrective to jaded sight-seeing ; others mean real business. American expeditions of both varieties have happened in Kenya.

V

THE BIG GAME HUNTERS

THE *safari* was a very large one. Billy Froth, the champion beer-blower of Nairobi, deposed to having counted at least two hundred porters with loads and all complete. As Billy was accustomed to blow from early morn to dewy eve, however, a liberal discount of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. plus 20 per cent. is a safe estimate to work upon. Possibly the guarded information supplied by Neaparaland Ltd., supplemented by that of the town bakers, Mellohot & Co., is nearer the mark. Sixty porters had been supplied with a dozen *safari* tents and one marquee, the which, considered from every angle of big game hunting, represent a very elegant *safari*.

To those still uninitiated—despite Margaret Peterson, Florence Nightingale (or is it Kirkpatrick?), and Florence Riddle (or is it Riddell?)—*safari* means a journey or a hunting expedition. It may also mean many other things. It has been known, in times of grave financial stress, to mean a hurried departure from the haunts where one is known to fresh fields and pastures new.

On the occasion under review it meant a departure into the wilderness with the objects in view (1) of shooting such game as could be driven by native beaters in front of the guns, and (2) having a right hearty time of it in the heart of savage Africa. Incidentally, it should be stated that ahead of the sixty porters went six cars loaded with assorted Americans and canned foods.

Of course, a white hunter accompanied the party. He was white beneath his beard and his tan, for it must be remembered that there are fashions in white hunters, just as there are fashions in Ascot gowns. The longer the beard of the hunter the greater the amount of romance that may be absorbed from Wild Africa—according to American heiresses, who are authorities on such matters. It is also worth mentioning that Johnny Walker, Esq., on his Black and White Horse, was in the van. As an adjunct—or rather an inspiration—to big game hunting his presence is imperative.

There were rifles in plenty. No big game expedition in Africa is complete without at least one .22. The *safari* party must carry that. The big game hunter, in addition to his whiskers, carries an elephant gun, a lion gun, a rhino gun, a buffalo gun, and a gun for shooting the moon if need be. These, in addition to the big guns who

are paying for the *safari*, make quite a respectable armoury. In this instance the bankers for the outfit were Silas K. Vanderoil, the Hon. Timothy Monocle; Sadie Vanderoil, daughter of the magnate; the Ranees of Salt Lake City, and Miss Googooye Hollywood, the famous film constellation. There were, of course, others. Among them were Mrs. Vanderoil and the butler. But they were merely accessories after the fact.

It was announced in the Press—in Kenya the Press is always spelled with a capital P because the printers are short of small ones—that the famous millionaire, Silas K. Vanderoil, his beautiful daughter Sadie, and the etceteras, were engaged on a hunting expedition on behalf of the Chicago Tinned Can Museum. The object of the *safari*, said one of the reporters in an inspired article, was to collect fresh material for a second edition of St. Clair Upton's famous novel, *The Bungle*. As all the members of the expedition—expedition sounds so much more impressive than *safari*—were sworn to secrecy, however, the Press was unable to make more than fifteen columns—with a supplement in large type—of a very interesting and historical outing. Silas K. Vanderoil, who supplied most of the material—except what the butler saw *and* said—was most emphatic on the part of

On the occasion under review it meant a departure into the wilderness with the objects in view (1) of shooting such game as could be driven by native beaters in front of the guns, and (2) having a right hearty time of it in the heart of savage Africa. Incidentally, it should be stated that ahead of the sixty porters went six cars loaded with assorted Americans and canned foods.

Of course, a white hunter accompanied the party. He was white beneath his beard and his tan, for it must be remembered that there are fashions in white hunters, just as there are fashions in Ascot gowns. The longer the beard of the hunter the greater the amount of romance that may be absorbed from Wild Africa—according to American heiresses, who are authorities on such matters. It is also worth mentioning that Johnny Walker, Esq., on his Black and White Horse, was in the van. As an adjunct—or rather an inspiration—to big game hunting his presence is imperative.

There were rifles in plenty. No big game expedition in Africa is complete without at least one .22. The *safari* party must carry that. The big game hunter, in addition to his whiskers, carries an elephant gun, a lion gun, a rhino gun, a buffalo gun, and a gun for shooting the moon if need be. These, in addition to the big guns who

are paying for the *safari*, make quite a respectable armoury. In this instance the bankers for the outfit were Silas K. Vanderoil, the Hon. Timothy Monocle; Sadie Vanderoil, daughter of the magnate; the Ranee of Salt Lake City, and Miss Googooye Hollywood, the famous film constellation. There were, of course, others. Among them were Mrs. Vanderoil and the butler. But they were merely accessories after the fact.

It was announced in the Press—in Kenya the Press is always spelled with a capital P because the printers are short of small ones—that the famous millionaire, Silas K. Vanderoil, his beautiful daughter Sadie, and the etceteras, were engaged on a hunting expedition on behalf of the Chicago Tinned Can Museum. The object of the *safari*, said one of the reporters in an inspired article, was to collect fresh material for a second edition of St. Clair Upton's famous novel, *The Bungle*. As all the members of the expedition—expedition sounds so much more impressive than *safari*—were sworn to secrecy, however, the Press was unable to make more than fifteen columns—with a supplement in large type—of a very interesting and historical outing. Silas K. Vanderoil, who supplied most of the material—except what the butler saw *and* said—was most emphatic on the part of

secrecy. "It is not generally known," he stated (in italics), "that one of the party is the Countess Ivy I'llclingtoyouski, the unfortunate scion of Russian nobility, who is my private secretary. Naturally, having a lady secretary, I have brought Mrs. Vanderoil with us. Countess I'llclingtoyouski has kindly consented to this arrangement. And I'd have you know, young man," the famous oil magnate added to the reporter, "that everything in our show is 100 per cent. American. The lions even have been imported from Ill——" The millionaire paused here, realising that he had dropped something; but the Press had gone. It had got the goods.

The subsequent proceedings are in part eloquently delineated by the Hon. Timothy with the aid of his eyeglass. "No fewer than one hundred lions were shot," said he. "One incident sets my blood tingling even now," he wrote in that famous aristocratic paper the *Yield*; "when a huge black-maned lion"—they are always black-maned when the stories are thrilling—"suddenly sprang upon the Ranees of Salt Lake City, and, like a flash, bore her to the ground. Quick as thought, I emptied the contents of my '897 into him, when, to my horror, I saw the lioness and eight other males start up in the bushes. I fired again, and

by one of these miracles"—which always happen in the pages of the *Yield*—"the whole nine, being in line, were impaled with one shot." Thus the Ranee was saved!

The Hon. Timothy does full justice to the hardships of the *safari*. One infers from his diary that David Livingstone had a comparatively easy time of it. "My man," says the Hon. Timothy, "left us on the fourth day out because he could not bear to see the white hunter buried under his whiskers. Being a gently nurtured fellah, he considered it cruelty to animals, and left. About the same time the butler left with Mrs. Vanderoil. Vanderoil promptly served a writ upon her (by cable) for desertion, and got his decree absolute by return of radio. He wasn't much worried, because the Ranee had induced him to become a Mormon, and, under United States divorce laws as applied to the wilds of Africa, a man, when he is on *safari*, can do pretty much anything he likes—especially if he is an oil magnate. Our chief trouble was that the sixty porters turned out not to be enough to keep us going with asparagus, and we had to send them back for relays to Nairobi. I found, too, that my marble bath had a crack in it, and that the hot and cold water system was out of gear, and I had to borrow

Vanderoil's, which was two sizes too big for me, so that I contracted neuralgia in the process of getting in and out of it. I am merely telling these details to illustrate the hardships of well-born people like ourselves while on *safari* in the heart of darkest Africa. Poor Sadie, for example, found that the porters had broken into her supply of scented soap and eaten the lot—except one cake which they were using for tooth paste—and the dear Ranee was horrified to discover that her bath salts were being used by the same heathens as a pleasant sort of beverage, which tasted not so bad when mixed with some of her favourite cosmetics. Really, it was a wonder we lived through it, and, had it not been that Vanderoil had brought Sadie's favourite maid, manicurist, and chiropodist along with her, goodness knows what would have become of the poor girls. As for me, bai Jove, I spent a fascinating time listening to Old Whiskers (the white hunter, y' know), sitting still and saying nothing for hours on end, while Sadie gazed into his face fungus and dreamed dreams and saw visions. I do believe, bai Jove, she embarrassed the jolly old blighter, because he used to get up, glare at her ferociously, and, just to let off steam a bit, walk off and shoot the eyelashes off the rhinos which grew about the bally place."

It is interesting to find from the Press reports of the *safari* that Silas K. Vanderoil adequately demonstrated the power of the human eye over the brute creation. He says in the course of a report to the local Press that he had one morning just risen from his *safari* couch—a humble contraption consisting of an old-fashioned Elizabethan four-poster with eiderdown quilt, and fitted with a spring mattress, “not,” as the millionaire modestly stated, “anything like what I am accustomed to in Palm Beach, but a humble makeshift good enough for Africa”—when a large black-maned lion (it is understood that this is not the one which had attacked the Ranee, since Timothy had filled it with lead some time before) suddenly (they always do these things suddenly, the black-maned fellows) jumped out on him.

“I had no time to think,” continues the magnate. “In any event, I have given over thinking since I struck oil. I stood stock still. I gazed at the brute. He returned the stare. Slowly I advanced till the beast cowered back. I never removed my eyes from his glowing orbs” (lions always have glowing orbs when American millionaires are looking at them) “and farther back he cowered. Then, like a flash, he had gone.

I felt weak and ill, as if I had just awakened from a long sleep." (It was hinted by the unsympathetic reporters that the oil magnate meant perhaps to imply that he then awoke. Be that as it may, not even the Kenya Press dare quarrel with a millionaire, especially an American oil magnate who is capable of buying up the whole country, including the Press, and turning it into a joint stock company, inc., in Chicago or Pittsburg.)

So the story duly appeared in the American Press with such striking captions as :

" THE EYE OF THE LITTLE OILY GOD "

" THE RANEE'S PET OGLES THE KING OF BEASTS "

" HIS EYE ON THE LION "

supplemented with much thrilling detail, partly supplied by Timothy and partly drawn from the wealth of American journalistic imagination. In any event, the effect was simply grand, and Silas K. was the lion at the finish, not the other one.

Of course, the camera was busy during the *safari*. No big game expedition is complete without a camera, for, in the first place, it is necessary to secure pictures of the man-who-puts-up-the-money standing triumphantly on the carcase of

something big and smelly—which last is why you always see them looking as if they were standing beside a Chicago canning factory on a wet night. The man-who-shot-the-beast always takes a modest back place when the camera is around, of course. His job is to shoot with the rifle, while the man-who-puts-up-the-money is shot with the camera. Thus Silas was seen in all the illustrated dailies and weeklies, posing on the defunct carcasses of all sorts of animals—and leaning on somebody else's rifle. Then there were numerous photographs—Silas and the Ranee kneeling and firing simultaneously at a charging rhino—which was propped up on an ant-heap, as it was already dead—Whiskers, the white hunter, having seen to that, being paid for it. Of course, one does not actually see the ant-heap, and the picture is very realistic. “What dare-devils these oil magnates are, to be sure,” says New York Society; “whoever would think it of them? And the dear Ranee, too! We really must ask her to visit us when she comes to Noo York.” Of course, Sadie enters the picture too. She is very much to the fore, looking after Pop when the oil magnate is stricken with fever—after celebrating Independence Day too liberally with Dry Monopole—and patting leopards, very dead

ones, which appear very much alive in the pictures. The one melancholy note struck in the whole fascinating story is that concerning Googooye Hollywood, who has had to take a back seat in the face of millions of oil money, beside which a Hollywood studio is as sausage and mash beside *pâté de foie gras*. Out of a thousand poseful illustrations she manages to secure a paltry five hundred for her beloved public, which, all things considered, is just five hundred more than she deserves.

In so brief a *résumé* it is impossible to detail all the adventures of the *safari* party, but as the local Press was unable to keep the story going for more than six months, we may plead justification, and call a halt to the tale. It may not be out of place, however, to visit the millionaire in his Kenya home on the outskirts of Nairobi, where, in company with Sadie and the Ranee—Googooye has returned to the Golden Horn, where her light is not dimmed by oil—he cultivates La France roses, sweet potatoes, and the air of a lion. Amid this scene of domestic and rustic peace, he is always at home to the interviewer, to whom he relates how he loves Kenya.

“My!” exclaims Sadie. “Pop and I just adore it. We never wish to leave it again. Not

even Palm Beach for me. Gee! give me lions and rhinos——” “And porters that drink bath salts and cosmetics,” puts in the Ranee roguishly. (The Ranee is not exactly Mrs. Vanderoil, for Mrs. V., the *real* Mrs. V. is happy with the butler. “Such a romance of Africa,” says the country club, “don’t y’know.”) “And the cool, mysterious nights,” continues Sadie, “with the Southern Cross swinging in the—in the either, isn’t it, Pop?”—(Pop doesn’t quite know, but agrees warmly, because he likes Sadie to appear like the key of a Yale lock; a sort of entrance to a university of knowledge)—“and Whiskers, the white hunter . . .” here Sadie generally pauses, and gazes with a far-away look in her eyes, while the reporter scents copy and murmurs sympathetically, “Just so, Miss—er—Vanderoil—er—just so. . . .” But Sadie won’t be drawn, and the reporter never quite gets there.

Nor do we. For the white hunter, who really is the backbone of all *safaris*, and of this story, has never entered it because he enters it so much. Which is always the hard thing about big game hunting in Kenya. And, after all, his is the greatest game of all. He is so well paid for playing it!

M O T I F

The Uganda Railway was constructed before Kenya, as it is now known, was heard of, or even existed as a colonial entity. The railway was a truly Imperial enterprise, though, like the history of British colonisation in most parts of the world, the statesmen who initiated and sanctioned its construction builded better than they knew.

VI

THE UGANDA RAILWAY

CIVILISATION, alas! brings many trials in its train.

The time was when Kenya, in its struggle to become civilised, played at railwaying. This game of playing at railways was not even second to big game hunting. In the first place, no one knew anything about how to run a railway. And nobody cared very much, anyhow. What did it matter? The Salisbury Government had made a present of a metre-gauge track, with engines and rolling-stock of all kinds complete. It did not matter that to reach Uganda the railway had to jump Kenya—or British East Africa, as this territory was then comprehensibly termed.

Distance was no object. And, being an altruist Government, it had not paused to consider the question of money invested. After all, in those days, before such international amenities as the tearing up of scraps of paper had interfered with the even tenor of his way, the British taxpayer was a reasonably quiet and prosperous citizen. No wild men from the Clyde, wearing cloth caps

within the sacred precincts of the House, thrilled the world with lurid adjectives and kept an eye on the Colonial Estimates. No one save a handful of missionaries knew where Uganda was, and Kenya, of course, had not then been born. Thus, when the Government of the day said, "Let's build a railway and let's call it the Uganda Railway," nobody knew and nobody cared. The corkscrew curls of a few maiden ladies bobbed vigorously in agreement, and a few aspirants to titles lauded the scheme. But the man-in-the-street went serenely on his way, unconscious of the laying of yet another foundation stone of Empire, well content that Britannia ruled the waves and that Jazz, the Charleston, and the Betting Tax had not yet descended upon him to interfere with his legitimate pleasure in life.

Thus was the Uganda Railway born.

At first it was a puling, puny infant of half-metre gauge. It grew in stature to the extent of eleven miles, after which it quietly expired, and was reborn again in the more robust guise of a metre track. Steadily it pushed its way through the wilderness, to the accompaniment of romance and short stories alike, to Victoria Nyanza, where, faced with the alternative of pushing on into the water or coming to a full stop, it terminated, never reaching

Uganda. In the process of its steady evolution it brought a great many things in its train. Some of these were desirable. Others were extremely undesirable. Among the latter might be cited remittance men, chits, and politics. Also, alas! some of the "best sellers." In the stead of inter-tribal warfare and undeveloped acres, it substituted taxation, lawyers, and the right to work. It scaled mountains, leapt valleys, and made light of swamps and rivers in its progress—a simple matter for British engineering genius allied to the British taxpayer's purse. And thus, for many years, the plaything of politicians, the medium of missionaries, the necropolis of novels, and the narrow-gauge of nebulous Nimrods, the Uganda Railway played its humble part in developing another limb of Empire.

But time hastened on.

And time—such as it was on the Uganda Railway—reckoning that a railway without a town or two along its route was of no use to Africa, established one or two straggling hamlets astride the track. With these villages came people—all sorts of people—people with money, people without money, and people with other people's money. They travelled in ancient rattle-traps dignified by the name of railway coaches. These coaches possessed a peculiar virtue in the direction of liver disorders.

As a shake-me-up they were without peers. No one who travelled in a Uganda Railway coach, and lived through the ordeal, could complain of lack of animation. One was animated from the time one sat down on the leather seats to the time one crawled like a victim possessed of St. Vitus's dance from the rickety-rackety two-for-a-penny rattle-traps. Those fortunate enough to reach Nairobi without having ruptured their spleen, disgorged their livers, or swallowed their thyroid cartilages were hailed as pioneers of the new part of the Empire.

They had successfully undergone the prime ordeal, the supreme initiatory test, and were the blood brethren of those who had equally successfully survived the operation before them. The Uganda Railway and a test of human endurance became synonymous terms. For, not only was one pitched and tossed about like a shuttlecock, but this ordeal of endurance embraced consuming prodigious quantities of the permanent way in the form of fine red dust cast up by the raging wheels as the carriages swayed and jolted their way along. The constitution of an elephant and the patience of Job were qualities which enabled one to accomplish this remarkable journey, while the ability to accommodate oneself to the gymnastic performances of the carriages was an additional accomplishment

in enjoying the thrills of the experience. The prime requirements at the end of one's travels were a bath of large dimensions, a deodorant to stifle the various effluvia collected on the way; a stomach pump to cleanse the system of the scenery swallowed, and a strong and capable insecticide—the last for very obvious and painful reasons.

Alas! the dear old days are gone. For, although one still meanders leisurely along, taking a full day to accomplish a journey which is about the same as the distance from London to Glasgow—a matter of eight hours at home—although one is still compelled to absorb liberal quantities of Kenya dust in the process of getting to the Highlands, although one still has to perform gymnastic exercises in consonance with the convolutions of the carriage in which one sits, the old-time atmosphere has departed for ever.

One may not, for example, bring one's favourite plough into the carriage with one, and playfully poke one's finger in the ticket-collector's eye when one is requested to remove the toy. One may not travel in the guard's van and refuse to pay one's way because of the discomforts of sitting among piles of luggage. One may not enjoy the exhilarating exercise of climbing over mountains of produce to one's seat in the corner, or sit upon someone already occupying the same because one could not

possibly see that there was anyone there. One may not bring one's tame leopard or lion cub into the carriage, and say, "Seize him, Sam" to the pet when the *babu* comes along to punch one's ticket. One must not pull the communication cord and calmly inform the driver and guard that there is an antelope over the way at which one wishes to take a shot. One may not even order the Indian engine-driver out of his cab, and, full of excellent champagne and *joie de vivre*, drive the train at a breakneck pace into the next station—or through it, as one's mood dictated. Alas! those dear, informal, happy days are gone. Never, it is said, to return. Gone are those spacious times when one was wont to stroll airily into the office of the general manager and demand a free pass over the whole railway system for one's cousin: "quite a kid, you know. Just down from Oxford. A blue, and all that sort of thing. Related to the Duke of Sciondom. On a trip to study the fauna in the Government departments of the country. Haw! Haw!" These things simply cannot be done. Nor may one, in the exuberance of one's spirits, because the coffee crop has been an excellent one, leap over the bar at a wayside station and assist oneself to champagne, calling out to all and sundry, "The drinks are on me," and assuring

the steward that, if he applies to Farm No. XYZ at the Back of Beyond, the debt will be liquidated.

The dear, adventurous days are gone!

And how dearly have we paid for their departure! We who were wont to depose the train officials and run the "express" to our own satisfaction are now the mere puppets of the High Commissioner of Transport, general managers, inter-colonial railway councils, and accessory what-nots. We, who were wont to assume, with lordly air, a seat on the front of the engine—or, by way of variety, on the roofs of the carriages—from which we took photographs of rheumy rhinos, leering lions, and lissome leopards, have been reduced to commonplace seats in corners of coaches, with lavatory accommodation where water coagulates only on occasion and not from force of habit. We are even threatened with the passing of the old-time hold-on-for-your-lives observation coaches—compared with which the most thrilling of Earl's Court scenic railway cars were peaceful and soothing—and the substitution of corridor coaches with sleeping accommodation and dining-saloons. We, who were made of such sterner stuff as joyed over occasional lapses into inadequacy of the wheezy old engines, and, putting our shoulders to the train, assisted it on its cranky

journey uphill, are condemned to a prospect of less than a twenty-four hours' journey from Mombasa to Nairobi in luxurious coaches-de-luxe. They simply will *not* let us alone! They insist on modernising us and catering for our physical comfort, while ignoring the mental affection we still entertain for the days of long ago.

Yes, indeed, the dear, adventurous days are gone.

There may be those among us who welcome the transition to less spacious and go-as-you-please conditions. There may be those who, of a later generation, would baulk at the spectacle of a charging rhino trying conclusions with the engine of their train, and leaving its horn in the boiler as a trophy. There may be such as rejoice at the fact that festive giraffes seldom pursue their joyous evolutions with coils of telegraph wires around their necks, what time frantic *babus*, at intermediate stations, tap the responseless keys and throw successive fits. There may be weak-backed creatures who are cheered by the knowledge that lions no longer take possession of wayside stations and compel the staff to take up their residence in the water tanks overhead, or, commandeering the whole of the outfit, lock, stock, and barrel, snarl and growl around the platform, while frantic messages are sent to Nairobi—such,

for instance, as the historic and classic one from the *babu* station-master: "Lions taken possession station. What can do? Wire instructions."

Those were the gallant, if tragic, days of Colonel Patterson's man-eaters of Tsavo. Those were the times when the hungry carnivora would mount the passing train, select his meal with great complacency and leisure, jump out, and make off into the jungle with his human menu. Of such, alas! was the record of Captain Lyall, whose tragic death is commemorated to this day in a memorial bridge at Nairobi. Those, indeed, were the days when comedy and tragedy walked hand in hand, when we of the pioneering times took what came to us in our daily life with a smiling face, asked no quarter from the rough places of the earth, and gave none. Those were the times when chunks of the permanent way would disappear on the wings of the storm, and train-loads of marooned and starving passengers would descend upon the nearest railway station and almost eat the wooden frames out of the windows.

Alas, the changing times! *Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis!* Indeed, indeed, the times are changed, and we with them. And yet, *have* we changed, we of the older stock? Would we not just as readily commandeer the general manager's chic coach and enjoy a journey in

comfort, were it not that the times will not let us? But these are days when, with the comforts and security of civilisation spread around us, men wear shorts at dinner-table, carry an armoury of bushmen's friends, revolvers, and rifles about with them in town, while we of the older generation contented ourselves, in the good old times, with a *kiboko*, a flask of whisky, and a camera.

Indeed, the Uganda Railway is no longer the pillar of romance that it used to be. The "Step by Step in Nature's Zoo" railway poster of two decades ago has given place to pictures of broad fields of waving wheat and thousands of acres of golden maize. Glamour has made way for commerce. Conversation has changed from discussions on the number of trophies one bagged during the year to the output of cereals or coffee. Coffee and wheat and maize and sisal and sugar and dairy produce and flour take the places in the railway trucks of rhino horns and elephants' feet. Masai spears and shields, Kisii pottery, and leopard and hyrax skins "for the girl at home" have been supplanted, on the journey from the capital to the coast, by boxes of plums and peaches and vegetables and butter and cheese—products of the one-time wild and desolate places past which the wheezy engines were wont to roar in an

effort to get to the civilised spots as quickly as possible. Sordid commercialism—so think we old pioneers—called into being by the unimaginative mercenaries who have built up great businesses in order to enable highly efficient treasurers, with many letters after their names, to present the country with dignified but business-like budgets, has taken the place of high-souled romanticism and a dignified aloofness from labour. Even lions are scarce now!

For the railway, once the essence of romance and adventure, is now but the tool of a nation in the making. Its one-time noble sphere of providing entertainment for idle scions of nobility, rough-and-ready swashbucklers, and hardy annual hobos has been commercialised into a system of grand trunk service for conveying the produce of the country to the markets of the world.

Thus the dream is over.

The Uganda Railway—name of glamour, romance, adventure, and all the thrills of life in the great and open spaces—is no more. Even the name has been changed. They have not left that anomalous shred of a glorious past to comfort us! It has reached Uganda and become the Kenya and Uganda Railway. The last vestige of romance was shorn from it with the ugly juxtaposition of its new initials, K.U.R. Time brings its revenge.

M O T I F

British East Africa, and notably Kenya, is being continually discovered and rediscovered by somebody who suddenly arrives on the scene, like a meteor from the sky or a bolt from the blue. The young "island" community, amid an ocean of black barbarism, is always being lectured and put straight by the latest quidnunc who fancies himself.

VII

THE PROPHET

THE Prophet had arrived. The savage regions of that part of East Africa now known as Kenya Colony had sweltered for centuries under a tropical sun, its Highland uplands piercing the turgid atmosphere of the lower littorals, elevating themselves to a cooler and temperate plane, where antelopes roam and the lion enjoys his meal, where the dik-dik gambols right into the jaws of the playful leopard. All things rested in peace and satisfaction and plenty, though life was brief and death sudden.

But one day, in a casual kind of way, came the iron rails, en route to Uganda, across the lake. And the people who came with it beheld a land of milk and honey. They tarried and became enchanted, eventually rooting themselves on the spot. And they brought with them a polyglot lot of followers—commercial travellers, Asiatics, Swahilis from the Coast, and what not. So the Colony was eventually established.

But a colony founded on beads and cotton cloth, nurtured on lion parties, medically

threatened by the actinic rays, and putting its trust in princes, dukes, and honourables—who arrived in increasing numbers as sportsmen, leaving their money behind as spoil to be divided up—was a weird sort of commercial settlement. Small surprise that business was either hectic or casual. It became a land of *pole pole* and *bado*, which, anglicised, mean “don’t hurry,” varied by an occasional political flare-up. So the Colony flourished in a sleepy kind of commercial haze with a Wild West framing, until one day the Prophet arrived.

He arrived from South Africa with a port-manteau of samples. He was a man of cheerful middle age, with a busy, variegated up-and-down past. A more subtle Micawber, with the ideas of a Lever, the brains of a philosopher, with a fault in the strata, and the energy of a volcano. A complete stranger to the century-implanted trade of the Coast, a trade controlled by a few and select conservative shipping and trading firms, he at once perceived that all was not right. He spoke to the Coast merchants with an air of a magnate. “Away with your cobwebs,” said he. “Cleanse your dusty go-downs with my patent pneumatic sweeper. Instal ‘system’ into your offices. Sanitate your

dwellings with my patent system." And as his hearers became increasingly impressed by his reasoned verbiage, they were persuaded to hail him as the angel of progress.

So he swept through the land until he arrived at the Highland capital, the pinnacle of his fortunes. He brought a brass plate with him and opened an office. Every day he added a new agency to his list. He took orders innumerable for goods that never arrived. And then he sounded his clarion cry.

"Wake up, East Africa," was the burden of his song and the title of his pamphlet. "Discard your cobwebs. You people live in a land of wild plenty. You possess millions of sable clients whom you have not yet touched. With three million natives you have three million clients who want hats. Each hat sold at 5s. means £750,000 of an order awaiting the enterprising importer for hats alone. Then there are the women. Even one camisole apiece, allowing three wives to each native, spells 9,000,000 garments, at, say, such a low price as 2s. each, a visible market for nearly £1,000,000. My dear friends, you don't know where you are! There are 3,000,000 acres of arable land in the country. Say, ten bags of mealies to the acre, 30,000,000 bags per annum,

and, with two rainy seasons in a year, you have 60,000,000 bags for export. At, say, 10s. per bag, we are faced with a potential output of this one product of £30,000,000. Then your wild economic plants growing like weeds on your vast stretches of veld! Look at your sanseviera. Its meaning is as pointed as its blade. You have clumps of it covering miles of country. Pressed and crushed the blades yield a fibre of unparalleled strength and tensile quality. A few thousand pounds spent on trolley lines converging to some central crushing mill would enable you to produce from fifty to one thousand tons of fibre per month. A ton of such fibre realises about £25 in Europe, so here we have £25,000 worth of raw material per month being unutilised, or, say, £300,000 of wealth wasted per annum. You people live in a sleepy hollow, with a country as rich as ten Californias lying fallow at your doorsteps."

And so the pamphlet swept on. Before the settler got to the end of it his hair stood on end with the horror of what he had missed. Was it believable? Was that reasoned pamphlet the emanation of a distorted brain or was it pure business wisdom? It was all real enough, one argued. The natives were there, and also their women. The land was there with soil of

unsurpassed richness. The sansevieria was there, as stated in the pamphlet, and its qualities were known and proven by trading experience. Then his figures were mathematically correct. One could work them out for oneself. The Prophet was a wonderful man with a wonderful vision.

So the Prophet became really famous. He stumped the country, and so many orders for his agencies poured into his office (now offices) that even his own "system," which he had installed with all kinds of weird filing outfits, could not cope with the demand for those numerous things which never arrived. The great Uganda Railway, from which no person had previously succeeded in getting a reply, answered his letters. He was sent for by the general manager to instal an office system in that systematically unbusiness-like concern. He was put on every committee except the finance committee. He worked like a Trojan to revive politics. He was great in debate. He was known to have occupied a whole exciting evening over the question whether a certain resolution should substitute an "if" for a "what." It was a matter of principle, and he stood on principle.

Then he suddenly disappeared. He did not leave the town or vanish from the country, but

like a bright star in the firmament suddenly hidden by a cloud his light was abruptly obscured. How it happened no person can tell. Whether his "system" failed him, or whether, like a distended Zeppelin confined in a narrow hangar, the space he filled—or was distended to fill—became bigger than the place he occupied—or tried to occupy; whether he had swallowed his tail like the legendary serpent and by a process of agglutination left nothing behind; or whether the goods that never arrived left a hiatus with nothing in it; or whether his clerks ate him up, or he became incorporated with his office system and disintegrated with it, is not at all clear. And town and country have reverted to commercial sleepiness, as if no prophet had ever arisen to relate the profit they had missed.

When the Great War started, East Africa (like many other outlying possessions) scarcely realised what it meant. But when the Germans set the pace, both in Europe and in East Africa, the Colony woke up. Kenya was turned into an armed camp. Every able-bodied person volunteered, for it was quickly realised that the Germans were out to overrun the Colony with their trained black soldiers. In the rush for "tabs" many a local grocer or other tradesman became a captain or colonel while the veld boys were looking around.

VIII

THE WAR

SOME people are facetious enough to suggest that had the local Press not published some of the leading articles it did publish prior to August 4, 1914, Kaiser Wilhelm would never have precipitated the Great War, for, as became a virile Press in a virile country, the leader writers were not afraid to "give the Kaiser hell." However this may be, when the cables nearly burned themselves out on that memorable day transmitting messages from the seat of unrest in Europe, and Great Britain finally took the plunge and plumped for the Allies, British East Africa, as Kenya then was, went mad.

To begin with, the Protectorate (Kenya was such) was not prepared. Why should it have been, with a German colony cheek-by-jowl with it across the border? Had German East Africa, as Tanganyika then was, been removed some thousands of miles away it is just possible that elaborate military arrangements would have been made years ahead in contemplation of a raid from it in the future. But German East Africa was much

too near to be dangerous. Just a handful of comrades who spoke German, over the border, as it were. And, anyhow, if it did come to a fight, there were lots of ex-colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, and even generals to draw upon. So nobody worried. There was nothing to worry about.

Thus it was that August 4, 1914, found the capital of the country, Nairobi, in a turmoil. Nairobi House, almost the only stone building in town, somehow became the fulcrum of enquiries, concentrations, conversations, and military gravity. Everybody seemed to forget all about Government House. The seat of administration, perched on the hill on its proud eminence about two miles away, simply did not matter. Round Nairobi House a seething mob of people boiled and bubbled. As became a pioneer country, this mob was armed to the teeth. Some of it carried rifles, and shot-guns, and revolvers, and bushmen's friends. Some of it carried simply rifles. It was a patriotic mob. It demanded that it should be permitted to fight. Britain, the motherland, was at war. As a matter of course, British East Africa, the youngest child of the motherland, felt impelled to take up the family quarrel.

Thus it came about that " Monica's Own " was

born. "Monica's Own" was not a new floral hybrid meet for a horticultural show. On the contrary, it was a very masculine tribute to the popularity of the then Governor's youngest daughter. It consisted of the flower of the Protectorate's settler manhood. Public-school boys and public-house boys alike rallied to the banner of "Monica's Own," and, in due course, a gallant band of mounted warriors descended upon the capital.

The spectacle was a never-to-be-forgotten one. In fact, it proved to be a never-could-be-forgotten one. Armed with long bamboo canes, upon the end of which had been affixed knives of sorts, and with fluttering pennants making a brave show in the Highlands' breeze, the "Lancers" invaded Nairobi. The lances might have passed; but what was one to say of the mules? And the donkeys? And the nondescript assortment of apparel?

Ridicule killed this potentially valuable adjunct to the nebulous military forces in course of formation. But "Monica's Own," if it fought no battles, if it did not ride into the valley of death, like its more famous peers of Tennysonian memory, possibly served as useful a purpose. The stress, the tension, the nervous strain of the first thrilling

days of war, broke under the spectacle of this gallant band of lancers—and Nairobi laughed. When Nairobi ceased to laugh, the reverberations of her laughter were caught in the hills up-country and echoed and re-echoed over hundreds of miles of veld. And the whole country laughed.

With laughter came sanity and a solid settling down to the job in hand, which consisted in the gathering together of what, surely, was the most heterogeneous collection of military units and individuals ever seen under any flag. They came in shorts, in breeches, in helmets, in stetsons, in double-terais, in high-laced boots, in shoes, in puttees, in leggings, in tunics, in khaki shirts open at the neck displaying broad expanses of brawny chests. They came in buggies, on horseback, on mule-back, on motor-cycles, in motor-cars of every make, kind, and age, on push bicycles, in ox-waggons, by train, and on foot. Bronzed, hearty men, under their various guises and disguises one sensed the spirit that was in them. For the most part of British stock, many had seen service in South Africa and elsewhere, but many were of diverse nationalities. Great, hefty giants from the Uasin Gishu Plateau, Dutchmen all; tall, blonde Norwegians and Swedes; swart

Italians ; lean, muscular British settlers—all gravitated at the call, and centred, and milled, and bubbled, and exploded around Nairobi House.

(Government House remained in dignified aloofness and desertion. No one thought of asking His Excellency what he thought about the war. Nobody knew whether he was or was not thinking about it.)

In due course the E.A.M.R. was born.

From the humble nucleus raised by that stalwart and picturesque old pioneer, the late Mr. Russell Bowker, Bowker's Horse (or B Squadron, as it latterly came to be called), blossomed forth the East African Mounted Rifles. A picturesque body this. Brown, sunburnt men in a medley of clothing, accoutred and armed after the fashion of individual choice. There were mules, and donkeys, and race-horses, for mounts ; there were well-bred and ill-bred men for riders. But each man was staunch to his code—the code of the fighter taking the field for the country he loved and had adopted.

This was part of the first line of defence.

Naturally, there had to be a second line of defence. Under the guidance of that tough old African pioneer, Sir Ralph Williams, the second line of defence was born. That it was not born

in Nairobi House caused a certain amount of heart-burning. There were so many military births taking place there that every room was a veritable *crèche*, and Sir Ralph had decided to transfer his activities to Hunter's Buildings, a reminiscence of the spacious days of Major Grogan. Here the N.D.F.—or the Nairobi Defence Force—came into existence.

And the country laughed again.

For here, indeed, were collected together all the B men and the C men and the D men—even the X, Y, Z men. Here were the lame, the halt, and those blind to everything save the desire to be out of the first line of defence. True, there were but a few of the latter sort ; but some there were, and these assumed their decrepit uniforms boldly and showed how fields should be won. The grandfathers and the greybeards were classed alike, and alike paraded and presented arms with the butt of their rifles in the correct position, or in inverse ratio to its military significance, according to their age, habits, inclinations, or ability to hold their weapons.

So British East Africa's army grew.

From a handful of milling, sweating, swearing men, surging around Nairobi House on that hot August day in 1914, the Protectorate built an

army that looked ridiculous and fought superbly. This was the army of Stewart, Tighe, Hannington, and Fendall. This was the army that patted its officers on the back and asked them to have a drink. This was the army that provided its own mounts, equipment, and even arms. This was the army of Longido and Bukoba, of the New Stanley Hotel and Mombasa Club. This was the army that advertised commissions—in the Carrier Corps—and rejected them on the ground that “any old trooper was as good as any old officer, and that all of them were jolly good fellows, anyhow.” This was the army that provided studies in contrasts, went into action without training or discipline, and took pianos and settees up to the Front. This was the army that fought the Battle of Namanga on a wet and darksome night, the enemy being a troop of baboons—which battle they sought to justify by saying, “Who could tell a baboon from a German in the darkness, anyhow?”

So much, so very much more of the tale remains to be told. Will it ever be told in its entirety? Will those who saw the sight ever forget the unforgettable? Will they be able to obliterate those pictures of unkempt white savages, booted to brown and sinewy knees, and spurred withal;

clad in nondescript garb with bronzed, hairy chests exposed at the turn of long and straggling beards? Will they forget the tunics with the sleeves cut away, and the shirt sleeves rolled artistically above the elbow? Will they be able to wipe out from memory those fleeting recollections of battered double-terai hats with wilting brims shading hairy faces and unruly locks? And will the picture not live long in memory of these nondescript fighting men contentedly partaking of lunch in Nairobi's most palatial hotel, cheek-by-jowl with handsomely accoutred and polished officers of Imperial units? Where but in British East Africa might such a sight have been seen? Not even among the democratic American forces was such freedom and such comradeship visible. And, too, this was the army which by tactic, unwritten law fought its fights manfully, loyally, and courageously, but skilfully ignored the fatuous demands of a straight-laced and war-proud military administration that every fighting man at the base should spend his spare minutes looking for commissioned men to salute. This was the army whose spirit refused to be broken by such military ritual, and who carried on minus the saluting process, and was none the worse on account of that!

Much might be written of the intermingled humour and pathos of these times. For example, some of the well-known names of the country went with their owners along the long, long trail which never turns back on itself. One can still remember the astonishment that followed the Longido fight. "What? Kay-Mouat killed? *Kay*? No! Why, Kay was one of the best fellows alive, a white man, if ever there was one. Got it *where*? Through the head? *The stomach*? God! Poor old Kay. And Sandbach? *Dead*, you tell me? Why! All the best men are going. Tarlton, too. Young Tarlton? Come along and have a drink. It's too bad, this ruddy war. Who started it, anyhow? Wait till I get at those — Germans. Killing Kay and Sandbach and Tarlton and . . . Oh, let's have that drink quick."

Astonishment—that was the dominant note at the beginning; then consternation, then anger, hot, unreasonable anger. Those Germans! Those . . . Somehow we forgot that they too had lost their Kay-Mouats and their Sandbachs and their Tarltons. . . . They, too, loved their old pals and were filled with hot resentment against us. They, too, wanted to kill and maim in vengeance. . . . British East had not then thoroughly realised that it was at war, that that sort of thing *was* war.

And one can remember those days when well-known figures appeared in the streets of Nairobi hidden behind masses of chevrons or stars, soldiers all, more or less. Not a little ridiculous, too, some of them looked, though heroes in their own eyes. "I say, Bill" (this from a private to an officer beautifully accoutred), "where did you get that brass hat? Won't ma think you look lovely?" Or, on the steps of the New Stanley Hotel, a disreputable E.A.M.R. trooper, with a tattered sleeveless uniform, battered hat decorated with a strip of leopard skin, and high boots laced to knees, elbowed by a major, monocle and all complete. "See here, my man" (trooper to major), "who do you think you're shoving? If you don't recognise quality under this rig-out you'll be — taught it; understand?"

But, after all, those were simple amenities. Nobody seemed to care, save a few of the imported erstwhile counter-jumpers, who had discipline on the brain and did not know that a soldier could still be a soldier despite the mud on his high-laced boots. If there were a few combats here and there between the stars and the stripes, those were seldom bitter enough to end in a feud or to demand a court-martial. Officers and men were for the most part sportsmen true to the British

traditions, and ready to take what came along in a spirit of sportsmanship and give-and-take.

But, although British East Africa had put in the field the greatest number of volunteers throughout the Empire in proportion to its population, in those early days there came that memorable time when conscription was the catch-word of the moment. Everybody caught the conscription fever.

There was the time when the country went "marching to Moshi" *en bloc*—in the Theatre Royal; when Major Grogan, the country's silver-tongued orator, besought every man who was a man to take up arms, and exhorted the Government to compel those who were not men to do their bit. And the roof of the Theatre Royal just withstood the strain of the thunder of applause as the gallant major sat him down and smiled on the crowded throng of German-eaters.

Ah, yes! These were, indeed, grand times—times when life, if hardly a poet's dream, was a real, virile thing, with German prisoners coming down from the lakes and up from the Coast and being accommodated in the first-class coaches while the resentful, but cheerful, volunteer army travelled in the flea-packed native coaches. These were the times when bacon was not available for

the East African trooper, and Bovril and other meat extract were served out to healthy German prisoners. These were the times when the Loyal North Lancs. arrived in the country; when Nairobi's traditional generosity was extended to the uttermost, and some of the weaker vessels were wont to repose in the famous open drains of the town as a result of a too generous hospitality. These were the times of the phantom aeroplane of which everybody heard but nobody saw—about the same time as the Russians were marching through England! These were the times of Mr. Monson's war rhymes and a real Army Headquarters on the hill, with a real guard parading backwards and forwards outside a real sentry-box. These were the times of rumoured attacks on Nairobi and of brushes with the E.A.M.R. and other units in the bush—brushes which were believed to save the capital. These were the times of German incursions and the blowing up of railway trains and reported spying and mysterious movements of troops. One can remember, too, the rumour that was acclaimed with glee that a company of the Durhams had been landed at Tanga—the "Durhams" having been confused with the name of the commander of the company. And one can remember, too, as time went on, the

confused stories of defeats and counter-defeats at Voi, of the Kahé débâcle, of General Smuts' brilliant dash into the interior of German East, and, later, of that elusive and mysterious person, Von Lettow, and of the Tanga tragedy and Dar-es-Salaam doings!

These, disjointed and inchoate, press through the mind as one harks back over the stirring days of the campaign in East Africa. Someone has yet to write a real history of that campaign. No one has done so in real form thus far. Perhaps there is not a man with the knowledge to do so. It may be that there is none with courage sufficient to undertake the task. For East Africa, perhaps in proportion to its numerical strength, made and marred more commanders than any other theatre of warfare. The war was on such a vast geographical scale; the fighting was so proportionately small and so terribly scattered. And the bases were so thickly populated with motor-cars and commissions that Von Lettow's little army, in its latter stages, must have felt ashamed of itself.

At any rate, Kenya has the satisfaction of being able to say that she was the only country in the Great War which fought first and trained afterwards. Her Old Contemptibles knew neither

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the voice of the drill instructor nor the discipline of the sergeant-major until they had been fully blooded and lost the flower of their comrades in arms.

After which the Imperial martinets with their tabs appeared on the scene and drilled them all out of existence !

MOTIF

Shortly after the war the Mother country and each Dominion were faced with the problem of looking after and providing for those whose war vacation was ended and whose future welfare was a patriotic charge on the Empire. Kenya Colony also desired to do its bit in providing for the stranded warrior; hence the idea of a "Soldier Settlement." Incidentally, Kenya also wanted more settlers, hence the rather early hasty attempt to found one. Though run on system and discipline, the Settlement proved an initial failure. The Government stepped in to assist and reduce the private losses, and, in the end, upon liquidation, happily succeeded in refunding the disappointed warriors most of their lost capital.

I X

THE NEW ORD

WITH the passing of the A memorable November of the captains and the kings of : tumult subsided, and, in the lar sunshine, then known as British later to become famous through Kenya, civil life descended like a

But the pomp and circumstances left behind them a legacy. In the honourables, and viscounts ruled generals, and admirals—a residential and naval precipitation that specified country a new significance and a

The rough-hewn old pioneers blazed the trail and tilled the land not a little in the process—gradually into obscurity. The voices of the and the rear-admirals became known. There was peace in British East Africa, there was no peace, for the New Order. The high priests thereof had dreamed somnolent days of the past had

CLES OF KENYA

don. Better organisation *à la*
recision, and the principle of
umbers were to take the place
through.

o pass that, from the ashes of
: Africa that once had kindled
around Nakuru Hotel and the
re arose another and a more
ast Africa.

typified by the name of Beadoc,
ie sign of the New Order. High
houlder of the lofty Highland
ed them their altar to military
w the cold breezes and refreshed
from the very eaves of the Roof
ctrinaires of the New Order set
at their stranglehold on the strong-
eanism in savage East Africa. *Their*
t the white citadel to rights; not
old-time methods! No more was
o clang clamorously of a chill morn-
the sleepy farmer to his day's darg.
a was the laggard *mnyampara*^a to
ethargic native labourers by obsolete
ry methods beloved by the civilian.
was to jump to it, get at it at the
our bell.

^a Headman.

double, and stand to attention at the call of the bugle. The New Order had begun.

So the arch-apostles of military system dug themselves in on the chill heights of Kericho, entrenched themselves behind ramparts of military efficiency and codes, consolidated their position and set themselves to prove to the whole world, of which British East Africa happened to be the immediate theatre of operations, how an army could farm on its system as well as live on its stomach.

Thus, the pilgrim on *safari* passing the precincts of Beadoc of a morning would pause and listen to the shrill notes of the réveillé. The roaming rhino and the lurking leopard would scamper from the sound and the scene in dismay and alarm. Ordinary farming they did not mind. After all, a settler had to make his living. But this highly specialised kind which besought (by bugle) Johnny Cope to show a leg, ordered the hungry farmer to "come to the cook-house door," and sent him to his sundowner to the echoes of "the Retreat" upset the digestion of the wild creation. Farming was farming, but the rhino and the leopard could not imagine maize and tea growing on the barrack square.

Down on the plains around Nakuru, where

the ordinary, old-fashioned farmer slaked his thirst with German beer—before Kenya XXXX had any froth on it to be blown—the toilers who knew not military system, as applied to farming, spoke with bated breath of these doings on the Roof of Africa. They discoursed in awed whispers of how the wilderness was to be made to blossom like the rose to the call of a bugle. They conversed in thirsty whispers of this new system that had overtaken British East Africa, and of how the virus of the disease of doing-things-by-numbers was even then spreading like a contagion among those who, in the good old-fashioned way, were labouring to bring forth good fruit.

True, the old-fashioned way was less spectacular. It was slow. There was not the same picturesque flair about ambling leisurely to one's job of work to the accompaniment of the clanging of a piece of hoop iron upon an old iron rail as there was in running to the scene of operations at the double, to the thrilling notes of the bugle. There was no jumping to it under the old system. There was no coming up to it with a click. Life was less orderly, perhaps, but it was less ordered. The nearest approach to the bugle was the shrill crowing of the cock. That had sufficed the pioneer-farmer for his morning's réveillé. And

he had been content to knock off work as the sun gave a last mighty pyrotechnic display and plunged down to his fiery couch behind the serrated peaks of the purple hills. It was all very slow, perhaps, and very devoid of method—for what are the wonders and precision of the solar system to the strident call of a bugle? It was all too singularly prosaic, too shorn of panoply, too void of the regularity and rectitude of roll-calls, parades, and kit inspections. That it had “got there” signified but little. That the farmers *had* succeeded in their task of harnessing Nature was of little account. In getting there the old-fashioned system had ignored the spectacularity and the ordered rhythm of that system beloved of army regulations.

So the New Order progressed.

To the dwellers in the towns percolated stories of the magnificence and the wonder of it all. The townsman, over his whiskys and first toasties, listened large-eyed to the wondrous tales of major-generals, colonels, majors, and captains—aye, and even second-loots and sergeant-majors. He was told of a miniature army that was transforming the Roof of Africa into one vast garden, where everything that could be grown on earth was being produced as if by magic ;

where wheat sprang into being at the call of a trumpet; where tea jumped to it at the raucous voice of the sergeant-major; where maize and flax bourgeoned by numbers, and where Nature herself paraded in her best green frock, morning, noon, and night, when the bugler let himself go in the farm compound. It was rumoured that even the sun, moon, and stars, as in the days of Joshua of old, stood still at the word of command, and that the rain came up to it with a click, what time the clerk of the weather was compelled to pack up his troubles in his old kit-bag. An awe-inspiring and a wonderful spectacle.

So time passed, the New Order flourished, and the bugle sounded jubilantly morning, noon, and night, while the maize, the flax, the tea, and the wheat responded to the magic touch of a military farming system.

And the Roof of Africa bloomed its praises to Army regulations and sang a pæan of joy to the major-generals, the colonels, the majors, the captains, and the sub-loots, and even the sergeant-majors.

Came Dame Rumour upon the scene one day. She had visited Beadoc, and she smiled the knowing smile of a thousand Mona Lisas with a fabulous price upon their heads.

And not that which she said, but that which she did not say, as she bobbed her ringlets and set her bonnet at a jaunty angle, caused those who did not come up to it with a click to ponder exceeding much. "Mark my words," said Dame Rumour, with that emphasis which implies that what one knows may not be purchased for untold wealth, "there is something amiss."

That started it. Day by day the pilgrims passing Beadoc on the Roof of Africa returned with a significant look in their eyes and tapped their noses knowingly. Theirs not to reason why; theirs but to state the bald fact that the bugle was less exacting and less insistent; theirs but to proclaim the humble truth that the Roof of Africa blossomed not as was its wont when first all Nature came up to it with a click; that the maize, and the tea, and the wheat seemed weary and ill at ease, and that farming-by-numbers appeared to have grown tired of itself.

So, too, was it noticed that the bank managers wore that thoughtful frown which springeth from overdrafts growing ever more draughty. Moreover, it came to pass that the major-generals, colonels, majors, captains, sub-loots, and even the sergeant-majors were treated with that cold aloofness which bank managers administer to

clients whose overdrafts are about to be called in. And the pioneer-farmers who still adhered to the old-fashioned system and answered to the *kengeli*, or cock-crow, of a morning, and drank deeply of their sundowners as the sun went down, wore the wise smile of men who would like to say, "I told you so," but whose sporting instincts revolt at hitting even a major-general or a sergeant-major when he is down.

That was long ago—six long years ago.

To-day the New Order is no more. Its requiem is heard in the howl of the hyena which prowls amid the rotting *bandas*¹ and the decaying fences of that which once had been military system. To-day the Roof of Africa blossometh no more like the rose. The leopard prowls through the jungle and the undergrowth that once was the compound whence the sprightly bugler bugled morning, noon, and night. The rhino, grown inquisitive and wondering whither the notes of the trumpet have gone, tramps with leaden feet over that which once was wheat and maize, and, perchance, tea. Under his heavy hoofs he beats a pæan to the demise of farming-by-numbers. The ghosts of the major-generals, colonels, majors, captains, sub-loots, and sergeant-majors hover

¹ Grass huts.

over the scene, and pilgrims that pass that way may, in imagination, hear the sound of ghostly voices from the farming command headquarters as the agricultural brass hats sit them down in conclave and decide upon the nature of the next local army order designed to wrest cereals from the ground at the double. The New Order has, indeed, vanished, and the jackals pick its bones amid the ruins of the altar of system high up on the Roof of Africa.

Down in the banks on the plains the bank managers crease their brows thoughtfully, and think how very clever they were to escape when they did from the period of system that had been inaugurated in East Africa after the Armistice. They smile complacently and thank Dame Rumour for her timely intervention at the time when the New Order was being trumpeted throughout the land as the salvation of the country and the acme of farming. "For," say they wisely, "the sinews of the new war of system and of progress were ours to give and ours to take away. Truly we gave, and as truly we took away ere it was too late to take."

None the less, the residue still remains.

The New Order may be dead, but its name liveth among the major-generals and the colonels and the

majors and the captains and the sub-loots and even among the sergeant-majors. For many of them are still among us, although no longer do they rouse themselves to the call of the bugle. No more do they jump to it ; no more do they expect Nature to come up to it with a click. Perchance they have learned the great lesson of Nature, that army regulations will not make the wheat and the maize to grow, and that farming-by-bugle is not all that it was cracked up to be. And there may even be those among them who, having learned the great lesson, having witnessed the downfall of the New Order, realise the disadvantages of writing down : "Hoe, one, steel ; inches 18 x 6 ; with helve, feet 3. Planed and shaped with handle," as against the simple formula : "One hoe complete." Like some of those old-fashioned pioneer-settlers, they may even shrink from the prospect of a recrudescence of the New Order. For already the major-generals, the colonels, the majors, the captains, the sub-loots, and even the sergeant-majors monopolise the Legislature, the People's Parliament, and the voters' roll.

MOTIF

The port of Mombasa has been for years a fruitful question of disputation between those who controlled it and those who used it. Mombasa Island's local authority, the shipping companies, the lighterage interest, the merchant importers, the Uganda Railway, the cranes on the wharves, and the storage godowns all wrangled over its working and shortcomings, each blaming the other. The goods were damaged in landing, the cranes worked too slowly in depositing, the godowns were too scanty, the railway too slow and careless, the merchants failed to clear their consignments, and so on and so on. In the end came a Commission of Enquiry.

X

PORT CONTROL

IN the course of her explorations into the realms of the various afflictions which beset humanity, science has made many wonderful discoveries and evolved many marvellous cures. In the great African field of research she has marched from triumph to triumph, conquering many of the diseases which the dark continent has thrown in the way of those blazing the trail of civilisation. Germs and bacilli have fallen back in massed formation before her attack, and problems which have been regarded as insoluble have been dissipated by the genius of the investigators. But, with all this triumphant progress, one of the afflictions typical of East Africa has stubbornly refused to yield to investigation, application, and dispensation alike. To-day, despite the triumphs achieved by research and discovery, the painful malady of port control remains as great a menace as ever to the progress and advancement of Kenya. Kilindini-itis, its Kenya form, is particularly distasteful and prostrating, and remains to-day a challenge to human achievement in darkest Africa.

To control a port would, one would imagine, be a simple matter. After all, there are many ports in the world. And any port in a storm, or out of it, charges berthing fees which the port manager does not forget to collect. This, one might be pardoned for considering, might be regarded as the hardest part of a port manager's work. As for the port manager himself, he should be responsible to——. But this is anticipating. Moreover, it savours of stealing the thunder of the Kenya Government. And this last is the lowest form of self-control.

And now for a little history. When Kilindini was simply Kilindini—before it assumed the dignity of the port of Kilindini—it controlled itself. This annoyed the British Government, who possibly thought someone else might wish to control it. Therefore the Imperial authorities of the time took over Kilindini. Apparently nobody's authority was required and nobody's permission was asked, which fact may perhaps be held accountable for the many afflictions which have befallen the port. Having taken over Kilindini, it occurred to the British Government that something would have to be done with it. This was such a bright inspiration that nothing else would make the punishment fit the crime than that

Kilindini should be called a port. Obviously, this was the simplest way out. This done, it became patent to the Government that some one would have to control the port.

Here the problem became more acute. The job, equally obviously, was out of the direct line of action of the Prime Minister of the time. The Secretary of State for the Colonies could hardly be expected to take on the work, and even the Minister in charge of the Duchy of Lancaster must have jibbed at any proposals that he should accept the position. Therefore, the Government put on its thinking cap and solved the problem by deciding that the best man for the job was a General Manager of Railways. The great obstacle in the way of this solution was that there was no railway in British East Africa at the time. But the British Government, being the British Government, soon supplied the deficiency. It built a railway from Kilindini to Lake Victoria, appointed a general manager, and said to him: "Double up and control the port of Kilindini. It's your job."

(Incidentally, all other alleged histories to the contrary, this is really the origin of the Kenya and Uganda Railway. Port control is the foundation of the present great system, and to port control, despite the many tribulations which it

has brought upon Kenya, must be ascribed the present greatness of this young and thriving colony.)

But this is digressing. There being no Chambers of Commerce, no Convention of Associations, no Reform Party, and no ratepayers on the spot, the railway manager's job was a sinecure. Everything went merry as a marriage bell, and he controlled the port so admirably that the few people resident on Mombasa Island whiled many happy hours away watching the ships come in and the ships go out again.

But this sort of thing could not last. Control of this kind was too simple and too easy. Therefore people—British people, who always want to interfere in Government control of any sort—began to arrive in the country. Somehow they had sensed that somebody was controlling something somewhere in Africa, without the British taxpayer having a single grouch to register. With these early comers came a Press, a number of licensed premises, a church or two, the member for the Rift Valley constituency that was to be, and the East Africa Turf Club. After this, things began to move. They simply had to. And port control began to be the question of the moment.

It is somewhat difficult to chronicle with any

degree of accuracy the events connected with port control from this time on. So many things happened at so many times affecting so many people that any chronological account is hopeless. One finds, however, upon reference to the records of the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce, the Convention of Associations, the files of the Press, and the Hansard of the legislative council, various resolutions—possibly one for each day in the year—covering a period of years. Each of these resolutions demands that there be port control. Nothing very definite about many of them, of course, but a simple demand that there be port control. This may seem paradoxical since it has already been stated that the general manager of railways controlled the port. But the position is simplified when it is plainly stated that, although the general manager believed that he was controlling the port, nobody else did. In fact, had his views on the subject and the views of the people who framed and passed the resolutions coincided, this true history of "How Kenya Became a Nation" would never have been written.

In such a vital matter as the compilation of an authentic record of port control, particularising, as opposed to generalising, might serve a better purpose. It may not, therefore, weary the reader

if a typical illustration be given of the difficulties in the way of the general manager who believed he controlled the port, and the people who considered that he did not. A most admirable example is to be culled from the minutes of that excellent body, the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce. A personal visit of inspection is strongly advised, but, failing this, perhaps the following, committed to type from memory and allowing for lapses into inadequacy, may suffice :

“ Mr. Superman maintained that the position should be definitely outlined once and for all time. At present, as things were, there was no one in authority to whom one could go. [Cries of “ We want port control ! ”] Why, just the other day, he, Mr. Superman, had had a lot of goods damaged by rain. Not unnaturally he wished to know who had done the damage and who was responsible. He discovered that rain was responsible for the loss. What he could not discover was who would shoulder the responsibility. He considered that very hard lines indeed. The position should, *must*, *WOULD* be remedied. [Cries of “ Hear, hear, ” and rapturous applause.] Port control was a mere myth. It was a by-word from one end of the

country to the other. There was no control about it except the control people kept of their tempers. He, for one, did not propose to stand it any longer. [A voice—presumably that of a railway man—"Sit down."] He suggested taking legal advice as to whom to hold responsible in such cases of damage to importers' or exporters' goods—the railway, the port manager, the lighterage companies, or the clerk of the weather." (Enthusiastic applause and "For he's a jolly good fellow"; although who was the "jolly good fellow" is not made quite clear in the minutes—Mr. Superman or the general manager of the railway.)

Of course a resolution was passed. Resolutions are essential adjuncts to any decent Chamber of Commerce; and everybody went home satisfied. So long as their goods weren't damaged, a resolution would meet the needs of the case perfectly well. After all, somebody's goods had to be damaged at some time, and Tom Jones and Bill Brown didn't see the use of shouting till they were hit. Mr. Superman had done the shouting and the resolution should clear the air.

As for the general manager, he was not worrying unduly. These frivolous complaints and vexatious

meetings of Chambers of Commerce simply had to be put up with. After all, he was paid to stand the kicks, and a good fat cheque at the end of each month compensated for quite a lot of uncomplimentary remarks on one's efficiency. As general manager he could control the port as he liked. Whose business was it but his own, anyhow, to know who was responsible for damage done to goods while they were being handled at the port? The whole thing was simplicity itself, in any case. How often had he explained it all? Was it not laid down in regulations? Why, for example, if a railway train happened to run over a crate of china and bend it badly, all the consignee had to do—or was it the consignor? it didn't really matter—all the consignee had to do was to go to the lighterage company who were handling the goods at the time and demand compensation from them! If they refused to accept responsibility—one never knew what those tiresome commercial fellows would do—because a railway train did the damage, the complainant simply came back to the railway authorities again. The railway authorities, naturally, referred the aggrieved party to the lighterage people, who sent them back once more to the railway. And so it went on. Beautifully simple and simply beautiful in its absurd

simplicity. What people had to complain about he, the general manager, for the life of him, could not see. Surely, this was control in the very best sense of that much-abused word. Perhaps the sufferer would have to keep on wandering backwards and forwards, in a sort of compensation purgatory, for a few months or years before he got his claim settled ; perhaps he would die before it was finally adjusted. But, even so—what then? Was that not money saved to the great public whom he, the general manager, served? And what more did they want?

None the less, such is this tenacious British human nature, the people refused to be satisfied. They demanded that the position be clarified. Therefore—and, of course, this should have come into this record somewhere earlier on in the story, only, like port control itself, the records available are somewhat chaotic—therefore, a port manager was appointed. This was an excellent move, and the general manager and His Excellency the Governor reckoned they had fairly cooked the public's goose. What better system of port control could be conceived than control by a port manager—a man trained in the job and paid for the job, the payment being a not inconsiderable factor in the appointment? But the people

refused to be satisfied. This was, they argued, simply another figurehead. If they went to the port manager, would they be any nearer getting the control they wanted than by writing to the general manager of railways? No! This was not good enough. A definite ruling was wanted. So cables began to fly over the lines, and the subject was even ventilated in the House of Commons—that archaic institution which insists in poking its nose into the pockets of young countries which it has filled with loans guaranteed by the British Treasury. Speeches were made and unmade. Verses and reverses were written. Much ink, and not a little temper, was spilled. Everybody grew excited and irritable, and the disease simply swept the country. And, in the middle of it all, the gallant major, smiling and debonair, did what he had promised to do long ago—sold to the railway another port, Mbaraki. Everybody, except the major, went mad after that.

Thus it came about that a Port Commission of Enquiry was formed. Now, as everybody knows, a Port Commission of Enquiry is a body of men entirely surrounded by red tape. Its deliberations are secret and its secrets are deliberate. When it is not sitting like a broody hen on the problems it is called upon to hatch out, it is

scratching about for information in places where it can't find any. This Port Commission of Enquiry did all these things remarkably well. It consulted anybody and everybody on the subject of port control—and it finally produced a report. In the process of delivering the goods, it covered a few hundred miles on free railway passes—mostly to Nairobi, some three hundred miles away, the place which really controls the port on the basis that distance lends enchantment to the view and the further one is away from a complaint the less likely one is to contract it.

This report was hailed as Heaven-born—until people had read it. Those who read it re-read it until their heads reeled. Then they passed it on to their enemies in the hope that they would contract brain fever. But there were others who, not understanding it, thought it excellent. "A work of genius," said they. "Just look at the suggestions in it. Whoever would have thought of them? We are saved!"

During all this, resolutions were falling about the country as thick as snowflakes on the river. They were being passed at all times of the day and night. Nobody slept. Nobody felt he could do justice to sleep. Everyone was suffering severely from port control; the only man who

was not affected was the General Manager of Railways, who, at the time, was in England, controlling the port from there. Most of the resolutions were passed at record meetings, and the Press of the Colony used up all its capitals in P's and C's in an effort to get "Port Control" on its feature pages as frequently as possible without saying the same thing in the same way twice.

Finally, it was decided that a Port Advisory Board must be established. This Advisory Board was to advise—— But this is anticipating.

So quickly had events moved during this period, when the excitement was at fever heat, that various things happened in bewildering succession. For example, about this time it was decided by the General Manager of Railways (who was still controlling the port from London) and His Excellency the Governor (who was also in London listening to all the excitement over the cables) that a New Arrangement was to be introduced. This arrangement was guaranteed to remove every obstacle. Port control was to be so stabilised (this word still gave many of the citizens a pain when taken in conjunction with currency) that not even the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce would be able to wring out one more resolution on the subject. The excitement was

at fever heat. What was the New Arrangement? Or who was it? What would it (or he) do? Then a home paper "spilled the beans." And the New Arrangement was revealed in all its nakedness.

At this juncture it is necessary to pause for breath. Before a crisis one must always take one's bearings if one is to acquit oneself well of the ordeal ahead. And why had this arrangement never been thought of before? Surely everyone must have been asleep? Yet this stroke of simple genius had taken the General Manager of Railways and His Excellency the Governor many weeks of intensive consideration to evolve. And what of the great solution? Simplicity itself.

To-day port control is merely a matter of the Port Manager controlling the port, the General Manager of Railways controlling the Port Manager, the High Commissioner for Transport controlling the General Manager of Railways, the Governor-and-Commander-in-Chief of the Colony controlling the High Commissioner for Transport, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies controlling the Governor-and-Commander-in-Chief of the Colony. Of course, in his turn, the Secretary of State for the Colonies is controlled by the Cabinet, and the Cabinet is controlled by the Imperial

Government, while the Imperial Government is controlled by the great British public. Thus, you see, this remarkably simple scheme gets right back to our dear, old, generous friend the British taxpayer, who controls everything in the long run (and doesn't know he is doing so) except Mr. Winston Churchill. What could be more effective, more beautiful?

There yet remains the Port Advisory Board. It controls nobody. Its function is to give advice. And the principle works out somewhat after this simple fashion. (The intelligent reader will observe how simplicity is the keynote of all this port control business.)

Supposing the Governor-and-Commander-in-Chief wishes to advise the High Commissioner for Transport, who is desirous of giving advice to the General Manager of Railways, who considers it advisable to make a suggestion to the Port Manager, and he cannot quite get the hang of what he wants to say? He simply applies to the Port Advisory Board. A tinkle on the telephone, as it were. The Port Advisory Board gets right down to business. While it is applying ice to its heated forehead, the Governor-and-Commander-in-Chief is waiting to tell the High Commissioner for Transport, who is keeping the General Manager

of Railways, who wants to pass on the information to the Port Manager, waiting. And they must just wait till the Port Advisory Board has struck an idea. There is no stipulation laid down, so far as can be ascertained, regarding duration of time allowable. The Port Advisory Board can carry right on thinking until they get tired of it. Of course, all this time, someone, say Mr. Superman, may be sitting waiting, with what patience he can muster, for a decision on who is responsible for a consignment of maize having been dumped into the water, or to whom to apply for compensation for a pink-eyed rabbit which has gone astray. Still, somebody, obviously, must control the port, and somebody must advise those who control the port how to do the job efficiently.

A little patience is naturally required in these matters. And if, in the processes of extreme simplicity, time is considered a negligible factor, the public must not cavil. In the first place, they raised the whole issue, and a weary Government has, at last, evolved a scheme calculated to satisfy everybody concerned in it—except the public. One must always bear in mind the chequered history of port control, which is, as has been said, the history of this young nation in making. And if, in one of the intervals of waiting,

a decision regarding claims for compensation from the Port Manager, who has referred the matter to the General Manager of Railways, who is awaiting a decision from the High Commissioner for Transport, who has applied to His Excellency the Governor, who has called a meeting of the Port Advisory Board—if, in the process of waiting, one's temper gets somewhat ruffled, one may always soothe oneself with the reflection that had there been no port control malady there would be no such problems to solve.

Which, taken as a prophylactic dose of philosophy, should reconcile one almost to anything in the port control line that is likely to happen in the future.

MOTIF

The native policy of the home Government as applied more particularly to Kenya, to wit, that the British people stand in relation to the African as "trustee," and that the native corresponds as "ward," must be taken as a diplomatic fiction, unrealisable to those who settle in Kenya, other than that the legend comes from Downing Street. The native, on his part, is also quite ignorant of the position, except when he is informed that it is so. When he is told, he does not understand it. Except that all Governments pose as trustees for the welfare of the people they govern, this particular attitude has no precise meaning in Kenya, either to the settler or to the native.

XI

THE WARD

I AM a Kikuyu. I am also a ward. Perhaps I should have said that I am a ward and also a Kikuyu. Kikuyu, the land of my fathers, is in Kenya—or, rather, what is left of Kenya by my trustees. I rather like being a ward. One never really knows how priceless one is until one becomes a ward. Before my trustees began to keep watch and ward over me I was merely a Native. Nobody worried much about me. True, some thousands of kind old ladies in Ulaya,¹ who had never seen me and never really wanted to see me, sent me supplies of spotted ties and canary-coloured socks. They also sent other things, with colours that appalled me and made me wonder if the gifts were worth the anguish caused me when I contemplated myself in the mirror. For, although I am but a humble Kikuyu, I have an eye for colour.

Perhaps I may make myself clearer, in seeking to explain my position in life, by dividing my life into two sections—my pre-ward and my

¹ Native word for "oversea."

ward days. Let me take the former first. In my pre-ward days I was a farmer. That is to say, I squatted on my haunches and scratched the surface of the earth with a *panga*.¹ Nature, always prodigal in Africa, did the rest. There are, of course, hard-hearted people who maintain that while I did the squatting very effectively my various wives did the scratching for our joint living. These people are harsh and un-Christian. They have little love for the poor native—ward though he be. They say also that, not only did my wives till the soil, rear my children, wash my clothes—at lengthy intervals—and cook my food, but that they kept me alive when sheer lack of work would have killed me. But, if so, what then? What is woman for? And what is man for but to be born of, and live upon, woman? If woman is content to work for man, and man is content to allow her to work for him, what is there to grumble about? The deal is mutual, according to African *dasturi*.² And it takes a lot of Christianity to upset the *dasturi* of the African. And a lot of *pice*.³

When I was a very young man, men with white skins began to come to Kikuyu. They brought queer things with them. They called them

¹ Native hoe.

² Custom.

³ Money, small coin.

ploughs. They took over lots of land in Kikuyu—I don't know who gave the land to them, maybe the *Sirkali*¹—and broke it up into long strips. Then they planted maize, coffee, and sisal. These men called themselves farmers. I did not like them because they brought no women to work for them. This was bad for my women, who had never seen a man work like that before. I do not think it is good for a woman to see a man working like that. With the coming of these white *shamba wallahs*² the Masai ceased to burn our villages and steal our women. So I forgave the white men for working without women to do the work for them. It was bad that they should do so; but it was worse that the Masai should steal our women. For a man without a woman is as a pipe without tobacco.

I can remember, too, when I became a convert. I was willing to become anything that would help me to avoid work. And I was afraid that my women would want me to follow the white man's example and work in the plantation. To become a Christian I had to sit in a nice *kanza*³ in a nice *banda*⁴ and learn to read and write the white man's *menena*.⁵ And with Christianity

¹ Government.² Farm mongers.³ White gown.⁴ Shed.⁵ Language.

came lots of nice *kanzas*, *chakula*¹—white man's *chakula*—*tarbooshes*,² jumpers, socks, and shirts, and shorts. My own religion did not bring me any of these things. The old ladies of my father's creed were unkind, ugly, and bitter. They did not knit socks for me. And I thought that Christianity must be a fine thing to provide kind old ladies who were so good to the poor native, old ladies with many rupees, eager to give clothes to poor Africans they had never seen; even although these poor Africans had wives to work for them! And I even dreamed that one day I, a humble Kikuyu, might, by becoming a Christian, add one of these dear old ladies to my stock of wives. That would have ended all my troubles. A wife like this would provide me with much *pice* to help me pay taxes and buy King Stork cigarettes and beer. After all, a Kikuyu wife only digs the soil in a man's garden, plants the *mahindi*, grinds the *posho*, bears his children, cares for them and his hut, carries the firewood and the water, and cooks the food.

Perhaps I am wandering a little. After all, I am only a poor native, and cannot express my thought very well. All this time, I had never heard about trustees. No one ever told me I

¹ Food.

² Fezes.

was a ward. The missionaries told me I was a sinner. I did not know what that meant. But I guessed it was something unpleasant—like one of the pills the doctarie once gave me for malaria. But I smiled, and said “*Ndio*,”¹ knowing that it was better to agree with the missionaries. I agreed, even while I was being approached by other *mzungus*² who wanted to make me adopt their religion. I tried hard to understand why there were so many Christians who were other things as well. There were the Escottish, the Anglaisie, the Romanie Catholicie, the Americanie, the Baptistie, and very many more. They all said they were concerned about the soul of the poor heathen. I asked them if they were all Christians, and how they could be? Perhaps some were like the Kikuyu, peaceful and pastoral, and some were like the Masai, fierce and always fighting, and perhaps others were like the Wakamba, always drinking, and evil. All these were Africans. Christians were maybe the same? How could I know? Nobody seemed able to tell me. But they all wanted me as a “convert.” What is a convert, I wonder?

The time came when they told me I was thoroughly converted, and that I must earn my

¹ Yes.

² White men.

living. This gave me a great shock. I had thought being converted was a permanent process, not a temporary state. And I did not realise that work followed conversion. But I knew that the *mzungus* must be in earnest. For the supplies of nice socks and shirts began to cease, and I was told that Christians must earn these things for themselves. I began to have grave doubts about the value of Christianity. Besides, I had learned that a Christian can have one wife only. Who, then, was to work for me?

So I decided to go back to my own hut. My wives never troubled me with these things. They never questioned me. They worked and fed me. If Christianity could not do these things for me, why should I become a Christian? Thus, it came about that I joined the army of "backsliders"—I think the *mzungus* called us that—who had grown tired of waiting for fresh supplies of socks, and ties and nice food. "Why," we all wondered, "should we work, when the old Christian ladies in Ulaya had so much money, and did not require to work?" Besides our *bibis*¹ were growing tired of our absence, and wanted us to return to them. And *bibis* are, after all, better than that gold which does not come unless one works for it.

¹ Women.

All this time no one had ever called me a "ward." I had never heard the word "trustee."

As it happened, some of the white men had their *shambas*¹ near my home. They offered me money to go and work for them. I did not like the idea much at first, as my *bibis* were keeping me in comfort. But I had acquired a taste for silk socks and ties during my term as a Christian, and I wanted some more. Money was needed to buy them. Besides, I wanted some white man's tea. My *bibis* could not give me these. Then the Government fell to demanding my hut tax. I was perplexed. Surely, as a Christian, I was exempt from all these things? For what other reason had I become a Christian? But the Government said I must pay, and *askaris*² came to take me away. So I said I would go and work and earn the money. The *Sirkali* is, indeed, very hard on a poor Kikuyu, even though he is given shelter from the wild Masai, and his wives and his goats are safe.

So I went out to *kazi*³ on a farm.

The *mzungu* in charge was a kind man. He had once been a missionary himself. Perhaps, like me, he found that the old ladies had ceased to send him out socks, and shorts, and *tarbooshes* as

¹ Farms.

² Police.

³ Work.

soon as he had been converted thoroughly. At any rate, he had become a farmer and had lots of nice Kikuyu land. (Missionaries, I have noticed, always have lots of land, although they do not always convert it much.) He paid me, and fed me. We sang hymns together till the other *mzungu* on the adjoining farm sent a shot through the hymn-book I was holding one day and nearly scared me to death. I heard him telling my *bwana*¹ that "he did not object to a little Sunday psalm-singing, but he did resent that infernal caterwauling every night. It put him off his sundowner." My master was angry at first. Then he went over to plead with him. I remember the other *mzungu* told my *bwana* that he had been a Christian long enough to know better than to shout about it. At this I wondered much, and thought what strange people the white men were.

All this time, I had not heard the word "ward." No one ever said "trustee" to me.

After my master sold his farm and went to Ulaya, another master came and took over the farm. I went to him one night with my hymn-book and asked him to sing with me. I shall never forget how surprised he was. "Jehosophat and jumping Cæsar!" I think he said.

¹ Master.

Then he stood very still, while his face got very red. I thought he was going to be ill. Suddenly he sat down and laughed till the tears rolled down his cheeks.

“Maud,” he called, and his wife came forth. “Maud! Here is a poor heathen wishes to convert me! The blighter wants me to sing hymns with him. Oh, Lor’! Oh, Lor’!”

I meekly admitted that I was a backslider, but that, like many Christian boys, I never yet had been in gaol. To which my master, who seemed to have recovered, and now looked very angry—why, I wonder?—replied that I jolly well ought to have been, and that unless I took myself and my hymn-book off he’d pretty slickly put me there.

I did take myself off, feeling very hurt indeed. If this was Christianity, what was wrong with it? Why should one *mzungu* sing hymns with me and another threaten to put me in gaol when I asked him to do so? I was sore dismayed and hurt in my heart. I thought, perhaps, I had joined the wrong sect. I would be a Baptist! My master would perhaps like that better! Alas! I little knew that there are many *mzungus* who are Christians who are not Christians, and many *mzungus* who are not Christians who are

Christians. So strange are the ways of the white man. A poor Kikuyu struggling to understand them cannot himself be understood.

But I may tire you telling you about all my troubles? Of how I became, in turn, a Baptist, a Latter Day Saint, a Seventh Day Adventist, a Salvation Army convert, and at last, at the Coast, whence I wandered, a Mohammedan. Each, in its turn, brought me material reward. Always I got food, or clothes, or money, and comfortable houses to dwell in until I was turned away and was told that my conversion was complete, and that I must earn my own living. This last part of all these religions confused me. I could not understand what work had to do with religion. So, each time I went back to my *bibis* and my hut, and was welcomed with kindness and sympathy. *They* did not mind if I were a backslider.

All this time no one had ever said to me that I was a "ward." No one ever said the word "trustee" to me.

White men, as a whole, were kind to me. Some laughed at me and said I was a smart rascal. They would rather have a frank rogue like me, they told me, whose hypocrisy was so transparent, than some of the plausible and crafty converts

who feathered their nests so nicely. (I did not know what they meant by this, but, as they smiled when they said these things, I smiled in sympathy, which would make them roar with laughter and say, "Isn't he the very devil for confounded impudence?")

Again, some of the white men would tell me that they might yet make a man of me if I'd cut out the insufferable snobs and asses with whom I consorted. "He's not really a bad native," I heard one *mzungu* say to another when I applied for work. "His trouble is he has been too much round the missions, and he thinks he is too big a man to do an honest day's manual work." I suppose I must have looked sad when he said the word "work," for he suddenly turned to me and told me to clear out, as he didn't want malingerers round there.

I always got lots of work to do, though. But then I would think of my *bibis*, and consider how much they missed me, and, when the weather got hot, I would ask the *bwana* to sign my *kipande*¹ and grant me *rukasa*.² Then I would go off to the Reserve again, taking with me sundry articles, which I saw no harm in picking up as souvenirs of my travels. A watch, or a safety razor, or a

¹ Pass.

² Leave.

mirror, or even a pair of the *bwana's* flannel trousers. How could I help cherishing these things and coveting them? Did not Christians have these things? Being a mission boy, many white men seemed to suspect me—which hurt me very much, although I was a backslider—but I was, as one of the *mzungus* said to me one day, a very lucky blighter to have kept out of gaol so long. I had kept out of gaol. Why should I, who could read and write English, go to gaol? Could I not read the Bible and the *Pilgrim's Progress*?

But, although the white men were all friendly to me none of them ever permitted any liberties. They did not seem to like me to walk into their sitting-rooms or on to their verandas and sit down as I used to do at the mission station. I shall never forget what happened to me the first time I did so after I had left the mission. After my old master—my missionary one, of whom I told you—had gone away, and my new *bwana* took over the farm, I walked up one day and, as had been my custom, sat down on the veranda beside him. He simply sat still as if paralysed. His face seemed to turn blue. "Do I see right?" I heard him mutter. He passed his hand dazedly over his eyes. Then—he leaped at me. I can

remember finding myself in the garden, feeling if any bones were broken, and hearing a voice saying, from very far away, it seemed to me, "If you ever come up on this veranda again, I'll—I'll——" but I ran away quickly, as I saw my *bwana* coming down the veranda steps very suddenly.

I must admit, none the less, that I liked—as I do now—the *bwana* who is a master. I do not like the *mzungu* who is always petting me and making friends with me. I like a master who is strong and just and firm. Even if he punishes me I do not complain, so long as I know I have been wrong. I have had the *kiboko*¹ twice, but I know I was wrong, and after I had been punished I went to the *bwana* and said: "Master, I was wrong and you punished me. You did right. I deserved the thrashing." And my master, who said he knew natives, said: "That's the right spirit, Kamau. Here"—and he gave me one shilling—"that is for taking your punishment in the proper spirit." I liked this kind of punishment, and on another occasion, not long after, I did something wrong. But my new master was a soft man and did not punish me. He just said, "Kamau, why did you do that? If you do that

¹ Whip.

again I will cut your *mashara*.”¹ I was disappointed, for I had wanted a shilling, and had thought this might be a habit among white men—to punish their servants, then give them a shilling. So I came back to my master, and I said: “*Bwana*, I did wrong. Punish me, please.” “But I have told you what I think of it,” answered my master. “Nevertheless, punish me, *bwana*, for I want a shilling very much,” I answered. At which my *bwana* seemed very puzzled. “What’s a shilling got to do with it?” he asked. So I told him about my last master, and how he had *kiboka*-ed me and given me one shilling. And I said, “Master, punish me in the same way.”

My master did punish me. But not in the way I expected. I could not sit down for hours afterwards, so tender was the place where he kept beating me all the way down the drive from his home, calling out, “You infernal rascal! You infernal scoundrel; so *that* is your idea of punishment, is it?” I cannot understand the white man. He is, and yet he isn’t, as it were. I cannot understand him.

After that I did not ask to be punished, but took my punishment when it came. For I like a real master just as I am the master of my *bibis*

¹ Pay.

and children. And what is man for but to give punishment to some one when it is needed, or to take punishment from someone when he has done wrong? I think many of the *mzungus* liked me, after that, because when I did wrong I was not, as one of my *bwanas* said, "like some of those snivelling, semi-civilised blighters who know just enough about the law not to understand it properly, and who goad and tempt a man to thrash them in order that they may push off to the District Commissioner and get a man fined or imprisoned for assault."

All this time no one had said a word about "trusteeship." I had never heard the word "ward."

Then the change came. It came with great suddenness. I and my fellow Kikuyus found ourselves heroes in one night. Of a sudden, from the position of poor serfs, uncared for and unthought of save by the dear old ladies who gave away the offensively coloured socks, we soared to one of great prominence and importance. We had come into our own at last.

I am not very clear just as to how all this happened. I am told, by some of my more educated friends, that the *mzungus* were afraid of the Indians. It is said among the Kikuyu

that the Indians, whom I hate and would rather rob than serve, wanted to assist the *Sirkali* to govern the Kikuyus and other Africans. Some of my chiefs called a big palaver, and said they did not want the Indians. But the big *Sirkali* in Londoni, King Georgie's *Sirkali*, had decided that the Indians should be the same as the *mzungu* in Kikuyu and East Africa. The white man said he would use his *bunduki*¹ if the Indians were given land in Kikuyu and other places among the mountains. So the *Sirkali* of King Georgie said the Indians were not to get this land if the *mzungu* became trustees of the natives.

It was, somehow, after this fashion that I and my brother Kikuyus and Africans became wards of the *mzungu*. And life has been very fine since then. In the pre-ward days life was very sad, and the natives were just poor people who worked for the *mzungu* and the Indian in order to pay their hut taxes. Now, the African is a very fine fellow. I am patted and praised where I was neglected and nagged in the pre-ward times. The interests of the natives, the *Sirkali* says, must come first. Has not King Georgie ordered it so? The white man, who was once our overlord and our big *bwana*, is now our trustee. I am not

¹ Gun.

sure what a trustee is. And I am not sure what a ward is. But both are something very nice, I feel sure, because King Georgie, who would not harm us or see us harmed, has ordered these things to be so. In pre-ward days, only the missionaries said they loved us and cared for us. The other *mzungus* did not tell us so. Now every white man loves us and is good to us. They are our trustees. How can they be other than kind to us?

It is all very wonderful and very nice. In the Legislative Council, which is the Kenya *Sirkali*, they are always talking about us—now. They wish to educate us all. They wish to feed us, and to clothe us, and to give us nice homes. But I am distressed to hear that they also say we must work. Trusteeship, surely, however good it is, must be like Christianity. It seems so very good to start with, but I am sure it has a hole in the middle of it somewhere. I like being a ward. But if being a ward means working, I will return to my *shamba* and my *bibis* and live on the Reserve.

The newspapers, too, speak much about us. They have printed many words about “trusteeship” and “wards.” I sit by my door and read of how the *mzungu* is going to build roads, and railways, and schools, and markets, and bridges for the benefit of the African. And I also read

that the League of Nations, the Aborigines' Society, and the Anti-Slavery Society are all anxious to assist us. How excellent a thing it is to be a Kikuyu, and a ward!

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I am lolling by my hut to-day. My *bibis* are in the field harvesting the maize, fetching the firewood and the water. The sun is hot, too hot for a ward of the *Sirkali*, such as I, to work. My hymn-books are by my side. I have many hymn-books. They are the envy of less converted boys than I. There is one from the Escottish Mission, one from the Baptistie Mission, one from the Anglaisie Mission, one from the Romanie Catholicie Mission, one from the Salvation Army, and many others. Sometimes I sing a little from one and sometimes from another. One is just as good as the other, I think, and the music is *mzuri sana*.¹ And, sometimes, I sing some of the old Kikuyu melodies of my childhood, for I think variety is good for a Kikuyu who is growing old, and has tasted most of the wines of religion and found Kikuyu the sweetest of them all. And I am very, very happy, for I am a ward of the *mzungu* and of King Georgie, whom no Germanie can harm, and the Kikuyu country

¹ Very good.

is good to behold. But with all my happiness I sometimes wonder. I wonder, for example, what one of the *mzungus* meant when he said he was a "trustee of the native, with his tongue in his cheek." I thought perhaps he had bitten his tongue and had placed it in his cheek to heal it. And I sometimes wonder what another *bwana* meant when a Mission *mzungu* said to him that he was so pleased all the *mzungus* now loved the poor African for himself alone, and this trustee, taking his pipe from his mouth, said: "Love the poor native! like the devil I do."

What did he mean? I wonder? For the devil, surely, is the bad man missionaries talk about? And how can a man love the devil?

None the less, I am happy. It is good to be alive. It is better to be a Kikuyu with *bibis* to work for one. It is best to be a ward.

And I wonder how it feels to be a trustee? Like the *mzungu* I have told you of, "like the devil I do."

MOTIF

It arose over the Indian question in Kenya. Rumours were abroad, pointed by Parliamentary debate, that the Highlands of Kenya, settled by the European, his wife and family, were to be dominated by Indians, the legislature swamped by their vote. The settlers took keen alarm (see "The Revolution"). Stern resistance was prepared. Representative settlers were invited to England in order to confer with Downing Street. A via media was discovered; result, the famous White Paper and dual policy. It was there laid down that the British stood in relation to the African as trustee. Where the settler made his home, this home was only made in trust for the African.

XII

THE TRUSTEE

I AM a Kenyan. Moreover, I am a trustee. I may not be aware, in all the fulness thereof, that I am a trustee. Nevertheless, to be a Kenyan is to be a trustee whether one knows or likes it or not, for have not the powers at Westminster so cunningly contrived to arrange my life that, whether I would or whether I would not escape from the responsibilities of trusteeship, there is no escape for me?

Sometimes I wonder just how, with about 12,000 others of my race, I became a trustee. Perhaps I and these 12,000 others brought this heavy weight of responsibility upon ourselves. Perhaps it was destiny. In any case, history has something to say about it all. But the historian has not yet been born—perhaps he never will be born—who is capable of analysing, with that degree of accuracy and explanatory finality which brooks of no denial, how trusteeship was thrust upon the European Kenyan. *Per contra*, no one, not excepting the *Manchester Guardian*, can dispute the fact as it stands. Not even Dr. Norman Leys

or Mr. Macgregor Ross can deny the fact of my trusteeship. They may rob me of the honour of my good intentions as a trustee. They can never deprive me of the proud claim to the title.

Sometimes I wonder much within myself. My mind travels back over the years to the thrilling, restless times of post-war unsettlement. I can visualise the light-hearted days when, free from the thralldom of trusteeship, I was one of the lords and masters of creation. I can re-create those spacious hours when, verily one of 8,000 gods, with my feet firmly planted on the soil of Africa, I and my peers stood four-square to the winds of fortune and misfortune alike. Bowing before me were 2,000,000 Africans. In front of these humble aborigines I paraded bravely, sprung of the overlords of the earth, a scion of empire, an Imperial unit before whom even the sun, moon, and stars seemed to quail.

Then came the awakening. One day I awoke to find myself an idol with feet of clay! The African sun still shone as bravely as ever. Mighty Mount Kenya reflected back her million points of light, heliographing her message of the great destiny of Kenya to the world beyond her borders. But that message, once of such import and portent, did not seem to be quite the same. Somehow

it carried less conviction with it than heretofore. Somehow my overlordship, mine and that of 8,000 of my kind, did not seem so real, so tangible, so firmly rooted as heretofore. My proud poise did not seem to carry with it that sense of self-assurance and dominion which had once been so characteristic of my bearing. I caught myself relaxing, less prideful, slouching along, shrinking timidly, carrying myself less bravely in the face of the world—a 50 per cent. overlord now, faced with rival claimants and treading warily along the path of Kenya's destiny—a path paralleled, on this new morning, with yet another path, flaunting the sign "Equality of Status."

That was six years ago. In those bold, brave days, irresponsible and debonair, when, the war over, we shuffled the cards of life boldly, philanthropic and coquetted with it as a dilettante artist would flirt with his brushes, there was naught to make us rue. We struck from the canvas of our daily existence the ever-changing colours of irresponsibility, pleasure, and business, the while, as befitted overlords with a constitution of hundreds of years of laborious constructive civilisation behind us, we meted out justice and fair dealing to the humble Africans who knelt before us. As pretty a picture as any mediæval baron could wish

to see! A sight to gladden the heart of the squire! Contentment and happiness the keynotes of existence, with but a few minor problems, such as currency, port control, administration, to face, but—with the real, the great, the vital issue as yet unborn.

Such peace could not be for long. It was too idyllic. Every rose has its thorn, and beneath the fevered pleasure of our times stalked the spectre of Equality of Status. It had not yet raised its head entirely out of its obscurity. Now and again the grim spectre had poised itself ready to spring, but had subsided again ere it had gathered the necessary momentum to launch itself at us. But the white overlord was due to suffer eclipse—not all of him, but enough to shock the paramount pride of his position. Thenceforward he was to be a 50 per cent. overlord only. Henceforth he must share his sovereignty with others. The other 50 per cent. was destined to be the shuttlecock of politicians, negrophiles, and Imperialists inflamed with altruistic alchemy and nebulous dreams of brotherhood and equality.

But I am a Kenyan and a trustee, not a historian. How, then, may I best portray the bitter days that followed? May I in the process strike, even if all unconsciously, the historical note?

May it be left to me to write, albeit all unwittingly, the true and inward facts of this trusteeship which now bows the backs of European Kenya, ready for the lash of exultant lampooners? May I sketch in rough and uneven lines these stirring days when the *babus* of the land rose before us, and, heralded by their slogan of "Equality of Status," challenged us to combat? May I tell of those times when, shaken to the innermost fibres of our being by this arrogant claim, I and my 8,000 confrères recoiled momentarily, only to re-assume our attitude of superior rectitude in the full consciousness of our assurance in the power and prestige of the ruling race?

What could affect us? What force could vanquish 8,000 of us? We, with our race-courses and our resources; with our farms in those Highlands which were sacrosanct to us; with our white citadel founded firmly in the soil of Africa; we, with our Convention of Associations and our unofficial conferences and our clubs in every part of the land! What could move us, the immovable? What irresistible force could match itself against us? Alas! We little knew! How could we sense that even then the links in the chain were being forged? How could we guess that we, the Kenya overlords, the scions of the ruling race,

were already ourselves assisting in the task of reducing our Imperial status?

The first shock over, I and my 8,000 confrères faced the assault boldly. We were confident of victory. But whisperings came from over the seas. We must think Imperially. We must realise that we were British first and Kenyans afterwards. Our Imperial heritage, which extended far beyond the humble bounds of Kenya, must not be jeopardised. Were we of the stuff that would, for a question of personal pride, undermine the fabric of the mighty Empire which our forefathers had so laboriously and courageously built up? Could we not hear the rumblings in India? Were the ominous reverberations across the Indian Ocean not loud enough to sound their warning to us, engrossed as we were with our parochial troubles? Could we not see the point of it, the danger of it? I and my 8,000 confrères, Kenyans all, Imperialists also, were challenging, not this handful of arrogant *babus* in Kenya only, but the mighty Empire of India. Did we realise what that meant? Did we understand that Mother India was, with a jealous eye, watching her children in Kenya; that she was prepared to stand by them and fight for them; that they were appealing to her, and that she was accepting

the challenge of us Kenya settlers, even unto the disruption of the whole mighty Empire of which we were all a part? So the uneasy currents of report and rumour drifted about the Colony. So doubts and fears as to the expediency of adhering to the "irreducible minimum" laid down by our Convention of Associations, in regard to Indian claims, began to manifest themselves. So, equality of status for the *babus* of Kenya, instead of being a monstrous joke at which we could laugh heartily over our sundowners, assumed the proportions of a nightmare, a many-horned ogre, a hydra-headed monster ready to devour us. What was to be done? What could we do?

The answer came. Where it came from who may say? At first a sibilant whisper, a conviction stated as a fact, a way out suggested. So simple this way out, so easy to understand! No long-drawn-out negotiations, no undignified and mortifying "climbing-down." All we, I and my 8,000 European confrères, had to do was to become trustees of the native. *Of course*, we always had been. Somehow that belief was borne in upon us even as the new creed was thrust upon us. Only—well—we had never really thought about it. We had never, as it were, advertised the fact. British-like, we had accepted it as it came along,

and had carried on, acting sub-consciously, if you will, as trustees of the native without any fuss. We had not actually told this even to ourselves. Now that it had been put to us—just how, we did not know—we shall never know—naturally, we felt that the world must know all about it. Why should we hide our light under a bushel? Had we not been traduced, slandered, reviled, and execrated for years? Had our enemies not torn our characters to shreds, alleging all manner of evil things against us in connection with our relations with the natives? And, all the while—the irony of it!—we had been trustees of the native!

In a mood of conscious rectitude, smarting under the injustice of it all, we suddenly waxed righteously indignant. Who were these people to attack *us*, the defenders of the African? Well, we would prove to them their error. Now the world would realise what we really were, what we had been, what we meant to be. Aha! In this last respect particularly we would teach the world. Besides, after all was said and done, although we would hardly admit it, even to ourselves, here was the way out. Let us boldly take it. Let us, in the process, prove to those arrogant *babus* that, as trustees of the native, we would

brook no interference from them. We, and we alone, must rule the African roost. Here was our trump card. We would play it openly, unashamedly. And here, surely, we might expect the assistance of the Imperial Government. Assuredly, our claim, being a just one, the policy we were adopting in the eyes of the world being one after the very heart of the Mother of Parliaments and the Aborigines' Protection Society and the *Manchester Guardian*, was sure to commend itself to *those* powerful forces.

Why had we never thought of all this before? So simple! Instead of antagonising home opinion, embittering the Cocoa Press and the negrophile societies, we could play a strong and a manly hand—as, of course, we always had done, only we had not had the sense to know it, or, at any rate, the craft to proclaim it. Assuredly Mother India could not cavil at me and my 8,000 Imperial confrères for seeking to protect the aborigines in whose midst we and the *babus* alike were aliens in a foreign land? We did not mind admitting in our innermost hearts that the scheme was somewhat, well—er—crafty, perhaps a little Machiavellian too, but, after all, was it not all for the good of the natives? Were they not going to benefit? If in the process I and my 8,000

European confrères played the hand to our own advantage—what then? Where was the harm?

So the way out was taken. And so the battle was won—and lost.

It was won inasmuch as the Westminster authorities heard the story of our trusteeship being wafted round the world, sat up, looked round, smiled, and said: "At last! Here, indeed, is the solution of a problem. At last the native problem has solved itself! What persuasion has failed to accomplish, diplomacy has succeeded in achieving!" And the *Manchester Guardian* and the Aborigines' Protection Society and the negrophiles looked over their respective pince-nez, rubbed their hands with much satisfaction, and chuckled. Verily, thought they, things are moving in Kenya. There are the people whom we have so vigorously strafed all these years for neglect, *and* worse, of the native, showing a generous and a heartfelt reformation and regeneration. Here, of a surety, is the spirit we have so long sought. Let us nail them down to it. And straightway they proceeded with the nailing.

Now, I and my 8,000 European colleagues felt a weight of uneasiness descend upon us. Somehow, we felt that all was not just as it should have been. Other people seemed too happy about it

all. And, for our part, there underlay our sense of satisfaction at evading one danger the feeling that we had invited another. Somehow we sensed that we had played the wrong card—the Joker—and that the joke was very much upon us. But what could we do? What, in fact, was to be done? We had sought to save the Empire. We had immolated ourselves and our future upon the altar of Imperialism. We had hearkened to the call of the motherland. But at what a cost!

Thus, in due course, there came the Devonshire White Paper—whereon we felt the cold breath of defeat and the relinquishment of many of our most cherished hopes. For, in every line of the White Paper, sacrifice was written against my name and the names of my peers. The *babu* had scored a victory. He also was to be a trustee. There was to be a fifty-fifty trusteeship. In every sentence the *babu* had carried a salient, and consolidated his position of equality of status. It was all so cunningly contrived, so craftily executed, that the fight was knocked out of us. We had been hoist with our own petard. Not only did we never again dare do other than pat the native gently on the back, smile sweetly at him, and say, "Good boy, pretty fellow," when he wore our favourite shirts or ogled our grandmothers (as

trustees having pledged ourselves we had no alternative), but we must needs do so in company, on a fifty-fifty basis, with the *babu* whom we had sworn to defeat! At one fell swoop we lost with both hands. Ours might, indeed, be the glory and the praise of sacrifice and self-abnegation—while the world put its tongue in its cheek and smiled on the side of its face farthest away from us. But what did it profit the European Kenyan to gain the approval of the whole world and lose his own self-respect? In place of the old, unchallenged superiority, in the stead of our erstwhile autocratic but humane and kindly rule, we had gained the silent thanks of the statesmen at Westminster, and a new title—Trustees of The Native.

There was the rub. In exchange for the retention of our Highland acres we were proclaimed and acclaimed to the world as the guardians of the aborigines. A proud title had been bestowed upon me and my 8,000 colleagues. The home Press patted us upon the back, and the *babus* grinned pleasantly at us and admitted that they had got some of their own back—but added that there was more coming to them. They hinted darkly *and* cheerfully of all that they would yet achieve. And we, myself and my stout-hearted but sad compeers, once the proud and self-satisfied

scions of a ruling and Imperial race, had a handful of Dead Sea fruit. We were 50 per cent. bosses!—and a 50 per cent. that was broken and bent and frayed. The sacrifice had been made to Empire. The price had been paid.

To-day, I, a Kenyan and a trustee, sit in my chair reflecting upon the stirring days that are gone. I can feel that the end is not yet. Already are heard the mutterings of another storm. The *babus*, encouraged by their past success, are awakening again. Whither does it all tend? What fresh sacrifice must we be called upon to make? Will I and my 13,000—there are more of us now—*confères* be prepared to make new offers at the Imperial altar? Will blood remain thicker than water? Or will we, disgruntled, suspicious, and churlish, say: "Aha! We smell yet another Imperial red herring being trailed across the path of our destiny. Of a verity we shall refuse to be asphyxiated by it. We will stand firmly on our own feet and we shall govern both ourselves and the natives—not to mention the *babus*." I wonder! But in far-away London that very keen statesman, Colonel Amery, has admitted that the day will come when not even the Imperial Parliament can stand in the way of self-government for me and my 25,000 fellow-trustees—for we will have grown. When that

day is due to arrive, who may say? It may not be for years, and it may be any time. Events, as those who know Kenya know, move quickly. And, if self-government is the only balm that will soothe the smarting wounds that have been received as the price of sacrifice and self-abnegation, assuredly we Kenyans of the Imperial race must possess this soothing balm to apply. Perhaps the wounds will not fester. They may remain open sores, healthy enough, but sufficiently painful to remind us of the facts of our humiliation, of the crafty planning for our downfall—in which case, who or what can prevail against us? Surely, as His Excellency the Governor of this Colony, Sir Edward Grigg, has himself said, not even the Imperial authorities, with the lesson of Majuba before the Imperial Government!

And now? A word in conclusion—a personal, as against an historical, one. I and my 13,000 Imperialistic fellows, despite the mortification of sharing a 100 per cent. authority on a fifty-fifty basis with the *babus* of Kenya, are not such bad fellows at heart after all. If, insidiously, we were forced into accepting the trusteeship slogan as a means to an end, that does not imply that we are any better than we were, or any worse than we were wont to be. The African is to us both a

human and an economic factor, to be treated with consideration and humanity—for our own sakes as well as his. If here and there in the past we have not been as true to our trusteeship as we might have been, we have been guilty of no more crimes against humanity and society than, as the crime analysis of the homeland can show, have hundreds of thousands of our own race and blood there. All we ask for, all that we require, is a square deal. Given that, there is, so far as we can see, no reason why self-government should not be ours to-morrow. The wish, at any rate, may be permitted to be father to the thought.

Meanwhile, as the war-shattered hero limps along on his crutches, so also do we, the one-time overlords, the white Imperialists of Kenya, limp, metaphorically, along on our moral crutches—beaten for the time being, humbled, subdued. Gone is the old spirit of “we are *the* people,” gone the 100 per cent. Britishism that was ours! Shorts and *dhoti* rags, double-terai and turban, march in the sight of the world on parallel planes—a symbol of the wonder and the might and the justice of the British Constitution and of British administration.

And also, be it said, a significant gesture from me and my 13,000 confrères of the sacrifice made and the price paid!

Mk

MOTIF

The disgruntled official is, or has been, peculiarly a product of Kenya. He arrives full of beans as one of the governing body, straight from a Public School, or some other classic abode of learning, but soon discovers himself a more or less cog in the administrative machine. Like the Prophet in civilian life, he desires to teach, though the more sensible of his class early discover that they have much to learn. With the self-opinionated superman, the longer he remains in the country the more keen he feels that he has a mission to govern it in his own way. But the obstinate superman is always up against snags. When such a man completes his official tour he retires disgruntled, with a suppressed complex, and lets loose the vials of his long-bottled wrath in the shape of books, meetings, and such like.

XIII

THE DISGRUNTLED OFFICIAL

JOCK McCALLAM MORE had received a real northern education. Derived from a hard-headed Scottish stock he had proved an apt, nay, precocious, pupil at school and college. Graduating through the university he took engineering as a side line, standing high in the examination lists. In due course he received an appointment in the Colonial Service, and discovered himself in East Africa. He not only discovered himself, but was there discovered pushing easily through the lower rungs to second in command of his Department. Uncannily expert at figures, he could deduce from the holes in any given plank or girder how many nails or bolts were contained in the whole structure. Unfortunately for him, his genius was employed in the best abused Government Department of any—which is saying a lot in Kenya—the P.W.D.

Now the P.W.D. (Public Works Department) had proverbially to make bricks without straw. His predecessor had made up for his deficiencies—and the deficiencies of his Department—by

assuming a pleasant air of geniality to the extent that the severest critics in Press and assembly were disarmed. Previous Directors, socially popular, had muddled through bad roads, rotten bridges, expensive cottages, and exceeded estimates, until their day arrived to seek that repose from worry and blame which an adequate pensions list permitted them to enjoy. In their country homes and London clubs they recounted without limit all they had done for this difficult, rotten, ungrateful Colony, and chortled over the troubles of the next in office.

But McCallam More was of a different calibre. He thoroughly believed in himself, in his Department, in his men, and his native labour. While his Department was the butt of the country, a target of every person's satire and howling criticism, he held his head up bravely, and with ready tongue and pen rebutted and countered all attacks, not only continuing to believe in himself, but persuading the successive Governors and his colleagues in other Departments what an extremely able man he really was. And he succeeded remarkably, becoming the admiration of his fellow officials—an example to follow, if impossible to rival. Where others fell he rose higher, and in debate his close logic and biting repartee covered

such a multitude of sins that the sufferers from the vagaries of his Department had no other course than to grin and bear the ills they wot of rather than challenge worse evils from his incisive tongue. It was in the Legislative Council where most of his didactic triumphs were scored. For instance :

QUESTION.—The member of the Nyanza Province : “ How it was that £2,000 had been voted to repair the road from railhead to Kachiliba two years ago, and the work had not yet started, with the consequent result that that very necessary highway was practically impossible to traverse ? ”

REPLY.—The Hon. Director of Public Works : “ It is true that this sum had been voted for the purpose named, but on account of the prior importance of the embankment at Mtito Die, whose foundations had sunk two feet in black cotton soil, it had been found impossible to utilise the only two stone crushers in the country at both places at once, and as the road in question was scarcely ever used by the few rather amateurish farmers in the vicinity who had asked for it, an alternative route having been discovered [Voice : “ In despair ! ”], his Department did not consider it expedient to proceed with the work to the

detriment of the more pressing demand of the Mtito Die embankment, which might otherwise disappear altogether."

QUESTION.—“(a) When the construction of the culvert on Section 21 of the Naivasha road would be finished; (b) The number of native boys employed on the work; and (c) When was the last occasion the work had been inspected by a European officer in the Public Works Department?”

REPLY.—“(a) The work done at the culvert in question had been somewhat delayed in construction on account of the difficulty of obtaining stone in the vicinity, which had to be carried to the spot from some distance; this delay had been accentuated by the interference by settlers with the natives waiting for the stone—mistaken for idleness [laughter]. The workers on many occasions had to leave their work to make complaint to the nearest District Commissioner, due to these interferences; it is, however, hoped to complete the structure within two months from this date. (b) The number of natives originally put on to the work was forty-five, but on account of absence on sick leave caused by colds and influenza the average attendance had been reduced to eighteen. It had been recently considered necessary to issue

the workers blankets for protection from the cold
 (c) A European foreman had attended at the outset, but the expensive services of a European were not considered necessary while excavation was being done, the work being executed under the skilled direction of a Muganda mason. With the limited staff available to his Department it was found impossible to station a European in charge of every minor work of the sort; other works were in progress of much greater importance than this Naivasha culvert, which would have attention in due course."

So our friend always hit back as much as he could, and would be permitted to do as an official. But when the occasions arose of speaking and voting upon Government policy—so frequently assailed by the Settlers' Party—he would take the aggressive and carry the war into the enemy's country. For instance, when it came to the question of economy on Government expenditure, so frequently stressed by the popular representatives. Mr. McCallam More, in the course of a long and finished speech in support of the Administration, would show that the imports of agricultural implements was less than that of whisky, thus implying that the settlers were devoted more to drinking whisky than to work. He would lay

great stress upon the proper housing and treatment of the natives on the farms, implying that they were the predominant partner in the body economic. His (the speaker's) whole duties lay in spending money in public works for the relatively unimportant European settlement.

But as an official member of the Administration the full measure of his combative tongue compelled a suppression of the full sum of indignation slowly collecting within him.

At length, after many years of fighting service—or, as it was put among the settlers, after many years of much talk and declamation with little useful work done by the Department over which he presided—his long term of office came to a conclusion. He retired upon a pension granted him under the Colonial Office rules, and quietly slid out of the country, unhonoured, unwept, and unsung, to the relief of a harassed community. As a retired member of the official service his tongue was free, his mouth unmuzzled, in England. He might have remained and settled in the country, as many a retired official had done in the past, taking a civilian part in the affairs of the Colony for whose welfare he still affected to have regard. There are many little worlds to conquer in the homeland, and only one little world in

which to shine in Kenya. So he decided to have his voice heard from afar. He had faced the music on his doorstep, and now determined to play his own tune among the many bands of the Mother country.

Thus he prepared a book—a veritable tome—which in its diffuseness and plausible logic impressed the reading section of the public interested in Kenya. He re-wrote history, all leading to the impression that the right to an African Colony goes by numbers and priority of occupation. In orderly, pedagogic sequence he reviewed the history of East Africa. First came the Antediluvians, then the Missing Links, then a high stage of civilisation, then Monkeys, Missing Link again, then Nile migrations, afterwards a Semitic wave, followed by Hamites. There was an era of warrior tribal incursions from the south, subsequently racial blendings (on the orthodox lines of Johnston's *Colonisation of Africa*). He showed how in more recent times the Masai tribes were the power, raiding and penetrating almost to the Coast. Some of the weaker tribes fled to the forests; others held a harassed and troubled existence while retaining their foothold. Then came the explorer and the missionary, followed

by a railway ; last of all came the European and civilisation, as it is counted to-day. But Mr. McCallam More, deep in knowledge of the past history of the African continent, elected to stop short with the Kikuyu and other present-day tribal people discovered in Kenya. It was to them that East Africa belonged. He dismissed the past and ignored the present. The British Government, which came later, must be true to its trusteeship of those people who existed immediately before British occupation—the European and his civilisation had arrived too late in chronological sequence to be considered seriously. It was true they now held and controlled the country, had parcelled out the unoccupied regions, and were engaged in commercial and agricultural pursuits endowing the last surviving tribes of these parts with peace and order to an extent they had never known in their past history or in the history of the past. The point emphasised by Mr. McCallam More in his profound and scholarly work was not the spoils to the victor—the rule hitherto in Africa—rather one might infer that the victor was to be spoiled. All that the Europeans had done seemed merely an outrage on the native ; even our hero did not admit that the European rulers had voted and

paid his own salary. Coming from an ultra-democratic stock, the fruit of industry was labour. Coolie labour had built the Uganda Railway, though Great Britain had paid for it and directed it: *ergo* the construction was due to India. The natives had laboured in the fields and worked on the plantations for a European master, *ergo* they were the creators of the industry. Three million natives were contributing, say, £1,000,000 to the revenue, while the 10,000 European residents paid about £2,000,000; consequently it was the native who was taxed the heavier. The unimportant consideration that the total revenue was all due to earnings derived from European industry and agriculture, to prosperity since European settlement, was passed over by our historian.

Revelling in his plausible description, he deemed all Kenya mad. The only useful lot, it would seem, were the oppressed natives. He had, one deduced, narrowly escaped from a community of lunatics—the one sane philosopher who had preserved his mental balance. He did his best while he was there (he implied) to put things straight, obeying absurd official orders and perforce tolerating the megalomaniac insistencies of the settlers. He seriously recommended that a general repatriation should be ordered for all residents, officials, and

managers, after a few years' service at this high altitude and low latitude.

Yet, curiously, the country prospered remarkably after his departure. Even the P.W.D. slept peaceably, doing as much work and creating less public discussion. But this disconcerting fact was omitted in the book, which proved a nine days' wonder—another book on Africa encumbering the crowded inky way. It stands enshrined in the British Museum.

M O T I F

After the war, and when the slump had followed, it was discovered in Kenya—as elsewhere in this war-ridden world—that administrative economy had to be exercised or the country would be snowed under with its expenditure. So a Geddes Committee was set up to prune the superfluities of the Civil Service.

XIV

THE GEDDES AXE

WHEN Mrs. Hemans wrote "Woodman, Spare that Tree!" she had never heard of Kenya—for the very good reason that Kenya at that time did not exist. As a natural consequence, she had never heard of the Geddes Axe (Kenya version). This axe, which was designed to strike at the roots of Kenya public expenditure, would have provided Mrs. Hemans, who hated to see trees cut down, with a magnificent and moving theme.

For it was an axe wielded with ruthless vigour, not by one woodman, but by a number of backwoodsmen, aided and abetted by the Government of the day—in which connection the difference and the distinction between the Government of the day and the backwoodsmen, proved somewhat difficult to define. For some said the Government was the backwoodsmen and others said the backwoodsmen were the Government—very much the same thing when all is said and done, and yet a distinction with a difference.

How the trouble arose, nobody seemed to know.

Kenya had been getting along all right, in spite of the Government and the elected members. She was pulling herself together after her struggles with the currency problem, and, having made a stable companion of stabilisation, was issuing post-dated cheques and Bombay *hundis* with an impartial hand. Possibly the accumulation of chits and I O U's in the local bars had had their effect on the credit of those of the legislators who possessed limited credit and a big thirst. At any rate, somebody discovered that there was a Geddes Axe busy at home chopping down expenses.

"Let's," said somebody. "Shall us?" said the others. And it was even so.

That was only the beginning. The problem was what to cut down. There were really so many trees of expenditure to have a cut at that the difficulty was to know where to begin. For expenditure in Kenya is like a *kaai*-apple hedge,—the more you cut it the quicker it grows.

There was, of course, the P.W.D., with its mis-spent youth and its voracious appetite for currency. But of what avail trying to cut a branch of the service that was a cut above them all in the way of expenditure? And who was there bold enough among the backwoodsmen to challenge the Director of Public Works?

The Geddes Axe was as nothing to the cutting edge of his versatile tongue. Of course, it might have been possible to amalgamate the P.W.D. with the Supplementary Estimates, in which event the expenditure of the Department would not have shown in the Budget even if it had eaten the head of the revenue. Nobody thought of that, however, and the Geddes Axe hung poised, waiting for a victim.

Then somebody had an attack of the divine afflatus, and solved the problem. "The P.W.D.," said he, "is a necessary evil. We must have roads to carry the Geddes Axe about with us when we fare forth from our farms to committee meetings. And we must have police to protect us when we introduce unpopular measures and are in danger of manhandling by the mob. And we must have prisons to hold our broken-down remittance men. We must have all these and other luxuries, but what about a cut in the salaries of the Service?"

At which the Geddes Axe backwoodsmen rose as one man, and said, "So let it be." And it was even so.

But again a new problem arose—that of adjusting the shears to the fleece, for those who carried the most wool were the wielders of the axe. This

problem vexed the souls of the Geddes Axe men for many months. Ultimately the difficulty resolved itself, and the deed was done. Working along the line of least resistance, it was found that the Geddes Axe could take a deeper bite into the more fragile branches of the salary tree. In some instances it was quite a simple matter to lop the limb off altogether. In others it was no difficult task to make substantial cuts without blunting the cutting edge of the axe. And, withal, the sturdy trunks and robust arms of the tree withstood the attacks of the axe and gloried in their strength. For who dared apply the vulgar lethal weapon to the stipends of chief justices, chief secretaries, commissioners of land, and those who dwelt in high places? For it is easier in Kenya to purloin the kitten's bread and milk than to steal the bull-dog's bone.

Thus it came to pass that the axe carved its way through the peace and contentment of the Service, and the little men went their several ways looking white around the gills. "For," said they, "why does the axe cut away the humble branches of the Service and leave the greater ones alone?"

But the great end had been accomplished, and those who wielded the axe sat them down and wined their way through toasts to their own

greatness and the wonders of the country they had saved from the rapaciousness of the unwanted. "For," they reasoned, perhaps truthfully, "many little wages make big Budgets, and those who earn little in their sum receive much in their total" —at the which, the trees of expenditure of great girth laughed within themselves, and considered what an excellent thing the Geddes Axe was, inasmuch as it pruned the tree of the little expenses that drained the big expenses of their full measure of the sap of currency.

To all of which there is a moral, for, was it not even this same Geddes Committee which, with the passage of not so many months, having cut away the minor limbs of the tree of expenditure, promptly set themselves to the task of increasing the growth of the same? Inasmuch as they decided that the gubernatorial tree, which flourished exceedingly, yet needed more of the sap of currency to encourage it to flourish. And they grafted thereto a new stem costing as much as they had lopped. But others said the money was worth it. At which juncture we may leave the Geddes Axe and its lusty wielders to the judgment of the future.

MOTIF

Malaria is scarcely a disease to joke about. But there is pathos and bathos. Some prescribed remedies are frequently more killing than the disease and more difficult to practise than is the malady to cure. Its gross effect on Kenya is nothing like what one might expect from the talk it arouses; but it serves a very useful purpose in official service. Mosquito nets are used by but a few in Nairobi. The actual deaths from malaria are statistically few in the Highlands, where life insurance rates are the same as in England. Though not a disease to despise, some of the innumerable preventatives are fair butts to shy at.

XV

ON MALARIA

MEDICAL science has taught us—even if actual experience has not so fully illustrated it to the extent these tomes of dire warnings emphasise—that malaria is a dangerous and widespread disease in the tropics. The particular genus of mosquito scientifically proven to be the infecting medium is that known as the anopheles—and there appear to be others. It is also a medical theorem that these dangerous mosquitoes breed in swamps, pools, and other stagnant water; even old bottles and tins are said to provide handy dwelling-houses and breeding-places for this public enemy.

But this dreaded pest of the civilian and settler is not altogether an unmixed evil. He does good to some people. After having everyone's hand against him for some decades—ever since Drs. Manson and Ross proved his criminality in infecting mankind with disease—later discovery and research have revealed that malaria has its uses after all; it is proving a cure for paralysis. But apart from being dragged out in the open (one

may conjecture with great surprise) as a public benefactor, after being cursed by everyone ever since the great discovery, the nimble insect has all the time been diligently, if unobtrusively, serving a very considerable and self-esteeming class of men, namely, the officials who obtain periodical leave to England on the score of the mosquito's evil reputation. Also annual batches of young medical students looking for practice date their active usefulness and regular pay from the time they come to close quarters with this useful medium of infection.

How many anopheles go to the square mile is difficult to conjecture. According to the incidence of malaria, one or two. For while trillions of mosquitoes seem to haunt some localities, it is only here and there that a person seems to contract the disease. How many mosquito bites to a case of malaria has not yet been worked out. Nor has it yet been calculated how many yards of mosquito net it takes to stop a malarial insect from biting. Some people wear mosquito boots—especially ladies, who now wear "nude" stockings up to the elbow, so deceiving that they invite the closer attention of the predatory insect, to which they are more attractive than the trousers, puttees, and breeches of the sterner sex.

One may occasionally observe men also wearing mosquito boots and shorts, which former cover legs and feet while leaving the thighs open to inspection and infection. This, however, does not appear to have so much attraction. So there seems no recognised rule to keep the mosquito out. It is still a game of hide and seek or go as you please.

The whole pursuit of the mosquito is in the nature of a mystery. Nobody seems to see the humour of it. For instance, while avowedly breeding in and haunting stagnant pools, bushes, old tins, and such-like dark places, they are mostly sought for where the medical man need not get his feet wet and may rag the civilian. This fraternity (of that ilk termed Officers of Health) inspects every private residence for drains and tins that are said to harbour mosquitoes. Meanwhile, vacant spots and open spaces, gravel pits and the like, are left to breed as many of these insects as they can. The principal reason for this apparently senseless course is that these unoccupied spots are mostly Government property, and would have to be cleaned at Government expense, and the Officer of Health must think of his own salary first; for what brooks it if mosquitoes be ejected and the Civil Servant follows?

Just as it is easy, and evokes authority, to worry the householder so that he eradicates mosquitoes from tins and drains, so it is impossible with a limited public revenue to drain a whole swamp and keep miles of unoccupied land free from bushes and pools of water. Thus the game of hide and seek continues ; as fast as the habited area is cleaned around the scattered bungalow, so fast, and even faster, the insects come down in their millions from the open spaces, until the worried householder goes mad in despair, thinking he is the delinquent, yet without an empty vessel or stagnant pool within sight.

The humorous aspect reached its apotheosis in Nairobi, when the medical service, in one supreme effort to educate people on their sins, united in compiling an illustrated pamphlet to teach them to keep their houses in order. In one part of the booklet the medicos artlessly exhibited by photos and described by text how the swamps and the Nairobi river and the excavations and quarries in and around the township bred these insects by the million—and it was asserted that the mosquito could fly a mile and be blown by the wind for three miles—while another part of the pamphlet warned people to keep their houses free, at risk of infection, by clearing their back yards and

gutterings of breeding-places. The labours of a Sisyphus were child's play to this task.

In Southern Rhodesia a law was framed, and possibly passed, to give a person three months' imprisonment for harbouring a mosquito—with the country around full of the insect! The problem had to be faced: how could strange mosquitoes be kept from evading the haunts of the tame and domestic variety? The accused must be put strictly to proof to show that the mosquito in his house is a veld one and not a domestic boarder.

One great remedy, discovered in Tanganyika and discussed in several articles in the local Press, was to cultivate bats, not of the cricket variety but of the flying-mouse breed. It was claimed that two or three tamed bats would clean a jungle. The fact was vouched for by one who had tried it. How this person caught the bats and trained them to catch and eat mosquitoes just near the camp was not clearly revealed. But he said the result was marvellous; not a bite all the night; the bats hovering around in silent wafting of wings, stirring the air with gentle breezes, while the travellers slept in peace and safety. Meanwhile the mosquitoes were buzzing in their millions outside the charmed circle.

The fact remains that without any ascertained cause during different periods at Nairobi and elsewhere in Kenya the mosquitoes arrive in their millions, what time Nairobi is busy erecting mosquito curtains. Before the curtains are paid for the mosquitoes disappear as suddenly as they arrive. It is not the case of rains or any particular season. They rise out of the earth, or water, bite, and then disappear, leaving the same old pools behind, and come again another day.

The entomologist lays down that paraffin is good (or bad) for the mosquito. Just strew a few drops of paraffin along the drains and the larva curls up and dies. Springing from this scientific discovery came the proposal to spray by aeroplanes. What a town, or a cultivated farm, would look like with a few tons of paraffin sprayed around the country and over the stores and buildings is a matter easier to conjecture than to describe in cold print!

The East Coast of Africa, from Durban to Beira, was a veritable fever bed in the earlier days. Then Durban became closer settled, the swamps cleaned up a bit, and fever disappeared. Yet the mosquito remained. Why? Delagoa Bay and Beira followed a similar process, having to-day a very small amount of fever and a large amount

of mosquitoes. Why? Whether the task of infecting so many Europeans was one too much for the anopheles; whether the anopheles died in despair and left only the culex variety; whether the virulent kind got fed up with civilisation and emigrated *en masse*, all has been a mystery to the uninitiated. Take the case of the Panama Canal. Yellow Jack fleeing before the Yankee with his strict attention to business and cowboy films. Yet one imagines that the mosquito (disarmed) remains. The whys and the wherefores are shrouded in mystery.

As a pendant to the above let's hear the medico scientist. In the *East African Standard* of April 4, 1927, a medical gentleman said, in the course of a series of weighty articles on malaria published in that organ :

“ If you feel really keen on getting malaria out of a given place, you first of all ask your entomologist to go and have a look. He comes back and tells you, in due course, which brand of mosquito is at that time carrying malaria, and all about its habits as he lives; some mosquitoes like shady swamps, some like clear, open water, and so on; and he tells you which kind of a life your present troubler prefers.

You act on this, and if, for instance, the malaria carrier happens to be fond only of shady streams, you tackle them until they cease to be shady or cease to be streams—and leave everything else alone. *You will not have got rid of mosquitoes* [the italics are ours], *but you have got rid of malaria*, and that is the great idea. This is not hot-air or 'theory.' It has been done and can be done—every time."

Now the above may be very good advice. How one is going to make a stream not shady for miles; what is to become of the water when the stream ceases to become a stream; and where the water of five or six or ten streams is to go, seems to indicate "hot-air," despite the disclaimer. Then, as to the brand of mosquito in each given place. One wonders!

Now another expert. The extracts given here are quoted as from the *Daily Science News Bulletin* of Washington. This authority says:

" . . . Other interesting facts about malaria have been established as a result of attempts in insane hospitals in Great Britain to cure paralysis of the insane by the action of malaria. Artificially induced malaria fever is one of the

most modern methods of treating paralysis and insanity, though the curative effect of fevers on mental disorders was known in such ancient healers as Hippocrates and Galen.

“ While cures have been effected in from 20 per cent. to 30 per cent. of the cases so treated, and intermediate results have been obtained in others, the medical world has become much more interested in the disease being used as the curative agents. It has been possible to learn several things about malaria when it is induced artificially, and is observable from start to finish under laboratory conditions that were not clearly understood before.

“ Lieutenant-Colonel P. James, of the Ministry of Health, states that, surprisingly enough, it is difficult to adjust conditions so that the patients will infect the mosquitoes and the mosquitoes in turn infect the patients. Contrary to the belief that malaria lurks in every stagnant pool, he thinks that in nature the only mosquitoes that become transmitters of the disease are those that live under sheltered and peculiar conditions. ‘ The human dwelling,’ he says, ‘ seemed to be the laboratory where malaria infection had its origin and was

cultivated.' The life habits of mosquitoes that live under such conditions should be carefully studied, he declares."

So here we have another viewpoint. The medical world is much more interested in the disease being used as a curative agent than in the disease itself. The domestic variety seems here to be the culprit, and not the aquatic sort. The insect certainly can be easier studied when stroking its wing after a gorge in the house than when wandering about swamps. But who is going to bell the cat and wait till he strokes?

Following these weighty articles a special leaflet was inserted in the *East African Standard* to assist the propaganda against the mosquito and malaria. We reproduce the injunctions *in extenso*.

DO YOU KNOW THAT

Malaria is an infectious disease?

Malaria is carried by mosquitoes and by nothing else but mosquitoes?

Anyone who has been infected with Malaria and is exposed to the bites of mosquitoes can give the disease to his neighbours?

This applies to your boys as much as to anyone else?

All who escape Malaria by making use of the measures mentioned below, help not only themselves but the whole of Kenya Colony, because every new victim increases the probability of still more victims?

MALARIA WILL BECOME A RARE DISEASE

and will ultimately die out, if everyone

Uses a mosquito net ;

Uses mosquito boots ;

Lives in a screened house ;

Allows no water to stand exposed and unholed in or around his dwelling ;

Does his best to ensure that, as soon as possible, all pools, streams, rivers, and swamps in his district are rendered free from mosquitoes.

WHAT TO DO.

If mosquitoes invade your house, **KILL THEM** by

Swatting them ;

Spraying them with an insecticide ;

Fumigating them with pyrethrum (one pound to a thousand feet).

LOOK FOR THEM behind curtains, beds, pictures, wardrobes, and in all dark and sheltered places ; these are where they hide.

INSPECT YOUR COMPOUND for breeding grounds.

Mosquitoes breed in standing water, and very little water may breed a large number of mosquitoes.

Therefore :

Allow no standing water to remain in or near your compound ;

Look for and get rid of old tins, broken bottles, and anything else which may hold water ;

See that your water tank has a gauze cover over the inlet hole ;

Make sure that your drains are clear ; if they are not, have them cleaned out at once ;

Report all defective road drains to the proper authorities and ask them to take action ;

Oil all water that cannot be dealt with otherwise ; pour on enough kerosene to form a thin film on the top of the water and mosquitoes will not breed in it, while any which may be there will die ;

Keep your grass cut short or it will harbour mosquitoes and
 prevent you from finding their breeding places.

IF YOU DO THESE THINGS YOU WILL BE DOING YOUR SHARE
 TOWARDS GETTING RID OF MALARIA.

In conclusion is reproduced an apt and clever
 bit of verse on the subject culled from the *Uganda
 Herald*, of May 20, 1927.

THE CHASE

With apologies to the Kenya Anti-Malarial Campaign

When President Roosevelt was hunting big game
 He never pursued, so I see,
 The greatest and wildest of beasts of that name,
 The family *culicidae*.
 Although they abound in these lands of delight,
 Uganda and Kenya, too,
 Its strange that he never collected a "flight,"
 And presented the same to the Zoo!

For whilst he described with the utmost sangfroid
 A charging rhinoceros shot,
 And measures his record in avoirdupois
 From the tip to the tip and what not,
 He plainly omitted all effort to add
 To the rest of his varied collection
 A specimen, surely most easily had,
 And one that they do not protect.

I mean the anopheles, wily and fierce,
 Fulfiller of many a grave;
 Yet surely no terror or danger could pierce
 The heart of a hunter so brave.
 I can only conclude he was quite unaware
 Of the peril and thrill of this chase,
 And, compiling a volume of records more rare,
 He failed to give it a place.

But now things are altered, or so it is said,
 Hunting the 'squito's *de vigueur*,
 The exercise gained in the chase you are led
 Is markedly good for the figure,
 And if you don't " hunt " you're in no one's good books,
 You'd no more attempt to decline,
 Than arrive at your hostess's dinner-de-luxe
 Arrayed in a cucumber vine.

The chase is exciting, not very unlike
 Th' immortal pursuit of the Snark,
 You search behind pictures and curtains, and strike
 At your quarry wherever it's dark.
 You tease it with nets and in long leather boots,
 You hide in a room with a screen,
 The huntsman his " Tally-ho " motor-horn toots,
 As you charge it with " Crown " kerosene.

You swat 'em or spray 'em with insecticide,
 Or fumigate them with pyrethrum
 (Let a pound to a thousand of feet be a guide),
 Or elderly settlers can breathe rum,
 But while you may safely attack them with al-
 -cohol, if you'd do as you ought ter,
 Make certain to starve this perverse animal
 Of any and all kinds of water,

Allow it no stance in your compound or ranks,
 Old tins, broken bottles are bad.
 Put a fine silken cover of gauze on your tanks,
 And start with a heart that is glad.
 With a cry " View halloo ! " and a right hearty will
 Let's ride to the chase in high glee,
 And you'll learn of the thrill that goes with the kill
 Of pestiferous *culicidae*.

FLOSSIE.

OK

Yet another remedy—paper linings. This preventive was seriously recommended by a correspondent in *East Africa* (London), who writes weightily as follows, in the issue of that periodical of June 9, 1927:

“ I have read the letter, ‘ Measures against Mosquitoes,’ which appeared in *East Africa* of May 26, and I know that many people have laughed at me and my paper linings—not ‘ stockings,’ as your correspondent describes them. Nevertheless, I have received shoals of letters upon the subject, and I think that you will find that thousands of people will yet wear paper linings where their nether limbs are subject to the ferocious attacks of cattle flies, mosquitoes, etc. There is nothing wrong with the idea. Obviously the letter to which Mr. Brett refers was written for residents in Great Britain. I suggest that he should live on a farm where there are cattle flies, say, during the summer and autumn, and wear knickers and stockings; I fancy he will want paper linings unless he has an impenetrable skin. Of course, people can wear leggings or mosquito boots if they wish, but if you are going out to dinner you want to look smart, and Russian

boots, mosquito boots, and leggings are not particularly smart wear.

“ When he says ‘ Most people would prefer the mosquito,’ he cannot have written in a sober moment, or he has not been to the land of the tropical mosquito. I prefer paper linings to malaria, elephantiasis, yellow fever, etc., all of which are carried by the mosquito. In England people are being poisoned by the bites of insects. So far as the legs are concerned, it need not be, if they will protect the legs in any way they like by leggings, Wellington boots, or paper linings. The latter method is very cheap, while the former are expensive. Not so long ago I was asked for a pattern of a paper lining, the idea being to find the right kind of paper and then to manufacture my simple armour. I gave a pattern, which is not actually a stocking—it is shaped like a gaiter. People need, however, not wear a shaped article ; the best kind of toilet paper does perfectly well.

“ I used to wear paper inside my trousers when I dined at houses which I knew to be furnished with that abomination of abominations in the tropics, the cane-bottomed chair. I have seen dozens of mosquitoes under a chair gorging themselves on the blood of their victim, at the

same time passing on whatever horrible disease they were carrying. . . .

“The French make excellent and cheap mosquito nets, just like a little room—big enough to go comfortably round a deck chair, and which can be moved to any part of the house, or outside, under a tree. Our people will not make them for some reason or other—which I have found to apply to so many other useful things in the tropics.”

Paper lining to trousers! Well, that may have a germ of an idea; but surely no paper could be retained so close to the skin that an insinuating mosquito would not discover entry—unless stick-phast were used to stick the paper to the hide. Then to walk about in a house within a house, or live in a cage under a tree! The ratiocination of human mental processes is very remarkable.

M O T I F

Kenya is very imitative, and frequently runs amuck in methods of governing. There came upon Kenya a wave of "Experts," invited by the Administration to report on all manner of local problems. Many of the resulting reports have proved dead letters, largely due to the legitimate expert being expert enough under other conditions, and scarcely expert enough to understand the almost unique conditions of Kenya's ethnological complexes and its equatorial altitudinal climatic anomalies.

XVI

THE EXPERT

IN Kenya Colony, as in other less favoured places, a prophet hath no honour in his own land. This country, in fact, is singularly devoid of prophets save those who prophesy with singular accuracy that when a job of work has to be done an Expert must be imported to do the work.

It will be observed by the intelligent reader that the word "Expert" has been dignified by a capital letter. This is very necessary, for Kenya worships at the shrine of the Expert. Yet, paradoxically enough, the man in Kenya who is sufficiently expert to do his work is seldom commissioned to undertake the job, for he is not expert enough to convince the authorities that he is an Expert.

So Kenya imports Experts. Originally she did so as an experiment. Now she has developed the habit.

Thus it befell that the town of Mombasa, being in need of reconstruction, imported an Expert. To be strictly correct, Mombasa herself did not invite the Expert to study her many physical

vagaries. The Government did. But, as the Government had long been accustomed to call the tune, and the people of Kenya, as a whole, to pay the piper, there was nothing left for Mombasa but to welcome the Expert and make him comfortable. This was done with a right good will, on the modern principle of "the more that we are paying (with someone else's money), the merrier we'll be."

Like all Experts, this one was expensive and expansive. Imagination was his strong point. Mombasa must be made a place fit for members of Government service to live in. Of course, the commercial and non-official community generally would share in the improvements. That would be their good fortune. And the island would have to be made a place worthy of the reputation and imagination of the Expert who was overhauling it. Nobody dared whisper "expense" in the Expert's presence. What was money? Filthy lucre. Stuff beneath the contempt of people with vision, imagination, ideals—and other people's money to spend. While ordinary mortals spoke in hushed whispers of the hundreds of thousands which grandiose schemes would cost the country, the Expert airily brushed aside such mundane considerations.

“My dear sir,” one might imagine him saying, “I did not come here to discuss expense. I am a town-planner, not a banker. Money simply does not enter into my schemes. I am going to make your town worthy of the traditions of the great race from which you spring. If that costs you money, what has that to do with me? You asked me to come here. You wished me to give you a town-planning scheme. I am going to give you one. Money? Money? Don’t talk to me about money.”

Taking pen, ink, paper, and sundry beautiful pigments, the town-planning Expert then drew some wonderful sketches. They were nicely coloured; the draughtsmanship was superb; the plan was perfect. There were boulevards, city squares, magnificent central ways flanked by gorgeous trees. (When it was pointed out that trees take time to grow it is said that the Expert scornfully said that that was Nature’s business, not his.) There were magnificent civic buildings, and Government buildings, and even private buildings. As an intelligent anticipation of what Mombasa might be if the town had a few spare millions of pounds to play with, or if Mr. Ford or Mr. Rockefeller would buy up the island and rebuild it as a U.S.A. health resort, there was nothing to

beat that plan. Rome, in all her glory, was never arrayed like Mombasa in her imaginary garments.

Some of the bolder spirits, having recovered from their awe, plucked up courage to suggest that the thing looked rather expensive. It was very nice, and they felt proud of Mombasa—on paper. If the Expert would only broadcast that plan, and people Overseas could be brought to believe that Mombasa was really shaping that way, well, they would be able to throw out their chests when on board ship, or looking condescendingly around Paris or Berlin. But, really, wouldn't the scheme be a bit—er—expensive? For example, that civic square now. Land was not too plentiful on the island. What about—er—well, building a bit more on it and leaving some of the space to the imagination?

One or two of the bolder spirits who suggested these things looked pale and worn after the ordeal. Of course, they had gone a little too far. After all, an Expert *is* an Expert. His job is to do things expertly. And if he is asked to make a real splash-up *mise en scène*, he has no time to think of such trifles as money. That was where these complaining citizens erred. They ought to have known better. It was little wonder that they never

smiled again. And nobody really sympathised with them.

After all, were there not the dog licences and push-bike licences, and the conservancy, and the butchers (about three of them), and the bakers (about four of them), and the candlestick-makers (unknown quantity; possibly one), from whom the doubloons might be extracted? Why worry? If the New Mombasa, garbed in her rich habiliments, *did* cost a few millions sterling, was not the British National Debt about £8 per head of the population per annum? And did the British taxpayer worry? And was there not, after all, the League of Nations, if somebody from whom we borrowed got *really* nasty about it? Those narrow-visioned whimslecrackers! Couldn't they take the broader and the larger vision? Let the motto, for the time, be, "Why worry? We won't be happy till we get it."

Fortunately, nobody met a sudden end. The citizens, inflated with the idea of their new status, living in these magnificent castles on the coral, so vividly drawn by the Expert, were inclined to be tolerant. If a few jerrymanders and wise-acres cared to be lugubrious and ill-disposed towards a really fine thing—after all, now, Mombasa was *some* island and the gateway to Kenya

(that was a phrase that caught the popular imagination and countered such mealy-mouthed complaints as lack of money)—after all, was Mombasa not the potential Liverpool of East Africa?

So the island caught the infection of the moment from the Expert, who really was a jolly good fellow, and so said all of them. And all went merry as a marriage bell. The plans progressed, burgeoned, and glowed in the sunlight of public approval, while the Expert smiled to himself and thought what a monument he was building on the coral of Mombasa to his own memory. The Expert, instinct with enthusiasm, stood far above sordid criticism. He had created the veritable City Beautiful. He had transported the citizens from an island of wattle and daub and *makuti* to an Arcady of which dreams are made. Here were splendid boulevards, palatial parks, gorgeous gardens, Arcadian avenues, magnificent monuments, and a triumphant terminal. A cause for civic pride indeed! *This*, Mombasa! All *this* belonging to the citizens. All of it—on paper!

That was the trouble. And here the doubts and fears began to creep into an atmosphere charged with hauteur and arrogance. The *civis Romanus sum* business began to suffer an eclipse. The doubts of the doubters, whispered with such meek

submission weeks before, began to reassert themselves. A more courageous voice would question: "Yes, but who is going to pay for it?" Another would be heard heatedly over a local vanilla ice: "I'm hanged if I am going to be taxed for somebody else's fads. Who is this Expert, anyhow?" And so the discontent spread. So the seeds of dissension were sown. The Expert found himself in a minority, and, finally, ere yet he had shaken the coral dust of the island off his feet, and exchanged therefor a handsome cheque by way of fees for services rendered, the storm had broken. Somebody would have to pay for all the magnificence. Who was to pay for it? The people wanted to know. The Expert could not tell them.

But those who paid dog licences, and push-bike licences, and the butchers, and the bakers, and the candlestick-maker, and those who paid conservancy and lived in daily terror of a strike of the Kavirondo pilgrims of the night, smiled serenely. For they knew that no Expert living could build a City Beautiful on dog licences and dough. They realised to the full that palaces are not erected on push-bike licences. And they also knew that the day was dawning when the Expert would return whence he came, and his plans would

become the plaything of excavators who will rediscover Mombasa Island in the year 3000.

To-day the town of Mombasa is as it was wont to be. It perches saucily on its coral crown and leans all awry over its reeking ancient harbour—a delightful conglomeration of architectural styles, stirring history, and multifarious smells. The Expert has gone. The City Beautiful he created (on paper) remains a City Beautiful—on paper. In some solemn archive, “far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife,” the beautiful, delicately coloured drawings, etched out with such finesse and delicacy of draughtsmanship and artistry, repose in sweet peace, what time the silver fish, and the moths, and the cockroaches, and the white ants make merry with those conceptions of city palaces, broad boulevards and temples of commerce. And in the very heart of the island the builder plies his craft as never before. Here and there a road has sprung into being—a tribute to the genius of him who laboured to produce a City Beautiful from dog licences and dough. But, beyond the compensation paid to the happy few whose property happened to stand on the lines of route selected by the Expert for destruction, the town has suffered neither thrills nor changes. The city fathers, doubtless in deference to the

substantial fee paid to the Expert, have drilled a road here and there—satisfied to have escaped so lightly the consequences of having had an Expert in their midst.

EPILOGUE

Extract from the *Bombasa Chimes* :

“ The tendency to bring expensive Experts to Kenya is one that dates back to the time when this country was not expert enough to build a reputation for itself. Unfortunately this tendency has developed into a disease. The malady has spread from Nairobi to Mombasa with disastrous results. One can recall the time when the town-planning expert, Mr. Bran Pie Williams, tried to rebuild Nairobi and Mombasa, and Professor Simple essayed a similar task. Upon these expert gentlemen money was lavished by a generous Government, and each in his turn went away rejoicing—they the richer from their visit and the Colony the poorer for their experience. The disease has, alas ! spread in other directions, and an epidemic of Experts has broken loose upon this unfortunate land. The disconcerting feature of the outbreak is that the *parasitus expertus* nourishes itself chiefly

upon Treasury notes—these being commodities which are very scarce in this Colony, being primarily absorbed by their prime functions of providing for official pensions and tours. There have been, recently, Experts on labour, on coffee, on forests, and even on Government. There are—or have been—Experts on mosquitoes and statistical Experts. Even to-day we are threatened with the advent of a sitting of Experts to decide how the adjoining Colonies can be federated—every man a super-Expert, an Expert of Experts, one who knows not only East Africa but everything else. Arch-Experts—men who from London could advise and revolutionise Bolshevik Russia and from Berlin could settle the Chinese question, or from Cape Town devise a method to reunite Scandinavia.

“ There must inevitably arrive a time when super-Experts will be called upon to report on the arch-Experts. Mombasa may, however, lay the flattering unction to her soul that she has been fortunate in having been called upon to pay for the Expert only, not for the fulfilment of his really magnificent schemes.”

MOTIF

It is a general impression of a large section of the Home people and the "unco' guid" of Kenya that the African native is being contaminated by the cinema, when, in fact, there is no picture house in East Africa with a native clientèle sufficient to pay the exhibition. The native rarely attends, for the reason that he is neither curious nor understands anything but the broadly comic, and this he is not disposed to pay for.

It is also a common theme of attack upon the Kenya Colonist that he has robbed the African of his land, and by his activities established industry in East Africa to the extent that the native must now, alas! work instead of being permitted to live his traditional life as a savage without interference with his tribal habits.

XVII

NATIVES, FILMS, AND CULTURE

A MEETING of the African Purity League was being held at Liberty Hall, Westminster, presided over by Lord Smith, a late Cabinet Minister, a colleague and friend of Lord Oliver. Among those on the platform were Dr. Keys, whose knowledge of African life was unrivalled, to the extent that he wrote a book—another book—on Africa, supplementing the endless literature on the subject. There were also present the Venerable Archdeacon, the distinguished founder of the Turkhana Taxpayers' Association, and Mr. Ross Macgregor, whose long period of official service in Africa attempting to build bridges earned for him the respect and gratitude of all native Africans, who had marked him down for years as their best benefactor and friend. Theirs had been a labour of love, not a love of labour. There were Canon Prodgers, Mr. Postlethwaite of the Society of Friends for Natives, Colonel Makepeace, the great explorer—who had tramped across Africa armed with a hazel switch, with which sole weapon he had subdued cannibals,

cowed lions and leopards, and annexed a whole province for the Empire—and others.

The immediate subject for discussion was the need to safeguard the innocence of the native African tribesmen and their women from the demoralising type of film shown with perfect safety in Oxford Street to people immune from the disease; but extremely dangerous and infectious to the simple-minded African, as yet unaffected by American picture morals. It was those of the English sort that were demanded. The noble chairman, in the course of opening his subject, said :

“ We are in a fiduciary position with regard to the native African, which behoves us to promote his advancement in the knowledge and customs, thought and habits, of civilised life, so that he progress to attain that mental level permitting him to take his part in controlling the affairs of the land which is his rightful inheritance ever since the days he was ‘ chivvied ’ from pillar to post by other regional savage predatory tribes before him. And this obligation is the more pressing in that without his consent and permission we have occupied certain tracts within the sphere of his migrations and wanderings—jungle regions uninhabited except by wild beasts. Not only have we robbed him of this, but have built

houses therein, founded settlements, created commerce, and generally imposed our peculiar civilised laws upon him without his invitation, desire, or consent. In other words, speaking bluntly, we have made money in his country—profiteers all—just paying him for his labour and services instead of properly granting him at least half the profits derived from our unbidden and unwanted intrusion. We owe the native tribes a lot,” pursued the noble lord, “and the least we can do in return is to repay them in spiritual uplift—if we don’t give them their portion in cash. [Loud cheers.] We must build schools, clothe them in trousers and whatnots. It is our mission to wean them from their pristine savagery. We must teach them religion to take the place of their present simple thoughts—the thoughts of a child of Nature—such as worshipping ancestors, sky, trees, hyenas, snakes, and the like.

“Yet,” continued the chairman thoughtfully, “somehow we mustn’t. Why spoil a perfectly good innocent savage as Nature has cast him, clad in all simplicity, and drag him into the maëlstrom of modern life and thought? Why make him work and adopt civilised habits, exposing him to all the vices of our boasted modernism? Why should the Arcadian savage be spoiled by contact

with European work-a-day settlers; their firearms and shooting, their brutality and energy, the kind of life their married people live nowadays, the thieving and roguery, the womanising, the oaths and unrestrained pleasures of Society at this too immature stage of our boasted civilisation? Were it not better to confine the primitive African to his Native Reserves—fence him round, preserve him in that fruitful region where all is peace and plenty—if not cleanliness? Would it not be better if, like a restive horse, he wore mental blinkers so that no cause be given him to shy at our exuberances, our superfluities, our extravagances? If we pretend any regard for the Africans why not preserve their native innocence, their natural artlessness and picturesque simplicity? [Loud applause.]

“ For instance, coming to our particular business to-night. What comes to the native with pictures? He delves into the very marrow of the life we lead—or are represented to be leading. Why permit him to witness these pictorial travesties of our times, perfect libels on the better life we practise [loud applause], or, let us hope, we all aspire to lead. [Deep silence.] By securing to the natives their own Reserves in perpetuity, out of contact with the hustle and bustle and vice of civilised communities, we preserve for them the means

to repair to their own simple life when tired of work—more or less forced labour [hisses]—imposed on them by our civilised conditions. A real home is secured to them where they may discard their *kansas* and trousers and other civilised trappings; reverting to the simple life of natural promiscuity and traditional sexual rites; free from a white man's more complex notions of sensual indulgences. [Loud applause.]

“And, further, is it not more in accordance with our trust to provide these primitive people with the real British article—the official—a caste traditionally different from the settler, to reside with them and show by Christian example how a white man should really comport himself; how a public school boy behaves; exhibiting all the virtues of an English gentleman without the vices inherent in pioneer rush and settlement? Could the native not sow and plough and become an agriculturist and industrial worker on soil belonging to himself—or his chief, which seems to be the same—without the dubious example of the white adventurer? One has to recognise that an average plantation or cattle ranch requires fairly big capital to develop, in ploughs and tractors, reapers and harrows, cattle dipping and nursing, dairy utensils and cleared paddocks; yet hands

were made before ploughs, and steady work with *pangas* and hoes may till many an acre, though weeds should grow behind the diligent and tired worker." [Applause.]

In similar strain, with such noble thoughts and language, did these worthy, patriotic, and high-minded London publicists harangue their fellows in the noble cause of the oppressed and harried African.

The scene now shifts to Nakuru, where there is a scarcity of native labour to work the farms.

A public meeting had been called to impress upon the Government that something should be done to provide labour, or the Colony would be ruined.

Another noble British peer is haranguing his fellows. He is saying :

" My lords, ladies, and gentlemen " (for two titled scions of noble British houses are present at the meeting, in addition to sundry cadets). " One is bound to respect the high and worthy sentiments and ideals that inspire our kith and kin in England. We, ourselves, or our fathers and many of our relatives, have at one time or another subscribed to and supported the African Society, the Aborigines' Protection Society, and have been staunch upholders of the Church Missionary Society, or a part of that stern Nonconformist

conscience which has helped so materially to stamp character on the British nation. These people are inspired with a spirit that cleanseth the soul. Altruistic in the African cause; always willing to sacrifice their own, or the other fellow's, who have shouldered the white man's burden in effect as well as in speech. [Cheers.] They advocate the rights of the black African with spiritual satisfaction, visualising the backward, dispossessed, down-trodden native walking about Africa in sackcloth and ashes and halos. And two-thirds of this vision may be veritably correct. [Laughter.]

“But we take the rude practical side here. [Loud applause.] It is a peculiar anomaly that the Home people and Government are proud of the progress we exhibit in this, their latest Colony, as reflected in industry, trade, British imports, in local revenue, and finance. They subscribe freely to our loans in the London money market, based upon our prosperity and the prosperity of the country's industry. Yet from another angle these efforts of ours are anathemised as slavery and forced labour. In England work is voluntary, because everybody likes it. Our voluntary labour is ‘forced.’ Yet by no stretch of reasonable imagination is coercion adopted in Kenya—openly or tacitly, officially or privately. Naturally the native is

taxed, but only to the extent of a tithe of what he can earn if he cares to work a cabbage patch in his own Reserves. That he comes out from his Reserves to earn this money among the settlers for preference is eloquent of a great deal. [Loud applause.] This is the kind of coercion we are charged with in England. [Laughter.]

“ One thing is very certain with us here—that the scarcity of labour in this highly productive country is seriously setting the clock back. There are enough potential workers ; but so long as these men live on the labour of their women, selling a cow or a bag of potatoes, a couple of goats or a quarter of an acre of maize, a few fowls or some eggs each year to satisfy the cost of their annual administration, so long will they remain in idleness in their Reserves. [Loud applause.] And are they better off without work ? Certainly not. In spite of the long years of mission work in the country, the administration of the British official, and other influences brought to bear upon them for their betterment, who really lifts them from savagery and indolence ? Why, the settler [loud applause], in the work provided on the farm, the estate, and in industrial and domestic service. [Loud applause.] We are the best and highest civilising influence they have access to ; and it is

the cause of civilisation for which we are working. [Loud applause.] If we did not prosper in ourselves we should not remain here or invite the settlement of others : if we had never come here this land would still remain a jungle and a wilderness, leavened by various oases of bibles and *bomas*."

Thus ran on the noble lord in Kenya, while his august cousin was speaking in England.

Following a high pronouncement by the Premier in England on the evils of the cinema to the natives of Africa, a wave of protest against the exhibition of films had been sounded in the Mother country, an echo of which was repeated in Kenya.

The occasion gave rise to the following letter, sent by a lady correspondent to a Nairobi newspaper :

" SPARE THE NATIVE

" To the Editor.

" SIR,—Rightly do those trustees in England, like our worthy Premier and late distinguished Uganda Governor, animadvert against the serious moral injury done to the simple African by permitting him to attend the cinema. A recent article in a leading London newspaper protests against the millions of unspoilt Africans inhabiting Central Africa being slowly but

surely poisoned by these pictures. But the evil has really only just started. Drastic steps should at once and urgently be taken before it is too late to stop the further spread of this pernicious influence. There are to-day within the equatorial regions millions of natives and perhaps six cinemas. In Kenya and Uganda alone there are about 6,000,000 native Africans. What are the two or three cinemas doing among these impressionable hordes of simple tribesmen? I visited a popular bioscope in Nairobi the other evening; the place was nearly full, mostly of Europeans, with a few Indians, and I counted no less than ten native 'boys.' This number, it is true, is small among millions of potential attendants. But look at the effect, even upon those few! There was a cowboy scene, a cabaret of dancing women in tights, a revolver duel, and a Charlie Chaplin; the Chaplin picture seemed to amuse these simple Africans mildly. But the effect of the women in tights upon these impressionable natives must have been deplorable. They were Kavirondos. Imagine these natives, fresh from their native villages, where the women roam naked in artless style, returning to their kraals and insisting upon their girls wearing tights!

In their nude state these girls go about unnoticed ; but clad in tights, made, perhaps, out of bullock hide, what, indeed, would they reveal ?

“ Some of these natives are our domestic servants. It is one thing to accustom them to bring us our morning tea in bed, observing meanwhile a grave and solemn demeanour ; it is quite another matter to permit them to witness on the screen pictures of giddy girls rudely reclining on couches, clad only in pyjamas !

“ And the shooting and the love-making. One may grant that thousands of natives were employed in the late war in East Africa, many being killed and maimed, for patriotic reasons—a memorial, indeed, has been erected to their memory. But why should peaceful natives be reminded on the screen of the deadly effect of firearms, of which to-day they are entirely ignorant ? If this knowledge spreads we shall hear of murders in Somaliland, killings in Abyssinia, and armed robbery in Kakamega.

“ Save the natives, Mr. Editor, I implore you, through the influence of the Press, from these terrible scenes.”

“PURIST.”

But the natives saved themselves by staying away, not being at all interested in pictures.

MOTIF

The racial problem of Kenya Colony has two aspects —that seen by the man in England who visualises it in long perspective, and that of the other man who resides in the Colony and has the subject very close to him. Perhaps Cape Town is the happy distance medium for correct vision.

XVIII

THE TWO VOICES

THERE are two very distinct views of the native question as applied to Africa (we deal particularly with East Africa here), namely, the Home or British view, and that other aspect held by those who colonise Africa and live permanently among the natives. Broadly speaking, these are fundamentally opposed views, though there are some sane and sensible people in England who agree with the colonists, and a few odd cranks in Africa who take the home view. These two exceptional classes among the British tend to keep the Empire together.

Reviewing the controversy dispassionately and logically, it should be correct to assert that those living on the spot, next and amidst the problem, should know more about the question than those who reside thousands of miles away and in most cases have never set their eyes on an East African native. That is only the empirical or common-sense view. But we know in books and politics that the Briton is as the Frenchman sees him, and the Bolshevik is as viewed in England and America.

Each country prefers it that way. This vicarious view of estimating foreign things was clear enough when we had during the Great War the vision of the Germans as the British estimated them, and an impression of the British from the German pastor's spectacled standpoint. On parallel lines of custom the great authority on native treatment resides in England and its capital, while the resident who hob-nobs with him, speaks his language, and employs him, is entirely wrong in his views. Both protagonists are of good British stock, so there can be nothing in either point of vision traditionally and congenitally to affect these contrasted ideas and conclusions.

The above statement can scarcely be questioned, but the argument is affected in the charge made by the Home person that the British settler is prejudiced and suspect by reason of his admitted self-interest in utilising the native—while the man residing in Manchester doesn't care a continental if the native works or does not work, so long as he produces cotton for the Lancashire mills in his spare moments. People at home are accused by the East African of making the welfare of the native a question of vested interest, particularly those religious philanthropists who suffer from myopia, meaning that, while blind to the great poverty

and distress among the proletariat in England, their far-away thoughts and channels of benevolence take the longer view of spiritually and materially assisting the poor heathen thousands of miles away, who occasionally visits England in a top hat and Oxford bags.

The Home view of the African native postulates an intelligent human being of similar fibre to the Englishman, only black, with the misfortune of centuries of savagery behind him, massacring and being massacred, but all the while craving for the advent of the missionary, or of a paternal civil government, to provide him with means of attaining to that higher life for which he has always yearned, having the necessary qualities nascent within him to grasp and practise.

The colonial view regards the African as a human being with special qualities and faults and vices of his own, such being inherent in the race to which he belongs, in the sense that a race-horse differs in qualities from a Shire, or a poodle from a bloodhound, both varieties of animals belonging to their respective genera. As Kipling has wonderfully put it: "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet"—which applies to the African and European. The European colonist, being better
Qx

acquainted with his qualities and limitations, his mentality and the best cultural treatment to suit his special case, regards the native from a quite different angle from that of the man at Home.

And these two opposed estimations of native character and destiny are propped up and supported by two other fundamentally opposed conclusions and accepted ideas. The Home British view of our African colonial settlement is that the European who emigrates with his small capital and brains—for the man who makes good in his native land has no need to emigrate—goes out as an altruistic, philanthropical, amiable, and devoted ambassador to serve the native of Africa as a kind mentor and friend, for the glory of his unselfish flag. He goes to Africa as a “trustee of the native,” which is the strictly official slogan adopted by all political sorts of British Governments, many times repeated in White Papers and Blue Books. At all white African societies—which appear to consist mainly of people who have never lived in Africa; and of African travellers, officials, and experts who have never colonised Africa—the great thought pervading all utterances and recommendations is “Africa for the native African,” with no time for the European who lives among

them, and by industry and example improves their condition.

Now, the East African aspect—that of the sons and grandsons of these same Home people—is an entirely different view. They agree with the foreign critics of the British, who stigmatise this postulated “trusteeship of the native” as sheer hypocrisy. You cannot have it both ways; you cannot pose as a trustee of the native and push your manufactures and force the native to grow cotton without seeming to have your tongue in your cheek. It is extremely difficult to reconcile the practice of sending younger sons to Africa to make fortunes and proclaim a Pecksniffian ideal of doing all for the sake of the native himself. The younger sons and crowded out family emigrants, being also British, prefer a spade being called a spade, not a crozier or a shepherd’s crook. They themselves do not pose as settling in Africa as trustees for anybody in particular, except themselves, their flag, and their children. And they also consider that the welfare of the native is implied in all these desiderata. But this welfare of the native is not pretended by the colonial type to have been their prime motive in emigrating, such as postulated by these “London Africans.”

So here we have the two opposed aspects and

ideals of the place of the African native in the scheme of things. And what of the native himself? He, indeed, is a much simpler object than visualised by either of his would-be mentors and masters. He is neither a simple-minded elementary soul, ready to absorb our European civilisation in tabloid form, nor is he the ignorant savage of limited intellect and capacity sometimes postulated by the colonial settler who utilises him. He is neither deep nor shallow, neither interested nor incuriously passive. He is a full-blooded human being with the aspect of life limited by his race and tradition and what he understands. In short, the average African is of a race apart from the European or the Asiatic, and will evolve all along his own potential lines of development. A similar diversity in basic trend and predilection exists among the different European nationalities, though the blood alliance between the British, the French, the German, or Italian, is in much closer affinity than are either of these European sorts with the African or the Asiatic. The same principle applies with the African as it does to the Asiatic. Scholars, philosophers, scientists they may aspire to be, but European they are not, either in thought or action, nor will they ever be ethnologically, one is forced to think. It is like

a parallel line that never meets, and in history has never met. Even biologically the latest theory lays down that humankind is not necessarily all derived from the one sapient ancestor source or the one advanced simian. As taught by evolution, similar natural processes exercised upon divergent recessives or variants of common stem origin evolve parallel changes, but not precisely the same type of organism.

If this be accepted, then all the pro-African views of the Home people and the idealistic and visionary pronouncements of those African experts, who have governed by precept but have not experienced the intimate life of the colonist established among the natives, go by the board. Missionaries have their mission, but many, if not most, of this class find themselves compelled in their candid moments to accept a similar view to that of the settler. One may train a race-horse of Arab derivation to run, or a Shire to pull heavy loads; a pointer to point, and a bull-dog to fight; but one can never train a donkey to do what a horse will, or properly domesticate the zebra tribe. A Red Indian has not yet been transformed, after centuries, into a white man, and a Chinaman, one thinks, will never become a real Frenchman.

Hence a pure African will always be distinct,

in thought and action, from the pure Caucasian. The theory that the black African may be trained and developed to approximate to a Christian European type is hopelessly impossible. The Home vision in this direction exasperates the European colonial who knows the strict limitations of the African. Such ideas must go the way of the trusteeship myth—which conclusion does not imply that the Africans are not very fine fellows as a species of humankind. The African is a very robust and virile race if properly trained and cared for. Any African State perchance established by Africans in Africa would never approximate to a similar State founded by the European, however educated such an African people may be. And the same carries in a religious sense.

Pursuing this theme in closer analysis, is it at any time possible artificially to level up peoples, even those homogeneous in race and tradition? A common franchise may be granted to all adults in a nation, implying a common interest and capacity to vote for the good of the nation. But does this theory, reduced to practice, accomplish the actual implication of its adoption? Is the mental capacity, personal experience, and knowledge of a Baldwin, Winston Churchill, a Rosebery or Chamberlain, a

Lloyd George or an Asquith, a Ramsay MacDonald, a Thomas or a Snowden, just equal in political value to that of any man in the street? Is each view of every man or woman of all ages and experience of equal value to the nation? Of course it cannot be; it is the political leaders who have to slog to gain a rival following among this inert mass of thought, just as planets of superior volume attract particles and atoms in their vicinity. Was it not Plato who fashioned an ideal republic where philosophers alone reigned supreme?

But the extension of democracy in every nation has ordered it so that every man or woman, penniless or wealthy, wise or foolish, wicked or good, useful or useless, shall be called in and given a voice—a voice that merely swells the power and increases the sphere of action of those who by their higher mental capacity to rule or terrorise rise to the dominant top. It is such a false but useful principle of governance that the Home people would extend to Africa, racially applying it to a community with much deeper and divided levels of social and political fitness even than in England—which is saying a great deal. Just as a typical costermonger is to a recognised statesman, so one may multiply a thousand times the difference dividing an African native from the European

mental level. In both cases the strata run in parallel lines, which, as far as the past history of the world shows us, will never merge.

A sudden fault, such as a world cataclysm may create—another ice or vapour age—might submerge the one and raise the other through the slow and painful process of evolution; but this is another and very remote story.

One may cut and polish a rough diamond or a ruby or jet, but the mere effect of polishing does not alter the basic composition of the original state or alter the quality of the individual stone. And even a composite or freak mixture of these basic substances will only vary the quality of each sort in some decided measure. Humankind, black, white, yellow, or red, stands on a similar basis of comparison. All mankind may conceivably be derived from the one similar ancestor, but the processes of time have fixed different races, just as a diamond and coal are mainly derived from the same basic substance, yet have such widely different appearances and qualities.

But the other voice contends differently. It argues that a soul is common to all mankind—why they confine soul to mankind and not equally to other intelligent animals is not clear—therefore, the black and white are brothers. It is common

knowledge that all mankind has the power to walk, talk, act, think, pay taxes, fight, and agitate; consequently, that a common equality of treatment may appear logical and fair. People who think in this strain deliberately ignore the difference between walking to the City each day and walking to the next kraal; building a ship and digging out a canoe; studying Shakespeare and learning the best way to extract a jigger from one's toe; paying taxes voluntarily to serve the community and paying taxes because the *askari* has ordered it; fighting for liberty and fighting for scalps; conquering for national ambition and waging war for more women in the wigwam.

Thus are the two voices disputing; meanwhile the world rolls on, destiny prevails, the cleverest rise on top, and the submerged sink. Races survive and others disappear. The white man increases in science, and the black man, safeguarded from himself, increases in number. But the order of natural changes on the earth is so slow that it does not count in practical politics.

MOTIF

This sketch seeks to portray the different varieties of the feminine sex in these days of feminine evolution, whose course is not by any means spent and whose goal is on the lap of the gods. In Kenya society we have the varieties at close hand for inspection, reflection, and retrospection.

XIX

THE M O T F E M I N I N E

DROP a weighted net into the sea to plumb its depth, and collect within close-knit folds an average assortment of its animalcula and atoms ; its jellies, crustacea, and plasma. The resultant mass of organic life, if divided and dissected, may be accepted as a specimen of the submarine inhabitants of that special world of ocean life. If the slime were placed under a microscope and examined at leisure in a limited space, much might be revealed in varied individual form and structure to interest the naturalist and student in marine biology. It may be acknowledged that within that meagre net all types that the bed of the ocean harbours would not be contained, but one might fairly conclude that an approximate content of the ocean bottom may thereby be realised.

It is on a parallel line of thought that life on board a passenger liner reveals to the observer the species of humankind that frequents and inhabits any particular region of the distant world to which the particular liner is bound.

Occupied with such thoughts, the observer lolls about deck, attends meals in the saloon, takes his whisky in the smoking saloon, and otherwise does his best to kill time which, with an active man, seems wasted in such a narrow world of no particular consequence or interest to him; fleeting contact with beings who have their own individual paths and orbits moving along parallel lines which rarely converge.

It was on such an occasion of promiscuity of souls of both sexes within this limited sect of companionship that these thoughts were registered.

The ship was bound for Mombasa, and the majority of passengers on board were either visitors to, or residents in, Kenya. The men, phlegmatic men, did the usual thing under these confined conditions; smoked and drank, read and yawned, pursued the women, and gambled. These were easily classed in their species and genera. The real interest, of rather tantalising pursuance, rested in the women on board; the sex which varied so much in garb, in physical beauty, degrees of merit, in conversation, and effervescence.

First and foremost, the centre of great interest with her own sex as well as with the men, was a Mrs. Barclay. This female specimen was a lady just as turned out by *Eve* (we mean the periodical,

not the Eve of period). She was very tall, very slim, highly polished (socially and physically), yielding the impression, at a moderate distance, of a long-stemmed, delicate lily. Dressed in a most charming and expensively artistic style, her gowns clung around her spare form in long yards of shimmering material. At dinner her mode exhibited a slender and graceful neck of considerable length, with as much of her bosom bare as might be safely exhibited to the vulgar gaze. Her skin showed a deadly creamy white, just as seen in a beautifully enamelled miniature. With hair immaculately dressed, feet perfectly shod, hose of the finest delicate silk, she reminded the observer of a picture from an illustrated fashion magazine. Seated at the saloon table, her hands, wavy and swaying, with their long, tapering fingers continuously touching her bare shoulders, her bodice, her hair, and ornaments, or depending listlessly from her wrists with her elbows on table, she became a fascinating study. Her fingers were adorned with some beautiful diamond rings which sparkled as she swayed, while a fleeting glance from her large round eyes assured her that the diamonds were there and being observed.

The lady was travelling with her husband, a quiet, good-looking young Society man, much a

minor constellation in her entourage. Rumour repeated variously—that she was extremely well-bred, that she was an actress, and that she was colonial born.

This specimen of the ooze of our human ocean was great at dancing, and affected a style which despised the swaying two-step, and affected the jerks of the old-time polka hop. Her long, tapering legs pranced in athletic measure as she discovered a tall, slim partner who affected the same style. They became the fascination of all beholders, for both danced extremely well in spite of their unconventional gait.

Her face was not what might be termed pretty, though, as a specimen of humanity, she was decidedly elegant and stylish. With eyes widely open, long thin mouth, white rows of teeth, broad peaky nose, and long eyelashes, she had an appearance of a beautiful ostrich. Probably under thirty years of age, there was still mature vigour in her frame, though some fatigue seemed to follow the orgies of the evening and night before. The problem she presented to the observer was: Where had she come from? whither was she bound? what was her class and origin? into what would she ultimately develop?

As a working hypothesis one visualised a girl

of wealthy parentage artificially endowed with all the veneer and accomplishments of the world—the fashionable feminine world—or carried off straight from the variety stage to an aristocratic flat or home. There were many charming children on board, but she was never observed to notice them. The lady was evidently not of the mould of a potential mother or family woman. Perchance, living a life of pose and make-up, as age may overtake her she was pretty well bound to reap the kind of pleasure in life that she was sowing in her young days. On the other hand, perchance, behind this seeming artificiality this subject under the scalpel of observation might possess more grit and common-sense than appeared in her frame and pose. But the whole estimation becomes purely hypothesis, based on inferences which generally prove reliable in the thoughts of any experienced observer.

Then another type, commonly known as “the vampire.” This lady, by a curious sequence, was bracketed with the valet of a fashionable gentleman whom she accompanied on the voyage. But the error, unhappily—or reverse—seemed to give a clue to her station in society. Mrs. Nelson (whose husband seemed to be a nebulous fiction or a past experience) was also of the “Society”

type of very debatable classification. Past her youth, though still escaping middle age, she was moulded on the lines of a Hebe. With a clear skin, bold and self-assured eyes, her generously rounded form, bright, fashionable garb, and rather sensual mouth seemed to label her rather unmistakably. A hearty trencherman, her favourite beverage was champagne, while a cigarette was her constant companion. Nothing wrong was assumed (though what the other women thought of her might have proved interesting). Anyhow, whilst perfectly legitimate and correct, or otherwise, her sexual blemish was the possession of a harsh voice. Nature's danger signal!

Then there was "Pussy." The first sight of Pussy was a little bit of fluff huddled up in furs coiled on a deck chair. She looked charming, coiled up, with a peep of fair hair and one blue eye shining from among her wraps. When seen in full feminine form and considerable slender length there could be no mistake about her prettiness. The young lady soon became popular among the gallant "boys" on board, and joined the exclusive circle of wealth and fashion. Report had it she was proceeding to join her fiancé in holy wedlock, but odds were given and taken that she would never reach him as a bride. In a modest quiet way she

joined the magic circle and had the young swells at her feet. When the vampire, tired of the night before, was indisposed and kept to her cabin, Pussy had the honour of her place at the private table of the man of fashion, who plied her with small talk and champagne. As the voyage rolled on Pussy got her fur somewhat ruffled, and commenced to develop a disappointed look. It was a fortunate day for this young girl when the journey ended, and she veritably became the bride she was intended to be.

Then there were the "Twins," or "Twinks," as variously called. The Twinks were two gawky young ladies fresh from the colonial backwoods, travelling to see the world. They were designated "Twinks" because of their fondness for variegated colours and fancy costumes. One may visualise these girls running long-legged and bare-legged on the veld, climbing trees like monkeys; father a wealthy cattle king who determined at rather a late date to give them some education, and as grown-up young women bidding them, like young heifers, to go and run loose in the world and have a good time. They were not necessarily twins, but were so termed because they hung together throughout the voyage, not being able to place themselves among any particular class of passenger.

A different specimen of the modern Eve was the
Rk

"boy-girl"; the youthful specimen with a boy's stride. Her hair was closely bobbed before the time this modern fashion had become common with the versatile sex. She also affected the male cut of garment. With freckled complexion, merry frank eyes, she startled the table at meals with her loud, boisterous laugh. She also danced as a boy-girl; not attracting the male sex, she more frequently took another girl as a partner. A very striking type of what is apt to be turned out under latter-day female emancipation.

Then we had the real thing in girls; just the kind of things one reads of in novels. A broad, open, and pretty face just entering womanhood. Presenting a delightful feminine figure, her lines through her soft, flimsy, tropical garments half revealing a Venus of eighteen years. A lovely and athletic young lady, her deck tennis was a picture to watch, with her free step and agile movement. A young official on board was her constant companion, and she plainly seemed to like him. A well-matched and youthful couple too. The future of such a girl would seem likely to travel along happy domestic lines; the mother of a family, enjoying as much happiness as the ordinary decent living person may legitimately lay claim to in this "vale of tears."

Still another type; the calm, rather serious English girl somewhat out of her teens, *petite* and shapely; healthy complexion; a veritable young woman of the non-romantic, intelligent type. This mature young woman was accompanied by her brother, equally typical on the male side of the robust, right-minded Englishman, with all the prejudices and qualities of his race. This young woman was always immaculately, but simply, dressed; in future years—one desires to think—the worthy wife of a morally correct man, earning the respect of her circle.

Then we had the two young matrons with families under their wing, their husbands quite a fitting type for such mature and charming womanhood; both proper men of good position in the colony. Rather peculiarly, these two English mothers were much alike in their habits. Both had maids with them for the children, yet equally did they devote most of their time to their little broods. Both dressed simply and plainly, and equally seemed to enjoy that calm repose of manner and appearance which would have made them popular if travelling alone without their pretty encumbrances. One must deem these still young women the happiest of their sex aboard, as far as appearances went; which is quite against

the modern teaching to avoid the troubles of child-birth and thus obtain more freedom and greater happiness.

And there were other types of less distinguished womanhood on board, such as the two hospital nurses of plain and simple demeanour. In their modest way they had fitted themselves out for the first-class journey, coming out at dinner-time in diverse costumes of some pretence, but rather archaic in style.

This microcosm of womanhood on board did appear to be typical of feminine life in the world and in the Colonies. There were those who pursued pleasure and travelled through life at a breathless pace, yet never seeming to reach that calm harbour of real happiness as one understands the term in its fuller sense. It did seem that the happiest were the most decorous and respectable, despite the sneers of the fast ones and perhaps the latent envy of those not in the whirlpool of "pleasure." As Aristotle has it, "Happiness belongs to those who are contented," and if one is always in pursuit of a thing the inference must be that one never catches it up and, consequently, is never contented.

M O T I F

The genus settler has proverbially to be found in the settlement around Nakuru ; the records of the famous Nakuru hostelry of the past have been luridly illustrative of high spirits, sporting orgies, ragging, rank and fashion in shorts, and women in breeches ; where Cockneys and farmer boys meet honourables and titled men on equal ground. To-day things are toning down to more formal social exclusiveness and conventional intercourse.

XX

A KENYA TAVERN

A BIG meeting had been held at Nakuru, that city of the lake embedded in the Rift Valley, from whose soda-steeped waters radiate in all directions ponderous ridges rising to mountain heights, in their turn overshadowed by giant escarpments. The vast Menangai, an extinct volcano, with its enormous slopes and great cavity—resembling a rugged hollow tooth—holds the town towards the lake, whose uncanny and fishless waters serve to harbour herds of hippo and swarms of pink-feathered flamingo, still preserved as living witnesses to the reality of this bit of ancient and savage Africa.

Around Nakuru are many homesteads, estates of leading settlers, lords, generals, admirals, majors, captains, and the like, all cast in khaki, flannels, and greasy hats. Motors, from Packards to Fords, are all over the place, and the big straggling hotel—that place of early orgy tradition—is the centre of arrival and departure of motley groups of settlers and their adventurous wives.

Kenya has been termed a "Public School"

Colony. If every settler is not a sprig of nobility or a gentleman's son the atmosphere around Nakuru seems to be affected by the early and long settlement of these classes in the neighbourhood. One noble lord, together with an old colonial pioneer, built and once kept the Nakuru Hotel, and their successors in the proprietorship of the hostelry have none of them been typical publicans—with the natural corollary of enjoying varied financial successes and reverses at the game of hotel keeping.

At this particular time the hotel was busy. A meeting had been called to consider the shortcomings of the Agricultural Department. An official of the veterinary branch had turned up, and after a vote of non-confidence in the Department had been passed unanimously, he had explained the whys and wherefores of the Department's limitations, to the cordial satisfaction of those who had just passed solemn censure. The crowd had dispersed to have a drink at the local club or hotel bar.

The manager was in his office, "counting out his money" at a desk adjacent to an open window which served as an enquiry bureau. The long veranda was occupied by various travellers and visitors, natives, dogs, motor cans, valises, a

snarling cheetah, splintery chairs of native make, and the like. To the office window strides a tall, well-set, middle-aged person, clad in dirty khaki shirt and shorts, and otherwise untidy in appearance. "Jones," says he, "I want a room." "Name," says Jones. "Beecham," says he. "How do you spell it—like the pill-merchant or otherwise? You had better write your name in the visitors' book." "Oh, I can't worry. I am Major Willoughby Beauchamp." "Yes, sir, the Hon. Beauchamp?" The Major curtly nods. (Pause. The manager rummages his desk.) "Excuse me, Major, there is a little account owing by you now for a long time. I would be greatly obliged if you would settle." "Look here, I have not come here to be insulted. Surely I am good enough! I will never set my foot again in your beastly hotel." "Well, Major, if you don't pay, perhaps it would be just as well." Major, in high umbrage, takes the key of his room, stays a night, and disappears in the morning, leaving an increased bill.

Meanwhile another tall, handsome looking, well-clad person is waiting impatiently for the bulky Major to finish. "Oh, how do, Jones; got my washing ready?" (Jones, meanwhile, is proceeding to make up his cash for the bank.) Leaving his respectable pile of notes on the table by

the window, he fumbles about behind a dark partition for the settler's washing. "Yes, Darke, I think this is yours. Two shirts and a collar, 80 cents to pay." "Oh, old chap, I haven't a bean on me; just give me a chit." "Come, Darke, I absolutely can't take a chit for 80 cents (9d.). Pay when you come in next time." "You can cash me a cheque, if you like!" "Oh, never mind, am rather busy just now." Just as the manager is resuming his count of takings a black face grins at the window. "*Bwana*, the water has stopped running and two people want a bath!" Rings a bell. "Call De Souza!" Up comes a Goan steward. (There are no waiters in East Africa, they are all stewards.) "Go, De Souza, to the Provincial Commissioner and ask him what has become of the water supply."

The manager resumes counting his notes, when a meek-looking little lady comes to the window. "Excuse me, Mr. Jones, what time does the train leave to-night?" Manager rises from his desk and looks at the time-table. "At 8.45." "Thanks." As the lady leaves she is jostled by another client trying to get at the window. "Beg pardon," is exchanged, and another "Beg pardon," as the little lady in her confusion cannons against a lady with luggage looming in the offing. "Can

I get a bed to-night ? ” says this lady through the window. “ Oh, certainly ; are you alone ? ” “ I have another lady with me. ” “ Would you like a room together ? ” “ Well, not very well. I expect my husband to arrive by car to fetch me. ” “ No. 16. Boy, take this lady to No. 16. ” Boy whispers, “ A man asleep with his boots on in No. 16. ” “ Oh, take her to 11A. How did he get in ? ” (*sotto voce*). “ Through the window last night. ”

After giving directions to deal with the sleeping interloper, the manager is just about to re-count his money when a cheery face appears at the window. “ Hullo, Jim ; to-day’s paper arrived yet ? ” “ No, expect it in a minute or two. Are you playing golf this afternoon ? ” “ No, going out with Miss White instead. ” And a breezy conversation ensues, only interrupted by the Goan cook arriving to tell the manager that no milk had come.

Then the lady housekeeper bustles in. “ Do you know, Mr. Jones, how many people slept in rooms 3 and 4 ? ” Manager looks up his daily muster roll. “ These rooms were let to Mr. Bezuidenhout and three friends. ” “ Well, nine slept in them. ” “ Good gracious, how did they all sleep, and who let them in ? ” “ Oh, these Dutch people engaged these rooms, and after dark six more of their pals crept in. They all left before breakfast without paying. ”

The steward returns from the Provincial Commissioner and says that the water had been cut off by the foreman to repair a pipe, and this gentleman had gone to lunch forgetting to turn it on again, but it was now all right !

Another native servant appears with excited gestures to inform the manager that the hose pipe filling the boiler that feeds the baths had burst. All the water escaping in the yard. Sends for the plumber.

Just then rolls up an elderly spare man with a beard. " Good morning, Admiral." " Good morning, Jones. Can you help me with a tin of petrol ? " " Oh, I'll see, Admiral." And the venerable British admiral departs, satisfied. Manager resumes his count. Just as he has got a cash total and is ready to pay in, a tall, dissipated-looking individual with trousers too short for his long legs peers loftily through the window. " What can I do for you, Lord George Ware-Gordon ? " " Good morning, Mr. Jones, has the Crown Prince arrived from Timbora ? " " No, the Prince only left this morning with two ladies ; he could not be back yet." And the manager turns again to his desk, makes another dive behind the partition, and hands a person at the window the choice of three old hats which had been left on the premises. But the missing hat was not there.

A heavily burdened car arrives from Eldoret. "Oh, how do you do, Colonel Trotter." "What's the road like?" "Oh, we had to have chains on coming down the ravine, though it is as dry as a bone here." "Did you meet Commander Sampson on the road?" "Yes, Captain Findlater was with him. They were bogged in the forest, being dragged out by a team of oxen by Major Dunn's place. By the by, can you cash me a cheque for 150s.?" "Well, I will see. I may manage it." The manager goes to the office safe, counts out the change, and accepts the cheque. "By the way, Colonel, you have forgotten to sign it." "Well, so I have. I beg your pardon." Signs the cheque.

Meanwhile a grubby looking individual stands by to get to the window. Seizing his chance he thrusts a dirty canvas bag through the aperture. "Say, Jones, just put this money in the safe for me until to-morrow." "All right." (Chucks the bag of money uncounted into the open safe.) At that moment a box body car drives up with a young man and his wife, a popular and well-known couple. After the two have descended from the car, they extricate from the baggage two big dogs, and are about to enter the hotel when another man lounging on the veranda asks what that was

in the *kikapu* (a native basket for carrying vegetables). "Did they have pups in there?" "Oh, no," hastily replies the young wife, "I quite forgot. That's my baby." And the convulsive basket, from which smothered gurgles are issuing, becomes extricated from the oil cans and port-manteaux. Then a departing guest comes to pay his bill. "Forty-five shillings," says the manager. "Did you sign any chits." "Yes," is the reply. "I had two beers." This brings a search for the chits. A big batch of envelopes is taken from a pigeon-hole and conned through for the client's two chits. "Oh, never mind," said the client. "Tear them up when you find them. I can't wait."

Another car splutters up with a weird-looking slim person riding on the mud-guard. On the car stopping, this curious individual vaults lightly to the ground, and is revealed as a young person with close-cropped hair, clad in shirt and riding-breeches, with the face and shapely features of a young lady. A dazzling smile lights up her countenance as she opens the door for the Prince and his two lady companions.

Yet another car follows, with a young, daring looking woman driving, and two men inside. "Look," says the manager to a friend sitting on

his desk in the office. "Here comes Lady Dorothea Frere-Butler with her new husband." At that precise moment the native houseboy comes to the window and asks where the memsahib should be put with her two husbands. A roar of laughter, for the lady travelled *en parti de trois*, carrying with her in gleeful triumph her former husband and her present one, all the best of pals.

With motor-cars arriving and departing, the entrance to the hotel, with its island of rocky-looking flower-garden, becomes filled with dust. But a veritable cloud now appears, under cover of which is observed a lot of animal hoofs. "Where are those animals coming to?" yells the manager. At the same moment a *shenzi* native, picturesquely clad in a dirty blanket and a broad grin, approaches the window and presents a note. "What the —, etc., does this boy want?" says the choking manager. He opens the note and reads as follows :

"Manager, Nakuru Hotel.—I am sending this little mob of cattle in for the train in the morning. Please put them up for the night and charge me with the cost."

Yells of laughter from the window audience. And this yields a bird's-eye view of Nakuru settlers and their belongings and customs.

MOTIF

Just a dream—but a real one.

X X I

THE APE-LIKE MAN

DREAMS are fugitive and quite unaccountable in direction. That one asserts despite the new Freudian psychology that speaks in terms of " suppressions," " complexes," " libidos," and such like occult jargon. Most dreams have nothing to do with anything one is concerned with; fleeting visions of the brain excited by boiled lobster, lying on one's back, or other physical manifestations while the creature slumbers. Dogs are known to dream and yelp while asleep.

But occasionally, very rarely, one does dream a connected or coherent story; such dreams in biblical phraseology might be termed inspiration or revelation. But even these ultra-vivid imaginings of the slumbrous soul are quickly lost to memory unless some coincidence connects them with some event occurring immediately after—sometimes called prevision or communing with the spirits of the dead—or otherwise a more mundane and practical course is taken of registering the dream on paper upon awakening. It is in the latter

category that the following falls, put on record before it was forgotten. The dream eventuated in Kenya, hence its inclusion here.

It was on the edge of a typically East African forest, with its tall, fantastic timber, thick undergrowth, twisted long yellow grass of last season's growth, and occasional green glades where fire had burnt the dry and old foliage, giving the young grass a chance to make a new-born appearance. On an open space at the edge of an escarpment, with steep slopes descending sharply to the lower and more broken country, were assembled a company of Europeans, evidently a *safari* party. The group consisted of three or four men and one female.

They were gazing intently upon a neighbouring headland jutting out from the adjacent forest edge further along the escarpment, observing a huge ape disporting himself in the open, apparently quite oblivious of the presence of white people in his vicinity.

"That's a big fellow," said one of the party, as he lowered his field glasses after a long look at the creature.

Then the woman, a fair young matron clad in female *safari* costume, remarked: "Yes, I have seen this fellow before, and watched him almost

daily"—for the party had their camp close by the post of observation.

What attracted, yet repelled, in the brute, was his grotesque resemblance to a man, more so than the average gorilla.

The party kept a careful watch, and stayed a few days longer on the spot for the set purpose of watching this umbrageous individual, which at times seemed almost to beckon them to approach.

At last curiosity conquered fear, and the party resolved to work round to the distant spot of his appearance and endeavour to surprise him at close quarters. Sure enough, the animal was in his accustomed place, and the party cautiously approached to within a few yards. A strange phenomenon then happened. The ape spoke to them in a language akin to their own, and their astonishment increased as they observed for the first time many more of the species coming from the forest glades. The arch-ape stood well over six feet, had a most forbidding appearance with small eyes cunningly, almost quizzingly, peering from beneath his cavernous beetle brows. He said, with as much of a smile as his prognathous countenance would permit, "We, also, have been watching your party, as you have been watching us."

A palaver then followed, to which the woman was listening curiously. The ape as he conversed moved his long hairy arms nervously, uneasily shifting his position. All at once the huge, ape-like man brushed behind the woman, trod on her foot, and disarranged her dress. Starting with fright and horror, she called to one of the men to escort her, and beat a hasty retreat.

As the two fugitives threaded the forest in the direction of their camp they heard terrible shouts and fighting behind them, which made the woman almost frantic with fear, her companion endeavouring in vain to intercept and reassure her. Their fears redoubled when they heard the apes in pursuit. In blind flight the woman stumbled along between the thick underwood, when suddenly she disappeared, having fallen into a deep hidden pit with precipitous sides, of the nature of an animal trap. Seeking the woman in vain, and observing the apes hot on his heels, the man squeezed himself through the undergrowth, changed his course, and sought shelter under a deep cavern among the rocks overlooking the escarpment.

Days or weeks had passed; the fugitive European subsisting as well as he could on berries or any other edible food he could discover, until

one day he became aware that the apes were on his track in close proximity. They hailed him to approach, saying no harm would befall him as they wanted him to visit the woman, who was well and alive among them. Somewhat reassured, and weak with hunger, the man went forth, joined the party of apes, and was conducted to the abandoned camp. Here he observed with astonishment that the erstwhile naked apes were clothed in man's garments. They had their ape-like faces clean-shaven; their bare skin showing nearly white. After a few words, ordering the man to wait, the arch-ape left, and returned with the woman. Stepping forward to greet her, the man observed with horror that the woman regarded him with a vacant stare as if unconscious of his presence. He turned fiercely round to the arch-ape, and asked him what he had done to her.

"Oh," replied the strange being, suddenly metamorphosed into a dry, sardonic philosopher, "I have been making an ape of her. She is now my wife." And he continued satirically: "She has lost your human consciousness and is not a white woman now. Next door to an idiot. All her old memory has gone. Fright did it. Her present state is that of a clean mirror, a clear canvas. Her consciousness will revive, ape-fashion,

later on. Human nature gets accustomed to its environment, which reacts stronger than any other influence upon the human spirit. You, man, may be proud of your knowledge and your civilisation ; but, shaken rudely and dwelling among us, in time your habits would change, your thoughts would alter with your habits, and you would revert to the state of your primeval ancestors. We apes and you men are not so far divided as you imagine. If it takes untold centuries to evolve a human from an ape, it takes a very short period of time for a human to revert to the brute stage. For the alliance and the kinship between our two species are permanent and fundamental. The mental advancement of you humans is but superficial and external, disappearing quickly under retrogressive conditions. I and my fellows have our traditions of civilisation, from which stage we have fallen by having been driven to the woods and leading a savage life, where might reigns as right and the weakest go to the wall. When I first saw this woman I was determined to possess her and make her one of ourselves. Fright has made her fall even below our stage of intelligence ; when she awakens, the only reflection to be thrown upon her vacant mind will be ape life and customs, and her children shall be apes."

Then I woke up with a great fear and intense horror, for it seemed to me, and seems to me still, that what the ape said of human reversion to brute type under savage environment was nearer the truth than we humans care to confess to ourselves.

MOTIF

“ Asking Singapore ” is a parody on the present and past pioneering days of the Kenya Government, always keen to enquire into and to apply exotic conditions to what is done in other and totally different places of the world. Precedents are useful as guides to those who would handle the present. In Kenya these searchers for precedents in other climes and other communities have frequently gone mad, such as proposing to ask Singapore.

XXII

ASKING SINGAPORE

WE of Kenya are a mighty people. Obviously we must be. Else how could we, with the utmost sangfroid, without preconsideration or premeditation, approach such a mighty subject as the conversion of our premier port into a duty free area?

Of course we had the sense to ask Singapore. . . . But this anticipates somewhat.

How the subject arose no man knoweth. Possibly no man ever will. One shrewdly suspects that no man careth particularly. The mine was sprung suddenly. So suddenly, in fact, was the charge set that, when the explosion came, Kenya was shocked into the consciousness that something, somewhere, somehow had been going on. Those capable of thinking at all after the shock sat down to puzzle it out. Those rendered *hors de combat* by the explosion wondered what had hit them.

Actually, the mine was sprung in the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce.

The Mombasa Chamber of Commerce is, not

unnaturally, situated in Mombasa. Mombasa is the port town of Kenya—the Liverpool of East Africa, some of its inhabitants like to call it—without apologies to Liverpool.

There were no overtures, no prelude. Following a bald intimation in the agenda of an ordinary general meeting, the Chamber, wiping off other matters of considerable importance with airy insouciance, dug deeply into the question of Mombasa becoming a free port. The great difficulty being that no one seemed to know what a free port really was.

Therefore, the Chamber decided to ask Singapore. But this is anticipating.

Fortunately, the Commissioner of Customs, having noticed the startling thing on the agenda, attended the meeting. He came armed with a sheaf of facts—and fancies—and, like Curtius and the chasm, proceeded to dive right into it. He shattered the case for a free port before it had been presented. He showed how absurd the idea was—before anyone had been told what the idea was. He demolished the arguments for Mombasa being freed from the thralldom of Customs—before these arguments had been put forward. In fact, he won the battle before it was lost—because no one knew anything about the subject except that

there was a prospect of Mombasa securing cheaper beer and baccy.

The subject of a free port being such a vital one, it may not weary the reader to read what the Commissioner of Customs said—how he shattered the walls of Jericho at one shrill blast of his trumpet of opposition and compelled the Chamber of Commerce to ask Singapore. Which, however, is anticipating. As reported in the *Mombasa Times* :

“ The Commissioner of Customs briefly introduced the subject by referring to a memorandum which he had prepared. He read the memorandum, which is as follows :

“ 1. The term ‘ free port ’ is capable of several interpretations. Webster defines it as (a) ‘ a port where goods may be received and shipped free of Customs duty, or (b) a port where goods are received from ships of all nations under equal conditions as respects rates of duty, etc.’ A somewhat more precise definition is contained in the report of a recent American Tariff Commission which interprets the terms ‘ free port ’ or ‘ free zone ’ as being ‘ an isolated, enclosed, and policed area in or adjacent to a port of entry, without resident population, furnished

with the necessary facilities for lading and unloading, for supplying fuel and ships' stores, for storing goods and re-shipping them by land and water, an area in which goods may be landed, stored, mixed, blended, re-packed, manufactured, and re-shipped without the intervention of Customs officials. It is equally subject with adjacent regions to all laws relating to public health, vessel inspection, postal service, labour conditions, immigration, and, indeed, everything except Customs.'

" 2. The conditions adumbrated in the second part of Webster's definition are already fulfilled so far as East African ports are concerned, and this aspect of the matter may therefore be disregarded, attention being concentrated on ' free ports ' in the more generally accepted sense of the term.

" 3. So far as the American definition is concerned, this is substantially accurate so far as it details the functions and characteristics of actually existing free ports. It suffers however in the following respect, viz., that there are cases in which a free port does support a ' resident ' population, e.g. Gibraltar, Hong Kong, and Aden.

LIMITATIONS

“ 4. ‘ Free port towns,’ as opposed to ‘ free port areas ’ and ‘ free port districts,’ are, in fact, the earliest manifestations of this system, dating back to Livorno (1547), followed by Genoa (1575), Naples (1633), Venice (1661), Marseilles, Gibraltar, Trieste and Fiume, Ancona and Messina. The Hanseatic towns only became free ports contemporaneously with the development of the German Zollverein. The growth of national sentiment on the one hand and the development of administrative technique on the other, are responsible for the gradual replacement of ‘ free port towns ’ by ‘ free port areas ’ and finally by ‘ free port districts,’ the only free port town in Europe at the present time being Gibraltar. To quote an eminent authority (Ehrenberg) on this subject, ‘ the free port town will only remain in small states without a hinterland, in isolated places serving transit trade, and especially in half or wholly uncultivated countries.’

EXEMPTION FROM TAXES

“ 5. A closer examination of the factors which tend to restriction of the ‘ free ’ area will

show very clearly that powerful arguments exist against the exemption of a considerable and not unimportant section of the community from state taxation imposed in other portions of the state, and the same argument to a lesser degree applies in respect of specially favourable treatment of a particular area.

“ 6. In manufacturing countries, the delimitation of an area within which raw or partly manufactured materials otherwise subject to duty may be manipulated without Customs control has much to recommend it, but in non-manufacturing territories the advantages are less apparent, unless overseas trade is confined almost entirely to transit or transshipment traffic.

“ 7. Thus the principle of a ‘ free port area ’ is applied to the transit sheds and transshipment godowns at the port, the principle of suspension of payment of duty until goods are required for home consumption being extended to the whole territory by the application of ‘ transit ’ and ‘ bonded warehouse ’ regulations.

FREE TRADE ALREADY

“ 8. At the port of Mombasa, which serves virtually the whole of Kenya and Uganda and

a portion of Tanganyika Territory and the Belgian Congo, the main imports are ultimately for home consumption, and all exports are free. Simple regulations governing transit, transshipment, and bonded traffic are in active operation, and single payment of duty on goods destined for Tanganyika Territory is now possible either at the port of entry or the Customs station of destination. In this manner all the major benefits of a 'free trade area' are already secured, and very little additional advantage would be likely to accrue were a free trade area to be established at the port.

" 9. Very considerable difficulties from an administrative point of view would inevitably follow the conversion of, say, the port area into a 'free port area,' and these practical difficulties would almost certainly operate to the ultimate detriment of the port.

RESTRICTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES

" 10. It is obvious that, if a 'free port area' were established, a rigid examination and check of all persons and goods leaving that area would be necessary in order to maintain a proper safeguard over the Customs revenue. Consequently,

the venue of Customs examination and check would be removed from the transit sheds (where supervision is relatively a simple matter, and a ship's cargo can be balanced against corresponding Customs documents within three weeks from the arrival of the vessel) to the railway despatching stations, dock gates, etc., where check would necessarily be more onerous and probably less efficient. Difficulties not now encountered in regard to a proper check over restricted or prohibited exports would also be experienced. So far as the general Customs accounting system is concerned, many grave disadvantages would follow the establishment of a 'free port area,' as a periodical stock-taking of goods within the area would be impracticable, and for this reason a proper audit check of imports, as shown on ships' manifests against final clearances from Customs control, would be impossible.

OPPOSED TO SCHEME

" II. As regards the possible claim that the establishment of a 'free port area' within the port of Mombasa would attract additional traffic, I submit that this is highly problematical. If dues are reasonable, and the regulations

governing entrepôt trade are simple, geographical position coupled with good port facilities will provide sufficient inducement for all traffic which can properly be served by the port, without recourse to other expedients, the advantages of which are theoretical rather than practical.

“ 12. On the above grounds I find myself unable to recommend the adoption of any suggestion that Mombasa shall be made a ‘ free port.’ ”

It was noticeable that when the Commissioner had so briefly had his say, the meeting was very subdued. Having heard the defence before it had put forward the prosecution, it was somewhat peeved with itself. Still, it valiantly tackled the problem. For example, the vital aspects of the revolutionary change proposed affected it strangely. What about picnic parties to the mainland? Were Mombasa a free port, would not this mean that every picnic hamper would have to be examined before it left Mombasa Island. Joy among picnickers! The social life of the island ruined. Or the man on a walking tour along the railway line would have to turn his pockets inside out, lest he carried with him a bottle of the brew of Bonnie Scotland or an extra quid of tobacco.

An intolerable position! A free port. Where would the *freedom* come in? Better far to remain as things were. Better that the Customs persecute visitors than that the island lose its past rôle. As for the lesser problems such a change would create on the country as a whole, that appeared to be the country's look out. Somebody would have to suffer, of course. Somebody always suffers when a revolution happens.

Thus, baffled, the Chamber decided to ask Singapore. Which, however, is anticipating.

One gathered from the discussions, however, that the free port question *had* been discussed, *sub rosa*, in the circles of the mighty. Even His Excellency the Governor had shown his interest. And the elected members, one learned, had favoured the idea. Perhaps the picturesqueness of it had appealed to them. Perhaps the thought that Mombasa might be quoted cheek-by-jowl with Singapore—which the Chamber decided to ask, this, however, being anticipating—Hong Kong, and Hamburg influenced those in high places. Whatever the reason, the proposal to make Mombasa a free port was favourably received, and the president of the Mombasa Chamber felt called upon to propound the problem at the first opportunity.

It will thus be readily observed that big problems are tackled with very great courage and initiative in Kenya. There is no grave pondering among dignified and reverend seigneurs. There are no preliminary trumpeting from the house-tops. Where angels fear to tread, Kenya citizens dash in. Of course, Highland opinion also had to be considered, and one inferred from such expressions of views as were heard that the shrewd business men of the hinterland saw no reason why there should be any change in existing arrangements. *Why* a free port? Who was going to benefit? Would the abolition of Customs at the port, while levied on the Highlands, assist the country? No one seemed to know. Everyone seemed to doubt. With Mombasa itself scratching its head and deciding to ask Singapore—which is still slightly anticipating—the Highlands could be none other than in doubt. The premier paper of the capital, from its own glass house, seemed to reflect this feeling when, reproducing an account of the discussions in the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce, it expressed a naïve astonishment at “the curiously sudden manner in which important principles are shot into the arena of public discussion in East Africa.” Indeed, indeed, this curiously sudden manner had been observed by the ordinary humble

citizen, who, obfuscated and confused by the issue, wondered what it was all about—and *why*.

No doubt Kenya owes its very greatness among the young nations of Empire to its very temerity. And, whether this temerity be revealed in the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce or the Legislative Council, the Colony still "gets there." Perhaps the guardian angel who takes kindly charge of foolish and intoxicated people has a special care for Kenya, the young country which shoots important principles into the arena of public discussion in a curiously sudden manner, such as a Kikuyu Conference, which almost split the Church of England, and its great currency adventure, which puzzled the British currency experts.

Can one wonder, therefore, that the Mombasa Chamber of Commerce decided to ask Singapore?

Moreover, the Chamber decided to ask Hong Kong.

It just stopped short of asking Bremen and Hamburg.

Perhaps it would have done even this last had it not remembered that there was a commercial war on.

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It happened in a wonderfully simple manner. Having decided that it knew less than a little about the subject, having expressed its wonder that the matter had been brought up at all, having listened

to the Commissioner of Customs, the Chamber, arriving at the conclusion that it was treading on dangerous ground, decided to apply in the humble guise of a suppliant to older and more knowledgeable centres. Hence it passed a resolution. Unanimously. There was nothing half-hearted about the resolution. The Chamber wanted to know. It was not ashamed of the world knowing that it wanted to know. Better Chambers had wanted to know in *their* time. So, as the dinner gongs of the port town were sounding and the members one by one crept silently away to attend to the calls of the inner man, the Chamber passed the resolution with a mighty sigh of relief deciding to: Ask Singapore. *And* Hong-Kong.

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This veracious story has been written with a purpose. It will serve to show that Mombasa is *not* a free port and is likely to remain a port responsible to Customs law. It is also written with the object of showing what a dashing people we are, how unafraid and unashamed we are to shoot into the public arena, in a curiously sudden manner, matters of vital public concern.

It is, moreover, written with the intention of showing how necessary it is, when one is in doubt, to ASK SINGAPORE.

MOTIF

Kenya has a difficulty to fit itself in the scheme of things. Born an anachronism—a temperate climate under a tropical sun—it would seem to take a lengthy period of time before its laws and by-laws become fitted to its circumstance. It started by taking over the India Code of Laws, a monument of centuries of legal practice and precedent applied to India. All went well until the European came to settle and colonise, when the India Code had to be continually amended, scrapped, and substituted. In later times the trend has been towards British law. But British conditions also do not always conveniently apply to this unique region in the tropics. Hence the tendency continually to apply to Singapore.

XXIII

ANACHRONISMS

“THE British take their customs with them.”
So saith the foreigner when he observes cricket being played under a burning tropical sun, and a heavy meal being served at the time the natives of the land are taking their siesta.

Kenya customs and politics are always wavering between two forces—centripetal, which pulls them towards actual local conditions, and centrifugal, which thrusts them outwards towards inherited habits. The Colony has been termed “a microcosm of Empire,” on the grounds that within its borders and towns and settlements reside so many races, Asian and African, and so many grades of people, peers and politicians, working farmers and gentlemen farmers, shopkeepers and merchants, of all races, that it may fairly be regarded as a bit of conglomerated Empire. Regarded as such, political movements and customs tend to progress in conflicting emotions. Every race has endeavoured to mould the land into a bit of its own country, but always the inexorableness of fate and environment has wiped

out such exotic attempts. In the earlier days the Somalis brought camels into Nairobi, and these solemn animals from the sandy desert were seriously harnessed into Scotch carts for the town use. But this gloomy philosophic beast visibly dwindled under such undignified treatment. He looked and felt out of place in a busy town of metalled roads, and groaned in silent protest. Time and manners were on his side, and the one last bony beast seen about the streets, and regarded as an anomalous anachronism by the Europeans and natives, in the end disappeared, carrying his hump to more kindly regions where such excrescences did better service. And the Indian. He tried to import "non-co-operation" from his native land. When his countrymen in India started fighting the Raj for self-government, the Kenya Indian started the same game. He held congresses and the like. He had a *hartal* and so forth. But all to no good. Kenya wasn't India, and the Europeans and Africans jogged along cheerfully without his co-operation. So he reopened his store and started afresh, a wiser man. Even the natives were organised by some Mission boys to go on strike—as in England—and instituted picketing. But the raw African mob of the Reserves congregated in the town did not

understand the game, so they joined the mob to see the fun, and the fun waxed uproarious and dangerous, with truculent demands made upon Government. The bubble was pricked, however, when the *askaris* came down, and a few shots, to prevent worse things happening, sent the natives careering for miles in flight, vowing on their return that this sort of game did not pay while money was so easily earned without the risk.

And the European has also been bitten by the same disease. In a place where the blacks did all the labour, an attempt was made to start a "Workers' Union" by some enthusiastic European Socialist employees obsessed by the word "democracy," while they themselves employed blacks to do the "dog's" work for them. Meetings were held and subscriptions solicited. About three turned up at these meetings, until that movement also died from lack of proper environment. Kenya has always laughed at itself after taking such foreign customs and ill-applied tactics too seriously.

Then the Shop Hours Act. In a land where people strolled to their offices at any old time between 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., and left at any old time between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., it was necessary to have a Shop Hours Act, "like at Home." It

was true that the unwritten law said, knock off at 5 p.m., when shops were closed, and it was likewise a fact that the Indian shopkeeper never seemed to close, catering for the native population, who came into town any old time and bought at any old hour. In London districts certain suburbs and regions have their late afternoons for shopping and also their Saturday evening markets, with early closing on other days. Nairobi always has its late and early shoppers. So the Chamber of Commerce (European shopkeepers) advocated the Shop Hours Act to stop the Indian selling while the European trader was playing tennis or golf. The Chamber of Commerce, visibly and vocally controlled by lawyers, bankers, and agents with military titles, firmly voted for this Shop Hours Act, and even the Convention of Farmers—especially as the Act would not apply to the outside districts—supported the idea, so the Act was duly presented to the Legislature by the Government, with the wise proviso inserted by the prudent Administrator (who had been let down before with such popular cries) that local option must be permitted. The Act, having been duly passed, was sent to the Nairobi municipality for its opinion and its adoption. Now in this topsyturvy land it so happened that the Indians had a

strong representation on the Municipal Council, being the very people the Shop Hours Act was aimed at. They solidly voted against it, and found one or two European councillors who also had their doubts and scruples on the point. So the Shop Hours Act, passed by the Legislature, remained inoperative and unapplied for years, until at last a very emaciated semblance of the original purpose was adopted in the Nairobi area as a preliminary experiment, the working result being still on trial when these veracious chronicles were penned.

Suddenly someone started the hare of daylight saving. Now, in temperate regions where the sun rises early in summer and sets late, with the reverse happening during winter, a great deal may be said for the practice. In Kenya, situated on the equator, the rising and setting of the sun scarcely varies half an hour the year round. Consequently, the idea did appear ridiculous to the sober-minded. Some people laughed and considered the proposition as dead as doornails. But they forgot their Kenya. To the astonishment of the temperate in this tropical zone, columns were written in the Press—by a select few—giving many reasons for adopting this exotic measure. It was urged that people went to their office too

late in the morning ; that knocking off at 5 p.m. left too little daylight for sport and exercise ; that early morning was the best part of a Kenya day ; that people rose too late in the morning, dined and retired too late ; and thus the ayes nearly had it. But it was pointed out by others that people could well open their offices an hour earlier if they chose to do so, say, at 7.30 a.m., and close their businesses an hour earlier, say, at 4 p.m.—the hours of daylight being the same all the year round—without interference with the clock. It was, however, contended that people would not rise at the earlier hour unless the clock time was changed, and that 4 p.m. (present time) was too early to close business. If it were 5 p.m. by the clock it would be different ! Then another person proposed that half an hour earlier in the morning would suit the case. To this the supporter of the measure retorted, “ Then alter the clock half an hour ! ” Again, a rejoinder was advanced that, for the sake of a half-hour, why change God’s own time ? The country people supported the scheme when they learned that it was not proposed to affect working hours on a farm. So the question was brought before the Legislative Council, where opinion became fairly evenly divided. It was eventually decided to

shelve the question for a period. At a subsequent session a motion in its favour was again proposed, and the mover persuaded the Government to appoint a committee of enquiry.

This committee duly sat, and spent many hours at many sittings for months, debating the point. Every possible authority was consulted, including all classes of industry and representatives of many sections of people. Report does not state whether enquiries were instituted at Singapore. The general manager of the railways, the Director of Agriculture, the Chamber of Commerce, the Public Works Department, the Convention of Associations, the Latter Day Adventists, the Press, the hotels, all were approached with the purpose of ascertaining what effect a change in the timing would have on their systems, co-operative, industrial, and physical; more particularly the benefits to general recreation, sport, and conviviality. Some were in favour of the change, others were opposed. Seeing that it was hopeless to obtain unanimity, and deciding that something by way of a change had to be recommended in view of the trouble already given to the Government—the official side had never been keen on the matter—the proposed new timing was whittled down finally to half an hour. As opposed to

daylight saving in Europe this half-hour was to defy and outrage the sun, never to return, all the year round. As put by a Press critic, "a monkeying with the clock, though you can't monkey with the sun."

The report of the special committee was a lengthy document, as an official report quite properly should be, however simple the issue.

Reducing it in brief, the first startling conclusion this select committee on daylight saving arrived at was that the term of its reference was a misnomer. *There could be no daylight saving in Kenya.* This frank admission might have been expected to dispose of the whole question. But no; it was a preamble to the squaring of a circle. Seeing that daylight working time was always there—it was put in another way—the commission could not afford to have sat for nothing! The change was called "zone time"—as stated in the official report: "Three hours E. of Greenwich, corresponding with the $37\frac{1}{2}$ meridian—the time at present in use in Kenya and Uganda. The clock, on a date to be fixed, would be moved forward a half-hour, and no further change would be made."

The reason given for this momentous decision to correct the solar time is set out thus: "The

object of this proposal is to start the day's work half an hour sooner after sunrise than is the case at present, in order that the day's work may be ended half an hour earlier, and so enable a number of individuals to have more time for recreation each day. It is claimed that the dinner-hour and the retiring hour *would remain as at present, by the clock, according to the custom of each individual concerned*, and that the sole effect of the shortening of the time between daybreak and commencement of work would be a corresponding shortening of the period between sunset or darkness and the dinner-hour." (The italics are ours, but the text is veracious.)

Now this comprehensive explanation or apologia demanded some further exposition. For instance, take the day's work ending earlier. As it stood when the commission sat, the shops closed at 5 p.m. and the offices at 4 p.m. Half an hour earlier according to the sun meant leaving work at 4.30 and 3.30 respectively. As few people come to Kenya for "recreation," what a waste of good daylight for work; for, naturally, there was all Sunday and half Saturday open for recreation each week in either case. Further, there was time for recreation all the year round as against winter time in England. As it stood, with full

hours' occupation, a considerable proportion of business and professional people took work home to complete. Many were working regularly from breakfast to dinner-time with few interludes. The workers proper had very little recreation. Those who never worked (more than they could help) had most of the day for "recreation."

But with a laudable resolve to explore every alternative—very proper in a committee of enquiry—the other way out was properly considered—namely, simply to start work half an hour earlier and close half an hour earlier. But this recommendation was all too jejune, and did not appeal to this select committee. Its reason for not adopting this rather obvious course had evidently been difficult, but the difficulty was triumphantly surmounted by the sophist who drafted the report. The objection to this simple remedy was that "such an arrangement would leave the period between sunset and dinner exactly as at present." That "as-you-were" course was not exactly demanded of the committee's effort, so they side-tracked, saying: "As, presumably, people would not go to bed any earlier, the half-hour gained for recreation would inevitably be taken off the hours of sleep—a very decided disadvantage." Hence, it appeared,

not only did the reformers want more recreation but also more sleep.

But one had to hark back to the original argument as stated above. There it claimed that "a number of individuals" (not everybody) wanted more time for recreation. How, then, about those people who were satisfied with a day and a half recreation a week (as well as sunlight playtime every day in the year, and many whole-day holidays) and didn't want to sleep more? Evidently the moving of the clock would not appeal to these people, even if it had been decided to twist the hands right round!

Enquiries were instituted of all races in the country—European, Asiatic, and African—and after hearing the "cosmopolitan" view, the committee unanimously concluded that "a regulation of shop and office hours (without altering the clock) is not possible." How it was that a regulation did obtain at the moment by unwritten law was not touched upon—evidently this knock-off at 5 p.m. was so deeply rooted that nothing would change it except putting the clock on, which only shows what automata we all are. But some admissions were made by the supporters on the committee, to wit, that the only people who would benefit (or suffer!) were those residing in

towns. In the end the new law of correcting time without saving daylight was adopted, in order that Kenya range itself in due conformity with other regions that were not situated on the equator.

Political economy, in the narrow sense as well as in its fullest, is very seriously attacked in Kenya. Sometimes there is a confusion of ideas as to where politics start and at what point economy ends. For instance, one school of thought is all for economy in public expenditure; this school would reduce all items of the Budget to an extent, if adopted, to leave little room for any function of government. Some critics advance a constructive policy as well; they would cut education, and spend new money on a bacon expert; stint the railway and open up new settlements; spend more money on roads and reduce vehicle licences—so long as they cut *something* they consider themselves economists.

The tendency to regard politics and economics as two principles of government entirely unrelated became most conspicuous in the Chamber of Commerce. After several discussions from time to time it was laid down as a rule by the Chamber that politics should be taboo; that members should confine themselves strictly to commercial matters.

It was pointed out by a member that the commercial needs of the community could not be entirely divorced from the policy of the Government and country. When the Government imposed high import duties the Chamber objected, though it was shown by the politicians in the Chamber—most of the members were either professional or amateur politicians—that revenue had to be raised from some source. As income tax and land tax had both in their turn been discarded as obnoxious in principle—a bad advertising medium to attract new settlers and new capital, also difficult of collection from the farmer, falling mainly on the salaried classes—the next best, or worst, course open was to tax the consumer. So a question of Government policy, or politics, came willy-nilly into the Chamber. And similarly with railway and port questions, all touching commerce very closely, and all a question of public policy.

But where the “economist” ran amuck was on the burning question of costs of living. Rents were too high, bread too dear, butter periodically giving jumps; the townsmen accused the farmer of extorting unconscionable prices for his produce, and the farmer called the townspeople “profiteers.” And the argument raged with vigour

in the local Press. "Economist" pointed with indignation at butter rising from 2s. to 4s. per lb. "There was so much butter in the country that only a few months ago butter had been exported, realising in England only 1s. 3d. per lb. Now, three months later, it had risen locally to 4s. Was there ever such a scandal!" "Economist" had to have explained to him that butter was cheaper when the grass was luxuriant, being the rainy season. Later, the dry season set in; hence the scarcity and rise in price. Another "economist" complained of rent being too high, until he had a reply also in the Press that building cost so much that it did not pay to build houses at even the rents that were being paid. Another "economist" complained of the rise in prices at the local theatre when Charlie Chaplin's super-film, *The Gold Rush*, was shown, until he was informed that the film cost ten times the amount of other films. One "economist" wanted to cut official salaries, until he was shown that the cost of living (and entertaining) was so high that officials could not live on their salaries. And so the vicious circle revolved around the question of economy, coming back to "as you were."

One great star arrived from the East, where wise men are supposed to come from. He burst into

the political arena one day by making a long speech at a public meeting. As he was a newcomer in the land, people were curious to learn his status and authority. Report stated that he was a retired official, at one time financial adviser to some Eastern potentate. So his reputation rose in estimation, until he was regarded as the coming leader of an opposition party to that in power. "Inebriated by his own verbosity," he filled columns of criticism in the paper—run by the editor as a new luminary on the political horizon. A series of numbered articles appeared, dictating from all angles how to run the country, as viewed from Siam or Rangoon or Singapore. It was when he touched lightly on education that he met his Waterloo. Writing as an "economist": "Why waste money on better and higher education? Did Europeans in India, Siam or Singapore educate their youth there? No, the young were all sent out of these strange, tropical, and unhealthy regions. Was not Kenya Colony also in the tropics? Could families be bred in the country? Surely not." It was true he was a bachelor and a new arrival, of inexperience of the Kenya climate. His drastic advice was to scrap the new Government Boarding School then under construction, and send all Kenya children over

twelve years of age by annual batches to England or South Africa. If the parents could not afford it, the Government should do it; give free passages to all, have them trained in England to fit them for Kenya, returning them as "tenderfoots" to the Colony. Meanwhile, Kenya Colony was to be regarded purely as an Imperial appanage and estate of the Mother country, governed by periodical relays of public school boys, evidently on the lines of the early East India Company. These sentiments came as a bombshell upon an ambitious and rising community of settlers. An irate paterfamilias, of many years' residence in Kenya, smote the man from the East, hip and thigh, with vigorous pen in the Press, and the new prophet retired into temporary obscurity—until he started a paper of his own, much to the disgust of the rival newspaper which had so innocently given him such generous prominence.

And the building and sanitary anachronisms! Laws and by-laws were so frequently promulgated under perpetually changing Medical Officers of Health that the property owners became very harassed. The plots were planned small; in spite of which there came a rage for "open space," to enable the blessed sun to act as a deodorant. Already two-storey buildings had

appeared, and even one four-storey, but the ukase went forth that no building must be constructed at a greater angle in the rear than 30 degrees from the top front elevation, hence, the higher the frontage the less the perpendicular at the rear. But the day arrived when prices of land soared so high as to render this limit to building space impossible. Sanitary measures changed with the régime in power. Buildings had to alter their sanitary conveniences just as the newcoming official differed from his predecessor. And projected bungalows were held up, or the plans abandoned, because of the sumptuary laws of unessentials.

Which all shows that Kenya Colony has not discovered itself yet. Metaphorically speaking, it still has its eyes on Singapore !