SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS



VOLUME VI.

1923.

THE
HADARET EL-SUDAN PRESS
KHARTOUM.

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SUDAN NOTES

AND

RECORDS

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(FOUNDED 1918)

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Transliteration of the Arabic Alphabet

adopted by the Editors of "Sudan Notes and Records".

ا	at beginning of word omit, hamza elsewhere '	ذ	dh (coll. d)	غ	gh
ب	b	ر	r	ف	f
ت	t	ز	z	ق	q (coll. g)
ث	th (coll. t or s)	س	s	ك	k
ج	j	ش	sh	ل	l
ح	ḥ	ص	ṣ	م	m
خ	kh	ض	ḍ	ن	n
د	d	ط	ṭ	ه	h
		ظ	ẓ	و	w
		ع	‘	ي	y

Vowels.

fatḥa	a,	lengthened	ā
kasra	i,	,,	ī
ḍamma	u,	,,	ū

Diphthongs.

ـَـي — ai (as in aisle)

ـَـو — au (as in mauser)

The ل of the article always remains *l*.

The silent *t* (ة) is omitted.

Notes.

1. The system is not applied to well-known names, such as Khartoum, Omdurman, &c.
2. The vowel sounds of e in "get" and o in "hot" with the corresponding long vowels (*a* in "gate" and *o* in "home") which occur only in the colloquial are expressed by e, o, ē, ō.
   e.g. beled, Moḥammed, bēt (or beit), ḥōsh.

Ei may be used as an alternative to ē.

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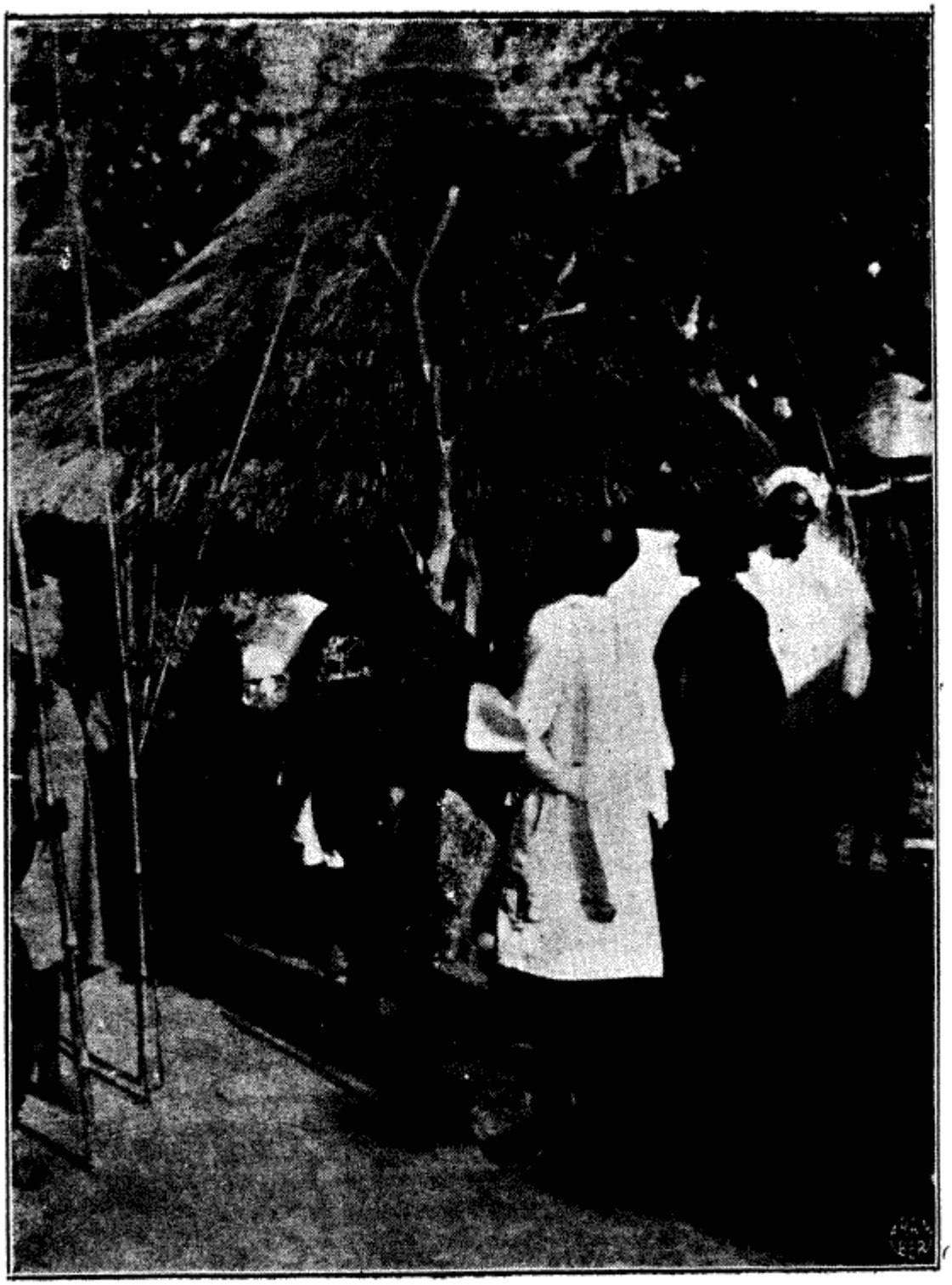
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SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS

Volume VI. No. 1.

The Afitti Nuba of Gebel Dair and their relation to the Nuba proper.

by Rev. P. D. Kauczor.

The southern spurs of Gebel Dobāb or Dāir (دائر = circle, thus called owing to the circular shape of the massif which has only two approaches leading to the interior, see p. 12 no. 32) are inhabited by Nuba who belong to the same linguistic group as the people of Dilling, Gulfan, Kodr, Kadaro and Karko. Their villages are called Defe, Māndūk and el'Ēn. According to my informant (1) who knows a little of their language, the dialect of Defe is 'long', that of Māndūk 'short' or 'quick', and that of el'Ēn 'big' or 'strong'.

The mountain range itself, on the other hand, is inhabited by a tribe listed in the Kordofan Handbook (2) under No. 17 about which no definite linguistic or ethnological information has hitherto been available. It is divided into two sections: the people of Sidr who inhabit the villages of Fala, Kotere, Tumba, Kundukr and Kutigele and who call themselves Afitti, and the people of Ketiri called in their own language Ditti.

(1) Hasan el Zein, a native of Sidr, who is serving in the XIV Battalion at Omdurman. Through the good offices of Major R. S. Gibson he was placed at my disposal by the Officer Commanding the Battalion, for the purpose of linguistic studies, and I have much pleasure in expressing may best thanks to both the Officers concerned. I had asked for a native of Gebel Dair in order to fill up gaps in my Nuba studies, and Hasan was the only man from this mountain who could be found. When he reported to me I addressed him in Nuba to which he made no reply. I then enquired for the word for 'water' in his language: to this he replied *bong*, which is Nyima, a dialect known to me to a certain extent from my Dilling experience. I retained the man and worked with him nearly every day for a period of six weeks, and he subsequently turned out to be a most excellent informant.

(2) Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Handbooks Series, No, 2, Kordofan, p. 57-58.

There can no longer be any doubt that the Nuba of Dilling etc. referred to above are related to the Nubians of the Nile Valley. A glance at the structure and vocabulary of the two languages is sufficient for an immediate recognition of the relationship. But it now appears that the language of the Afitti, to which tribe my informant belongs, though exhibiting considerable divergences, is likewise in a real sense related to Nubian, so that there is every justification for including this tribe in the designation of Nuba.

I hope soon to be able to publish my linguistic studies about the Gebel Dáir Afitti, which will show that the relationship is mainly one of internal structure, the position being that Afitti agrees in some points with Nilotic Nubian only and in others with Mountain Nuba alone, whence the possibility of borrowing is excluded.

From an ethnological point of view the Afitti likewise show themselves to be undoubted members of the Nuba Group. Certain points of custom and belief which are peculiar to them are so extraordinary and so unique amongst African tribes, that like some features of the language, they may be explained as living relics of the once flourishing Nuba Kingdom, to which the Afitti no doubt belonged.

1. The Aro or Ancestral Spirit.

The veneration, or rather deification, of the tribal ancestor is common to all Nuba and explains the highly developed tribal patriotism which is characteristic of all the tribes belonging to this group. Each tribe forms a patriarchal family and the consciousness of family relationship is so marked, that not even marriages within the tribe are permitted. Thus the people of Dilling form two large exogamous groups, each of which has to look for wives either to the other group or to strange tribes.

The word for Ancestral Spirit is *aro* (1) at Kodr, *uri* at Dilling and Gulfan, and *kundi* in the Afitti dialect. The word *aro* or *uri* is probably identical with the *uru* which in Nilotic Nubian means king.

The worship of the ancestor prevails so exclusively that it seems to overshadow completely the concept of a deity, and in no Nuba tribe is there any form of worship addressed directly to God, except in so far as Muslim influence is felt. The Nuba in their own language never directly approach

(1) When speaking Arabic the Nuba use only this word to designate the spirit. For typographical reasons Nuba words occurring in the present paper are not rendered with close phonetic accuracy.

God, but when desiring some blessing they go to the *kujur*, in which case they address him, or rather the ancestral spirit within him, as God. Thus the Afitti say: *aba boil*, our ancestor God; the people of Dilling: *anaba abila*, our ancestor our God. All tribes have huts and holy places of the *aro*, where the ancestral spirit is believed to be present in a special way, and where gifts and and sacrificial offerings are presented, an act which is always accompanied by the invocation quoted above: our ancestor God.

The Dilling Nuba, it is true, differentiate between the *aro* and God and call the latter *bil ipti* i. e. God the Creator. The Afitti, on the other hand, have no word for God except the Arabic Allah and it is no longer possible to form an idea of their original concept of a deity. Their ancestor Dimbēr is believed to inhabit a deep and vast mountain cave in the form of a large snake. This cave is visited on important occasions, and offerings are made in order to consult the ancestor. In Dilling there is also a cave in which the *bil* (it is not certain whether this means God or the ancestor) is believed to dwell in the form of a snake. In front of this cave there is a tripod for the reception of sacrificial gifts.

Thus each Nuba tribe sees in its ancestor, to whom it owes its existence as a tribe, the tribal god who directs the fate of his descendants and sends all blessings and all calamities which befall the people and the individual, even death which comes as a punishment for transgressing the ordinances of patriarchal tradition.

The fact that the *aro* is regarded as guardian of the patriarchal traditions, any transgression of which he may punish with death, proves clearly that he combines the roles of tribal ancestor and tribal god. If a man dies young or in the age of manly strength his death is assumed to be the consequence of such a transgression and people say: *uri hurm*, the aro has killed him. For this reason the traditions which regulate the life and the customs of the people and give them their characteristic note, are called *urin jar* i.e. things of the aro, and the phrase used of one who has committed a breach of custom is: *urin jargi dwanyanga*, he has injured a thing of the *aro*. In a Dilling funeral song the dead man laments: which thing of the *aro* did I injure that he should have killed me?

Amongst the Afitti the name of the ancestor, Dimbēr, is still remembered: according to my informant he was an Egyptian fellah who lived in very remote times and from him the Afitti are descended.

The other Nuba, e.g. the people of Dilling, can give no consistent accoun of the ancestor. An old man stated that he was a slave called Kwotang, who had seven sons and a blind daughter who married a Fellati. The section of the Dilling people who are subject to the Great Kujur are the descendants of of these children. All the Nuba agree that their original home was in the North.

In addition to the Great *Aro* each Nuba tribe recognises several lesser *aros*, the ancestors of the different family groups. Amongst the Dilling people the Great *Aro* is called *uri ture* i.e. the Old Spirit, the Afitti call him *kundi dobo*, which has the same meaning.

The lesser *aros* have different names expressive of their particular functions, and each family group calls itself after the ancestral spirit: thus at Dilling there are People of *Uri ture*, People of *Uri mande*, People of *Uri keliran*, People of *Uri shaiman* etc.

2. Kings and Kujurs.

Amongst some Nuba tribes, e.g. the people of Gulfan, the *kujurs*, tha is to say the Great Kujur with his several subordinates, combine the functions of spiritual and political chiefs; others, such as the Afitti, have a king as well as *kujurs*. At Dilling one of the two sections, which is called People of *Uri ture*, recognises the Great Kujur as their sole chief; the other section, called People of the King *(shil iri)* has a king *(shil)* and about 24 subordinate *kujurs*.

It is only in dealing with the Government that the king is regarded as official representative of the whole people.

The *kujurs* have nothing in common with the witch doctors or rain makers of other African tribes. The fact that they themselves are called *aro*, and that they are addressed with the formula: our ancestor God, shows that they stand in some special relation to the ancestor. They are regarded as his successors, and on this account their function and dignity are hereditary in one family. In the tribes, in which *kujurs* are the sole chiefs, they exercise all the patriarchal functions of the ancestor; where there is a king, they represent the priestly side of these functions, the Ancestral Spirit being thought to live and work within them. In this sense it is said of every *kujur* (1) that 'he has the *aro*.'

The veneration with which the *aro* is regarded by the people is transferred to the *kujur*. A man, when meeting a *kujur*, first of all takes off the

(1) The word *kujur* is derived from the verb *kuj* to be or to hang on a thing; it thus means one upon whom the *aro* is or hangs.

knife, which following the Arab custom each Nuba carries on the left arm: he next bares the left shoulder and inclines it towards the *kujur*, who lays his hand upon it and pronounces a blessing. A hut in which a *kujur* happens to be may only be entered barefoot; no one may share his seat or sit at equal height, no one may eat in his presence, far less share his food. At Dilling only a *kujur* may keep pigeons which are a symbol of the *aro*.

Afitti custom agrees with this in the main features, but instead of men they have women *kujurs*, priestesses of the *aro* in whom the Ancestral Spirit dwells. At Dilling I was told that in the old days women on various occasions held the office of Great Kujur, but the most interesting feature of the Afitti custom is the fact that the priestesses are virgins and remain virgins all their lives.

At the same time the Afitti have one, and only one male *kujur* who, however, according to the definite statement of my informant, has not the *aro* dwelling in him, but is only his *muterjim* or interpreter, i.e., it is his function to interpret the sayings uttered by the priestesses in their ecstatic states. He plays a similar part on the occasion of ceremonial consultations of the ancestor, as will be seen hereafter.

The Afitti have four such priestesses (1) each of whom presides over her district: but one of them, the priestess of Fala which is the seat of the king, is supreme and directs the ceremonies at festivals. Like kingship and the office of *kujur* amongst the other Nuba the priestly office of these women is hereditary in certain families. There appears to be a definite law of succession, but the king decides in the last instance. It is interesting to note that every girl destined for the priestly office has to have her portrait painted. I was unable to ascertain definitely whether the painting of the portrait is the duty of a special functionary, but this is probably the case in view of the fact that the Afitti are much more ruled by tradition than the other Nuba. The girl stands naked in front of the painter who draws the picture on a wooden tablet using a paint prepared from the dung of the lizard. The portrait is taken to the king and preserved in his dwelling. If these statements of my informant are true (2) a collection of such African portraits would be a most valuable possession for a museum; in any case it appears to be worth while to investigate the matter thoroughly.

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(1) Strangely enough my informant used only the Arabic terms *sultana* or *malika*.

(2) He repeatedly and with great emphasis assured me that this was the case.

Apart from her official functions the chief priestess leads a secluded life. She is constantly attended by an old woman appointed by the king who acts as her adviser and instuctress and protectress; in addition to this she has a number of boys and girls devoted to her service; the number of these is decided by the king and each village has to provide its share. Boys and girls live in separate huts under the guardianship of the old woman, they wear a a kind of uniform with special badges. They remain in the service of the priestess until they show signs of puberty, whereupon the old woman reports to the king that it is time to return such an one to his or her family and to find a substitute. Apart from religious visits for the purpose of soliciting a blessing, the Chief Priestess receives no visitors, not even her nearest relations such as brothers and sisters or parents, nor does she pay any visits.

There is therefore no question of any danger threatening her virginity, nor does such a danger, for that matter, exist in the case of the other priestesses who live with their families, because they are regarded as higher beings and held in awe accordingly. My informant states that if anyone should nevertheless dare to commit an act of familiarity, the old woman who constantly attends each of the priestesses, would immediately inform the king. The latter causes the great drum to be beaten, the people assemble, and the king mounting a high scaffold addresses a reproof to the people.

The dwelling of the High Priestess stands by itself separated from the dwellings of others. In the immediate neighbourhood there are nō houses except a few huts belonging to the guardians appointed by the king, and their families. No one may approach the High Priestess without the king's knowledge and permission: the fortunate person who obtains such permission touches the ground with his finger tips and with eyes downcast says *aba boil*, our ancestor God. The reverence shown to the High Priestess is transferred to her attendants, and no one would dare to hurt one of her servants. Her dwelling place is invested with the right of asylum, and a murderer taking refuge with her is safe from the avengers; an ill-treated slave who seeks her protection is deemed to be free. The king supplies in abundance all that the priestesses need: he also furnishes the costly garments and the gold and silver ornaments worn by them. On the head they wear as diadem a costly fillet or hood with two silver horns. It would be difficult to interpret such traditions as other than genuine and ancient Nubian.

3. The official functions of Kujurs and Kings.

In the case of tribes such as a section of the Dilling people, who have no other chiefs side by side with the *kujur*, the latter exercises a patriarchal rule. His first duty is to care for widows and orphans for which purpose he levies on his people a small tax of grain. Upon the death of the father of a family he receives a share of his cattle; and if the deceased leaves unmarried daughters it is incumbent on him, in the absence of paternal uncles, to arrange for their marriages, the bride price being paid to him. He is consulted in all important affairs and by virtue of his *aro* gives responses and decisions. At Gulfan he performs a certain anointing ceremony on newly-born children. Adults are brought to him when dangerously ill in order that he may offer up a sacrifice for them. He reconciles enemies and settles disputes by summoning the parties to his presence, sprinkling them with water in the name of the *aro* and admonishing them to live in peace. After suffering a disaster, such as a fire, or before embarking on an important enterprise, such as the erection of a new homestead or the purchase of a horse, people offer sacrifices in the hut of the *aro*, and the *kujur* performs certain ceremonies. He offers the first-fruits of the fields to the *aro* and thereby indicates that it is permissible to gather the harvest. In former days he probably exercised very considerable temporal power, but this is not very prominent nowadays, and people prefer to take their disputes to the Government for settlement.

Each of the subordinate *kujurs* has also a hut of the *aro* to which pilgrimages are made: which particular *kujur* is visited for consultation or for a blessing on any particular occasion depends on the special virtue ascribed to his *aro*, and a sight frequently witnessed is that of a party of girls in silent procession or of women singing and dancing, as they go on their way to visit this or that *kujur*.

I am unable to say what power the king *(shil)* may have exercised in the past, at present he does not greatly differ from the others. He wears a ring, called *tungi*, which has magical powers and is both the symbol and the guardian of his authority. This ring he may send in the shape of a firefly to anyone disregarding the traditional customs or guilty of disobedience to his ordinances: in which case it brings disease or death to the recalcitrant. People swear by this ring, as well as by the ancestor and the hut of the *aro*.

The king of the Afitti has no special title, the word used being *mąk* which is also used by other tribes. But the fact that he has the power to summon the whole tribe by drum beat for the purpose of announcing his will, and that

he appoints and takes care of the priestesses, shows that his power and authority must still be very great. Further details however are lacking.

The priestesses' sphere of authority includes all matters pertaining to fertility and the means of sustenance: it is one of their duties to appoint the times for sowing and reaping: they themselves begin these operations, and by means of the celebrations which they conduct confer a blessing on them. A hunting party before going forth on an expedition, especially when hunting giraffe, visits the priestess to ask for her blessing addressing her on this occasion also as *aba boil*, our ancestor God. This is also done when there is illness in the family or when women have proved barren. The blessing is conferred by sprinkling water on the petitioner by means of an ostrich feather. It is a curious fact that the sowing and reaping ceremonies are conducted by the priestesses in the presence of women only to the exclusion of all men. An exception is made, according to my informant in the case of the old men who attend the ceremonial tasting of the first fruits, seated with heads bent and eyes downcast, but turn away after the ceremony.

Like the Dilling *kujurs* the priestesses are consulted on all important occasions, and their function resembles that of the classical sybillae: in the midst of the deafening noise of the songs performed before them on these occasions they are possessed by their *aro* and fall into ecstatic trances. If the occasion is one of supreme importance they undertake a pilgrimage, accompanied by the *kujur*-interpreter, to the cave of the Ancestor in order to consult him with great solemnity. My informant gave a description of one of these solemn consultations which may be reproduced in this place.

The scene is laid in the past, during the 'First Turkish Rule' by which term the period before the Mahdist rising is meant. This was a time of continual unrest during which the land and the people were threatened by many dangers, sometimes on account of the Arabs who harrassed the Nuba tribes with their frequent raids, and sometimes through the Government, the character of whose misrule is well known. Nowadays, says my informant, no occasions for such solemn consultations arise, as the 'Second Turkish Rule' is zaman el amān.

The description begins abruptly with an order addressed by the king to his son instructing him to arrange for the consultation, as rumours of the approach of enemies were troubling him and the people.

First of all he is to assemble the four priestesses, the fair woman, i.e., the Chief Priestess Katebil of Fala village, Fari of Kundukr, Jalta of Tumba,



Dahabi of Kutigeli, and finally the *kujur*—interpreter of Kotere, who is not referred to by name but only by his official title.

The text (1) runs as follows:

1. arse Kwotekakero tittitia, o tor, Falea kiri kwanyege, Katebilna, ommai, o tukku,

2. o tor Kundukura, Farina ommai,

3. o tor Tumbia, Jaltana ommai,

4. o tor kutigelia, Dahabino ommai,

5. kore ko tor, aba boil kotingeli, bate angu o tebening, ko gelia, ko tukku.

6. kwanyegen. Arse kwotekakero ke tettua, kirkor ke tukkina, Koteriu kundi dobo ke tukkuna, Dimber da ke tori.

7. kirkor ndi kitti: ongiu mbere uragoto ? Katebil mbere o turi, doga aba boil olliai,

8. Katebil ndi kitti: Dimberu mbereno o turi.

9. ongi uragoto?

10. katebil ndi kitti: ndi o ngare:

Ate mbera tersea,
Komangano ngara
Odera kosennara

Translation:

1. When the moon of Kwotekakero (2) appears let him (the messenger) go to Fala, let him bring the fair woman Katebil and come.

2. Let him go to Kundukr and bring Fari,

3. Let him go to Tumba and bring Jalta,

4. Let him go to Kutigela and bring Dahabi,

5. That we may arise and visit our Father God, that he may tell us his answer so that we may hear and come.

6. It is well (said the messenger). When the moon of Kwotekakero appeared the women came (with the priestesses), also the Great Kujur of Kotere came, and they went to Dimbēr.

7. The women said: what song are we to sing? Let Katebil lead the song in order that our Father God may come forth (from his cave).

8. Katebil said: Begin the song of Dimbēr.

9. What are we to sing? (said the women).

10. Katebil said: say thus:

He who puts his hand into the fire (3),
He demands a sheep,
On its forehead a white stripe,

(1) As diacritical signs and marks indicating the intonation had to be omitted, the linguistic value of the text is limited. It is quoted only on account of its ethnological interest.

(2) According to my informant this month corresponds to the month el wahid of the Sudan Arabs. It is more than probable however that the months of the Afitti, like those of the other Nuba, correspond to the seasons of the year. Other names of months could not be ascertained.

(3) It is related of Dimber that once, when still living on this earth he put his hand into the fire in order to prove his courage.

Ko ideli Odera kosennara	A firstling lamb, On its forehead a white stripe.
11. kirkor ngoge mbere angu aba boil kettingenina,	11. The women thus went to that place and performed their song before God the Father.
12. aba boil mbere angu kidi, oliu anguu kellago.	12. Father God heard their song and came out of his dwelling.
13. Koteriu kundi ndi kittu : aba boil, ingu shano ko tukku, anjia bate aningaro tebening, doga engwangol ketebeni.	13. The *kujur* of Kotere said : Our Father God, on account of thee we have come, to-day say unto me everything that I may inform thy children.
14. aba boil ndi kitti : hai angwa, i ngande?	14. Father God said to him : my son, who art thou ?
15. woi Koteriu kundige.	15. I am the *kujur* of Kotere.
16. i Koteriu kundie?	16. Art thou the *kujur* of Kotere ?
17. ong, aba, woi Koteriu kundige.	17. Yea, father, I am the *kujur* of Kotere.
18. woi, mora kettang, igo o dogang, kotodenening,	18. As for me, anger has seized me. You have deserted me, no longer do you come hither to me.
19. mbir delleno o tir, kon delleno o tir; Afii aningar limme kindere, jiri attangano tare, mindigi, buria ni, wi gor kotigi temaddeni ?	19. You have many cattle, you have many sheep ; if the Afitti all combine together to buy a bull and slaughter it by the road, shall not then the (poor) people come and eat.
20. igo tilldonga iuno, ase dattia iuno ode.	20. But you sit by your drum and at your beer drinking.
21. ki attangano maiode. tunia woi turi, wi attangano kuttiritia, hoi ittoning.	21. You think of nothing. At night when I weep and call somebody he does not reply.
22. igo ndigidde Komurnguu kendeta aba boil endatenening.	22. If you continue thus Father God (1) will bring upon you the fate of Komurnga. (2)

(1) The title aba boil by which the people address the ancestor Dimber is here applied by Dimber to God.

(2) The people of Komurnga were turned by God into stones as a punishment for their overbearing behaviour. The ruined village with the stones resembling human forms is situated near Sidr. The story of Komurnga forms the longest Afitti text in my possession.

23. hai aba boil, kira ne batenendi e tebai, ogo ki ingu anignaro kommena, jiri kommena, kon kommena, k a d e n g kommena toli kommena, menag kommena, kirkor so aningaro kommena.

23. Oh Father God, do not use such speech. We have brought to thee all thy things, a bull, a sheep, a hoe, an axe and grain; also we have brought all the women (in order that they may dance and sing before the ancestor).

24. hai Koteriu kundi, tar ne aggelangia baten geli.

24. Thou *kujur* of Kotere, approach and listen.

25. hai aba boil baten anjia kejeno, kwanyegeno tebening; keje kira e dogai, aningaro tebening; ou ngwangol kecciagorter, agur dobo angwa angu koi narde,akka ennen; kiri dobo angarea tungu andia ullde de, kiri areu akka ennen; kwaia keja turitia, ogo tinderagote walla kirio tettagote? bate tebeninga, ke tor Afii ke tebenea, dete onu o dogoina, kwanyege o tigi.

25. Oh Father God, say unto me to-day good news and bad news. Do not omit the bad, tell me all. Our little children, our old men, whose eyes do not see the world, are at home; the old women lie on the angareb and do not go out, the pregnant women are at home. Now if the earth bodes evil (if enemies approach) are we to fight or to remain with the women? Give me an answer that I may go and tell the Afitti, so that they may desist from their (present careless) manner and stand forth well (prepared).

26. hai kundi, ne bate delle dogai, ta bate ongu geli.

26. *Kujur*, cease from much talk. Come, listen to my speech.

27. ong, aba boil, ka tukku.

27. Yea, Father God, I have come.

28. hai angwa, woia, koi aningaro kege ka tingel; kwaia ke tor, kecciangannо ke tur; kiri iu, mbir iu, menag iu, aningaro kira tingelia o dogai, mutira o tanendena, o tondo mutiru arega ojjui; igo agur attagi o tukku tingelia, o dunyi; kiri iu mutiru tekku ango tingelia ommening; koi o tingeli, ongi turato.

28. My son, I have wandered all over the earth and have seen; the time (of rest) is past, but little is left of it (there will soon be war); your women, your cattle, your grain, nothing of these leave below; ascend the hill with it, take it up the hill and put it in the midst of the hill. You men alone come down and stay there, let the women bring you down food from the hill; and look upon the world and see what comes of it (observe all events carefully).

29. kwanyegen, aba boil; Turukki kotatai walla arafki kotatai?

29. It is well, Father God. Are the Turks coming or the Arabs?

30. araf ngonno kotatia, turukki kotatenai.

30. Whence should the Arabs come? The Turks will come.

31. turuk niatinge walla ogogi turuk niagote ?

31. Will the Turks kill us, or shall we kill the Turks ?

32. igo buria armag detia, kiattanga so kwotaddenenai; igo buria attangia detia, Turuk kwotigi buri kettai, mutira kindere, ngoge, mutir arega kiri ke tini, ngwangor ke kini, mbir ke tini aningaro elkwe kwaia jinmiatenden; igo huri armega detia ki attanga so endaddenening.

32. If you camp at both approaches no harm will come to you ; but if you camp at one approach only, the Turks will come, they will seize the (other) approach, they will ascend the hill, they will find the women, the children and the cattle in the midst of the hill, they will take every thing and carry it down with them. But if you camp at both approaches they will do you no harm.

33. kwanyegen, aba boi; ongi i ellder, aba boil?

33. It is well, Father God. What demandest thou ?

34. idelino kellder.

34. I demand a firstling lamb.

35. ideli endera ellder ?

35. Of what kind is the lamb which thou demandest ?

36. idil odera kosennara kellder

36. I demand a sheep with a white stripe.

37. nga mindatai idil ? Fari, kiri kwanyege ommai ?

37. Who is to bring it, the lamb ? Shall Fari, the fair woman (priestess) bring it ?

38. Fari ongina tir ?

38. What (garments and ornaments) has Fari ?

39. Fari gabben dibilu tekkuno tir, filany dibilu tingeliuno tir, ora dibilu tajiuno tir.

39. Fari has a silver upper garment above, a silver apron beneath, on the head she has a silver hood.

40. kwanyegen, idili ommaia, o tondo ijimmirngia arega o tersa, ottea, o dogai.

40. It is well, let her bring the lamb, let her lead it hither and put it under the tamarind tree (in front of the cave), let her tie it up and leave it there.

41. Fari mindigi kettoa, kellago.

41. Fari brought it, tied it up and came out.

42. Katebil kadeng o turi ommai o tondo kundiu olia o joea ollage o tor.

42. Let Katebil take the hoe and bring it, let her carry it into the dwelling of the spirit (the cave) throw it down and go.

43. Jalta o tukku toli o turia o tondo oli ngelea o juia o tor.

43. Let Jalta come, let her take the axe, carry it to the opening of the dwelling, put it down and go.

44. ena kiri armanga kira o tukki.	44. But those two women (Dahabi and her old woman) they shall not come.
45. nda aba boil, kiri kotonai.	45. Why, Father God, shall these women not come ? (Question of the *kujur)*
46. weiang, kira tukki, ole ennen.	46. No, they shall not come, there is blood. (the priestess is unclean because of menstruation).

4. The Great Festivals.

Kujurs and priestesses take the chief parts in the celebration of the popular festivals, on which occasion they display their priestly functions in a most distinctive manner. The Nuba have no festivals of a purely religious character: being cultivators *par excellence* their festivals are connected with sowing and with the harvest, though at the same time they are clothed with religious significance.

The Dilling Nuba have three great popular festivals: the feast of sowing, the feast of green fruits, and the feast of the new grain. Each is celebrated on a Saturday, and there are fifteen days of preparation and eight days of after celebrations.

The date of the feast of sowing (1) is said to be fixed by the Great Kujur with reference to the position of the Pleiades. In 1914 it was held on 9th May, in the year after, as required by the calendar, on 8th May. This in fact is the time when the Pleiades cease to be visible as they set at dusk. Fifteen days before the festival, on a Friday, the king and some subordinate *kujurs*, the latter attended by their official servants called *kejad*, meet at the house of the Great Kujur in order to put the hut of the *aro* in good repair. This day also marks the beginning of a kind of Lent which lasts until the feast of the green fruits, and during which dancing, playing and marisa drinking are forbidden. On the following Friday incense is burned in the hut of the *aro*, and the ascending smoke announces to the people that the festival is due to be held after eight days. On the morning of the feast day the Great Kujur, attended by the king and one of the subordinate *kujurs*, leaves his house on the hill and descends into the plain, where he is met by the whole male population, who have collected their entire stock of sheep, goats, cattle, donkeys and horses. The celebration gives the impression as if the whole tribe were preparing for

(1) I have been told by Dilling Nuba at Khartoum that this festival is no longer celebrated, or at any rate, only on a very small scale.

an exodus or engaged in a migration: each horse and donkey carries one or more boys who appear to be ready for a long journey, while all the young men and warriors stand in attitudes suggesting readiness for battle; as soon as the *kujur* has reached his appointed place they move past him to the accompaniment of the roar of song in order to obtain his blessing, which he conveys by sprinkling them with sand: then they rush off to the forest to hunt wild fowl and other game which they bring to the *kujur*. The latter subsequently divides the spoil with the old people and widows, thus suggesting that the tribe is far from home and obliged to live by hunting. This part of the festival is called *ungur*, i.e., hunt. The procession of the warriors is followed by that of the mounted boys who drive the flocks and herds past the *kujur*, while the latter unceasingly sprinkles sand and pronounces words of blessing. Next, accompanied by the mounted boys and the old men, he moves to a place near by where there is red sand: here he taps the ground three times with his staff whereupon the boys roll in the sand sprinkling themselves over; as they are well anointed for the festive occasion with butter or simsim oil this process gives them a most fantastic appearance. The people now form a semi-circle in the plain while the *kujur* ascends a gently sloping rock on the side of the hill; there he stands for a while on the height and then prostrates himself touching the ground with his forehead. This ceremony forms a most impressive spectacle, the *kujur* standing on his height dressed in a flowing red garment and a red cap, attended by two men clad in red and white, while the populace stands below looking on with awe and reverence. This ends the forenoon celebrations, and *kujur* and people go to their homes.

It is obvious that the universal blessing constitutes the essential feature of this celebration. It is stated that in the past the blessing and the hunt, or perhaps the latter only, took place at an earlier date. In the afternoon dances are held in the *hosh* of the Great Kujur in front of the hut of the *aro;* they are accompanied with the music of antelope horns and drums and wild singing which has the effect that even ordinary people are seized by ecstatic trances. The object of this performances is to put the *kujur* into a trance in order that he might be possessed by the *aro;* the *kujur* hops about now on the right leg, now on the left, howling and waving his arms in the air. In this condition he receives revelations from the *aro*, and with uplifted axe he points to the directions in which the grain will grow best during the coming season. The whole celebration is a mixture of sublime and beautiful elements with the absurd and ridiculous.

How the date of the festival of the first green fruits is determined is not quite clear, but it is always held fifty days after the feast of the new grain, i.e., after an interval corresponding exactly to that separating Easter from Pentecost: in 1914 it took place on 12th September, and in 1915 on 11th. (1) of the same month. The Nuba call this feast *ukud*, i.e., bean leaves; in contrast with the other noisy feasts, which are accompanied by singing, dancing and music, it consists of a quiet idyllic celebration held by the separate families. The ceremonies of the first two Fridays of the preparatory period are similar to those of the feast of sowing; on the third Friday however, i.e., the day preceding the festival, the king and some of the subordinate *kujurs*, the latter accompanied by their official attendants, meet before the Great Kujur. One of the attendants carries a wooden dish containing vegetables, gourds and fried locusts, and the tasting ceremony now takes place in the hut of the *aro*. The Great Kujur partakes of a vegetable leaf, a piece of gourd and a locust, and his example is followed by each of those present in turn: thereby the first fruits of the ground are regarded as blessed. On the following day, the festival proper, the same ceremony is performed by the people, and custom requires that all those related by descent in the male line should meet together for the ceremony: feuds lasting up to that day are put away, and the festival bears the character of a feast of reconciliation. The senior member of the kin group or, should he be absent, the youngest partakes first and hands the dish to the next man, and so on until each has tasted in turn. From this time onwards it is lawful to partake of all the produce of the ground which has grown since the beginning of the rainy season, with the exception of grain, and thus the feast is an occasion of rejoicing for the whole people. Vegetables form the mainstay of the Nuba's daily food, but at the time immediately preceding this festival the stock from last year's harvest has often run very low, so that this Easter of the Nuba frequently marks the termination of a veritable Lent. The general rejoicing is expressed by the young men by means of flute playing which may not be indulged in at any other time of the year. The flute is made of the bark of a certain tree, which is peeled off a branch of medium thickness and let to dry: any accidental tears are mended with pitch and holes are placed at well chosen intervals. Some of the young men play the flute most skilfully, and it is a favourite amusement to serenade the girls with flute music. When the latter go to the well in single file some

(1) As the beginning of the preparatory period of fourteen days coincides approximately with the passing of the sun through the latitude of the locality it is not improbable that this event is regarded as the signal for the celebration of the festival.

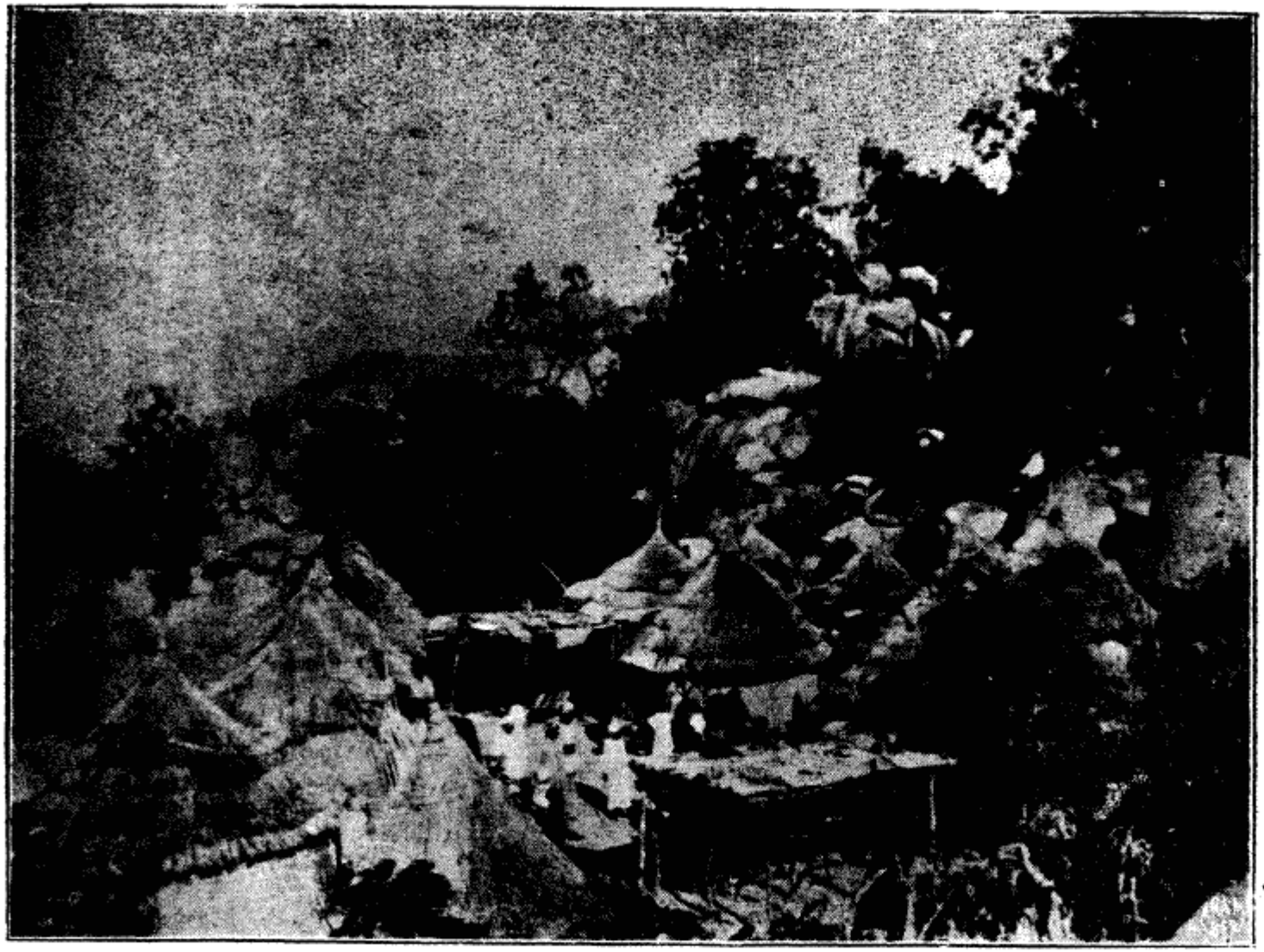
tuneful swain may often be seen standing on some rock along their path, and especially at night the amorous wail of the flute penetrates the air from many directions.

The third and most important festival is the feast of the new grain called in Nuba *urmalcie*, the going forth of the spirit. In 1914 it was celebrated on 31st October, and in 1915 on the 30th (1) of the same month. As in the case of the other festivals, smoke ascending from the hut of the *aro* eight days before, announces to the people the approach of the festival: On the eve of the feast one of the official attendants of the *kujur* prepares the first bread from the new grain under a certain *tebeldi* tree; it is then offered up as a sacrifice in the hut of the *aro*. Unfortunately I did not witness the ceremonies performed by the *kujur* on the occasion of this feast in the hut of the *aro*: the celebrations which take place outside are very magnificent. At sunset on the day preceding the festival the entire populace go up to the top of the hills: soon afterwards, at about 7 p.m. in response to some signal or other, (2) the rumbling of the *kujur's* drums is heard, whereupon the whole people break into a shout of joy which is kept up for about half an hour. When asked the the reason the Nuba reply: *uri bal holm*, the spirit has gone forth. Quite early on the following morning the drums are beat and the people begin their shouts of joy: many of them, mounted on horses and asses, assemble at the foot of the *kujur's* hill. The Great Kujur, attended by the king and several *kujurs*, all dressed in gay holiday clothes, comes down from his hill and anoints the horses and asses with butter, he then mounts his animal and accompanied by a large following of men on horses and donkeys goes to the cultivation in order to begin the harvest. A few heads of dura are collected from each field which the procession passes, and the return to the village with these first fruits of the harvest resembles a triumphal procession; the Great Kujur rides at the head followed by the mounted men each of whom carries a bunch of dura heads, then come many women dancing and singing; thus they approach, and the shouts of joy, the beat of drums, and the hollow sound of the long antelope horns culminate in a climax of noise at the *hosh* of the *kujur*. The dura heads are deposited in the hut of the *aro* as sacrificial offerings.

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(1) It might be of some interest to observe these dates for a series of years and check their accuracy.

(2) I find subsequently that the pleiades rise on this day at 6.45 in the locality in question.



The Kujur's Tukl, in which a large part of the ceremony took place, is on the extreme right (foreground) concealed to a great extent by a large tree. The rakuba is clearly seen.

The Afitti have only two of these festivals: the feast of sowing at the beginning of the rainy season and the feast of the new grain. About the celebration of the former I did not obtain any details; it appears to consist of songs and dances performed by the woman under the superintendence of the priestesses. Should there be no rain for some time after this ceremony, the chief priestess mounted on horseback (1) leads a procession of the women through the fields, and it is asserted that heavy rain follows without fail after such a procession. The Afitti also are forbidden to indulge in any rejoicings or amusements during the period between the two feasts.

A detailed description of the harvest festival I quote once more in the words of my informant. Like all natives of Africa he is incapable of giving a descriptive narrative, and thus he records the words saids by the various actors rather than the actions and events: this method has the advantage of producing a more vivid and picturesque account of the proceedings.

Whereas in the case quoted above the initiative for the solemn consultation of the ancestor was taken by the king, the festival of the new grain is entirely the business of the chief priestess Katebil. First of all she needs the services of a woman to act as her herald for the purpose of summoning the women from all villages by means of a peculiar call *(elany)* which consists of a trilling noise made with a high vibrating voice. During the celebration itself the same woman acts as the priestess's chief assistant. As the essential feature of this festival, like that of the Nuba feast of the green fruits, consists in the ceremonial tasting of the first fruits, this herald and assistant bears the special title of *teletinga*, the taster. This year the chief priestess has chosen for this office a certain Mona belonging to the village of Kotero in the district of the priestess Fari. The appointment and investiture is made with a certain amount of ceremony: in the first instance the chief priestess sends one of her ladies to the king, who communicates with the priestess Fari by means of a messenger; the latter then informs Mona again through a messenger instructing her to report to Katebil in order to receive her commands.

The narrative again begins abruptly with Katebil's message to king Baje. The text given here has been considerably abbreviated.

1. Katebil said to a serving woman: go, speak to Baje that he may send a man who will say to Fari: send a man and let him go to Kotere and say to Mona: Katebil (has said): we wish to taste the corn.

(1) It is stated that in the old days the priestess mounted on horseback used to go forth with the men to lead them in battle.

2. Let her come at once and announce to the Affti: when the Friday comes we will taste the grain.

3. Mona came, (received her instructions from Katebil) then gave the trill amongst the Afitti.

4. The women heard the trill and came.

5. Mona comes (and says): Women, are you all assembled?

6. The women (say): Yea, all of us are assembled.

7. (Mona speaks): Katebil has said: when it is tomorrow and when it is Friday, (1) let all assemble, let them come to the rock below and wait there.

8. Then Katebil will come from Fala and tell us her commands.

9. Then I will go with you to the fields, we will break off grain, we will bring melons, beans and sesame.

10. The women said: Oh Mona, all this, wherein shall we carry it?

11. Take baskets all of you and come, that we may go forth; and do not let the sun be hot upon us, come quite early.

12. (On the morning of the feast) the women took baskets and came (and said): Mona, we have come.

13. Mona said: Have all of you come? Yes, said they.

14. Mona said: Women, stand together, come hither and take your places, take your places as for a dance (2) (in a square).

15. They remained standing; then Katebil came from Fala and called Mona. Mona replied: Hoi.

16. (Katebil speaks): Have you looked to see that the women wear beautiful garments?

17. Yes, I have seen that they are beautiful.

18. Start the song for them, let them begin the clapping, I will lead the dance, and then begin you the movements.

19. Mona started the song for them, Katebil stepped inside (into the centre of the square formed by the women), danced, and came out again.

20. (And said): Mona, place yourself at the head of the women, sound the trill three times, then go (in single file) and do not talk.

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(1) On one occasion *onangiji* was rendered Tuesday, on another Friday.

(2) The dance consists only of rhythmical movements of the body accompanied by the clapping of hands; the latter is regarded as the essential part of the performance, hence the name *atekongar*, the beating of hands.

21. Go and stop by the fields; put the baskets on the ground, go and break off the grain, bring it and put it in the baskets, likewise the melons, the beans and the sesame.

22. Then arise and move and come hither.

23. Mona went and did with the women all that Katebil had told her and came.

24. She came to the rock below; also the old men of the Afitti were all gathered together and had come to the rock below.

25. Katebil said: Mona.

26. Mona did not say hoi with the mouth, with her hand did she say hoi. (1)

27. Have you brought the grain? Mona replied with her hand: we have brought it.

28. Then bring it hither and put it on the ground, then go and bring wood; come and make a fire; when the fire has taken hold of the wood, then take (thou, Oh Mona) of the grain (four heads. from one basket) and put it in the fire; then take one (head) and put it towards the east, take one and put it towards the south, take one and put it towards *ditti* (the north); take one and put it in the midst of the Afitti.

29. Then take all the grain (i.e. a basket full) and bring it hither near me.

30. Now let a woman come, put the grain into the fire and then crush it. (This is done).

31. Now let Mona take both hands full and hand it to me that I may taste it for you. (This is done).

32. Now throw it behind, go and take (again) both hands full and hand it to me that I may taste it. (This is done).

33. Now throw the hands behind again, and fill the hands a third time; and take it to the old men that they may taste it.

34. And then come and fill the hands, and take it to the women and let them taste it. (2)

35. Now arise you all, bring water in a jar that we may put out the fire with it and remove the shadow of the grain (all disease), that our grain may be

(1) As during this ceremony no one but the priestess may speak, Mona answers the call by raising her open hand. To the question of the priestess in No. 27 she replies by raising the open hand and bringing it down closed.

(2) The detailed description of the ceremony is as follows: the first time the priestess takes a single grain out of Mona's hand with a needle, and puts it to her tongue, then she touches eyes, ears, nose and neck with it and puts it back, whereupon Mona throws it behind over her head. The second time the priestess chews the grain and draws a line with it over her head and forehead. The third time she eats it whereupon grain is handed to the others present to taste.

heavy that it may be like the rock of Kumbar (in quantity), and may no enemy come into our land (so that we may be able to eat it in peace.)

36. (The women say: thy blessing will certainly be fulfilled, for we have performed our prayer, that is to say) we have danced with clapping of hands and Katebil has danced.

37. Katebil said: Oh ye Afitti, Dimbēr has said: the Afitti have deserted my path, they have taken the path of the Arabs, they have deserted me; the men lie down at their beer drinking, and the women indulge in love affairs.

38. Verily by our father God, verily if they do not cease from their doings, verily by God, they will fall into the grave of Komurnga.

39. Let them cease their doings and listen to the words of Dimbēr: if they listen to Dimbēr's words he will not let them perish.

40. But they have taken to the ways of children.

41. Once upon a time the older men did not stay at home, but they all assembled in the village house and stayed there; also the young men spent their time in the village house.

42. Now the land is spoiled; the women have become men, and the men are turned into women; the son does not listen to his father's words nor the daughter to the words of her mother, they run about in the open like fowls.

43. Say not: Katebil has brought these words out of her head and speaks with them; I do not know such speech; our father Dimbēr has said these words to me.

44. Let the Afitti take the path (of righteousness); if they do this it is well, they will not see evil with their eyes, nor hear it with their ears, by the life of our father God.

5. The great events in the life of the individul.

Only the Gulfan Nuba have certain ceremonies at the birth of a child, the head and breast of the new-born being anointed by the *kujur* with sesame oil. It appears however from an account of the missionary Léon Henriot, dated Khartoum April 1883, that formerly the same custom was also observed at Dilling. The account says: if a child is born it is taken according to custom to the *kujur*, who pronounces all sorts of blessings, washes it in water and anoints it with oil.

The naming ceremony at Dilling takes place four weeks after birth in the case of a girl, and five weeks in the case of a boy. The father previously

goes to the forest and catches several chameleons (1) which he skins; the skin is cut into narrow strips which are made into threads. On the day of the ceremony he consults relations and friends about the name which the child is to bear. As soon as he has decided on a name, he goes home without announcing his choice to anyone; then he ties the threads of chameleon skin round his hips and hands and feet and those of his wife and the child, and gives the infant his name. Enquiries about the corresponding ceremonies amongst the Afitti only yielded the information that the chief priestess sends a large basket full of eatables as a present for the child.

Circumcision is nowadays practised at Dilling on both sexes in accordance with Arab custom, but it is stated that the circumcision of boys goes back to very ancient times: the operation was performed by the *kujur* at the approach of puberty in a very painful manner, viz. on a stone by means of an ebony axe. It was the custom to conduct the boys to the place of the ceremony amongst general singing and the beating of drums with the idea of rousing them to a state of enthusiasm and thus rendering them insensible to the pain.

Circumcision amongst the Afitti is stated to have been adopted from the Arabs. The operation on women consists of the removal of the clitoris and takes place immediately before the first delivery in order that the blood from the wound might mingle with the blood of childbirth.

With regard to marriage customs the Afitti differ from the other Nuba in the remarkable fact that the consent of the bride's mother has to be obtained and that the latter fixes and receives the bride price. This circumstance, together with the existence of priestesses and the exclusion of men from the sowing and harvest ceremonies, is a clear proof of the persistence of a matriarchal system.

At Dilling a young man does not begin to look for a wife before he has reached the age of twenty or thereabouts, the expression used being *tero tu*, he begins his courting. After he has made his choice he is expected for a considerable time to pay frequent visits to his future parents-in-law, in order

(1) This harmless, but curious little animal is regarded as sacred by the Nuba. There seems to be something mysterious about its shape, and the eyes which revolve in all directions, and the power to change its colour at will, whence it is assumed that it must have relations with the other world. When finding a chameleon a Nuba seizes it between head and body and squeezes it gently until it opens the mouth wide, he then spits into it saying: say in the presence of God that so and so has given me water to drink. It is not harmed and may be killed only for the naming ceremony. The chameleon is often the hero of Nuba folklore stories.

that the parties concerned may get to know each other; it is then said of him: *tere bin*, literally he is going after a girl. There is no definite betrothal ceremony: if the youth thinks that he has gained the favour of the girl's parents he sends two old women of his family to the girl's father in order to treat about the marriage; on this occasion no mention of the bride price is made by either party. If the father gives his consent, the bridegroom visits, the girl at night accompanied only by one man of his own age who acts as witness, and he takes with him a straw mat which is rolled up and tied with six cords, to be used as the bridal couch. The bridegroom unties three of the cords, the bride two others and the witness the last, and thereby the marriage is concluded. The term used for this simple ceremony is *birshi dwanyanga*, they have untied the mat. The three spend the night together in the same hut, the witness sleeping by himself while bride and bridegroom share the bridal mat, but the marriage is not consummated during this first night. The husband is not yet allowed to take the bride to his home, nor may he make his dwelling in the village of the parents-in-law, as the people of Dilling form two separate exogamous communities. He is obliged to build her a hut in the *hosh* of her parents, and continues to live at his own home only visiting her every night. At this stage the father-in-law fixes the bride price which consists of six to ten cows and a certain quantity of grain and sesame; in addition to this, the bridegroom is obliged to give his services to his wife's father in connection with such work as the building of huts, sowing, cleaning the cultivation of weeds, harvesting and threshing. Some fathers-in-law prove most exacting and keep the husband waiting a number of years, even after the birth of several children, before they consent to the removal of the wife to the husband's home. During this period, between the wedding and the removal of the bride, either side may dissolve the marriage without any difficulty, and one has the the impression that the relation between husband and wife during this time is not regarded as a real marriage, but as a kind of concubinage authorised by the girl's father: the word *ter* (girl) is applied to a married woman up to the time she leaves her father's home.

The Afitti customs connected with courtship and marriage were described by my informant in his usual vivid manner, though he has omitted all reference to certain important particulars, such as the ceremonies performed at the wedding and the period during which the wife remains with her parents after the conclusion of the marriage. Although the text is somewhat lengthy it is likely to be of greater interest if reproduced without any omissions, as it gives

an excellent picture of Afitti life and manners. The narrator at first does not describe the acts of a third person in an objective manner, but following the method often observed amongst natives, addresses a fictitious actor telling him what he should do or mentioning what he has done: at times however he reverses the parts and introduces the fictitious actor as speaker, as for example in number 5-9 and 57-60; finally from number 66 to the end he drops into ordinary narrative in the third person.

1. (If you wish to marry a girl) stand by the road; when the girls come along going to the well, listen, with your ears to their talk what things they talk about, whether they talk about the young men, or hold the converse of women.

2. Also with your eyes look well at the girls, how they walk, whether they look at the people or go their way.

3. If they do not look this way and that way, and if your heart desires a maiden, then go and talk to her mother; if she consents then go and marry her.

4. You have stood by the road; the girls became beautiful at night by means of oil, they went their way going to the water (and now tell me how it came to pass).

5. I looked upon them with my eyes, and with my ears I heard their talk (and I said to myself): my (future) wife is not amongst these girls; these girls' speech is about men, they do not hold the converse of women, their eyes are long.

6. For I stood by the road; when they came along I did not speak to them, they of their own spoke saying: ho, young man, why do you stand thus?

7. I remained and stood silent and did not speak to them; then said the maidens (one of them): ho thou man, are you deaf or , you not hear, or do you not love the maidens? Take your spear and come with us to the well, and pour water for us that we may get home (in good time), otherwise night will overtake us, then with whom shall we go home?

8. The girls said to her (who had spoken thus) Maiden, why do you talk to this man? has he not a mouth so that you speak all the time? If he desired a maiden, would he not have spoken? His girl, she whom he desires, is not here, we are all of us bad (in his sight), he desires a noble maiden.

9. Curses on his mother (says the girl). Where would he find a noble maiden?

10. (The narrator now addresses the fictitious hero) One of these days you will say to your sisters: oh my sisters, no maiden has my heart grown fond of (up till now); come therefore and go to this house near by, quite quietly when the mother and the father are not there; they say a fair maiden lives there; look at her well with your eyes, then come and report to me.

11. Your sisters now have gone: by her house they say: oh Bargoda, has your morning been well ?

12. Bargoda says to them: Yes, our morning has been well; as for you why do you stand outside ?

13. We stand there without any purpose; we only wanted to come to see you.

14. That is well; come into the house, come here and sit down on the *angareb*. (They are inside) How is it that you come to me to-day to see me ? I sit always here by myself in our house: no maiden comes to me to say good morning. To-day you are to me as a feast day: your doing is fair above all; stay here, I go to fetch water for you.

15. She went, she brought water, she put bread in a dish, she brought it and put it on the floor (and says): my friends, arise and drink, (1) for you are dying of thirst.

16. They arose and drank of the water. The girl said to them; my friends, remain here, do not be afraid, this hut belongs to you, it belongs to no one else; I will go and prepare porridge for you.

17. They said: no, Bargoda, we will not eat porridge, we will only drink bread and water; we have just eaten porridge at home and then we came here at once, we are not hungry. (2)

18. Then the maiden understood their words and smiled a little with her mouth (and said): why, my friends do you refuse to eat our bread. Is it that you have seen here a young man so that you refuse our food ? (3)

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(1) The dish contains small pieces of dry bread, which are taken out with the hand and dipped into water: thus eating and drinking are combined, but the process is regarded as drinking only. This should be noted in connection with the following.

(2) All the Nuba have more or less the same custom to refuse food from the wife or the intended wife of a brother. Bargoda therefore knows through the refusal of the girls that they had been sent by their brother to look for a bride. Conversely custom requires that a bride or wife, whether actual or prospective, may not look at her brothers or sisters-in-law.

(3) Girls may not eat meals in the presence of young men; they may not even be seen eating by them.

19. Oh no, how should we refuse your food? We only came to see you; you have been to us to-day as the sun; but to-day let it be, on another day we will come here early in the morning and stay and plait mats with you.

20. Bargoda said to them: you only talk thus to me, you will not come.

21. The girls said to her: by our father God, we will come.

22. Bargoda said to them: that is fine, when you come then my heart is as honey.

23. The girls said: Oh Bargoda, why is it that we look at you with our eyes, but you do not look at us?

24. (She replied:) I look at you with my ears, (with the eyes I may not look at you, for) I see your intention with my eyes: how then could I look at you with my face?

25. Your sisters (now said): Our friend, it has turned afternoon, we go home, come see us on our way.

26. No my friends, do not go, entertain me yet a little; I will bring you oil, sew your skin together with ointment, then will I see you on your way.

27. She went, she brought oil with ointment and put it down for your sisters (and said): My friends, arise, sew your skin with oil, turn your back to me that I may sew it for you.

28. Our friend, do not exert yourself.

29. What have I done then to exert myself?

30. You have brought ointment and oil; what would you then do with us?

31. Is then this, the oil and the ointment, so much?

32. They said: If it is not much then what is it? It is well, they said, and put the oil on their heads, then they said: Bargoda, arise, let us go, and see us on our way.

33. Bargoda said: it is well: They went outside, Bargoda remained standing by the door (and said:) My friends, go then, bid your mother good morning, and bid your brothers good morning. When will you come to me?

34. We will come to you to-morrow morning.

35. Your sisters went; they come and say to you: oh brother, such a girl we have never seen with our eyes. Who brought you news and told you that there is a girl in this neighbourhood?

36. You say to them: I myself; no one told me that this girl lives in the neighbourhood; once when her daughter was still small I saw her with my eyes; since she grew up I have not seen her again; once when she was little, she was exceedingly beautiful; I never saw where they took her afterwards;

I have seen all girls with my eyes, and heard their talk with my ears, only this one I never saw; where did they put her, said I to myself. Therefore I (said) to you: go, look at a maiden in this neighbourhood and come and tell me, whether she is beautiful or ugly: if she is beautiful I will go and talk to her father and mother, whether they give her to me or refuse.

37. Your sisters (say:) oh brother, this girl is as the sun; her beauty is not (ordinary) beauty, she is a noble maiden; when you go and talk to her mother, she will give her to you and not refuse.

38. Did you look at her house?

39. We looked at her house, it is like face-paint; this girl, her teeth are as white as the moon, her eyes are like beer; she never looks up with the eyes, nor do her eyes look upon the world behind, nor does she look at the ground; her mother must have been a woman of nobility.

40. Then you say: When it is night, I will take a dark garment, and when people are asleep, and the dogs likewise (i.e. at midnight) I will go there softly, and wake her mother (1) and talk to her (to hear) what she says.

41. When it was night you went there and knocked at the door.

42. The woman got up and said: hi dog, what do you want? she said to you (thinking it was a dog).

43. You said to her: no I am not a dog, I am a man.

44. She said to you: what sort of a man are you?

45. You said to her thus: I am of the Afitti.

46. Who brought you here to us, at night, when all the people are asleep?

47. No, no human being brought me here, our father God brought me.

48. Well, if our father God brought you, what do you want here at night.

49. I want your daughter.

50. Who told you that I have a daughter?

51. Our father God told me: when she was still small, I saw her with my eyes; my heart remained with her; when (later) I said to my father that he should find a wife for me, my father said to me: if you want a wife go to the path of the water (the path leading to the well) and stand there; when it is afternoon all the girls will meet and start on their way to the water; stand still, look at them with your eyes and listen to their talk with your ears; if any maiden pleases you and your heart runs away, come and tell me, that I may

(1) The mother has a hut of her own, where she sleeps with the daughter.

go and demand her in marriage for you. So I went and stood by the road: all the Afitti girls, made beautiful with oil, had started on their way and went to the well: but never did my heart grow fond of any maiden; one like her I have not seen. Therefore I would go there and wake her mother, and hear her words and see, whether her daughter is there or not, and so I came.

52. Therefore then you troubled yourself at night and came?

53. Yes, you said, but what is the trouble that I have taken?

54. All the people are asleep, have your eyes no sleep then, or are you not afraid?

55. For the sake of your daughter (I came, then) should I be afraid? Now everyone should be afraid of me.

56. Right, my son, I will not turn you away; you have never, like the the sons of the Afitti, sat on the *angareb* with the old people, nor have you, like the others, said harsh words to your mother or your father; your excellence is not found amongst all the Afitti; I will not refuse you my daughter; therefore go to her father and talk to him; if he consents, I will consent many times.

57. I went to her father and said: my father I want your daughter, will you give her to me, or will you refuse?

58. He said: my son, my heart would love you if her mother also loved you; I am exceedingly fond of you; go therefore and talk to the mother, and say to her: I want your daughter, listen with your ears to what she says, and come and tell me: if she imposes too much *māl* on you, come and tell me, I will give you some cattle; for a girl is like a gourd, if we let her lie at home, what are we to do with her? afterwards if my daughter bears a boy, I demand the cattle back, but if she bears a girl, her mother will have to pay up cattle. (1)

59. It is well, my father, your speech is exceedingly sweet; I will go to talk with the mother, I will tell her all your words; if she consents, it is well, then let her mention her price, but if she does not agree to your words, I will come back and tell you; then do your part (what you think right.)

60. I went back and told the mother all the words of her husband.

61. His wife said: your speech is good, but our marrying is exceedingly burdensome: if you can lift it from the ground (like a burden) and put it on your shoulders, you may marry my daughter: but if you can not lift it from the ground and put it on your shoulders, you will not marry my daughter.

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(1) The bride price is thus paid to the mother, but she is obliged to pay back two heads of cattle every time a girl is born.

62. Mother, if its price (i. e. of marriage) were like a mountain, I would lift it up and put it on my shoulders.

63. It is well, my son, this speech of yours is not found amongst old men, such a man I am pleased with; a man whose heart flutters like a chicken shall not stand at our door: but one whose eyes are like fire, he may stand by our door. My son, I demand ten red cows, three bulls, to put the cauldron on and heap up the meat (1); I demand ten sheep, five axes, eight hoes (2), a grain store (3) full of grain, and a rifle.

64. My mother, all this which you have mentioned is very little, do you not ask for anything besides ?

65. I also demand two slaves.

66. It is well, he said; he went to his father and said: arise and bring the cattle from the pasture, drive them forth and take them there, and put them by her door, that her mother may count them; let her count ten cows, three bulls and ten sheep; give her five axes, eight hoes, two slaves, a rifle and a store of grain.

67. His father said: Boy, where did you find such a maiden that you give so much *māl* for ?

68. His son said: Be quiet, you have not seen the world, now at last I have found a maiden.

6. Burial and belief in immortality.

Almost complete agreement between the Afitti and the other Nuba may be traced in two matters, which usually preserve old traditions most faithfully and express the national character in the clearest manner, the mode of burial and beliefs about the life after death.

At Dilling they dig a shaft, almost to the depth of a man's height; from the bottom of the shaft they dig sideways making a roomy chamber which affords space for several corpses. The entrance to the chamber from the shaft is formed by a round hole just big enough for one person to pass through. The corpse is swathed in cloth and wrapped in a mat and firmly tied: it is let

(1) At the wedding feast three bulls are slain and their heads cut off; the heads are placed on three stones and the meat cauldron put on top of them.

(2) Arabic *hashshāsha* or *malōda*.

(3) Arabic *suwēba*.

into the shaft head upwards, and received by two man who stand at the bottom and push it through the entrance hole into the lateral chamber; one of the men then crawls into the chamber in order to lay it out carefully. The entrance hole is blocked with an earthenware jar and walled up with mud. The corpse lies in the chamber on its right side, the head resting on his hand, like one asleep. The shaft is then filled in with earth, and a small mound is made over the grave on which are placed some sticks and stones and a gourd containing some grain to be eaten by birds and ants. The grave is then left without any protection, and there are no cemeteries: the grave mounds are seen here and there, but always near a dwelling.

The Afitti make the perpendicular shaft very narrow, and instead of the chamber they make a lateral shaft from the bottom, of a length and height just sufficient to contain the corpse comfortably, but wide enough to hold some funerary gifts which are placed by the side of the dead man. This constitutes a difference in custom between the Afitti and the other Nuba who place no gifts in the graves of their dead. The gifts consist in the first place of a jar full of water, but no food, secondly favourite possessions, such as ornaments in the case of women, or a rifle in the case of a man. If the dead man was addicted to smoking, a pipe is placed in his hand. The shaft is not filled in, but covered on top with a large stone over which a kind of pyramid, of the height of a man, is erected; the grave is surrounded by a circular mud wall and a dish full of grain is placed inside this enclosure.

All Nuba are conscious of the fact that they differ from other tribes with regard to the pious care with which they bury their dead. They hold that such loving care and the customary lament are essential for the well-being of the dead, and regard it as one of the greatest misfortunes to die away from home, unlamented and unhonoured by the customary funerary rites. The Dilling people weep and wail over all their dead, the Afitti on the other hand conclude the burial rites of an old man with gay singing and dancing.

They have no clear ideas about the state after death; they are reluctant to think abont the dead and do not talk about them. There are however two expressions referring to two distinct states, *due* shadow, and *undelam*, Afitti *ulilang*, which is translated by the word *'afrīt* or devil. Each Nuba tribe claims the former state, as a mere shadow, for themselves, though they do not know where and how the shadows exist. But if there are misfortunes or cases of illness in a family, the shadow of a dead relative is said to be the cause: it is thought that during his life on earth he 'spoiled a thing of the *aro*'s' i. e.

violated one of the many traditions which are regarded as sacred, in consequence of which the *aro* does not let him be at peace. In order to obtain peace for him sacrifices are offered up for him in the hut of the *aro*. The popular belief therefore is, that a Nuba who during his lifetime faithfully observes the tribal traditions enjoys peace after death: should he not be at peace, it is possible to help him to gain it. But the suggestion that a man might after death become an *undelam*, even as a punishment for the violation of tribal tradition, is strongly repudiated by everyone in so far as his own person is concerned. The *undelam* is conceived as the dead man himself who is believed to come out of the grave in his own body, but misshapen and ugly: thus he walks about working mischief: there is nothing good about him, and nothing can be done to help him, he is only to be feared and abominated. This state is ascribed by each Nuba tribe to the other tribes of their nation, but more especially to the peoples which do not, like the Nuba, live under patriarchal laws and traditions. Thus the people of Dilling state that the Gulfan Nuba turn into *undelams* after death, the Afitti say it about the Ditti etc. The Afitti abuse members of other tribes by saying that they eat bread and drink water twice, that is to say the first time as human beings and the second time after death having risen from their graves. The 'resurrection of the body' is thus regarded with the utmost horror, and there is no doubt that this fact constitutes a not inconsiderable difficulty in the spreading of Christianity amongst the Nuba, as it affects one of the fundamental dogmas of the faith.

It has not been my intention in the preceding paper to give a complete ethnological account of the Afitti Nuba, and of their relation to the other Nuba tribes. Many details about public and domestic life, and numerous superstitious beliefs and practices of every day life, which I was able to observe at Dilling, have been omitted in this place owing to the fact that I do not possess the corresponding information about the Afitti. But even a general sketch is sufficient to show that from the ethnological as well as the linguistic point of view the Afitti of Gebel Dāir are genuine Nuba.

At the same time I wanted to draw attention to this interesting and likeable (1) nation, whose traditions raise it vastly above all other African tribes: it would appear that a visit to the different Nuba tribes, undertaken by one more expert in ethnological matters than the present writer, would well repay the labour spent on it.

(1) See note at foot of page 31.

APPENDIX.

Mr. C. A. Fletcher, Assistant District Commissioner, Nuba Mountains Province, has been present during some of the ceremonies connected with the Feast of the New Grain (see p. 17 of the preceding paper). His description and the photographs, which were taken on that occasion, are of great interest as illustrating Father Kauczor's paper.

Ed.

THE DILLING CEREMONY.

COMPILED FROM NOTES MADE ON THE SPOT ON OCT. 28th, 1922.

I arrived at Dilling on Oct. 27th, and was informed that I would be expected to attend the principal ceremony of the annual *Sibr* on the following morning, in the absence of the District Commissioner, Bimb. Deane. I was told that it took place at 7 a.m., and that there was a preliminary ceremony on that evening (the 27th).

I foolishly did not ask for particulars about this preliminary ceremony. Had I done so they might have linked up what I saw with what was seen by the Austrian Missionary at Dilling and recorded by him.

The two chief men at Dilling are the Mek, Isa wad el Daif, and the Kujur, Findama,—both of them very old men. They live on the two principal Dilling hills, which are known respectively as the Gebel el Mek and the Gebel el Kujur, and stand only about 500 yds. apart.

At 7 a.m. on the 28th. October, accompanied by the Mamur, Yuzbashi Saleh Effendi Zeki, I rode up to the foot of the Gebel el Kujur, and then climbed up to the Kujur's house, which is only about 150 ft. up. In response to my request the salute him, to Kujur, after some delay, emerged from a small *tukl*, clad in the dirty red robe that so many Nuba Kujurs affect. Having been strictly confined in this *tukl* for some six months—for he had retired there

(1) The Nyima, although linguistically related to the Afitti and therefore to be classed as Nuba, form a noteworthy exception. They are a cowardly and treacherous race, full of low cunning and deceit, and singularly lacking in the open courage and contempt of the fear of death, which distinguish all the other Nuba. They avoid all open combat man to man, but attack from an ambush stabbing or shooting their victim, even if he should be incapable of resistance, or rushing on him from behind with knife or spear. Formerly custom required that a man had to commit a murder and produce the evidence of his deed in the shape of some part of the victims body, before he was considered to have proved himself a man and to have become eligible for marriage. It is only owing to the watchfulness of the Government that this custom has died out or at any rate has become very rare.

for the purpose of rain-making at the time when grasscutting started in the early summer—he was delighted to come out into the world again, and gravely acknowledged my congratulations on his extra-ordinary success as a rain-maker this year. He then sat down on an *angareeb* under a *rakuba* just outside his *tukl*, and talked to me for nearly ¾ hour, whilst waiting for the arrival of the Mek, which was to be the signal for the beginning of the religious ceremony. During this period he was joined by his assistant priest—a silly looking man with, however, a rather fine beard, who is no doubt ultimately destined to succeed to the kujur-ship, as with the exception of the Mek and the Kujur themselves he was the only male who took part in the ceremony. A large number of priestesees also appeared on the scene during this long wait—ladies more to be revered for their age than admired for their beauty—and shortly after them the Kujur's wife and three small sons appeared and began, in pairs by turns, to beat the *nuggara* to summon the people to the ceremony (photo. 1). Unfortunately they did not stop after attaining this object, but continued to beat the *nuggara*—or rather the "*nagagir*" !—till the bitter end.

At about 8 a.m. the approach of the Mek was signalled, whereupon the kujur again retired into his *tukl*. Meanwhile the Nuba of Dilling were rapidly assembling, and took up their position, in small groups by sexes, on the hill surrounding the kujur's hosh (photo. 2—photo 3 gives some idea of their view of the ceremony.) None of them made any attempt to go near the *hosh* itself, for it is said that anyone, except the Mek, the Kujur and his family, and the priest and priestesses—I hope I may also add the District Commissioner—who enters the *hosh* during the ceremony, will die within the year. Even Ali wad el Mek, the Meks son and *wakīl*, who now does all his father's work and is the most important man in Dilling, had to view the ceremony from the hill-side with the rest of the Nuba.

Mek Isa now arrived, and entered the *hosh* of the Kujur, carrying a long wand: he walked straight up to the entrance of the Kujur's *tukl*, where he waved his wand forwards and upwards, uttering a weird high-pitched chant, in which I was informed that he was summoning the *aro* (the god of the gebel) to the ceremony.

At the conclusion of this chant, the Kujur emerged from his *tukl* and greeted the Mek, after which they both sat down, the Kujur (with his priest beside him) on the *angareeb* under the *rakuba*, and the Mek on a small stool facing the Kujur. After the two principals had conversed together for a rather wearisome ½ hour, the Mek rose up and again waved his wand at the

entrance of the Kujur's *tukl*, the priestesses all joining with him in calling on the *aro*. The Mek then sat down again, and after a minute or two he began to tremble violently and bark like a dog: simultaneously the priest and the Kujur were also overcome with a severe fit of trembling. This signified that the *aro* had at last descended upon them, and was also the cue for the priestesses to set up a wail which they continued at intervals till the end of the ceremony! The Mek then rose up and did a shuffling step-dance (reflecting great credit on a man of his years!) to the Kujur's *tukl*, which he entered. The Kujur also rose up and attempted to do a similar dance, but he was trembling so violently that he could not keep his balance, and he would have fallen several times on his way to the *tukl*, had he not had the walls of the *tukl* to support him. The priest then got up and did an idiotic-looking dance round the *hosh*, stooping forward with his hands dangling limply in front of him—a ludicrous ape-like performance—after which he too entered the *tukl*. There in the *tukl* sat the three of them, trembling in the society of the *aro* for about ¼-hour—except for a minute when the Mek came out and waved a drawn sword (his sword of honour) over the heads of his two sons who were beating the *nagagir*. I do not know why he did so, unless his religious ecstasy had aroused a feeling of paternal pride, as his action had no apparent connection with the ceremony. Shortly after the Mek's return to the *tukl*, the Kujur became even more violently agitated than before, and started to grunt violently like a pig. This signified that the Sultan of the *aro*, i.e., the chief god of all the gebels, had now descended on him, and the Mek, thereupon, wrapped him up from head to foot in a cloth of many colours, and helped him on to his *angareeb*, where he lay, grunting vigorously for about another ¼-hour. During this period the priestesses entered the *tukl* one by one, shuffling in on their knees, and kissed both the feet of the Mek, after which they shuffled out again.

After about ¼-hour the grunting of the Kujur ceased, though he continued to tremble violently on his *angareeb*. The Mek then helped him off his *angareeb*, carefully covered the whole of his head with the coloured cloth in in which he had been enveloped on the *angareeb*, and then backed out of the *tukl*, supporting the Kuju face to face, with his arm round his neck, and himself supported by the priest. (See my enlarged photo., which, however, was taken later, when the priest had ceased to support the Mek.)

As they emerged from the tukl for the climax of the ceremony a great cry arose from all the people on the hill—a cry of excitement not unmingled with apprehension, for should the Kujur, stumble and fall, they too, every man and

woman of them, would fall down and die on the spot! (This seems rather incredible, but I was assured that such was their belief).

Ably supported by the Mek, however, the Kujur successfully made his trembling way out of the *hosh*, where an axe was placed in his hand. This axe he waved towards the North-West, signifying that that was the direction in which the people must cultivate next year. As the 1922 cultivation had been towards the South-East, and as the Kujur, though blindfolded, must certainly have known which direction the entrance of his *hosh* faced, this indicates that his religious ecstasy was not sufficiently great to rob him altogether of his common-sense!

The Kujur was then led slowly back to the *rakuba* outside his *tukl*, and, after being again enveloped from head to foot in the coloured cloth, was laid upon the *angareeb*, where he lay apparently in a stupor, in which I was told he would remain until a bull was slaughtered in the *hosh*, and a piece of roast fat was placed beneath his nostrils, upon which he would become a normal man once more. After this the first fruits of the grain were brought up and laid outside the Kujur's *tukl*.

By this time the sun was getting high, and I was getting hungry, so I decided not to wait to see the revival of the Kujur. On my way down the hill, I saw a miserable bull lying on the ground, en route for the slaughter. The poor creature was quite exhausted with its efforts to climb the hill, and I was not sorry to have missed the end of the ceremony.

The rest of the day was devoted to play—with sticks and horses—and the night, and, I believe, the following days, to merissa, etc.

A FIKI'S CLINIC.

In the following note I propose to describe and discuss the treatment adopted by a certain fiki-healer of my acquaintance, who specializes in cases of madness.

Most Readers of the Sudan Notes and Records will recognize the general method which proceeds on orthodox Sudan lines. There are of course variations in the application of the principles upon which such treatment depends, but they are variations of detail only and the discussion of this particular Clinic is offered as applicable to fiki-healers as a class.

A few remarks my be interpolated here on the meaning of the word fiki It is generally rendered in English as *holy-man* or *religious leader* and is used, indifferently to describe the Head of a religious sect big or small, the guardian of a holy tomb, a man of well known piety who has no particular diocese or religious function, a curer and a school master of a *khalwa* or Koran school. But the spheres of all kinds of fiki overlap to a certain extent, and except perhaps in the case of some teachers in *khalwas* where the title of fiki would seem to be a courtesy one, they probably all exercise most of the various functions in greater or less dagree. The office of curer like that of religious leader is generally hereditary, and the family tradition may be kept up by some supernatural manifestation. Our fiki for example as a boy was placed by his father in a grass hut which was then set on fire and after its destruction the boy was discovered unscathed amid the embers.

His clinic is in the province of Khartoum and consists of a house for the fiki, boarding accommodation for the *talaba*, who also take the part of assistants, and separate huts for the patients. I gathered that his general clinical practice has much declined since medical facilities of a European type have been placed within the reach of almost everyone, and though you may still see among the out-patients women in quest of spiritual aid to pregnancy and some other cases in which relief is sought for ordinary physical ills, his reputation chiefly rests on his successful treatment of sufferers from mental disorder. A *Magnoon* (mad person) is as the word implies possessed by a *Ginn* and the fiki's efforts are directed to driving out the evil spirit and leaving the patient in full possession of his faculties.

The patient is brought to the fiki generally by some relation, often his mother or grandmother, who looks after him during the period of his visit. He is allowed a small house near the fiki's quarters, probably in the same compound. Soon after his arrival he is visited by the fiki, who proceeds to thrash him with a green *garida* (palm stem) on which has been inscribed some texts from the Koran and cabalistic letters. If the patient is quiet and takes it well, he probably gets off with about 50 blows on the back and shoulders. If he struggles and shows fight, he is over-powered by the assistants and receives a larger dose. This first introduction to the fiki and his rod serves to impress the patient with the fiki's domination over him. He must then treat the fiki with every outward sign of respect, standing bare-headed in his presence, and obeying him in every particular. Any slackness or inattention to the master's wishes is immediately visited with a further application of the stick. Sometimes it takes several days of beatings before the patient becomes tractable, in other cases the effect is produced by a single drubbing.

At first he is generally fastened by an 8 or 9 foot chain round each ankle to a stake in the ground. For food he is given three times a day about one ounce of *Kisra* and oil mixed and a little water. The meagreness of the diet keeps his spirit low. At the 2nd. or 3rd. visit the fiki pours a nostrum composed of herbs and seeds *(ruba* and *komon)* up the patients' nostrils in the same way as melted butter is sometimes applied by natives of the Sudan to people suffering from a cold.

Three times a day the fiki visits the patient and makes use of one or both of the following methods of treatment:—

First method—Short passages from the Koran are written in ink on a slate and then washed off; the water used for this purpose is collected in a bowl and drunk by the patient.

Second method.—The fiki sits near the patient and reads to him portions of the Koran. At every phrase or sentence he spits or puffs at the patient directing his aim all over the body. It is not necessary that any moisture should reach the patient's body; it is the spirit of the spoken word issuing from the master's mouth that is directed at him. The fiki then asks the patient questions to test his mentality and tells him to do things involving thought. These questions and actions are introduced gradually as the patient shows signs of improvement. When after varying periods according to the difficulty of the case the patient no longer shows any signs of madness, he is

allowed to go home but must return after a month for final examination. If he is then passed as normal, the cure is complete and the patient or his relations make a suitable offering to the fiki by way of fee.

On leaving the clinic the patient is given one or two specially powerful *hegabs* which he wears ever after and which prevent a recurrence of the trouble.

The green stick on which the sacred words from the Koran have been written is burnt after the recovery of the patient to whom it was applied.

The ordinary explanation of the beating is that it is administered to the *Ginn* that possesses the patient and not to the patient himself who is said not even to feel the blows. The fiki subscribed to this theory, but he had previously told me that the beating reduced the patient to a state of absolute obedience. After all the result is the same whether the castigation by subduing the *Ginn* leaves the patient tractable or by cowing the patient himself makes him obedient. Some fikis however merely touch or gently tap the forehead of the patient on each side with the inscribed wand.

The *garida* is applied by the fiki himself and not entrusted to the assistants whether it is wielded with force and frequency or merely laid gently on the patient's forehead.

The treatment is given to people of both sexes, young and old: one case I saw was that of a girl of about 13, who was eventually cured.

A complete recovery was effected in the case of an educated copt who was entrusted by his Christian relations to the Mohammedan healer.

A considerable number of mental cases pass through his hands each year and they are all said to be discharged cured or at any rate much improved. I have seen and talked to several people who have been restored to sanity and could find no trace of mental abnormality in them. In fact so sure were they of the efficacy of their cure that they did not mind talking and even laughing at the ridiculous way they used to behave before they were taken in hand.

The cure is *not* always complete. I know of one case, that of a young man of about 25 years of age, who was treated in this clinic for a couple of months and sent away as cured. I saw him afterwards and although certainly much better than before and able to go about by himself he was far from sane.

The method adopted by the fiki is in reality psychological and I submit that it is parallel to the methods that have been adopted by religious healers all over the world and in different ages. The power of healing disease and of casting out devils (which latter must be translated into the language of modern

thought as the power to cure certain forms of insanity) was not only attributed to Christ but to may of his follows in the faith in the first few centuries of the Christian Era. "The expulsion of the demons", says Gibbon, "from the bodies of those unhappy persons whom they had been permitted to torment was considered as a signal though ordinary triumph of religion and is repeatedly alleged by the ancient apologists as the most convincing evidence of the truth of Christianity".

The same hypothesis may be assumed to account for miraculous cures in pre-Christian and Christian times. It accounts for cures among uncivilized or semi-civilized peoples as also cures by Christian scientists and psycho-therapists. The hypothesis that is at the root of them all is of course suggestion.

There is an obvious difficulty in referring cases of madness to the class of diseases that can be cured or alleviated by suggestion in that suggestion would not seen possible in the case of a person who was not *compos mentis*.

Now insanity is normally subdivided into two main divisions according as the mental defect is quantitative or qualitative. The most common form of quantitative defect is imbecility in which the patient is born with sub-normal equipment, i.e. the congenital lunatic. Under this head also comes dementia, where the patient possessed at one time a normal mind, which has since gone into decay. Adolescent insanity, general paralysis of the insane and senile dementia are examples of this class. These mental states generally correspond to definite brain changes and can be investigated more profitably from the pathological than from the psychological stand point.

Qualitative mental defect on the other hand occurs when mental equilibrium is upset and certain aspects of the mental life attain undue prominence. There are many forms of this (*vide* Psychology of Insanity' by Bernard Hart) but generally the patient has his lucid moments when he can talk, reason, observe, remember quite normally, and in many cases is quite normal in all except one particular subject. It is with the latter broad class that psychological cures have a chance of success. In Europe if any remedy is attempted at all, it generally takes the form of psycho-analysis.

This distinction between the qualitative and quantitative defect is recognized in the Sudan.

The word *magnoon* (possessed by a devil) applies to qualitative defect while the word *matuh* applies to imbecillity or dementia. This latter, the fiki tells me, is incurable. The reason from his standpoint would be that there is no *ginn* to drive out.

A curious case of genuine madness—possession by a *ginn*, is that of the man who goes mad at the loss of all his possessions. This cannot be cured by the fiki's ordinary treatment and the only remedy for it, he tells me, is the reacquisition of wealth.

We may take it for granted, then that cures for madness are not effected or even attempted except in cases of acquired insanity. In these cases it sometimes happens that no improvement results from treatment and the fiki comes to the conclusion that the subject is not *magnoon* but *matuh*. In other words, the patient is suffering from dementia and is not a suitable subject for psychological treatment. If we examine the fiki's methods we find that the first stage is the subordination of the sufferer's will to that of the master, and this is effected by theological magic and the *argumentum ad baculum*. His mind begins to function normally in the presence of the fiki and he gradually yields to the influence of suggestion. The patient knows that he is being treated by a celebrated curer and the whole process is for him full of unspoken suggestion. The nasal douche, the daily draughts and sprays of liquid gospel all suggest to him that the evil thing is being driven out. He believes he is possessed by a *ginn* and the knowledge that the fiki, reinforced with applications of Koran, is mightier than the *ginn* all help to strengthen the suggestion of eventual cure; and when the fiki begins asking him questions and he finds he can reply to the obvious pleasure of his doctor, he feels that the evil spirit is being overcome. He is in fact able to recognize his mind and readjust the balance.

The unruly complex is pushed back into the subconscious and calm reigns where before there was disorder. By wearing *hegabs* presented to him by the healer, the now sane patient unceasingly practises the auto-suggestion that there be no return of mental disorder and this makes the cure lasting. A relapse is not unknown in these cases and it occurs when auto-suggestions weaken in the course of time, but a second visit to the clinic soon puts the patient right.

That a large number of cases treated by the fiki are successful is beyond doubt as it is equally certain that other psychological methods of treatment secure a number of successes.

It may be added that the curing of madness and other diseases is not mentioned in the Koran but is frequently alluded to in the "Hadith".

SOME NATIVE SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT THE WHITE-SPOTTED GECKO LIZARD WITH NOTES ON ITS HABITS.

BY

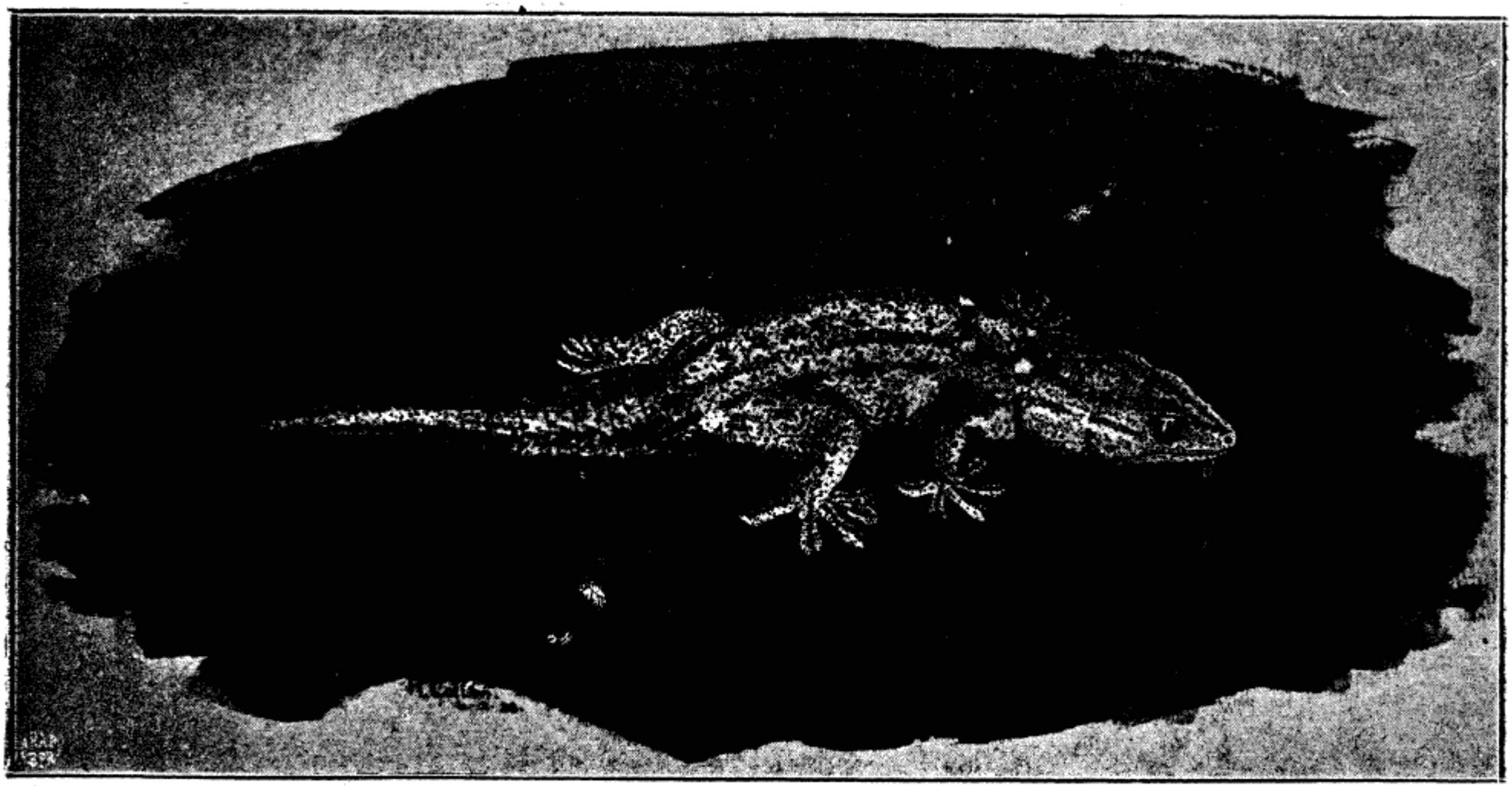
RICHARD AND LUCY COTTAM.

To the best of our knowledge, native superstitions about the familiar gecko lizard of the Sudan have not previously been made the subject of a paper so, in our opinion, they appear worthy of record. These superstitions have been collected in Khartoum, and similar ones have also been heard of by one of us in the provinces but, no notes having been taken of these at the time, it is not possible at present to give their exact rendering; therefore, no mention will be made of them. It is hoped, however, that the few notes embodied in this paper will serve as an inducement to other observers to collect and record the superstitions prevailing in the provinces regarding the gecko lizard.

Gecko superstitions are probably very ancient. If this be so it is not unreasonable to deduce that they have undergone some modification as years passed on. Be that as it may, no attempt will be made to trace their antiquity here but, in order to confirm their existence, we deem it expedient to put them on record.

To hear of the existence of such superstitions in the Sudan, which appear to be common amongst uneducated natives, is not a matter of surprise as their occurrence in other countries has also been noted. Further, that the natives of the Sudan are hostile to the gecko lizard will have been noticed by many of the readers of this paper. Whenever a gecko lizard was seen within reach, it has been our experience that natives would try their utmost to kill it. And though others consider that such a behaviour on the part of natives may not be general, we understand from many people with whom we have discussed this matter that similar observations have been made by them.

The killing of gecko lizards is, unfortunately, not confined to natives for Europeans sometimes show an unfriendly spirit towards them, and it is not difficult for us to realize how often these creatures are killed on the strength of a servant's remark about their being poisonous. Most of the native



THE WHITE SPOTTED GECKO.

superstitions appear to be based on the assumption that the gecko lizard is poisonous. To the naturalist, all geckos are known to be non-poisonous, and to make this statement more emphatic, we may say that out of nearly two thousand kinds of lizards representing the species of the whole world, only two are known to be poisonous and they are not found in this country. Of course the natives do not know this, and if they did, it is assuming too much to expect that such knowledge would easily destroy customary superstitious beliefs which have probably taken many years to establish.

In addition to reciting these superstitions it is thought a short account of the natural characters and habits of the gecko lizard will not be out of place, for then a comparison can be made to see how much truth there is in the native beliefs. This account we propose to give first.

The species of lizard, which is the subject of this paper, is the white-spotted Gecko *Tarentola annularis*, Is. Geof. St. Hil. known to the natives by the name of "*dab*" or "*dub*", and to Egyptians by the name of "*bors*". It is a fine stout gecko, sometimes over eight inches in length, with its body and head much depressed. In colour, it is brown, with two pairs of conspicuous white spots on the shoulders, one behind the other, and five dark bands across the back and dark markings or sometimes spots on the tail, with all underparts smooth and white. In general colour, however, it is very variable and appears to depend upon the animals' environment; we have known specimens to be very dark brown and others greyish white, while in old mud houses in Khartoum and Omdurman their colour simulates the mud walls. Dr. John Anderson * received specimens from Minia in Egypt which were so white that he asked an explanation and was surprised to find the lizards had frequented a white-washed house.

The skin of the gecko is somewhat warty in appearance for the back, legs, and tail are studded with tubercles, those on the latter being fairly long and pointed, and directed backwards, while the skin on the cheeks, neck and sides of the body is in folds.

The eyelids are immovable, and the eyes themselves are covered by a transparent skin, behind which they move freely; the pupils are elliptical in shape and characteristic of an animal which is nocturnal in its habits. It is noticeable that the gecko when disturbed in full daylight cannot direct itself as easily as at night.

* Zoology of Egypt; Reptilia and Batrachia. By Dr. John Anderson, L.L.D., F.R.S., 1898, p. 91.

The tongue is very thick, fleshy and sticky, the latter character being useful to the animal when snapping up insects for food.

The teeth of the gecko are numerous, and are arranged in series near the edge of the jaws. They are very minute, only protruding from the jaws about the length of half a millimetre, while their setting is so close that four of them just about cover the space of a millimetre. We have often allowed geckos to bite our fingers, and declare without hesitation, that the bite is not sufficient to pierce the skin of a human being, and is therefore absolutely harmless.

The feet are so constructed as to enable the gecko to climb smooth and vertical surfaces, the dilated fingers and toes being free and having adhesive suckers on the undersides, made up of numerous hair-like excrescenses which, acting on the vacuum principle, expand on pressure from the feet, and drive out the air, thereby making it possible for the animal to adhere to difficult positions when on a wall or a ceiling; in addition, the third and fourth fingers and toes are provided with sharp claws which are used by the gecko when walking on the ground.

The tail of the gecko is readily broken off, in which case it is easily regenerated, although the new limb may not be exactly like the preceding one; the skin and muscles are replaced normally but the new tail is usually shorter and the scales often very different. The discarding of the tail—a general character in lizards—is a natural provision which enables the animal to get away from an enemy for, while the pursuer is busily engaged in clinging to the broken tail, which invariably jumps and wriggles about, the lizard makes good its escape.

White spotted geckos generally frequent rocks, ruins, inhabited houses and old buildings, the deserted portions of villages being particularly favourable, but the truth of this observation can only be realised after having been out on a special search pulling down or turning over old mud bricks thereby disturbing the lizards. In addition to being common in such places, they are frequently of great size, which may be owing to their not being molested. The animal is usually nocturnal in its habits, but when found in dark places, such as store-rooms, it may be seen active during the daytime, although we have not seen the animal stay for any appreciable length of time when exposed to daylight.

Usually, geckos spend the daytime hiding or sleeping in holes or crevices or under rafters in buildings and come out at dusk in quest of food. They are familiar creatures on verandahs and house walls during the evenings or in

other places similarly illuminated, but this is only because they have taken advantage of the numerous insects attracted to the light. The food of the gecko consists of insects of various kinds, but they have been known to kill and eat small animals. The White Spotted gecko has been seen to eat American chamelions *(Anolis)* at a very rapid rate*. Mr. J. T. Hirst informs us about a gecko which killed and partly ate a newly hatched chicken, which was being fostered in a basket in the house. Mr. R. Wintle recalls observing geckos attacking and driving off toads which were hunting for insects. Geckos have been known to eat their old skins after moulting. We have kept and fed these animals on pieces of raw meat but they varied their diet occasionally by killing and eating young lizards which resided in the same cage. They are evidently fond of preying upon insects and must be very useful animals on that account; a large gecko put into a storeroom containing many houseflies apparently exterminated the latter by the following morning.

When keeping geckos in captivity we notice that although thev can be kept without water for many weeks, when given water they always drink it greedily—this, by the way, we have found is also characteristic of the desert lizard, *Acanthodactylus boskianus*. As one of the native stories is based on the idea of geckos drinking from zeers, and although these seem likely places, it is as well to know that they do actually visit zeers. Not only have we observed geckos drinking from zeers, but we have taken particular note of individuals in a state of moult which have been found drowned in the zeers and assumed that owing to their condition the suckers on the feet had failed to act, the animals consequently falling into the water. Mr. J. T. Hirst is in a position to observe the drinking habits of the gecko lizard, and being particularly interested in natural history, he has for some time watched individuals which visited the screen containing the meteorological instruments. He has frequently see geckos drinking from the wet bulb and evaporometer, and found young ones drowned in the bottle connected to the wet bulb; he further states that geckos are constant visitors to the meteorological screen.

In digressing a little here, it is to point out that gecko, desert and garden lizards are very interesting animals to keep in captivity for although thay are timid at first in a short time they lose their natural fear and become somewhat docile. We have often kept geckos in captivity for long periods; and certain friends will remember a particular gecko, which was given its liberty hunting on the walls of the house in a most confident manner, with a piece of blue ribbon tied round its neck to establish its identity!

* Reptiles of the World. By Raymond L. Ditmars, 1910, p.114.

The voice of the gecko must not be omitted for certain people will not forget their first acquaintance with a kind of laughing noise coming from behind a picture on the wall! Geckos are noisy at times and this may be particuiarly so during the breeding season. The sound of its voice may be likened to the click of our tongue, as "kek", "kek" but, at times, it resembles the squeal of a bat; when the former call is given many times and fairly quickly, it gives one the impression of a laugh.

The white spotted gecko lays its eggs in suitable holes or crevices in walls of buildings. They are white in colour and possess a fairly hard shell. The animal breeds after the rains but the length of period for breeding in Khartoum is not fully known. We have seen young lizards as late as January.

The above account of the natural characters and habits of the gecko lizard, although given briefly, will be found useful for purposes of comparison with the native superstitions which follow. These superstitions have been arranged in the followiug order:—

I. Superstitions regarding the gecko poisoning foods and drinks.

II. Superstitions concerning the food of the gecko.

III. Superstitions regarding the bite of the gecko.

IV. Superstitions regarding injuries to the human body caused by the gecko.

V. Superstitions regarding the effect of excretions from the gecko on the human body.

VI. Superstition regarding the effect of the sight of a gecko on a woman during pregnancy.

VII. Superstitions concerning religious connections of the gecko.

VIII. Superstition regarding the creation of the gecko.

IX. Superstition of the gecko used as a charm.

I. The gecko is said to poison food and drink.

Probably the most remarkable native superstition about the gecko lizard is that where it is said to poison peoples' food and drink. This credulous belief we have collected from many persons and it appears to be generally known.

1. The dab is very poisonous, the poison being in its breath and in its spittle. If a dab appears near a vessel containing milk or water or any other native drink, it will spit in the vessel and make the liquid unfit for drinking. A person on being told that a dab had been seen in such a position would

refuse to drink the liquid and would immediately pour it away for the reason that any person drinking from a vessel contaminated by a dab would die. Many persons have been poisoned by the dab.

The following variations in the rendering of this superstition are noticed :—

a. The dab contaminates the above liquids by drinking from them.
b. The dab only needs to look into the vessel in order to poison the contents.
c. The breath of the dab is sufficient to poison any native drink.
d. Food is said to be poisoned by the breath of the dab.
e. The dab poisons food by spitting on it.
f. People drinking or eating from a vessel which has been contaminated by a dab do not always die but have great stomach pains.

2. A knife laid across the top of a vessel containing milk or water or other native drinks will always frighten and keep away the dab. This is the usual way of protecting the above drinks.

3. If a zeer (water vessel) is left without a cover of any kind during the night the water therein is sure to be contaminated by a dab. The animal will come and drink and having done so will vomit the water back into the zeer and drink again. Any person drinking the water from a zeer which has been visited by a dab becomes sick and dies.

4. When a battikh (melon) is cut and a portion of it put aside until ready to be eaten, the native stick a knife into the fruit and leaves it there. This is done to frighten away the dab. If a person should neglect to leave a knife in the battikh, a dab will come and eat some of it, and after eating will spit into the battikh. Anyone eating from battikh contaminated in this way will become sick and die.

5. At the time of Mohammed the Prophet, there was a certain man who had heard about battikhs and wished to grow them, but he did not know from where battikh seeds could be procured. One day he mentioned the matter to a friend who told him the seeds of the battikh were in the care of an animal called "dab". After having asked how these seeds could be got, he was further told to go to a certain place where a dab resided, and wait until the animal came out to search for food; "when the dab sees you, he said, it will say: what do you want? go away!" "You must then reply that you will not go away until you get seeds of the battikh" The dab will then answer: "I have not any seeds of the battikh, go away!" "If you then prevent the dab from returning to his house, it will become angry and say: if you will get out of my way I will give you seeds of the battikh."

The man in question carried out those instructions and eventually obtained seeds of the battikh. After giving him the seeds, the dab told him it was necessary for every man who wished to eat a battikh, either to eat the whole of it, or when a portion of it is left to be eaten later, to stick a knife into the fruit otherwise he (the dab) would see that anyone who ate from the battikh would be exposed to the danger of death.

The above story which has been given to us by an educated Berber boy appears to be an elaborated version of Supersition No. 4. As we have been unable to find another person who is familiar with the first portion of it, we relate it only for what it may be worth.

6. Salt should be carefully protected from contact with the bors for if salt is left uncovered the animal will come and urinate upon it. If a person should eat from contaminated salt, a rash of brown and black spots (like those on the back of the bors) will appear all over his body.

The above superstition has been given to us by many Egyptian people in Khartoum, and they say it is common belief in Egypt.

II. Superstitions concerning the food of the gecko.

1. A dab is able to eat from a person's food although the animal may be some distance away. Five men were eating kisra prepared with rub (a kind of native bread made with curdled milk) when one of them saw a dab on the wall. "What does the dab eat?" he asked, to which another of the company replied: "The dab is eating with us!" As some doubt was expressed, it was decided that the dab should be caught and killed and cut in halves. When this was done, it was seen that the dab had kisra, prepared like the food they had been eating, in its stomach.

2. The dab eats and drinks from all kinds of native food and drink, but has special liking for milk or kisra.

III. Superstitions concerning the bite of the gecko.

We are informed that natives, generally, believe the bite of the gecko to be poisonous, and because we have heard so many of them declare that that is so, we recite only two incidents as being typical of all the rest.

1. A gecko was accidentally caught in a mousetrap, and the servant who saw it wanted to kill it. One being prevented from doing so, he explained that the animal was poisonous, and on that account he disliked it. He also expressed some anxiety that the gecko should not bite and thereby poison his employer.

2. A gecko was found dead in a bathroom and the servant was asked for an explanation. He immediately acknowledged having killed it, for the particular reason that had it bitten or spat at him he would have died.

IV. The feet of the gecko believed to caused injuries to the human body.

1. The feet of the dab are dangerous and cause various kinds of inflammation of the skin. A fairly common saying is that "No sensible person will handle a dab because when fools have touched them they have had their hands blistered and their skin made to burn like fire.

2. One morning a gecko was disturbed from some bedclothes which covered a baby who was asleep. The servant, an Egyptian, when he saw the animal became excited and remarked that the mother of the baby had been specially protected by God, for "had the feet of the bors touched the baby's eyes, they would have become very much inflamed".

3. A dab running over a person's body is supposed to produce leprosy.

V. The excretion of the gecko is believed to cause injury to the human body.

1. Some time age, when soldiers of the British Garrison in Khartoum where being treated for blistered necks, which had really been caused by an excretion from blister beetles, they (the soldiers) said, when asked for their opinion, that gecko lizards, while walking over the ceiling of their rooms urinated upon them and caused the blisters. This superstition they had got from the natives.

2. Salt having been urinated upon by a gecko causes a rash of brown and black spots on the body of the person who eats it (c. f. Superstitions I, No. 6).

VI. Superstition concerning the gecko and childbirth.

If a woman, when pregnant, should see a bors her baby when born will have its skin disfigured with spots like those on the back of the bors.

The above was related to us by an Egyptian in Khartoum who assured us that this superstition was generally known in Egypt.

VII. The gecko is believed to be an enemy of God.

1. The dab is the enemy of God because it betrayed the prophet. When Mohammed the prophet left Mecca for El Medina, pursued by his enemies, he took refuge in a cave in a rock. After he had settled in the cave, a spider came and spun a web over the entrance. A pigeon then came and made a nest on the top of the rock and laid eggs. When the pursuers came to the cave to search for the Prophet, they saw the spider's web which covered the doorway and one of them remarked that had the Prophet entered the cave he would

have broken the web of the spider. Another said the pigeon would not be nesting there if Mohammed was in the cave. The men therefore decided to go away and search elsewhere. As they were leaving a large dab ran up the side of the rock-wall, sat over the entrance of the cave and began to cry out: "El Rab fil Shak", "El Rab fil Shak", (The Master is in the hole) thus drawing the attention of the prophet's enemies back to the cave.

In a variation to the above, the pigeon is left out entirely. We have many times heard natives mutter the words "El Dab Khasim El Rab". (The gecko is the Master enemy) when geckos have been disturbed.

The dab helped to burn the Prophet Abraham by adding dry grass to the fire, while the frog showed its usefulness by pouring water on the fire to try and extinguish it. On this account certain natives believe if a man kills seven dabs on a Friday morning, he will no doubt go to paradise.

In referring to Rodwell's translation of the Koran*, we find the people threatened to burn Abraham for breaking up the idols which they had been worshipping, but there is no mention of the gecko being concerned in the proceedings.

VIII. Superstition concerning the creation of the gecko.

While God was making the animals, the dab would not wait for its turn in creation, but jumped into existence solely by its own efforts.

IX. Superstition regarding the gecko being used as a charm.

1. It is said that in order to prevent a horse losing in a race the leg of a dab should be tied to the front of the horse's bridle; by treating a horse in this way it is made to run quickly.

In relating the above native superstitions we have endeavoured to give them as simply as we have heard them, and if the gist of each one is clear, we shall feel that the time spent in collecting them has not been wasted. To complete the paper it is necessary to give the following comments and references.

With regard to the superstition that the gecko lizard poisons food or drink we have been assured that much of both are regularly wasted by being thrown away on supposition that they have been fouled by the gecko. The custom of placing a knife into a melon in order to protect the latter from the gecko, also occurs, it is said, in Egypt and Syria. It is hard to understand on what, foundation such a superstition stands, but it is not difficult to imagine a gecko lizard visiting melon which has been cut and left exposed, and then being

* The Koran. By Rev. J. M. Rodwell, Sura 25.

tempted to lap up the moisture from the fruit. That the gecko should spit into food or drink, might possibly have originated from observance of the sticky saliva in the animals. We have noticed when a gecko drinks, the water slightly drips from its mouth. This character may, we think, be the foundation for the belief that the gecko when drinking from a zeer vomits the water back into the zeer. It is particularly noticed when native are asked for the names of the persons who have been poisoned by the gecko the responsibility for that information is invariably placed upon thier fathers or friends who are said to have known the unfortunate victims of the lizards.

Opinions differ as to whether the natives die or are made very sick after having eaten or drank after the gecko.

Mr. Wedgewood Bowen informs us that similar supertstition about a gecko lizard contaminating food occurs in South America and is referred to by H.W. Bates, in this Naturalist on the River Amazon, but not having access to the book we caunot give the exact quotation.

In Egypt, another species of gecko by name *ptyodactylus hasselquistii*, is supposed to poison by contact certain kinds of food which when eaten produces leprosy *.

Dr. Hans Gadow, says that a harmless gecko which is common in the South of Spain and Portugal is considered to be a dreadfully poisonous creature†.

A species of gecko is believed to carry the virus of Kala Azar in places where the disease is endemic in Tunis and North Africa. Major R.G. Archibald adds, however, that the above observation remains to be proved.

With regard to the food of the gecko although it is known to vary, the animal being omnivorous in its habits, any further observations on its feeding would be of value. We have not been able to persuade geckos to eat table scraps, but as previously mentioned, raw meat was found most acceptable. A gecko which frequents the house of Mr. J. Rhodes has been observed to climb a small stool and partake of sweet cake, while Mr. J. T. Hirst has seen one pick up particles of food which had been dropped from a parrot's cage.

The belief that the feet of the gecko cause injury to the human skin needs further confirmation. We hesitate to make comments upon the reference that

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* Zoology of Egypt; Reptilia and Batrachia. By Dr. John Anderson, L. L. D., F. R. S., 1898, p. 75.

† Cambridge Nat. Hist. Amphibia and Reptles. By Hans Gadow, M. A., Ph. D., F. R. S., p. 506.

such a naturalist as Hasselquist should observe in Cairo the hand of a man, after a gecko had run over it, being covered with inflamed red pustules accompanied by an itching like that caused by the sting of a bee. Baron Cuvier made a suggestion that the above state may have been caused by the extremely fine claws of the gecko *. We, however, beg to draw attention to the fact that, although having handled geckos very often, we have not at any time suffered inconvenience. A peculiar sensation is noticed when a gecko runs over your skin, as if the creature's feet were sticky, but the claws on the feet are hardly felt, and more often, are not brought into action at all.

It is certainly difficult to get natives to handle gecko lizards, and it is noticed that individuals who could not be induced to touch them handled specimens of chamelions and desert lizards, *(Agama palleda)* with impunity, although the latter bear a resemblance to the gecko. We recollect when in the company of Mr. Waino Pakkola (who by the way had great experience of lizards) in old uninhabited houses at Burri, failing to persuade natives to catch or handle geckos; and as a matter of fact we have not yet induced natives to handle live geckos, although we have many times demonstrated to them that the animals are perfectly harmless.

It apears to be worth while to mention the two lizards which the naturalist has determined to be the only poisonous ones in the whole world, the Gila Monster, *Heloderma suspectum* and a species in the same genus, *H. horridom*, which are found in Mexico. The former has poison glands in the lower jaws, the secretion coming out from between the teeth and the lower lips †. It has no true poison fangs but the poison enters the punctures caused by the smell teeth when the lizard bites in anger.

In conclusion, we tender our thanks to the many friends who have contributed notes and observations of which we have made use. To Sheikh Mohammed Osman Mirghani we are indebted for the collection of several of the native superstitions given, including the one which credits the gecko with eating kisra in company with men.

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* See first note, page 49.

† Poisonous Animals of the Desert. By Charles T. Vorhies, p. 366.

DAYS AND NIGHTS ON THE AKOBO RIVER.

Recuperating my jaded system under the fig trees of Pachalla the thought occured to me to write a short account of a few days on the Akobo river in case the Editor of the "Sudan Notes and Records" should wish for once to cast aside some learned treatise on Arabic proverbs or spurn an animated article on the correct use of ق and ك in favour of a simple and pessimistic story :— The story of an individual who would aspire to produce an "Outpost of the Empire" yarn had he the journalist's power of describing grammatically the commonplace episodes of life at exaggerated length and were he not doubtful as to what Empire he was resident in.

On a day early in March after having more or less brought my military routine duties up to date and left detailed designs for the architectual construction of certain mud and grass buildings to be erected in my absence, with numerous other instructions varying from the proceedure of possible courts-martial to the efforts to be made to recover from some unknown and unfathomed crack in the cotton soil my one and only golf ball, I set out on my journey.

I now assumed the toga of the administrator rather than accoutrements of the soldier.

The dual nature of my work, alternately bringing peace and war to my near neighbours, has at times caused me to suffer delusions and may even have mystified other authorities.

But I much doubt at any rate if this subtle but important change was patent to the onlookers who saw me set out from my abode of grass.

My intention was to visit the Anuak Sultan and people of the Adonga and Akobo river districts. I had previously passed through that part of the country in 1921 so the gilt was somewhat off the gingerbread as nothing can equal a journey in new and unfrequented parts.

For the first day we travelled through the Kuk tree forest that fringes the left bank of the lower Akobo river and then on the third day we emerged on to the Niakan plains that during the rains form a vast swamp extending for 70 miles as far as Neum, the first of the Anuak villages in this region.

The days were excessively hot and seldom could shade be found for the midday halt. The "going" was generally bad owing either to cracks in the cotton soil or earth hummocks that in places cover the whole ground as closely as the tufts of hair on a Negro's head.

Over this sort of trackless country marching by night is impossible.

The usual pools of water inland had either dried up or were in a smelly and thick soupy condition. And to avoid certain muddy khors we had to keep some distance from the actual river which was generally split up into numerous branches to which accsss could only be obtained across wide stretches of bulrush covered swamps.

And what with the clouds of dust raised by our feet in the burnt-grass ashes and our struggles against stiff and interlaced half-burnt grass stems I have known travelling under more pleasant conditions.

In some ways this swamp area of the Niakan plains has a fascination. No natives live near it and canoes do not pass through it. It is the haunt of numerous hippopotami and when camping one night near a large grove of ambach trees our sleep was disturbed by their deep wheezing grunts protesting at our presence

Mrs. Gray's kob were frequently seen on the edge of the unburnt reeds while inland hards of tetal and tens of thousands of white-eared kob put up a dust screen across the horizon as soon as they sighted man.

These white-eared kob emigrate to the Akobo from the neighbourhood of Mongalla and after paying toll to the Beirs along the Pibor river are hunted by Anuaks with packs ef dogs. No wonder they give man a wide berth; but, after all, the loss inflicted on them by natives and the lions, that abound on these plains, must be very small in propertion to their numbers.

My last day across this inhospitable regions was an unfortunate one and ushered in a spell of misfortunes.

Owing to lack of water where we had expected to find it in the evening we had been compelled to enter the unburnt reeds and thistles and push out way in until we found water, which we eventually did after digging in a small sandy Khor.

Next morning I decided to march along the bed or this khor where ar least we were free from the obstacles outside it.

I was walking at the head of my transport on the lookout for something to shoot as we were in want of meat when all of a sudden 25 yards ahead and on the top of the 8 foot bank appeared the black outline of an animal slightiy screened by a fringe of grass.

We all saw it and stopped, and I am sure mouths behind me began to water.

At first I thought it was a warthog but as its head was down I was uncertain. Then an Anuak behind me said 'white-earded kob' and as this seemed quite likely by the height of back and length of body I fired.

Imagine my intense disgust and sorrow to find on mounting the bank, that I had shot a baby elephant.

I felt like a murderer. What pleasure it would have been to have seen this poor little animal wandering about by himself. There was not a sign of elephant anywhere in the neighbourhood nor had tracks of them been seen for several days as the natives say they seldom visit these treeless swamps.

The plodding along the heavy track seemed to become heavier. The small khor gradually became larger and deeper with pools at intervals, and in the afternoon, meeting with a pool that covered the width of the khor bed, I had to find a way out of it up banks that had become quite 15 feet high.

Thinking that if I could ride up the bank my baggage mules could get up it without off-loading I selected the easiest looking place and mounted my mule.

Up I went and just as my animal put his forefeet on the top the edge of the bank gave way and he fell backwards, then sideways and commenced to roll. I managed to quit the stirrups and got a start on him, rolling for all I was worth and reaching the bottom just ahead of him.

We picked ourselves up and looked at one another but as he made no remarks and as no damage was done I said nothing.

After that transport drivers did not require any urging to off-load their mules and carry up the loads,

The Fates however still pursued me seemingly desirous of letting me know that at my age I ought not to go gallivanting about in such a country and in a manner unsuited to my dignity.

For to save weight of baggage and because there is to my mind little difference in comfort I usually dispense with a camp bed and sleep on a mattress of grass on the ground.

On the night following the above distressful day I halted near an old gemeiza tree that hung far out over the river near Neum.

The Anuaks with me at once selected its base as their camping spot as it was the best bit of ground and said that the gemeiza was one of their sacred trees.

But as the place was just suitable for my tent and servants we said we could not be bothered with their old Kujurs and we were not in the mood for a practical acquiescence in their fancies and superstitions which at other times we record and respect when in our office chairs.

At 6 p.m. it began to rain: at 8 p.m. it was pouring accompanied by thunder and lightening.

At 8.30 p.m. having just began to doze on my bed beneath the mosquito curtain I suddenly sensed or heard something moving along the side of my net. In reply to a couple of blows of my fist on my blanket to frighten the intruder I received at short range of my face a couple of indignant puffs. To such retorts I have been unaccustomed, but it suddenly flashed across my memory that cobras show their displeasure in some such manner before taking further action.

So I withdrew my face and the intruder passed into the grass mattress and settled immediately below my pillow.

Well, I thought, after all it must have been a rat as for all I knew of them they might have a habit of snorting and perhaps it was one with a cold in its head. So I laid down my head on the pillow and composed myself asleep.

But when your ear is on a pillow and that pillow is separated by a blanket from a grass mattress the slightest noise from below that would otherwise pass unnoticed is easily detected, and twice again at intervals did I hear my visitor settling himself for the night. So irritating was this disturbance that I could not sleep: my ear seemed to enjoy registering the faintest move beneath.

Finally I shouted for my servant and told him to thrust my stick into the mattress and out the rat. He did so and retired, and for a few minutes I had peace. Then repetition of the insidious noise informed me that nothing had bolted, so I sat up and decided my servant should see this matter out to the end whilst I kept within the mosquito net. A candle was fetched and a business-like cudgel produced.

After a few progs into the grass out came the head of a cobra, and with commendable aim under cramped and difficult conditions his aggressor got in a good blow. A few more scrambled hits amidst shouts of "look out" as I peered through the net, and a nice little cobra two and a half feet long, eight inches round the middle and with no tail to speak of was pulled out and thrown with execrations into the river. I was told by my servants that the Arabic name of its species was "Nuwam" meaning "the sleeper"

I don't doubt it but that did not justify it coming to my sleeping abode.

Can it be wondered at that after recent events and with the monotonous pattering of rain broken at intervals by receding thunder I passed a restless night! And as this is a pessimistic story I must confess that when dawn broke fever encompassed my aching body.

One cannot shoot baby elephants, roll down a bank with a mule after you and then entertain at night a peculiarly repulsive visitor during a rain storm without some ill consequence.

At least I cannot.

My life has been spent on far too quiet a line to accustom me to alarms and hardships. Not for me has been "over the top" at dawn or clouds of poison gas: only the Beirs and "put and take" have so far nibbled into my nervous temperament,

Thus it happened that I had to spend two more days in this unholy place during which time my servants would try and see how many snakes they could locate in the old gemeiza tree, whence my visiter had undoubtedly come, and as they kept me informed of their discoveries I could not help imagining each night that every rustle of the grass was anouncing an irate cobra in search of his lost mate.

As a matter of fact they did locate a brother cobra tucked away in a crack of a large branch and a long thin green snake that would persist in swinging his head from side to side as though meditating a dive. There were probably plenty more.

الوحدة خير من جليس السوء

I left them undisturbed to test the nerves of the sacred tree's devotees.

I suppose the Anuaks thought their Kujur had put it across me and I told them I thought of fining the particular owners of this sacred tree for allowing it to set its snakes and fever at me.

To their credit I must add that they did not complain it was all my own fault but said they were sure it was much too well behaved to do anything like that. I wonder !

During the period of enforced leisure under the sacred tree I thought it an unhappy coincidence that at the first chance of having a quiet read I should, on opening February "Blackwood", see in the index an article entitle "The little Elephant". I read everything except it.

As the remainder of my journey passed off with no other particular misfortunes not withstanding the efforts of a female elephant to get me into trouble as I was nearing home this narrative must now be brought to a summary conclusion.

As for the remainder of my Autobiography I must hurry it forward if there is any prospect of further similar journeys in this charming part of the Sudan where "we live and move and have our fleeing."

Akobo

7.3.1923. C. R. BACON.

"LATET ANQUIS IN HERBA."

Last year when travelling on the Upper Akobo River I underwent the experience of harbouring at night beneath my blanket and pillow a peculiarly venomous type of cobra I as was sleeping on a grass mattress on the ground instead of camp bedstead.

This year on the 16th February whilst travelling on the Kongkong river in the Beir country I had an even more unpleasant experience.

I realize that these snake stories might endanger some people's reputation for veracity and sobriety, but I feel sure that in my case I have nothing to fear.

Soon after midday I was seated on a waterproof sheet spread out on the grass under the shade of my tent. My back was resting against pillows supported by a couple of mule trunks, and I was endeavouring to consume with a certain lack of avidity some curry and a pickled walnut.

Under my plate which was supported on my knees lay "The Times of the 22nd December and my attention was alternating between my food and an article on "Cheap Cottages".

But presently I realised that my attention was being distracted by some subtle movement at my back. I put down my plate and turned round but could see nothing on my pillows to account for the sensation, so finished my curry.

Again I was annoyed by some movement behind me so I further examined the pillows as I thought something might have got inside their covers.

But whilst thus turned and with my back "en l'air" I was not a little disturbed to feel the same sensation of movement still on my back.

I first shoved the newspaper over my shoulder to push off any wandering insect but as that did not have the desired effect I brushed my hand along my belt line : I did this lightly and with some hesitation as I had a feeling that something might nip my fingers.

The next instant I was struck motionless. From out of my open shirt front and on a level with my "bread-basket" shot the head of a snake and about 28 inches of body leaving the tail still inside my shirt.

Its head sunk down on to the waterproof sheet but most unfortunstely under and within 2 inches of my slightly raised bare knee where I could not see it, but I was painfully aware that the open leg of my pair of shorts seemed

positively the ideal bolt hole in case the snake should become alarmed or was filled with a politicians desire to explore every possible avenue.

Just at this moment my servant appeared with more food. I ejaculated the one word "stop" and like a well trained youth he did so without saying a word or doing anything silly.

Meanwhile for a full half minute, and in all stories of this nature this period is truly said to seem more like half an hour, I watched the reptile's body expand and contract with its breathing. The horrid part being that I could not see what it looked like doing or which way it might seem to be going next.

However I decided that if it was going to ground up the leg of my shorts I should have to make a violent protest.

I am glad to be able to record here that no vivid recollections of the past 7 years of my life in this District flashed before my mind to accentuate the horror of the situation. My attention was absorbed in watching the snake's palpitations which honestly beat mine, but I did not know whether his were due to excitement or anger. Also I was keenly anxious to know which way my visitor was deciding to go. And I could not suppress one little thought reminding me that the Medical Orderly of my party was one of the newly trained Sudanese and I foresaw something in the nature of a panic on his part should I suddenly have to shout lancets and life savers.

However at last to my infinite relief the Snake's head appeared beyond my knee and with a rapid movement the balance of its tail emerged from within my shirt and the beast glided off the waterproof sheet into the grass.

Then arose in me an unreasonable hate and with a shout we fell upon it with every handy weapen—my cook rushed on the scene with an Arab sword.

In a few seconds it had met an ungrateful end. And then not because I wished to convince sceptics but because I felt I owed it something for our short but intimate acquaintance I immersed the 34 inches of the deceased snake in a quarter of my only available whisky. What more respect could I show it when my hate had been appeased!

The mystery as to how it had penetrated into such close quarters with me was explained when my shirtback was found to have developed a long slit over my right shoulder blade. The snake must have glided between the trunks over the pillows, and there found a dark gap inviting its entrance.

Thank goodness I was wearing a singlet beneath my shirt and that it was in an unusually good state of repair!

If only I had a facile pencil to depict the exit of the snake from my lower bosom I might have realised my ambition to get an article into the "Wide Wide World" Magazine and be paid for it, as I could easily have supplied a portrait of the Author.

Well I somehow feel there should be a "moral" to this story and in that case suggest that however necessary it my be to be good nevertheless that is not enough and one must be careful if the Financial Secretery is not to be given a chance of wiping off the liability of a substantial gratuity that may be due in the not distant future.

Akobo
30.4.1922.



A Typical Nuer.

Note the coiffure, spiked wristlet and ambatch ornament round the middle.

THE NUER OF THE UPPER NILE PROVINCE

The present is the first of a series of articles on the Nuer of the Upper Nile Province. The account that follows of this primitive tribe makes no pretence at being more than a collection of notes compiled during occasional visits to their country during the course of the past two years. They have been obtained either from, or through the medium of, the chief Government Interpreter at Malakal, one Tut Deng—or Bilal Said as he prefers to be called—a Dinka with an encyclopaedic knowledge of all that pertains to the Nuer with whom he now chooses to identify himself. Although no effort has been spared to make these notes as accurate as possible they suffer from being derived, either directly or indirectly, from one source. With the exception of Tut Deng I have failed to find a single Arabic-speaking native who had the least idea, either of extracting the information I required, or even of putting any intelligent question to the average Nuer. Finally, in reply to nine out of ten of my enquiries as to the reason for a particular custom, I was unable to elicit any more illuminating an answer than that our fathers have always done it. It is possible, in this connection, that the Nuer are really ignorant of the why and the wherefore of their various customs and have not in their own minds any explanation for the faith that is in them, which they accept with their usual fatalism as part of the inexplicable and even uninteresting order of the universe. Savages are, for the most part, without the phraseology with which to describe an abstract idea and are little concerned with anything but the actual present and immediate future. Theosophical explanations are not for them. The higher criticism is only a late development in the historical evolution of a race.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Nuer must be among the most backward of all the peoples of Africa, They live by, for and with their cattle. Such little grain as is grown they cultivate with a view to its future conversion into merissa, or native beer, although they tend nowadays to make use of it in ever-increasing degree as a kind of porridge. When this grain has been consumed they are entirely dependent on the limited and uncertain milk supply that they can obtain from a herd of cows which has been, in many cases, seriously depleted

by cattle-plague; or they rely on the fish that they catch as the various pools and watercourses dry up. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that for a great part of the year they are in a state of semi-starvation, and often on the verge of death. The bitter experience of past years has taught them nothing. They inhabit a country where grain can be produced with the greatest possible ease. Yet, such is the indolence of the Nuer that his dislike of work overcomes his horror of a death from starvation.

Lazy to a degree, indifferent to the outer world and any suggestion of progress they are a heart-breaking race with which to have to deal. Even such interest as they take in propagating their species is limited to the hope that they will thereby obtain sons to tend their herds, or daughters to enrich them by their dowries.

In their ordinary greeting of *Chiniang*, "have you slept?" is the epitome of their whole life, for no more natural a question than this could be addressed to a Nuer who does little else unless he is galvanised into a spasmodic activity by the insistent demands of a hunger that will no longer be denied. Indeed it is difficult to see how, in the near future any real moral, material or spiritua progress or development can be expected from them.

At the same time there will inevitably be changes amongst them in their outlook on life and methods of living as administration becomes closer and more sustained, and for this reason it is as well to depict them now as they really are, in all their barbarism and degradation, before the mists of time have enfolded their past in a romance that was never theirs, and assigned to them an attractiveness that they have never possessed. It is often the custom to portray the savage as an interesting individual, living the simple life simply and morally, with no troubles to annoy him and no unsatisfied wants: a primitive, unspoilt, unsophisticated creature who, happy in his Elysian surroundings, leads an idyllic life until civilisation clothes him in unbefitting garb and introduces him to the curse of trade gin. Seen through the vista of years some savages may appear to have led an artless, unharassed life of comfort and contentment, with no real faults, worries or afflictions. Of the Nuer, at any rate, such a description would be emphatically untrue. They lead a harsh, uncouth existence.

They are without the ritual, ceremony or reverence with which the Shilluk treat their *Rit* (or king) and show little or no respect to such personalities who, either owing to their own or inherited powers, are set in authority over



NUER.

Note the flour-bags and ivory armlet.

them. This lack of chieftains in whom to repose confidence or regard renders it almost impossible to establish control over a tribe where each man is a law unto himself which he interprets so as to suit his own convenience.

The Nuer however cannot—as would be the simplest and, in some ways, the must satisfactory solution of the whole question—be left entirely to themselves. In the Upper Nile Province alone they number some 300,000 souls with a total fighting strength, were they to amalgamate, of over sixty thousand active, able-bodied men. Many of them own rifles imported from Abyssinia, while all are adepts in the use of the throwing and stabbing spear. The slightest relaxation of control - as was recently illustrated in the case of the Jekaing - inculcates in their truculent brains the idea that Govornment is afraid of them, and the inevitable consequences ensue.

They are a turbulent race. Their cattle has been seriously depleted in recent years by cattle-plague, or the petty thefts and chicanery of their less warlike neighbours the Dinka and Burun. They are, therefore, a continual menace to the policy of peaceful penetration which is the aim of the Sudan authorities. For very good and obvious reasons the full strength of Government has never yet been exercised against a tribe which acts more in ignorance and devilment than from any well defined and considered motives of hostility.

Occasionally they are visited by a District Commissioner with a few police, but their numbers are so large and the country over which they roam so vast that quite an appreciable proportion of them has never yet seen an Englishman.

Moreover, by the purchase of arms from the Abyssinians they have - in their own opinion - made themselves sufficiently strong to evade or disobey any orders issued to them, however beneficial these may be to the community at large.

This arming with rifles is however a double-edged weapon as some clumsy or enthusiastic warrior may loose off his rifle and thus give warning of an impending attack. At the same time possession of this arm does make the Nuer a more difficult problem in the first instance for the civil authorities to deal with. Time and experience will disillusion them as to their fancied strength. Meanwhile, the most that can be hoped for is to be able to show them that there are things in the world worthy of more serious consideration than a barren cow or philo-progenitive herd bull.

As the Nuer can neither read nor write, have no written records and few, if any, tribal or historical traditions it is difficult to elucidate their origin and

discover what germs of truth may lurk in such vague and disconnected legends as they have. In what follows I give with considerable misgivings (and a warning that any statements made require still further corroboration before they can be accepted as actual facts) the account that the Nuer have given of the origin of their tribe.

Part A.

1. GEOGRAPHICAL.

The area enclosed by the Bahr el Zeraf, Main Nile and Bahr el Jebel as far south as parallel 7° 30′ is, with a few insiginificant exceptions, inhabited by Nuer only. Ten miles south of the Junction of the Bahr el Zeraf and the Main Nile the Nuer are again found on the east bank of the former river from where they march with the Dinka along the Khor Attar as far south as parallel 9° until the (river) Fullus* is reached.

This river with Wang Nyaitch to a point on the Sobat river about parallel 32° 20′ east divides the Dinka from the Nuer who, from here, extend roughly due North to the Addar swamps from where the northern boundary along the Khor Dāga runs to meet the Abyssinian frontier.

Here the Khor Jokau and Bāro river are theoretically the dividing line between the Anyuak and the Nuer though, in point of fact, the latter usually cross south of the Adāra river as far as roughly par 8° 15′. From this neighbourhood to 7° 50′ south of the Pibor river is the eastern boundary of the Nuer from where it runs almost straight to par. 7° 30′ when the Bahr el Jebel is again met with.

The total area amounts to some 26,000 square miles with a poplulation of possibly 320,000 people, or about twelve to the square mile. This populaton is roughly distributed as follows:—

Tiun (§)	West.	Bahr el Jebel
	East.	Long. 31° East
	North.	Lat. 97° North
	South.	Lat. 7° 45′ North
	Population. 10,000.	Area. 3600 square miles.
Lak.	West.	Bahr El Jebel.
	East.	Bahr El Zeraf.

* i. e. Ful Lus, the pool or river of the fish *protopterus aethiopicus*, cartographically misspelt as Khor Filus.

§ See Note, line 9, on opposite page.

	North.	White Nile.	
	South.	Lat.	9° North
	Population. 30,000.	Area 2000 square miles.	
Garweir.	West.	Long.	31° East
	East.	Long.	31° 30′ East
	North.	Lat.	8° 45′ North
	South.	Lat.	7° 50′ North
	Population. 50,000.	Area. 4400 square miles.	

NOTE.—In the following article the sound N G that should more correctly be transliterated by $\dot{N}$ is, for typographical reasons, written usually NG. Similary CH, JH, SH, DJH take the place of $\underset{<}{C}$ or $\underset{<}{T}$ as the case may be.

Lau	West.	Long.	31° 30′ East
	East.	River Pibor	
	North.	Lat.	8° 15′ on east 8° 45′ on west
	South.	Lat.	7° 50′ North
	Population. 70,000.	Area. 5500 square miles.	
Jekaing including Gargwang.	West.	Long.	32° 30′ East
	East.	Abyssinian frontier	
	North. Khor Daga & Par.	9° 30′ North	
	South.	Lat.	8° North
	Population. 160,000.	Area. 10,500. square miles.	

The population of the Nuer under review amounts to some 320,000, a total which make them one of the largest tribes in the Sudan. It is even possible that their numbers exceed this figure but it has hitherto been only practicable to make a very rough estimate of the population.

The above computation, which is based almost entirely on the numbers of a few small sections which were vaccinated in 1921, can only he regarded as accurate within limits.

At the same time it is interesting to note that the conjucture of 160,000 for the Jekaing section corresponds with the conclusions arrived at during the 1920 patrol when some 30,000 huts (each containing as a rule about five persons)were actually counted.

2. TOPOGRAPHICAL.

Although, not unnaurally, there are different local peculiarities in a territory that extends over some 26,000 square miles there are three main characteristics that apply to almost the whole of the district inhabited by the Nuer.

It is dead flat, and almost treeless — except in the immediate vicinity of watercourses — while tall grass, from two to twelve feet in height covers the entire area during the summer and autumn months.

The watercouses are for the most part shallow depressions, rarely exceeding six feet in depth except for a short period during the summer.* These are usually difficult to cross during and immediately after the rains, not so much owing to the depth of the water as on account of the matted grass, reeds and waterlilies that entangle the wayfarer in their weedy embrace. Here and there are a few more or less sandy ridges rising a little above the surrounding plain and, in the neighbourhood of the Bahr El Zeraf (or Giraffe river), three or four small hills reaching to a height of two or three hundred feet. Apart from these little excrescences the only topographical item of note is the Aiyod ridge, which stretches for some fifty miles in the Upper Nile Province and is continued for a few more in Mongalla. This Duk, as it is called in the Nuer language, is for the most part rather sandy and only extends for a breadth of some four or five miles but it is distinguished by an arboreal wealth to be found nowhere else in the Upper Nile Province. In an appendix will be given a list of the more common trees and shrubs that are to be found in the Nuer country though the traveller may wander for many a mile without seeing more than higlig (1), talh (2), and kharub (3). Here and there one comes across a sausage tree (4), sycamore (5), tamarind (6) or tebeldi (7), but otherwise it is not until one reaches the vicinity of a watercourse that trees are to be found in any variety or profusion. The soil is of the ordinary cotton soil type, which is so sodden and viscous during the rains as to be practically impassable even to the native, while in the dry weather it cracks so badly and becomes baked so hard as to make animal transport a matter of considerable inconvenience.

The average rainfall is somewhere about nine hundred millimetres a year, though a little heavier perhaps in the extreme south of the district than in the north. The rainy season is fairly clearly defined : an occasional storm in March or April is followed by more regular rains in May which develop into frequent

(1) *Balanties Aegyptiaca.*
(2) *Acacia Seyal.*
(3) *Bauhinnia reticulata.*
(4) *Kigelia Aothiopica.*
(5) *Ficus Sycomorus.*
(6) *Tamarindus Indicus.*
(7) *Adansonia digitata.*

* This remark does not apply to the rivers such as the Sobat, Bahr el Zaraf, etc.



A typical khor in the Nuer country.

downpours in June, July and August. During this trimester the excessively trying heat of the two preceding months gives way to cloudy skies and cool weather which is often accompanied by a kind of Scotch mist. The departure of the rains follows the same course as in the Northern Sudan: thunder and lightning are more frequent than during the height of the rainy season: the storm itself is usually fiercer while it lasts but less in volume. In September the rainfall gradually diminishes and, by the end of October, is finished in a normal year. Cool weather may be looked for during three, or possibly four, of the winter months, in which time the grass rapidly dries up and prairie fires commence. Between December and June practically the whole of the Nuer country is set on fire and becomes a blackened waste with fresh grass springing greenly in order to supply the needs of the numerous herds of cattle that roam the district. Premature burning, however, not infrequently leaves consider able tracts only partially consumed by the flames and here wild cats and other game find a temporary hiding place.

The rainfall, though normally heavy, is, as elsewhere in the world, of uncertain distribution, and this factor plays a very important part not only in determining the migration of the Nuer from year to year but by adding very materially to the difficulties of administration. There are no wells in the Nuer country—unless a slight excavation of no greater depth than six feet in certain places can be dignified by this name, and, as the watercourses dry up, larger and larger herds of cattle tend to concentrate round the rapidly diminishing pools until the scanty water is of so foul a character as to be practically undrinkable by a European. I once stopped at one such pool where my native servants would not even boil their food in the filthy water that we found, preferring to go to sleep without either eating or drinking. An official's movements, therefore, are almost entirely governed by the accessibility, or otherwise, of the water supply, which varies from year to year and makes his itinerary a problem of great uncertainty as the presence of water one year in a given place is no guarantee that water will again be found there at the same time in another year.

Moreover the dead level of the country means that only a little heavier rainfall that usual or an exceptionally high river will flood a large expanse of country for hundreds of square miles. Thus in the year 1918, an abnormally high river resulted in the Bahr el Zeraf overflowing its banks and inundating the country to the east to such an extent that a journey which, in the ordinary course of events, is a matter of some inconvenience owing to the uncertainy of finding

water, had to be performed for a distance of eighty miles in canoe. And, in the same year, Nyerol post, thirty five miles to the south of Abwong, on the river Sobat, which was usually supplied over a waterless tract was only with the greatest difficulty kept in touch with civilisation owing to the country in between being almost entirely under water,

As to the agricultural possibilities of the Nuer district it is as yet too early to hasard an opinion. The Nuer are so backward a race and so unenterprising in character that their only excursion into the agricultural domain has been limited to the production of a little *dura* * and tobacco.

Cotton, however, would appear to flourish and the wild hibiscus, from which excellent fibre can be produced, is to be found everywhere. The casual and ignorant observer would indeed incline to the view that where Nature is so exuberant as to be a positive nuisance there would be a promising future for the production of grain, cotton, tobacco, fibre - producing plants and possibly rice in certain localities.

The Nuer in their own language refer to themselves as Nāz or Nuār; the Shilluk, Arab and Dinka call them Nuer, and various writers Nuehrs, Nueirs, Nouaer, Nower, Nuwehr, etc. As the term Nuer by which they are generally known is a sufficiently accurate reproduction of the Nuer' own pronunciation I have decided to retain it when writting of them.

Places are usually named after a particular incident that occurred there or owing to some topographical or other characteristic. Amongst people like the Nuer, who make no provision for the future, hunger, not unexpectedly, plays a very prominent part and is responsible for many place-names.

Thus :

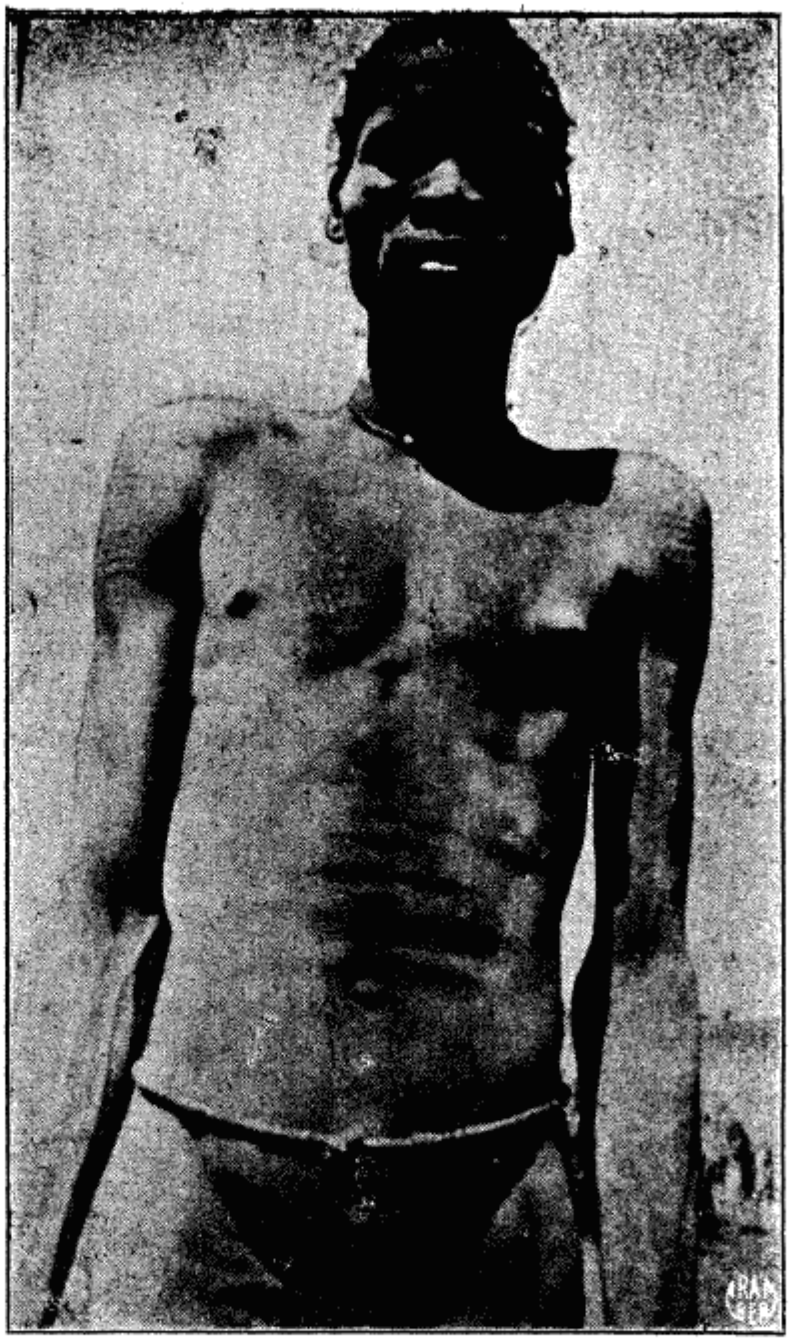
Doish (= deflated belly) : † Chief Busz wished to catch some fish in order to appease the pangs of hunger but failed to do so: he then addressed the river as follows:— "Why do you not allow me to catch your fish seeing that my belly has fallen in from hunger?"

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* Sorghum vulgare.

† I regret that my transliteration of Nuer sounds follows no recognised system. Many of the words were written down at a time when I did not know one word of the language and in the way that I thought would most accurately represent to me the sound that I should be able to recognise when, in a state of somewhat less abysmal ignorance, I came to check and revise these notes. Unfortunately, owing to my transfer from the Upper Nile Province, this opportunity has not occurred.

The sound variously represented by the letters SH, JH, TCH, TSH, or Ch is perhaps the most difficult to reproduce accurately as it undoubtedly differs according to the speaker and frequently the S is silent. In many cases, i.e., CHAM 'to eat' the sound corresponds to the Italian CI.



A NUER IN MOURNING WITH ROPE GIRDLE ROUND THE MIDDLE.

Note the cicatrisation on forehead, breasts and arms.

Gworkwaijh, named after a man called *Gwor* who was so hungry that he ate the husks of the *lalob* fruit *(kwaijh)*.

Limkontchiek. (*Lim*, ask: *Kon*, the name of man; *tchiek*, a woman.) Kon, when travelling, was overcome with hunger and begged for some food from a woman whom he happened to meet and who gave him some porridge.

Koannuoannak. *Nak* = skimmed milk with no sustaining fat in it. *Nonan* was hungry and asked for something to drink: he was offerred skimmed milk and was so angry *(koan)* that he refused it.

Traces of a previous Dinka residence in what is now the Nuer country are not infrequently met with. Thus the khor (watercourse) Nyangding is a Dinka name denoting *Nyang*, daughter of, *Ding*, the snake fish (Ar. *dabīb el hōt*) and is so called owing to the prevalence of this particular kind of fish.

Wulang : (*Wun* place of : *Lang* the *nabbak* bush)

Banajur named after an ancient Dinka woman who lived there. Wunbil, a sandy *debba* (or rise) called after a man Wunbil. Tull = Death : the occurrence of this name commemorates the outbreak of some such epidemic as small pox.

Episodes and various characteristics are recorded in the following name places.

Kaikwi (*Kai* = bite : *Kwi* = cobra) a man was bitten by a cobra but recovered owing to the application of a root obtained from some particular tree. Charms and antidotes against cobra bite are obtained from the Nyam-Nyam of the Bahr El Ghazal. The root is chewed and put on the place that is affected. Charms, consisting, for instance, of a bit of *Gulum* *(called *Koat* in Nuer), are also employed against fever

Qwoinjoak. *Qwoin* = a well : *Joak* = deep. a 6 foot deep well. Yuoat Nyakong : *Yuoat*, name of a man : *Nyakong* his mother : a well known chief.

Qwoinkaou. A man buried a dead reedbuck which he had found and hid it in his house so that no one else might partake of it : an unsocial act in the eyes of the Nuer who are so frequently in a state of semi-starvation.

Rubdoal. *Rub* = forest, *doal* a boy who has not yet undergone the initiation ceremony. A boy was killed by an elephant in this forest.

* *Capparis tomentosa*.

Nyakur named after a well known rich woman who lived there. Bar Riaq. The lake of the crested crane, *Riaq*, an onomatopoeic word, used also sometimes by the Shilluk, * to denote the quacking of the crested crane.

Kurwai, the place of the *derişa* thorn.

Mantchum, the mother of the man called *tchum*.

Yakwaitsh. *Ya* = attack : *Kwaitsh* = a leopard.

Burmalwal, a pool called after a man *Malwal* who made holes, *Bur*, for fish in it.

Khor Taloar the river of a yellow fruit not unlike a lemon in appearance (Ar. *Gebbein*) which grows here.

Kwaingunmut. *Kwain* = steal : *mut* = a spear. A man called Gun found a spear sticking in the ground and stole it.

Toaktchak. *Toak* = mouth and *Tchak* = milk. A man after drinking milk did not wipe his mouth with the result that it was left of a vivid white colour.

Kwoing Luwal Ta-an. A man called *Luwal* found a dead cheetah, *ta-an* and carried it off.

Kok poat. *Poat* is a stick for knocking cattlepegs into the ground with. *Kok* an onomatopoeic word for the noise made when driving them in.

Tor Kiel. The pool of the rhinoceros, found eating grass near it.

Ying, the name given to the smell of *naal* grass, Noing Ying.

Bull lim kun. A man called *Lim* was found roasting a rat, *Kun*, though for what reason is not known.

Tor Pott, the pool of defeat. There was a good grazing place found by the Nuer but as soon as they reached it they were attacked and driven away by the Turks †

Cattle, not unnaturally amongst a purely pastoral people like the Nuer play their part in giving their names to various places.

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* In the following articles I have retained the common spelling in use for this tribe- it is really the Arabic name for the Shilluk (Sing. Shilkawi). The Shilluk however, who hate the Arab intensely, dislike being addressed in this form and according to D'Oyler prefer to be called Shulla (Westermann óchólò pl.chól).

† Arab, Europeans, Egyptians and in fact any light-coloured race are referred to as Turks by the Nuer.

Toaqroall, a bull with a black body and white front legs which died in this place.

Jokrial, a peculiarly marked black and white bull which was sacrificed in the place now called after it.

Fanyangluel, the place of the bull *Luel*, red, with crocodile markings. The Dinka, being hungry, killed a bull with marks like those on a crocodile's skin, *Nyang*.

Joagga, a bull half black and half white which died here.

Fa denoting "place" is a common prefix.

Fataish. *Taish* is the Nuer name for the grass cushion put on the head n order to support a *reika* (an oblong wicker basket used either to carry food or a puling infant or, not infrequently, both together).

Fawīwi, *Wīwi* is the clear ground of a ridge as distinguished from the grassy plains.

Fakām, the place of the axe, *Kām*.

Fagār, the place of the axe, *Gār*. When the Nuer first went to this place there was much *higlig* and *talh* that required clearing away.

The sound of the axe, *Gār*, ringing all day through the woods gave the name to the place.

Fagnyang, the place of the crocodile, where a crocodile ate a man.

3. HISTORICAL: THE ORIGIN OF THE NUER.

The Nuer claim a common ancestry with the Shilluk, Anyuak, Dinka and Atwot. As so much has been written elsewhere about the Shilluk the following account of the Nuer ancestry will be limited to various traditions connected with the Atwot, Dinka and Nuer, and only a brief reference will be made to an account of the Shilluk ancestry which differs from that usually given by this people. *

The Shilluk themselves recognise a relationship with the Dinka but deny that they are in any way connected with the Nuer. For this they can hardly be blamed as the Shilluk are in every way superior to the Nuer. At the same time the Shilluk also refuse any affinity with the Fung—a denial that cannot for the

* In Westermann. (*The Shilluk people*, XL-LII, 31,44, 178 etc.) is to be found the most authoritative account of the history of the Shilluk and of the traditions that are most generally accepted by them.

present be accepted as correct. For this reason too much importance should not be attached to a statement that may not have any more foundation than a refusal to recognise an undesirable relationship. According to one Shilluk tradition * Nikawn (Nyikawng), the founder of the Shilluk race - and Deng - the ancestor of the Dengka, or Dinka - were Ni Mai cousins. Opinion is divided as to whether this was a real blood relationship or not, some of the Shilluk people maintaining that Deng and Nyikawng were merely friends who called themselves cousins in consequence. Other state that Deng was the son of Abuk who was a sister of Nikia, the mother of Nikawn.

At any rate the relationship between the Shilluk and Dinka seems, on the whole, to be generally admitted by both tribes. And, similarly, both Nuer and Dinka claim to be descended from a common stock. It is possible that the Dinka and the Shilluk are the older races and that the Nuer are an offspring of the former. Similarity of customs and language, as well as of traditions, point towards a common ancestry. A linguistic survey of the languages should set at rest any doubts there may be about this question.

The Nuer have very indistinct and somewhat contradictory explanations to offer for the origin of their tribe. This is only to be expected of a people so ignorant and unintelligent as they are. However, by eliminating statements that are obviously incorrect, and comparing others with the more or less generally accepted traditions of the Shilluk and Dinka, it is possible to extract a fairly coherent and intelligible account of the Nuer ancestry from the various legends current amongst them.

In the dim and distant past Deng Dīt, the Great God of the Dinka, (or Dengka as they should more correctly be written), married a woman called Alyet in the Dinka language and Lit in that of the Nuer. (†). While living in an aradeib tree Alyett gave birth to Akol (or Aqwɔl) who married Garung from whom are ultimately descended Deng and Nuer, the respective ancestors of the Dinka and Nuer tribes.

Now Deng Dit means in the Dinka language "the great rain", Alyett "a howling storm", and Akol "the sun". Garung means the waterlily and its seeds (‡) which are eaten in times of hunger. A man who is born at such a

* For much of the information concerning the Shilluk that appears in the following pages I am indebted to Dr. Oyler of Doleib Hill.

(†) These two persons are often referred to as GWANG DOONG and MAN DOONG respectively.

(‡) Nymphaea lotus. (The roots of this plant are regularly eaten by the Baggara who call them *Suteib* ; we have seen them on sale in the market at Sherkeila.-Ed.)

period is not infrequently given the name of Garung (*). What it exactly means in this particular connection I have not been able to decide satisfactorily. But, with regard to the other names given above, it is tempting to assume that the Nuer are unconsciously finding an animistic explanation for the origin of the world and of their own race when they refer to these early marriages of what they now regard as actual persons who really lived at some period of the world's history.

When Garung died he left behind him a cow and a calf, the former being bequeathed to Deng and the latter to Nuer. Deng, however, as can readily be believed by anyone with only the slightest acquaintance with the habits of this tribe, stole the calf of Nuer who was the younger brother and not able to retaliate. Nuer consequently left the family and, when he had grown to man's estate, returned with some friends and retook his calf. From that day to this the Nuer and Dinka are constantly raiding and counterraiding one another for cattle, the original theft of the only calf in the tribe still being remembered with the bitterest of feelings.

Alyett herself is regarded as having issued from an aradeib tree beside Yeir Guoal (the river of smallpox) which runs through the country called Raiyung, not far from Shambe, and this river is now referred to as Yeir Leish or Lit (the river of Alyett). This tree was held in the greatest of reverence and a sacrifice of a bull, or at any rate a sheep or goat, was invariably made to it at the beginning of the rains. The tree was thus adressed "Man Doong yungda mo kanni" "Man Doong" (by which Alyett as the ancestress of the human race is referred to) "this bull is yours, take it" (†) This particular tree is reported to have fallen down during the past twelve months owing to old age and the recent epidemic of what appears to be Spanish influenza is in consequence attributed to this untoward episode. (‡)

After Alyett had given birth to Akol (and according to some accounts the

(*) Westermann 159, 160, refers to a person GARO, the son of the sun. Possibly the same individual is meant.

(†) I am told that the *aradeib* tree is still regarded as sacred by some sections of the Nuer who will not cut it down or epmloy it for building their huts.

(‡) My informant had himself lost six sons and many cattle during the past year, all of which were attributed to the downfall of the sacred aradeib. (Capt. V. H. Fergusson, O.B.E. informs us that this tree was at a place called Kot in the country of the chief Madi, about Lat. 8°30 Long. 30°18, and was destroyed by fire in 1918, but he has never heard that the outbreak of influenza was attributed to its destruction.—Ed.)

ancestor of the Shilluk also) she produced a canoe from the river as well as the cow and calf referred to above. The cow, as we have seen, was given to the Dinka, the calf to the Nuer and the canoe to the Shilluk, in which connection it is interesting to note that the Nuer themselves state that they learnt the art of canoe making from the Anyuak, who are very closely related to the Shilluk.

Nuer, the descendant of the marriage between Akol and Garung, had two sons Ga'a and A'ak, the former of whom married a woman, whose name is unknown, who became angry with her husband and went to A'ak for redress. Wherever she walked water sprang from the ground and formed a khor or watercourse which was given the name of Li (Lil or Lit) and is reported to exist somewhere to the west of the Bahr el Jebel in the neighbourhood of Shambe. Ga'a wished to go to A'ak in pursuit of his recalcitrant wife but everywhere found his way barred by the newly forming watercourse. Finally he reached the place where Ga'a was living and stopped on the near side of the khor while he tried to persuade A'ak to give his wife up.

This khor was given the name of Lil Daka, the river of division, and, because it was supposed to have sprung from the Great Spirit, it was referred to as Lil in order to distinguish it from an ordinary watercourse which is called Wang (*).

After a conversation carried on across the dividing waters A'ak said that if any woman could cross the stream the matter was at an end and Ga'a would not be able to obtain the return of his wife. Many women succeeded in doing so and remained with A'ak when it was arranged that in future anyone crossing from one side to the other should become a member of the the tribe to which she or he crossed. Thus the Garweir section belongs to A'ak as do Nuon, (west of the Bahr el Jebel not far from Shambe) Dok, Jalūk, Qwei, Beiq, (Gad) qwaish. Families of Ga'a are Bor, Lang, Raiyung, Wott, Ror, Bull (Ghābar el Arab), Leiq (who live near Khor Aradeib) Lak, Tiung, Jekaing (near Nasset and the Bahr el Ghazal), Lau, Keirluwal (Bahr el Ghazal).

A'ak was the ancestor of Nuon, Dok, Qwei and Jaluk but the descendants of Ga'a were far more numerous. By one wife he had four sons Ror, Wott, Lang and Bor who are the heads of what are reported to be more or less insignificant *shiengs* † in the Bahr el Ghazal Province. By another he had three sone Tiung, Najh and Reill. Tiung the is a section of the Nuon living between the Bahr el Jebel and the Bahr el Zeraf and numbering some ten

(*) A Dinka word for a stream, e.g., Wang Nyerol, Wang Nyanding, Wang Gnyaitch.
(†) i. e., Sections of a tribe.



NUER HUTS.



NUER IN THE GRASS.

Note the bead girdles and combined tobacco pouch and neck rest (with the middle Nuer.)

thousand souls, divided, as is the usual Nuer custom into two *susbhiengs* Riā and Bang.

Najh was the ancestor of Raiyung and Lau, the father of the large Lau section of the tribe which is subdived into Mor and Gun with a total population of some 70,000 persons living between the Aiyod ridge and the Abyssinian frontier. Reill had three sons Keirluwal, Leiq and Lak, the last-named alone belonging to the Upper Nile Province. Lak number some 30,000 inhabitants and live to the north of the Tiung between the Bahr el Jebal, Bahr el Zeraf and the main Nile. Ga'a also had another wife named Guoat who gave birth to Bull. This man is of some importance in the history of the Nuer as it was his daughter who was married to Kīr, the ancestor of the Jekaing—the largest section of all the Nuer.

Ga'a and A'ak thus account for the whole of the Nuer tribe with the important exception of the Garweir and a less numerous section in the Jikull.

The ancestor of the Garweir section was a man named Wurr, who descended in a storm of rain from heaven, holding in his hand a stick of the inderab tree (*). He was found near the house of A'ak by whom he was brought up. His offspring now number some 50,000 persons who inhabit the Aiyod ridge and the country between that district and the Bahr el Zeraf.

Jikull is similarly supposed to have fallen from the skies in a storm and arrived near the house of Ga'a who fostered him with the rest of his family. Another account, however, states that a woman was angry with her husband and fled from heaven to earth where she gave birth to twins. One of these died but the other, named Kull, survived and was the ancestor of the Jikull section. These people are insignificant in numbers and influence and are scattered among various divisions.

It will thus be seen from what has gone before that most of the Nuer trace their descent to Garung and his Dinka wife Akol while the three sections of the tribe—the Jikull, Jekaing and Garweir—who are not their direct offspring, were brought by them or their relatives after miraculous appearances on earth which may, or may not, find favour with the credulous.

Thus, according to such traditions as there are, the Dinka and Nuer have a common ancestry. And, certainly, the relationship between them, although they are sworn enemies and ceaselessly at war among themselves, is far closer

(*) Cordia Abyssinica.

than between either of them and their neighbours, the Anyuak, Burun or Shilluk.

When first we hear of the Nuer they seem to have been domiciled in what is commonly referred to as "the Island", the country west of Shambe, between the Bahr el Jebel and Bahr el Ghazal.

With them were the Atwot and to the north and west the Shilluk. Nyakang, the ancestor of the Shilluk, is regarded as having lived originally in the Jur district with a chief named Dimme at a place called Jur Dumbo. From here he left by canoe for the country that is now inhabited by his descendants.

At this time the Nuer and Dinka lived on friendly terms with one another and intermarried, a custom that, in spite of tribal differences, unfortunately still holds good at the present time and is a source of much friction. Indeed one of the numerous complaints with which one is called upon to deal is where a Dinka woman is married to a Nuer who pays the dowry to the girl's parents. After a few months of married life the girl obtains permission to visit some distant relatives but omits to return, with the result that the sorrowing husband is bereaved of his wife and cattle at one fell swoop. Being of a somewhat independent turn of mind the Nuer collects some young warriors, of whom part may very possibly have suffered in a similar fashion.

They then raid the nearest Dinka from whom they are likely to recover the cattle or others in their place. This rouses the indignation of the simple and inoffensive Dinka who hurries off to the nearest Government post with a piteous account of the wickedness of the Nuer. Perhaps understandably the part played by the Dinka lady, the *fons et origo mali*, is discreetly glossed over.

Somewhere towards the close of the fifteenth century, or possibly earlier, there appears to have been a big tribal upheaval in the middle of Africa: perhaps an invasion of some alien power which the led to an emigration of the Nuer from the Bahr el Jebel to the neighbourhood of Lake No, Nasser etc. Or, possibly, as the Nuer themselves believe, this general centrifugal impetus may have been simply imported by the overpopulation of a district that could, at the best of times, support a very limited number of people.

At any rate, if the attached genealogical tables are to be believed (and for the past seven or eight generations I am inclined to think that they are more or less trustworthy) Kir appears to have been born about the beginning of the sixteenth century under the following circumstances.

There was a Dinka woman, sister of Ging Marang, living at Qwoong, just south of the main Nile in what is now the Lak country though at that time it was inhabited by the Rueng Diñka. One night she heard a baby's cry from the top of a grass hut. As there was nothing to be seen there except a gourd she was, not unnaturally, somewhat perturbed and informed her husband of the strange occurrence. With more force than politeness the man replied, liar! However, as his wife insisted on the truth of what she had told him, the doubting husband finally agreed to spend a night in the haunted hut. He, in turn, heard a baby crying and cut the gourd down. Some other Dinka were then collected and, on their splitting the gourd open with their spears, there emerged a baby, to whom they gave the name of Kir which means, in their language a bowl or gourd. *

The child was then given to the Dinka woman to bring up, Ging Marang assuming the honorary rôle of uncle. However, Kīr, when about seven years of age killed a Dinka boy with the result that he and his uncle were compelled to flee from the wrath of the relatives. On his departure the Dinka said *achilo kang* (†), someone, the stranger, has gone. This phrase became corrupted into the word Jekaing by which name the descendants of Kīr are now known.

Kīr settled in the neighbourhood of Lake No and, on reaching man's estate, married a woman of the Bull section of the Nuer, who bore him a son Madjok, the ancestor of the Gargwang division. A second wife from the Garweir gave birth to Matiung from whom are descended the Garjok while a third wife, from the Leiq Nuer, bore him Kunjokjak, the ancestor of the Garjak section.

On the death of Kīr, Madjōk was appointed by his father as head of the tribe and given the hereditary leopard skin, without which no case of killing can be tried. Matiung and Kunjokjak decided privately not to accept Madjok as their chieftain but to deprive him of the guardianship of the Sacred Spear. ‡ They persuaded Ging Marang to join them although the question of the succession did not concern him in any way seeing that he was a Dinka. Kunjokjak had, however, helped him to pay for his wedding dowry and had

* A rather similar story is related of Nyakawting who found a mysterious gourd which moved about in a strange manner. On cutting it open he found a man, an ostrich and a crow inside.

(†) Further enquiries are desireable with regard to this particular phrase which may quite possibly furnish a solution to what is now largely a matter of conjectuer.

‡ See Part D. 15.

thus recruited him as an ally. When this agreement was come to Madjok was outside looking after the cattle but on his return he at once divined that something was wrong. He spoke to his relations and was greeted with the remark that he was from henceforth of no more account and had been deprived of the leopard skin and Sacred Spear. He was also informed that in future his sons and his sons' sons would work for the plotters and their descendants. Madjok replied that this would not be so as, although he was but one and they were three, yet would his offspring outnumber theirs.

His wife shortly afterwards gave birth to a boy named Gwang, i.e., the secret plot.

When Gwang, who gave his name to the large Gargwang section of the Nuer tribe, became infirm the mother of Madjok was still young and powerful so she slept with Matiung and gave birth to a son Gnyung. This son Madjok regarded as his own offspring and gave to Gwang to look after with the result that this section of the tribe is also included amongst the Garjok Nuer. Now, as a matter of fact, the descendants of Madjok outnumber those of the other three as was foretold and the enmity that commenced several hundred years ago still continues to-day.

When the three conspirators wished to deprive Madjok of the hereditary authority the latter sent for his uncle Pirr, from the Bahr el Ghazal, and gave him the leopard's skin saying that for the future he and his would have nothing to do with Kunjokjak, Matiung and Ging Marang.

The descendants of Pirr received the leopard skin with the privileges that accompanied it, and it has been handed down from father to son ever since. (*)

The Garjak leopard skins are held by the representatives of the Lam Taar section of Matiung, and the Yak section of Gong.

Thus there are three main divisions of the Jekaing Nuer: the Gargwang, descendants of Gwang, who go to the family of Kenn for all disputes involving bloodshed but deal with other matters amongst themselves: the Garjok which include the offspring of Kann and Pirr: and the Garjak who are composed of the children of Matiung, Kunjokjak and Ging Marang.

Before the general emigration of the Nuer and others from their original homes there was a man called Darkok, a descendant, or possibly a son, of

(*). The present holders of this and similar skins are Lim Gun on the Akobo, (*shieng* Bwop of Lang section) living three hours to the north of Nasser, and Qwanlieigh (*shieng* Dooap of Yuoall section) living to the south of Nasser.

Ga'a living with the Lang, Najh, Bor, Wott and Ror sections of the Nuer in the Island of Shambe. He was chief of the leopard skin and lived in a hut rather removed from the rest of his neighbours. When visitors from other sections went to see him he had a habit of detaining them on some pretext or other and killing them secretly by night. His sister's son, however, happened to discover what was going on and told the people who collected in large numbers, after hiding their spears in a spot near at hand. These people than pretended to take part in a game with the friends of Darkok, running this way and that, until they had decoyed the murderer's friends to the place where the spears were hidden. These spears were then suddenly seized and most of Darkok's followers were done to death, only a few succeeding in making their way back to bring the news to Darkok. He then told the remnants of his family to drive the cattle away leaving a large and shining spear fixed in the top of a dom palm, and a black cow. Darkok, himself, being old and infirm also decided to remain behind. The Nuer heard the cow lowing and, thinking that the rest of the people were still in the cattle-kraal with their animals, they collected and rushed the luwāk, capturing the spear, cow and stool of Darkok. The old man then came forward and asked why his followers had been treacherously attacked. On being informed that it was in retaliation for the people that he had himself put to death he enquired, somewhat irrelevently, as to who had taken his spear. Lang replied that he had, whereupon Darkok said to him "It is yours, and when you wish to use it address it as the spear of the dom palm."

"Who has taken the cow?" queried Darkok. "I" said Najh, and he was told that henceforth it would be his. "And who the stool on which I used to sit? "I have" replied Ding Targei (*) Then yours it is, and you are henceforth the chief of the leopard skin." Whereupon Darkok left to join the remnant of his people, and from that day to this the Atwot (or Atweit) as his descendants are called have lived a separate existence and become a distinct tribe from the Nuer and Dinka. In fact the Nuer regard them as standing in much the same relation to them as do the Dinka. The memory, however, of these early quarrels still lingers with the Bull section in the Bahr el Ghazal Province and they will not intermarry with them owing to a fear that if they do so they will die from a spell cast upon the stool of Darkok when they took it from him.

When Darkok departed from the Nuer he left his wife in her father's house where she shortly afterwards gave birth to a son Bāg, from whom is descended the section of the Nuer called Kirr after the wife of Darkok.

(*) i.e. the bull with the spreading horns.

Sometime about the middle of the eighteenth century, or possibly rather later, the Jekaing Nuer, in two divisions, swept northwards from the neighbourhood of Lake No. One section travelled by way of Jebel Eliri, while the other followed the main river. The latter, under the command of Lat Joar Di-yung, brushed aside any opposition that they encountered from the Shilluk, whose king, Awin, they drove out of Fashoda. The two parties united near Kodok and, continuing their invasion, crossed the Nile at Melut and reached as far north as Arung. Here they turned and, keeping to the east bank of the river, marched back until they arrived opposite to Kodok. From here they cut across the plain to Abwong and thence made their way northwards and eastwards to their present habitations between Nasser and the Abyssinian frontier.

Their recent history does not come within the scope of these articles, except to remark that it has been occupied very largely with forays on their neighbours the Dinka, Burun and Anyuak.

The account given above of the Nuer may be summarised in the genealogical tables which follow in an appendix. These can only be regarded as approximately accurate but will assume somewhat greater importance when the question of Totemism and Exogamy is discussed later. *

These genealogical tables, if taken *au pied de la lettre*, would make the origin of the Nuer tribe somewhere about the fifteenth century, a hypothesis that cannot be seriously considered especially when one bears in mind the fact that the so-called ancestors of the various sections, e.g., Bul, had a numerous following at a time when they are now regarded as originating the tribe†. The explanation lies, I take it, in the fact that these personages, whose names appear in the tables, were the first historical people to emerge from the mists of antiquity, and were the leaders of their various divisions which they commanded when they left their homes in the south for the neighbourhood which they now inhabit. Whether this was due to overpopulation, as some of them suggest, or to the pressure of some alien tribe cannot at present be determined.

Up to this period it is perhaps not unreasonable to imagine that the Nuer, Dinka, Atwot and Shilluk were all more or less congregated in the area round Shambe but were forced gradually to emigrate.

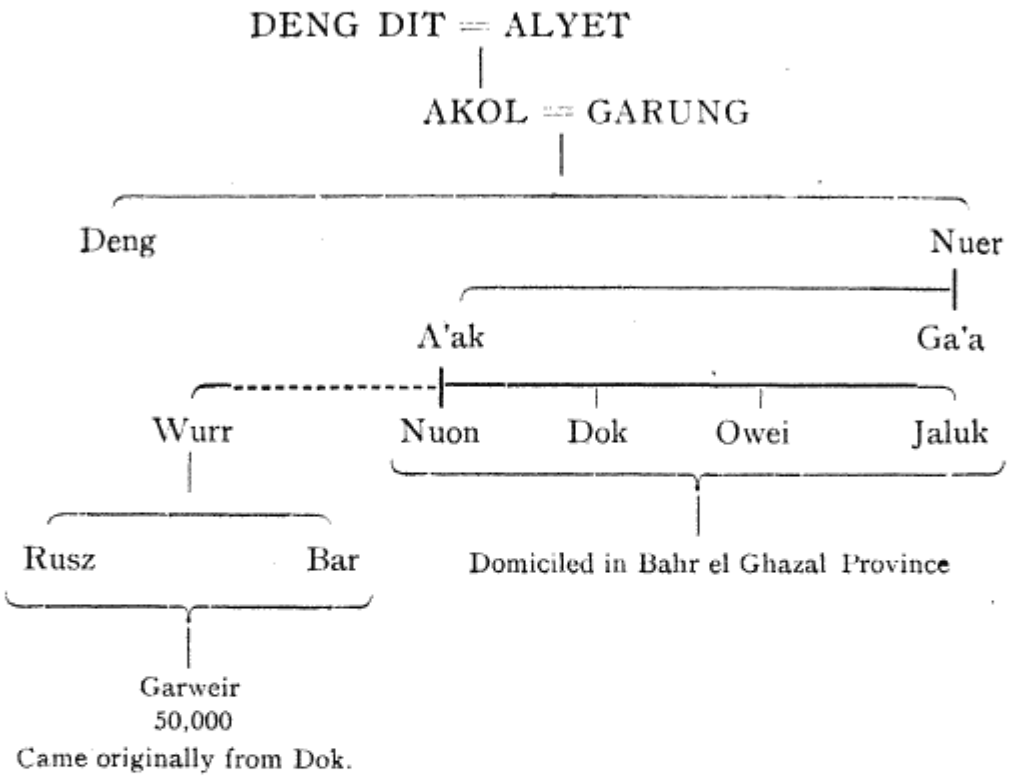
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* See D. 14.

† The same sort of error occurs in Genesis 4.14 and 17.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE NUER TRIBE *

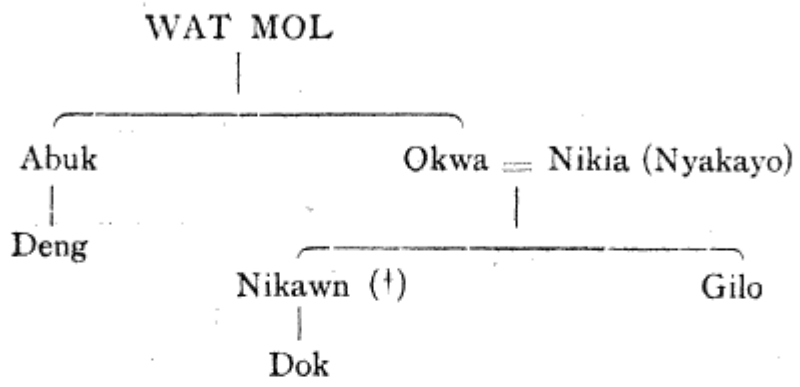
Table A.



* According to a Nuer account.

RELATIONSHIP OF SHILLUK, DINKA AND ANYUAK (*)

Table B.

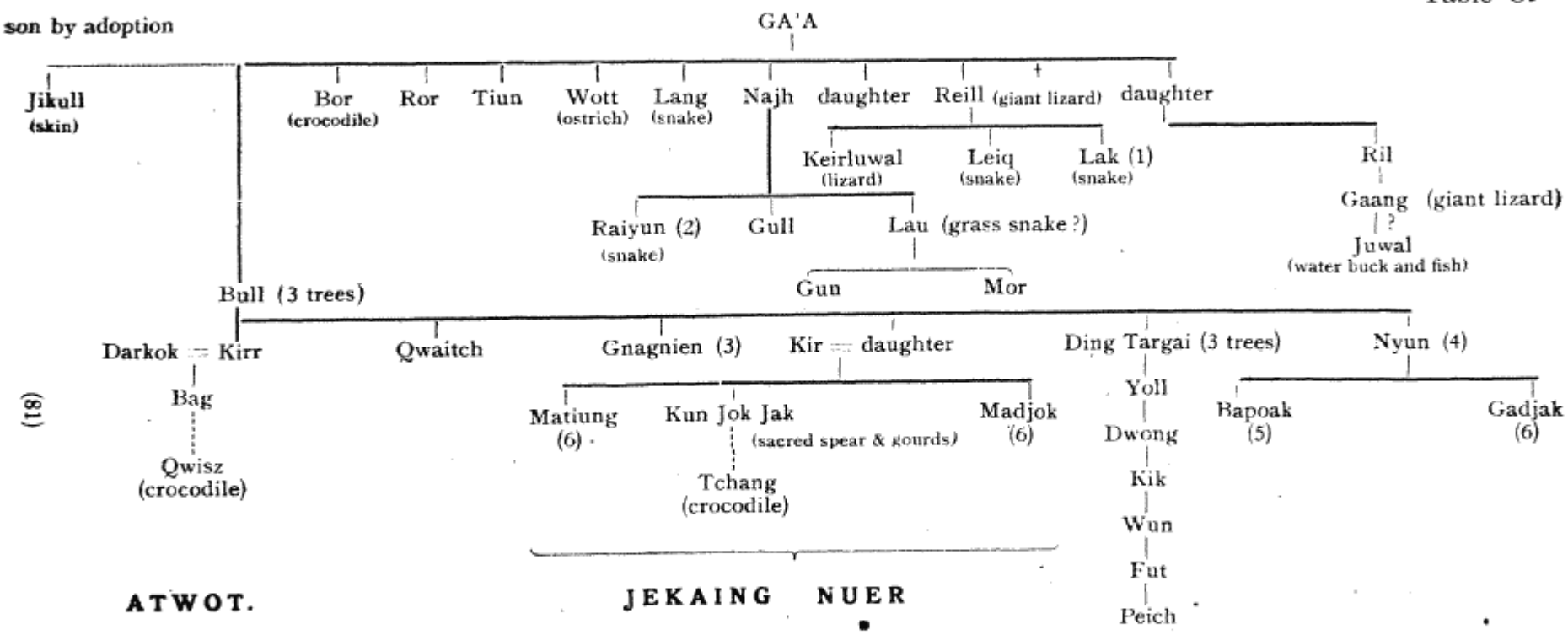


(*) According to a Shilluk account.

(†) See also Westermann, The Shilluk People XL.

TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE DESCENDANTS OF GAA WITH THEIR TOTEMS

Table C.



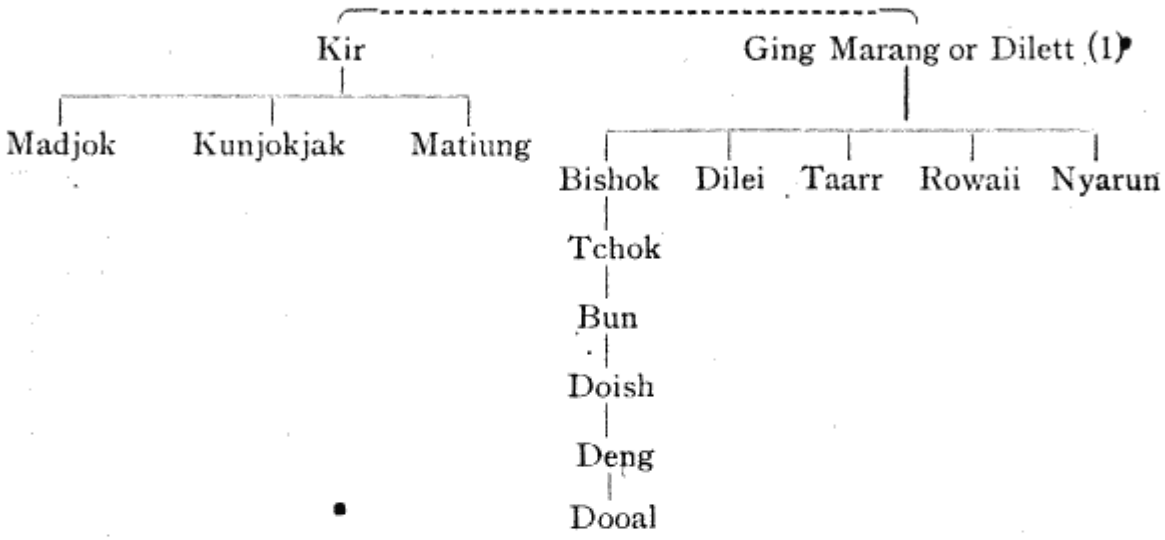
† = ant hill

(1). Came from KHOR ARADEIB. (2). Lau and Raiyun fought on the Bahr El Jebel. Raiyung defeated LAU who left for the country now inhabited by this section of the tribe. At that time the district was occupied by the Dinka who were defeated and dispossessed of their territory by the Lau Nuer. Raiyung is the name of a roan coloured bull with white belly. (3). = The quiet one. (4). He had a snake for his twin. While still unweaned he was brought by his mother from the BAHR EL JEBEL. Owing to a quarrel his father remained behind. (5). = The one who was bathed. (6). The name of a bull.

N.B. Although BOR, ROR etc. are regarded by the Nuer as actual sons of Ga'a they should probably to taken to be descendants only. This remark applies to all the persons shown in the attached genealogical tables with the exception of PEICH (table) C DOOAL (table D) KISH WUR (H), TUTDENG (F), KULONG FADAK (E) RAITCH KOSZ (G). In these cases the descent as shewn from father to son is probably accurate for5 or 6 generations.

GENEALOCIAL TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE MAIN DIVISIONS OF JEKAING TRIBE.

Table D.



Ging had two paternal bulls, MARANG and DILETT and is called after either of them. MARANG is a bull white up as far as the withers with the rest of the body grey, black and reddish. DILETT is a bull dappled like a giraffe.

Ging belonged to the RUWENG section of the Dinka.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE MAIN SUBDIVISIONS OF THE KON JOK JAK SECTION.

Table E.



(1) His mother belonged to the GA'A division. His descendants are called GARJAK aud together with the descendants of MATIUNG are included under the general title of GARGWANG.

KUN is the name of a man and JOKJAK his paternal bull, red and white.

(2) Ancestor of the SHIENG TAIYUNG.

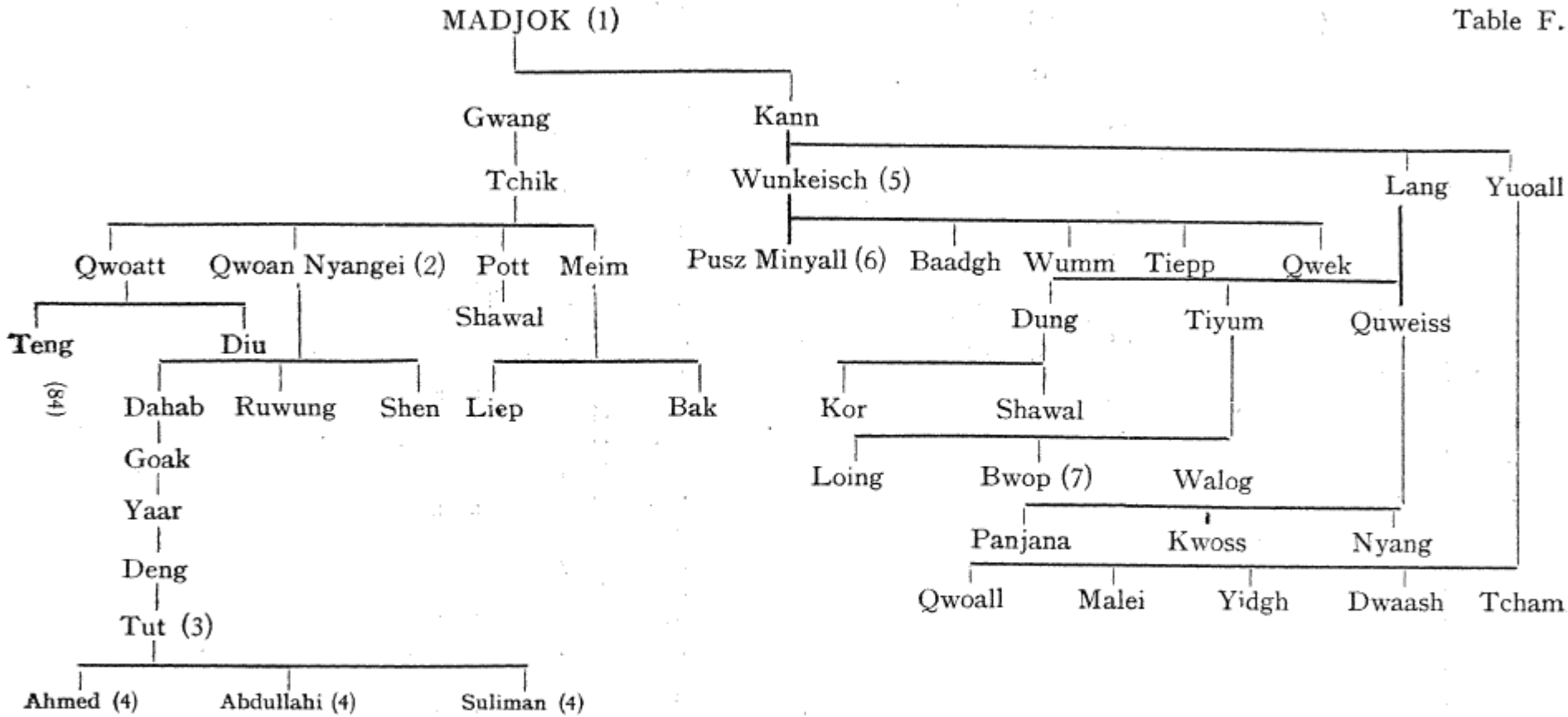
(3) „ „ „ „ TCHANG.

(4) „ „ „ „ WAU

(5) i.e., the name of a twin.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE MAIN SUBDIVISIONS OF THE MADJOK SECTION.

Table F.



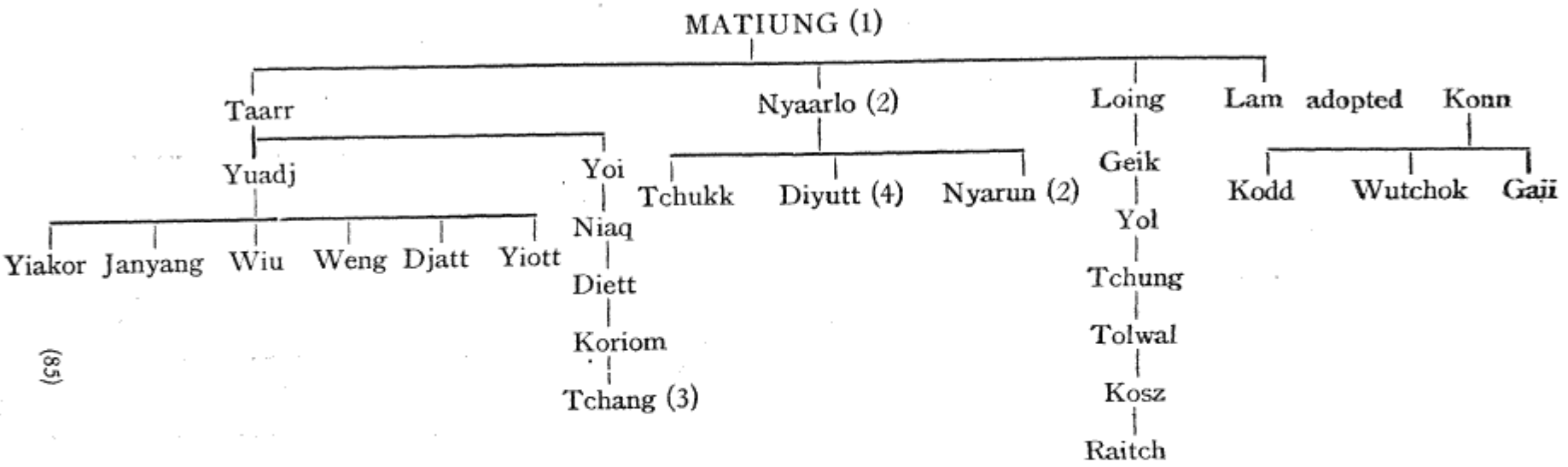
(1). His mother belonged to the FIR Section of the SHIENG BUL who live near GHABAT EL ARAB. His descendants are called GARJOK MADJOK is the name of the paternal bull with a white belly, black neck, black rump and white back.

(2). QWOAN was a smith who had an anvil and a chisel. When the tribe moved from the summer to the winter quarters the two implements were put in a reed basket and carried on the head of a woman. As she walked they kept knocking together and making a noise GEI-GEI: hence the name NYAN-GEI. (3). = "The herd bull": chief Government interpreter who married a Dongolawia woman. (4). Arabic names.

(5. i. e. The Hot Eye: one who makes people ill with the evil Eye. (6). Live East of Nasser. (7). Live South of Nasser.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE ILLUSTRATING MAIN SUBDIVISIONS OF MATIUNG SECTION.

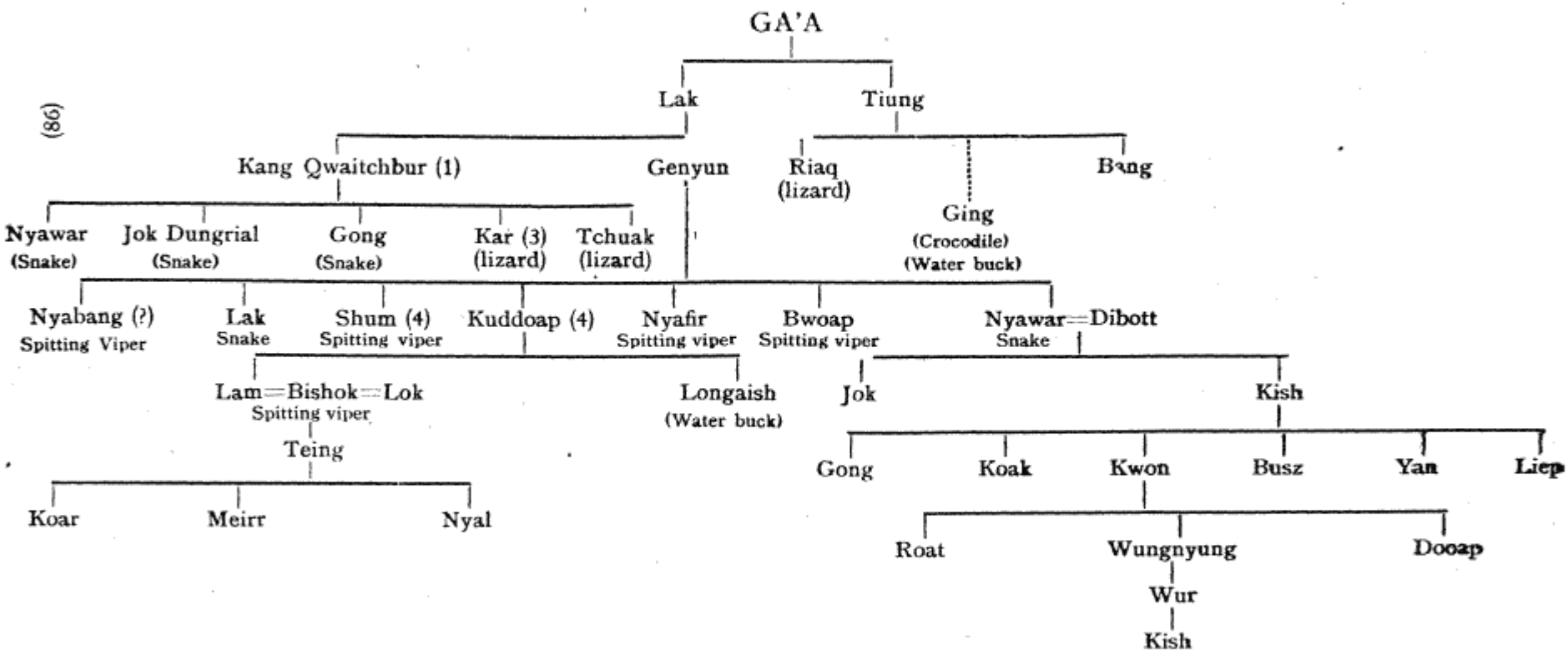
Table G.



(1). The name of his paternal bull, of the same colour as a hartebeeste, TIUNG.
(2). The name of a woman.
(3). The guardian of the sacred spear.
(4). The family of MUT DUNG belong to this section.

TABLE TO ILLUSTRATE THE MAIN SECTIONS OF THE LAK AND TIUNG WITH THEIR TOTEMS.

Table H.



1. KANG the name of a man = the deceiver: QWAITCH BUR his "bovine" or "bull" name = dappled like a leopard.
2. A bull name = a bull with white back and the rest black, like a crested crane. (RIAQ).
3. = The branch of a tree.
4. = A snail shell.
5. Came from the south somewhere about the year 1700 A.D. He was one of twins, his first-born twin being called DIT = bird.

PART B.

1. THE INDIVIDUAL

The average Nuer is spindle-shanked, and lanky, with the habit, common to many Nilotic tribes, of standing on one leg with the other bent upon the knee.

As a whole, although wiry, nimble (when necessary) and accustomed from their youth to endure fatigue, hunger, thirst and hardship, they are not so robust or muscular as the ordinary Shilluk, Anyuak or even many Dinka. A not infrequent characteristic of their personal appearance is the elevation of their shoulders due, possibly, to periodic starvation—a fact which, in all probability, also accounts for their somewhat slender proportions.

Time and distance count for little with them. In the year 1922 an ancient woman accompanied me on foot for 400 miles in order to obtain some cattle that she had lost some years previously. On her head she carried a reed basket containing her pipe and food for the journey together with various nicknacks such as gourds and tobacco. On the succesful attainment of her object she rounded off her trip by a visit to Malakal, another hundred miles distant from her home.

In character rude, intractable, truculent and reactionary to a degree they are an enemy to any sort of progress and, at present, do not want or appreciate any amelioration of their hard, barbaric lot. A savage, smoke ridden existence amid the stench and filth of an over-crowded cattle-kraal is the consummation of all their hopes and ideals. They are also passionately fond of a dance which is even more appreciated if it ends in a free fight as it often does.

At the same time they have at least one redeeming feature as a race, and that is truthfulness. They are sly and cunning but, as is the case with the Shilluk also, when they appear in Court to answer a charge of adultery or theft of cattle they almost invariably tell everything that they know about the offence that is being investigated. They seldom refuse to acknowledge their guilt and only plead that they have no cattle with which to pay compensation to the injured party. Unfortunately, contact with the tricky Arab gellaba (or pedlar) is having an adverse influence on their pristine simplicity and

candour. * In fact, contact with the outer world and a different stage of civilisation has not, in the past, proved an altogether unmixed blessing as far as the Nuer is concerned. Their present aloofness and sometimes hostility to strangers is largely due to the treatment that they received some fifty years ago from the Arab slavedealers. The earliest explorers of the White Nile found the Nuer a far more sociable individual than he became a few years after the raids of the "Khartoumers". Casati † for instance, stated that they were "once a peaceful and amiable nation but to-day jealous, timid and hostile. The frequent raids made upon them by the slavedealers of Khartoum have changed their feelings to hatred and animosity."

Schweinfurth, too, ‡ noticed the same change in the year 1871. When he first visited the people in 1868 he found them "peacefully pasturing their flocks and herds beside their huts and betraying nothing like fear . . . They were disposed for friendly intercourse with the Khartoum people . . . Two years and a half later all this was unfortunately changed, and landing was impossible".

In appearance the Nuer is as repulsive as he is in his habits of life. A cattle-kraal, on a cold winter's morning, when the whole population—stark naked in the vast majority of cases—appears with a thick coating of white dung ashes is a gruesome and awe-inspiring spectacle.

During the winter months there is seldom any washing of the body though the face is usually rinsed in the early morning, preferable in the urine as it falls from an obliging cow. Otherwise there are no cleansing or purificatory rites for men or women.

Nails are pared with a spear and the eyebrows removed as it is the firm conviction of the Nuer that they would go blind were they not to pluck out the latter. All hairs are also carefully extracted from the body, ashes as a rule being put on the face or body before depilation. Neither hair nor nails are regarded by them as in any way sacred and they are thrown away anywhere.

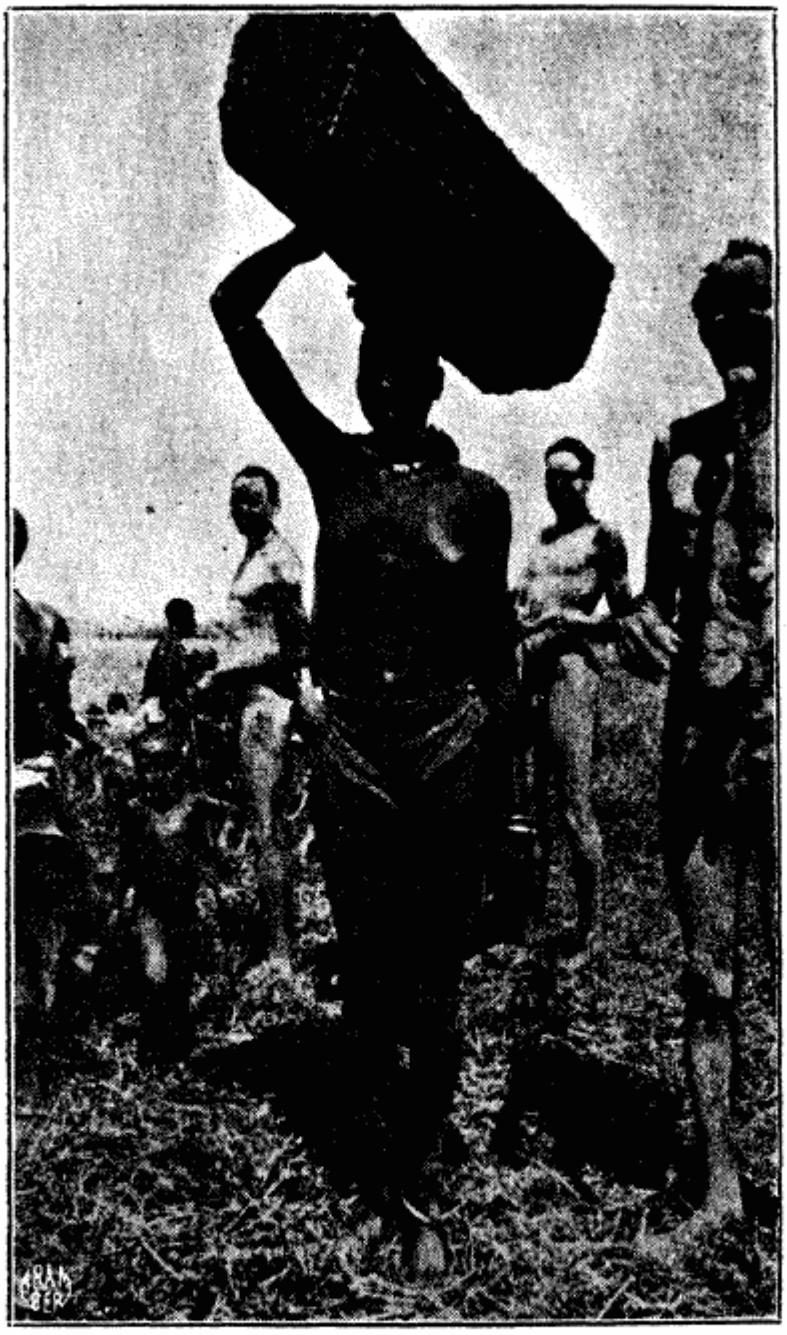
Teeth are cleansed, (save the mark!) in the dried ashes of cow dung which are usually washed away with water afterwards.

Typical of the Nuer is a rusty coloration of the hair. To attain this result cow dung is made into a cake during the rains and then left for two or three

* This is especially the case at Nasser where the American missionaries have noticed a decided change for the worse in this respect during the past few years.

† Ten Years in Equatoria, I., 38, London 1891.

‡ The Heart of Africa 1., 117, London 1873,



A NUER WOMAN WITH BASKET.

Note the pipe and white ashes.

days. It is put into a dung fire where it remains for twenty four hours. As soon as sufficient has been collected it is rubbed all over the body or, if it is desired to procure the particularly coloured coiffure that is fashionable amongst the Nuer, the cowdung is made into a paste and plastered completely over the head. A kind of horn shaped prominence covers the longer hairs and usually points either in front or towards the back of the head.

There are five main offices held by various chiefs of the Nuer. The holders of these respective titles are called Qwoar Moong, Wud Oak, Qwoar Kwaitch, Qwoar Yika and (g) Null.

Qwoar Moong*, or lord of the Earth, can cast a spell upon a man's crops or cause him sickness which he alone can remedy.

Wud Oak, or man of the cattle, is called in when the cattle are sick. In order to make a cow prolific he rubs her back with butter milk or fat. He also gives the order for the Initiation ceremony to be held, as will be seen later†. Quoar Kwaitch * is the chief of the leopard skin before whom all important cases, and more especially those in which killing is concerned, must be tried.

Quoar Yika, or Chief of the mats, attends at all wedding festivities and is called in when the marriage portion is being discussed. His duty is to see that there is tobacco for the contending parties and mats on which they may seat themselves.

(g) Null is the commander-in-chief who settles when war is to be undertaken and the methods of fighting that are to be employed. He is also the peacemaker if two sections of the Nuer wish to embark on a fratricidal fight. He then comes forward and spears two of the best bulls of the hostile factions in order to break off the fight. All these titles are hereditary and transmitted from father to son or a near relative if a council of elders thinks the son is not a desirable person to inherit the office. This same assembly also decides the succession in cases of dispute.

Each big section of the Nuer, e.g., Lak, Tiung has its hereditary officers of which however there may be more than one. Thus among the Garjak. (g) Null is Qwoal Yungei, Wud Oak is Toal Bol, and Qwoar Moong is Lim Gun.

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* Among certain sections of the Nuer I am inclined to think that the offices of QWOAR MOONG and QWOAR KWAITCH are identical.

† D. 9.

Of these various personalities little or nothing is known at present.

But far more important than any of these is the witch-doctor. A prey to superstition the Nuer has no real reverence for God or man, wherein lies one of the main difficulties of administration. At the same time he is at the mercy of any p'ausible or unscrupulous necromancer who knows how to play upon the superstitious ignorance of the people.

From time to time a witchdoctor attains to a certain degree of eminence but his influence is scarcely ever, if at all, for good and is directed merely to the enrichment of himself with the greatest possible celerity and least possible trouble.

The other hereditary chiefs should in theory possess a certain amount of authority but no Nuer would demean himself by paying the slightest regard to their wishes or commands unless he thought that he was likely to benefit personally by carrying out his injunctions.

It is to the witchdoctors that the Nuer turns in times of difficulty or doubt, if his wife proves barren, if he desires a succesful issue to a hunting expedition or to obtain the gratification of some wish that he feels too lazy or too weak to obtain by his own unaided efforts.

The titular chiefs in fact have little or no influence in comparison with the witch doctors. Each of these maleficent personages has under his protection a certain number of Nuer, varying from fifty to a hundred or more according to his powers. For each of these a piece of dried grass is picked which, along with other similar stalks, is tied into bundles and kept in the house of the witch doctor. If any one becomes ill the magician looks at his particular bit of straw in order to discover the reason for the malady. This is usually attributed to the intrusion of some foreign body into the person of the sick man. Such a malady is generally regarded as being caused by some evilly disposed enemy, who has overlooked the invalid and caused this alien matter to enter his body—an impression that is often confirmed if a Nuer undergoes an operation for a stone in the bladder in Malakal*. A sheep is then demanded by the medicine man who throws a fragment of mussel shell upon the ground and thereby divines the cause of the disorder. He will than pretend to produce some foreign substance from the sick man which he hands to the onlookers for inspection.

That such an object as a fair sized stone, for example, can be extracted from the invalid's body and yet leave no mark at the point of exit occasions no wonder among this unsophisticated race.

* Where there is a large Government Hospital.

At death the particular piece of grass that represents the man who has died is thrown away and sometimes if a piece of grass becomes withered or fragile, it is exchanged for a more vigorous sample. These bundles of grass are made up about every two years, on which occasion a cow is entrusted to the witchdoctor who is entitled to keep it provided no member of a particular bundle dies in the meantime or no serious malady overtakes the people. In this case the cow reverts to its original donors.

These reactionary witchdoctors are as much a curse in the Southern Sudan as the illiterate fiki is in the North. They stand for all that is retrograde, they hate progress. During the past four decades a change for the worse has come over their methods of divination. Up to the year 1880, or thereabouts, the ordinary witchdoctor foretold the future by means of such inanimate objects as a mussel shell or gourd. Since the coming of the Dervishes however (and it is not improbable that rumours of the Arab *fiki's* methods of witchcraft have influenced his own behaviour) the Nuer witchdoctor has to a large extent abandoned the old methods of divination for others less troublesome. All he has to do nowadays is to pronounce that the Great Spirit has appeared to him in a dream and told him to do so and so, or informed him that such and such an event is about to take place and he has accomplished his task. These methods are probably far more dangerous and calculated to prove subversive of Government than the practices formerly indulged in. For it means to all intents and purposes that the witch doctor is in direct and personal communion with the Great Spirit and is thus a personage with the greatest powers for the wreaking of evil. This change is realised by the Nuer himself who calls the old type of witchdoctor, now practically non-existent, Tiett while the newer practitioner is named Gɑ̈k.

As a rule these witch doctors are inclined to keep in the back ground when a Government official is in the neighbourhood but they can usually be dientified by the fact that, unlike the other members of the community, they allow the hair to grow upon their chins. At the same time they do not hesitate to exercise their malign influence over anyone who may accept a post under the Government. As these medicine men are credited with powers of life and death over anyone who displeases them or an ability to cause paralysis it can be imagined that it is no easy matter for a chieftain to wield any sort of authority over his subjects unless he has at any rate the tacit good will of the local witch doctor on his side.

Such a medicine man not infrequently sanctifies a tree, saying that while

he was sleeping beneath the tree power came to him. He then puts a gourd beside it in order to impress the natives. I have seen one such tree at Amwot in the Lau Nuer country.

The spirit of a witchdoctor is inherited, the father as a rule before his death designating a son or even a daughter for the holy office, or, failing either of them, a near relative. At the same time the legatee is expected to receive a confirmatory vision, which may appear to him by day or by night and is invisible to anyone else.*

The nucleus of the Nuer organisation is the *shieng* which has three connotations:

(1) The family, consisting perhaps of a man, two or three wives, a few children and one or two near relations who have attached themselves to this particular unit.

(2) The conglomeration of a number of families tracing descent to a common ancestor.

(3) A subdivision of the tribe, intermediate between these two and usually referred to in Government documents as a *subshieng*.

In an appendix to the first of the present series of articles was given a list of the main divisions into the which the Nuer tribe is split up. These tables are necessary for a proper understanding of such questions as Exogamy which will be dealt with later.

From them it will be seen that the Nuer in the Upper Nile province fall into five main divisions. Lau, Garweir, Lak, Tiung, and Jekaing. Jekaing in turn has three sections Garjak and Gargwang.

These main divisions are subdivided into two: Lau for instance is split up into Gun and Mor, the Lak into Qwaitchbur and Gengnyun and so on.

One instance, taken from the latter section, will suffice to illustrate my meaning.

One of the chief subdivisions of the Lak is the Bishok section which has a clan Tieirr (with four families attached to it Kwong Teir, Muzz Teir, Toap Teir and Nyadin).

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* See notes at end of this article.

Each of these clans may have several families, e.g., Lokh, Lam, Tang, Gal and Kwongill descended from them.

As each of the latter becomes sufficiently numerous it forms a new shieng of its own. Thus the number of shiengs tends to multiply indefinitely.

If one wishes to discover the ancestry of a particular Nuer or his family one has to put the following questions :—

Q. What is your family ?

A. Lokh.

Q. From whom are you descended ?

A. Bishok.

Q. What is your country *(rull)* ?

A. Lak.

So far no proper system of nomenclature has been devised in order to differentiate between these various divisions and a good deal of confusion arises as *sub-shieng* is obviously an unsuitable term, being equally applicable to a family or a larger unit than this.

The Nuer recognise the importance, or possibly advisability, of family co-operation. If one member of a household is poor, or has lost all his cattle from disease or some such misfortune, he asks his relatives for assistance. The Nuer have not yet emerged from the bartering stage and, as there is technically supposed to be no bartering amongst near relatives, one will help another to the extent of the free gift of a hoe or even a highly prized bull or cow.

When a man becomes old the duty of caring for him falls upon his son if he has one, or failing him a brother, nephew or near relation in the order named. Definite rules are laid down for the inheritance of property (as will be seen in the next section) and for the distribution of duties and responsibilities in certain events. Thus, if a man at death, leaves only a few cattle behind him, they pass automatically to the youngest wife in trust for any unmarried children there may be.

The distributionof the family may be illustrated by the following instances :

A is the head of a family with three wives B, C, D, and two married sons P and Q, and two unmarried sons Y and Z. The youngest wife remains with A and with her any unmarried children. C and D have special huts allotted them near by. The married sons have already set up house on their own.

It is in the cattle-kraals, or *luwak* as they are called, during the dry

months of the year that the Nuer is really happy. He can lie on a bed of cowdung ashes, smeared in the same pleasing substance in lieu of habiliments, and watch his cattle without having the trouble of getting up and opening the door of his hut in order to see them. He then lives in the closest intimacy with them and life has nothing further to offer him. As amongst the Bahima, who live on the borders of Uganda, there seems to be an almost physical and spiritual bond between the Nuer and his cattle. (*)

After a boy has been initiated into an age-class § and has arrived at the age of puberty, his father gives him a bull with a bell and a tassel of wool or giraffe hair to put on its horn, as well as a club and two spears*: This bull has a special name, usually descriptive of its colour, and this name the young man assumes as his patronymic. Thus Jokjak is a red and white bull : Nyung a bull with markings like those on a crocodile's skin : Marâng a bull with a white belly and white markings up to the withers, the rest of the body being red, grey and black : Dilett speckled red and white like a giraffe.

A tribe is very often named after a wellknown man and his bull. Thus Kunjokjak, a section of the Jekaing, is so called after a man Kun and his bull Jokjak.

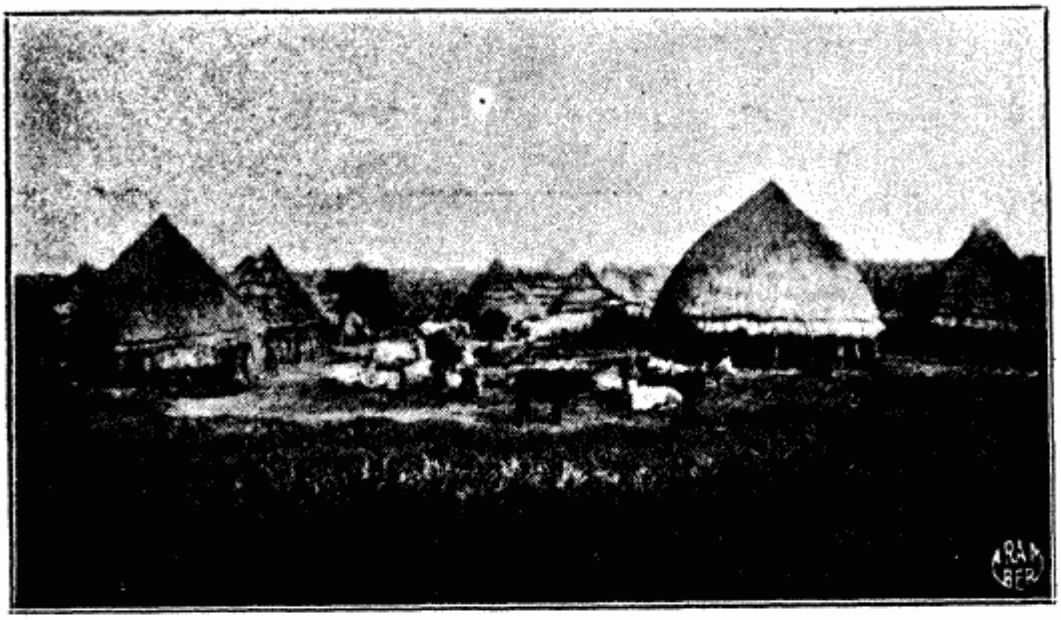
Not infrequently the name of the man is forgotten while that of his bull is remembered. Madjok the large section of the Jekaing for instance is called after a favourite bull of Kir's who gave this name to his son. Similarly the ancestor of the Dungrial section of the Lak was called Jok and had a well-known bull Dungrial, i. e., black and white, Jok's name is almost forgotten and the section is named after his bull instead.

This paternal bull, which the young man is given by his father, must always be kept by him. If a Nuer wishes to breed cattle he will try and find a stud bull with similar markings and when he has to pay a dowry he will always leave at least one bull of the same colour in his herd, or, if possible will refrain from parting with one of this kind at all. If he has a marriageable daughter he will endeavour to get part of the dowry paid in the paternal colours.

The bull is a kind of guardian spirit of its owner who calls upon it in times of stress and difficulty. It is also his playmate. He rushes round the kraal with it, leading it by a rope, jumps over it, plays about with it and sings to it for instance as follows:

(*) See Sir. J.G. Frazer, the Golden Bough 2.532.

§ See Part D. 9.



A Nuer Village Scene.



A Nuer Bull.

"Yoi- yoi- yoi, oh my bull Jiuk" (i. e. black and white) "if the night is dark your body is white like the moon. In war I always capture my enemy's spear. Young men go to the cattle-krall. I was in the *luwak* when the enemy came upon me. I do not want a lazy bull. With my brother I went to war." Frequently a small boy aged about seven, leads the bull round the kraal while the man plays with the bull, pretends to fight with it and jumps over its back. If he is the fortnnate owner of more than one ancestral bull the services of other small boys are enlisted and the game takes a more elaborate form.

Similarly, before setting out on a hunt, or if danger threatens him, the man will call upon his bull to help him. When leaving for the grazing ground the bull is addressed and told to find the best pasturage for the cattle. *

The paternal bull also plays an important part in the lives of the Shilluk and Dinka. *Nijoak*, for instance is a Shilluk bull with a black head and white body. When a Shilluk young man 'enters the drum', i.e., is allowed to attend a dance he is given a bull and also two cows with their offspring. This bull is decorated with a large bell and a tassel of a giraffe or buffalo tail is put on the horns. The young man also—as does the Nuer—plays with the bull and sings to it, for instance, as follows:— "I am the son of So and So: I am a rich man. I have many cows. There is no one so great as I. Let no one dare to try and hold me". If this bull is not present at the bridegroom's house on the wedding day the bride cannot visit the hut.

Similarly amongst the Dinka a bull may be called *Marial*, i.e., one with a black head, black harnessed belly, black neck and with the rest of the body white. The owner cleans the bull in ashes and then takes his shield and jumps about in front of it. He pretends to fight with it and sings, e.g., "I am So and So: I am a great man. No one can talk to me. I am the bull *Marial*". This bull, too, as with the Shilluk, is decorated with a bell or a tassel made from the hair of a buffalo's tail which is attached to the horns.

But in no case is there a more illuminating instance of the close relationship that is supposed to exist between a man and his cattle, than in the fact that a menstruous woman, or one that has recently given birth to a child, is not allowed to drink milk. Were she to do so the cow from which she drank would, by a species of homeopathic magic, be similarly infected. (†) A

* c.f. Driberg. The Lango p. 109. London 1923 "One who takes a hostile spear on his shield invokes by name a favourite bull belonging to his father or maternal uncle."

(†) It is also said that on these occasions a woman should not even approach a cow but this point at present lacks corroboration.

similar belief is held by the Banyoro (*), a Bantu people inhabiting Unyoro the country which lies to the northwest of Uganda and borders on Lake Albert. "At such periods however a rich man may give his wife an old cow whose milk she may drink without the risk of hurting a valuable animal by her dangerous contagion."

This attitude of the Nuer towards his cattle has to be recognised and appreciated if grave administrative errors are to be avoided. To take what has probably been a fairly frequent occurrence in the past :—A *shieng* has omitted or refused to pay the very reasonable tribute demanded from them—the taxation per head among the Nuer amounts to rather under twopence. This shieng is visited and a fine inflicted. Every care should be taken to allow for a reasonable exchange of cattle after the tax and fine have been collected if trouble is to be avoided in the future. The authorities may quite fairly take a certain amount of cattle, and not necessarily the best from their point of view but, included among these may be one of some particular colour which is not only the paternal bull of the owner but his friend and tutelary spirit. Its loss, in the opinion of its master, may involve him in all sorts of difficulties and disabilities which seem foolish and incredible to the Western mind.

To the Nuer the cattle kraal, or *luwak*, is something almost sacred and on it all his thoughts are centred. An inevitable adornment of it is a forked stick, called *Riek*, with a tuft of hair attached to it. The spears are either leant against it, or suspended from it. Everyone in a cattle kraal, who owns cattle, must put up such an erection, of bamboo, *inderab* or *kakamut*, in order that the cows may be prolific and give birth to cow calves. Near it is *Goal*, a fire composed of smouldering dung in order that the cattle may not be troubled by the flies which abound in the Nuer country. This *Riek* and *Goal* are called after the owner of the cattle and sacrifices must be made near to them.

For grazing purposes two or three families collect their animals together and take it in turns to provide herdsmen, who may be either boys or men.

In spite of the deep regard in which the Nuer holds his cattle he seems to have but little knowledge of how to treat his animals if they become sick nor has he any medicines for them. If cattle plague breaks out, the infected herd scatters in all directions spreading the disease among any uncontaminated

(*) The Golden Bough. 2. 522.

cattle with which they are brought into contact. * Diseased skins are sold to the pedlars who wander through their country. To this fact the Nuer themselves attribute the widespread disease that has taken enormous toll of their herds during the past few years. It is also interesting to note that they believe the disease to be carried on the hooves of the pedlars' donkeys, a theory that I remember reading somewhere was put forward some years ago by the natives of Dongola. The Jekaing, however, in the Bahr el Ghazal Province make such stringent quarantine regulations that if a man is known to have eaten of an animal that has died of cattle plague he is not allowed in a district free of the disease.

Young calves are given their mother's milk for a week after which period the owner begins to take it.

3. PROPERTY.

Property consists of cattle, sheep, and goats: iron (including hoes, spears etc): brass, (e.g. bracelets or similar ornaments): beads: grain: personal effects such as a skin or neckrest, and land.

Where possessions are so few in number and so simple it is possible to legislate for almost any conceivable infringement of the rights either of an individual or a tribe.

The head of the household owns all the ancestral cattle, his stock being increased from time to time by the marriage of one of his daughters. When he becomes old he divides his cattle amongst his sons, only retaining sufficient for his private needs and those of his unmarried daughters, or any womenfolk who may still be dependent upon him. His daughters have no real share in the property though they are permitted to drink the milk until they are married and pass out of the control of their father. The sons marry in strict rotation according to their age, a younger son never being allowed to take a wife before an elder. The father continues to live with his unmarried sons but his eldest wife if past the age of childbearing goes to live with the eldest son on his marriage—a sensible arrangement which guarantees the old woman against starvation. In return she helps to look after any offspring there may be. A younger wife remains behind with her husband and helps to care for any small children in the house.

The father pays the dowry for his son and some two years after the

* The Shilluk do exactly the same where an epidemic either amongst the cattle or human beings breaks out. The inevetible result of course follows, and the disease is quickly spread throughout the length and breadth of the country.

marriage ceremony gives him a bull and two or three cows in order to start a herd of his own. Up to this time the son, although married, continues to live with his father.

On the death of the head of the household the eldest son inherits the biggest spear, the smaller being kept in trust by the widow for the unmarried sons. The duty of providing for the unmarried members of the family devolves upon the eldest son. In return he is entitled, on the marriage of each of the daughters, to receive one bull and one cow out of the dowry.

The household cattle are divided into groups in order that all members of the family may have a fair share of the milk and butter. The wife is the housekeeper but her powers are somewhat restricted. Two or three cows are set aside for the children, according to their number and two or three reserved for making butter. When the gourds of butter are ready the wife informs her husband who decides on their disposal. But if the husband wishes to give or lend a cow to an impoverished relation he has first to ascertain his wife's views and obtain her approval before determining which cow is to be handed over. In fact, although she has no actual property in the cows she is responsible for seeing that there is sufficient milk and butter to meet the requirements of the household and if a guest arrives she must provide butter and milk for him. She is allotted a certain number for this purpose but she is not permitted to dispose of any of them without the consent of her husband, and, even if she makes a surplus of butter she cannot part with it without first informing her husband who settles as to what is to be done with it. If in her spare time she manufactures several jars she can barter the work of her hands for beads, etc., without reference to her husband. But she may not part with any grain however much there may be in the cornbins. The means of life, in other words, remain always under the control of the husband. A wife, however, may offer a guest milk, butter or merissa if her husband is absent and she is unable to obtain his permission.

There is no family collective property but if a head of cattle dies, even from cattle plague, each member of the family is entitled to a share of the meat in the following proportions :—

The off fore leg goes to a married daughter,

The near fore leg is taken by the next married daughter if there is one or, failing her, the owner's sister.

The paternal uncle takes the off hind leg.

The aunt acquires the ribs.

The maternal uncle takes the spine.

While the near hind leg, stomach. etc, are divided amongst any near relations

Whenever anything is found the finder has to institute enquiries as to the owner who is entitled to the article in question without any remuneration being offerred to the finder, provided he can establish his title to it: otherwise the finder is allowed to keep it.

Cattle are exchanged for sheep and goats.

A title to land is recognised, each *shieng* having grazing and cultivating rights over certain areas. Thus the Dinka—Nuer boundary is Jebel Zeraf while within the Nuer area the country is again divided up amongst the *sub-shiengs* and after them again amongst the *shiengs*, the boundary between Lak and Tiung, for instance, being the Longtam khor.

The chiefs actually decide as between families boundaries of all new areas but land has been generally divided in days gone by and all now know and recognise the family limits.

So far land is sufficiently plentiful to supply the needs of the sparse population and disputes are rare. If a man from *shieng* Nyabulli wishes to settle with some friend in *shieng* Shung the relatives of the friend will allot him a site.

An illustration of the extent to which subdivision of land has taken place is afforded by the Lak Nuer who have delimited the following boundaries:

Kilo 35-40 on the Bahr el Zeraf, *shieng* Shung, a small section.
„ 40-45 „ „ *shieng* Lok, also a small section.
„ 45-55 „ „ *shieng* Dungrial.
„ 55-75 „ „ *shieng* Nyawar
„ 75-80 „ „ *shieng* Gong.

These rights extend only to grass and cultivation, anyone being permitted to hunt in the district or to collect gum or the fruits of the trees and even to cut trees down.

Fishing rights, however, go with the land and these are a fruitful source of trouble. The head of a family may give a temporary licence to strangers to fish in the family's waters. For piscatorial purposes the stream is divided into sections and a trap, like a small hut, is made on behalf of each family, any fish entering such trap being the property of the family which put it together. As

however the Nuer are too indolent even to watch the fish enter the various traps, special guardians are appointed and these are allowed to kill any fish that they may require for their personal needs.

Each man has allotted to him a larger area than he can till as it is wanted for the grazing of his animals. He may cultivate in one place one year and another place in that following provided he does not trespass beyond the boundaries of his own land.

Every year the grass on his land is consumed by fire, the young man setting fire to the windward of the plot they wish to burn. If the conflagration extends beyond his own particular area into another's territory there is no claim against him even if the neighbour had not wanted his own holding burnt at that particular period.

Grass is usually left between each cultivatied plot to mark the boundaries as is the case in the northern Sudan---for instance in Abu Deleig district.

4. ELEMENTS OF JUDICIAL LIFE.

The Nuer have a definite scale of penalties laid down for particular offences. The following lists show the relative importance that the Nuer attach to various crimes and misdemeanours and the penalties that in the ordinary course of events apply to them. These penalties may vary in different sections of the tribe and from time to time to meet the fluctuating conditions of their material wealth : although in theory as binding as the laws of the Medes and and Persians, they are not absolute as I have had occasion to note myself : at the same time they afford the Nuer a general standard as a working basis. When a crime is committed no consideration is taken of extenuating circumstances : if one man kills another in the course of a fair standup fight the punishment is theoretically the same as if he had plotted for years and finally encompassed his death by poisoning. The only material consideration is whether the murderer can afford, with the help of his relatives, to pay the full penalty laid down for any case where the life of one man is taken by another.

With this general proviso the following scale of penalties may be taken as approximately recognised.

Theft. * Of dura of the first crop before it has been threshed, and a hut

* Brun Rollet "Le Lil Blanc et le Sudan, Paris 1855, writing in 1844 states that thieves had their heads cut off while a murderer was handed over to the parents of the victim who might demand from him as many cows as he had fingers, toes and hairs on his head. p.240.

has been broken open in order to obtain it, 3 bulls and 7 cows if tried by a chief of the leopard skin.

Theft of dura of the second crop : no fine as no additional labour has been involved in the cultivation and it is regarded in the light of a windfall.

Theft of Indian corn also carries with it no penalties because this may be picked by children and others as it ripens for their immediate wants and is not stored away.

Theft of a sheep or goat, killed and eaten in the forest : 4 cows and 2 bulls, a heavy sentence as these animals breed quickly and a numerous offspring is lost by the theft of a prospective sire or dam.

Theft of a cow or bull: 5 cows and 5 bulls among the Lak, Jekaing, Garweir, and Tiung but 3 bulls and 3 cows amongst the Lau.

Theft of tobacco one or two head of cattte.

Theft of personal effects no penalty at all.

Theft of a spear, hoe or stabbing spear, five head of cattle.

If a shield is borrowed for a fight and not returned one head of cattle, though this form of misappropriation is said to be very rare.

Arson, accidental or intentional, one cow. A case was once brought before me where some Nuer had followed a swarm of bees into a hut and, wishing to obtain the honey, had attempted to smoke the bees out and in doing so accidentally set fire to the hut.

The people were unanimous in stating that the penalty for this purely unfortunate burning of the hut was exactly the same as if an enemy had in cool blood destroyed the hut out of vengeance.

Adultery or rape 3 or 5 cows and 1 bull.

There is no penalty or compensation for hurt inflicted either in the heat of a sudden fight or by deliberate intention, the idea being that as the Nuer are involved so frequently in fighting of some form or another there would be no end to the litigation arising out of it and in the course of time everyone would be a complainant or defendant.

There is also no penalty if a cultivator kills an animal which he finds trespassing in his crops, a custom that would be welcome to administrators in the Northern Sudan. *

* If a Shilluk finds his neighbours' sheep in his crops he may kill them without penalty : but if he finds cattle and destroys them he must replace them.

In a case involving bloodshed the following is the recognised procedure.

A kills B and at once runs to the cattle kraal of a chief of the leopard skin in order to find a sanctuary. He is regarded as a prisoner and may not see his wife or children and is not allowed to leave except to perform the ordinary functions of nature. During this period he may not dye his hair nor wear any ornaments. Here he remains for a period of about six months, a very sensible precaution allowing time for the hot blood of the relatives of the deceased to cool down. Although the Chief of the leopard skin is under no delusions as to why a stranger has suddenly appeared in his kraal he makes no enquiries or investigation and does not question the man as to the reason for his arrival until half a year has elapsed, when the murderer is asked to explain his presence. On the murderer doing so, the Chief repairs to the house of A's father to see how many cattle he possesses and informs him that he is going to fine him so many. He then makes his way to the relatives of the deceased and informs them that he has come to see what blood money they are prepared to accept. The relatives refuse and demand a life for a life. The chief answers that this is impossible as it would only lead to unending bloodfeuds, resulting in the weakening of the tribe with no permanent satisfaction to anyone. A discussion then follows, the relatives of deceased haggling for their pound of flesh. As a result of a previous visit to the father of the murderer the chief of the leopard skin is able to fix what he thinks a just recompense and he then goes to A's father and tells him of his decision. A pays, probably from his father's heard, a certain amount on account and his near relatives collect the remainder. The relatives of deceased are then informed that the fine has been paid and about seven days after the appearance of the new moon one of the fine cattle is sacrificed by the Chief who says that if any of the relations of the deceased continues the vendetta his blood will be shed as that of the bull has been. The Chief then takes a cow and a calf, male or female as a reward for services rendered. The fine cattle are handed over and the case is at an end.

The Garweir section of the Nuer make two payments of cattle to the relations of the deceased apart from the actual blood-money.

As soon as the blood-money has been paid in full the relations of the murderer collect at an appointed place where the Qwoar Moong is ready to receive them. The relations of the deceased approach in a warlike manner.

The Quoar Moong produces a cow called *Yung Toka*, " the cow of the drinking vessel " (*Toka*). This is his own property for which he receives a fee

from the murderer or his relations. The cow is placed between the two parties and speared on either flank.

The members of the rival factions, who have hitherto been sitting opposite to one another, now draw near and each section catches hold of a bone of the sacrificial animal.

The bone is cut in the centre by the Qwoar Moong and each faction retains one half of the bone. The ceremony is completed by the drinking of the cow's urine from a vessel shaped out of the root of a *kuk* tree.* Both families then eat of the meat, † The payment of what is called *Yung 'Toka* follows and consists of a cow and calf which is handed over to the mother or a near relative of the deceased.

The second payment is that of *Yung Pul Loitch* "the cow of the eased heart" (*Loitch*=heart, *Pul*=leave it). This is interpreted to mean that the hearts of the two factions which were previously troubled within them are now freed from care and the feud is at an end.

This payment is made in a peculiar manner.

The relations of the deceased, acting on a preconcerted plan, steal this special cow "of the eased heart" from the relations of the murderer who approach them in an angry manner. If the feud is to continue—even after the blood-money has been paid in full—a fight may still ensue, though only if it is precipitated by the action of some hot-headed individual.

If everything passes off without a hitch the relations of the deceased, on the approach of the murderer's family, cut the tail of the stolen cow (*Yung Pul Loitch*) until it bleeds.

The friends of the murderer, on this signal, retire and the blood feud is then regarded as at an end. This payment, however, may not be carried out for many years after the blood-money has been paid and in some cases is not made at all. ‡

In connection with a case of killing no question of provocation or mitigating circumstances is taken into account. If no blood money is paid the family of the deceased attack that of the murderer and so on indefinitely. Any

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* *Acacia Verugera.*

† I was once present, in 1920, at a very similar feast of reconciliation among the Shilluk, Dr. Oyler has contributed an article on the ceremony in "Sudan Notes and Records" Vol. III. 1920. p. 296.

‡ Information supplied by Mr. Coriat, Assistant District Commissioner of Aiyod.

near relative of deceased may kill any member of the murderer's family and though this vicarious punishment may seen unfair from the European point of view there can be little doubt, as has been pointed out by, I think, Sir J. G. Frazer, that in this family or tribal responsibility lies the germ of the social sense. It is immaterial with what kind of weapon the offence is committed, whether spear, stick or other implement. It will thus be seen that in the Nuer Criminal code there is no suggestion of either reformative or penal legislation : the affair, whether theft, rape, or murder, is treated rather as a civil wrong which has to be made good ; further, as the young men, who are far and away the most likely to commit these offences, are themselves without any personal property, any crime committed by them reacts on the family whose restraining influence may naturally be expected to be exercised towards preventing any mesdemeanour for which the penalty will recoil upon their own heads.

Different types of cases are tried before different judges or tribunals.

In an ordinary case of theft one chief is chosen from each *shieng*. Where homicide is involved the chief of the leopard skin is the presiding judge, usually assisted by a tribunal of forty or fifty members belonging to the interested parties. The chief listens to their point of view and finally bases his judgment on their views and the knowledge that he has personally obtained as to the wealth of the murderer's family and the wishes of the relatives of the deceased. Cases may be, and often are, settled out of court by mutual agreement but all really important cases must go before the chief of the leopard skin.

This rank is hereditary and each distinct section of the Nuer, such as Lak, Tiung Jekaing has its own particular chiefs which are not necessarily chosen from different subsections within the tribe. Thus the Lak Qwoar Qwaitch (of whom there are said to be about twenty) are nearly all selected from the Dungrial section (*) this preference being due to the fact that some years ago there was an exceptionally just and popular body of judges drawn from this division. The leopard skin passes at the will of the Qwoar Qwaitch to his son or brother but if no prior arrangement is made and an unexpected and untimely fate carries off the Qwoar Moong the succession is determined by a meeting of the whole *shieng*.

* Yell Nuon of Nyawar section, an ancient blind man, is the only Qwoar Qwaitch among the Lak who is not from the Dungrial section. He lives with Wur Wunyang and has a son called Riek,

In the year 1912 the usual penalty for homicide was a fine of about fifty head of cattle, but the herds of the Nuer have been so depleted recently by cattle plague that a payment of not more than ten cattle is now usually all that is required.

There is no legislation at present to deal with the theft of a rifle as the introduction of this weapon is of so recent a date that no provision has been made to cope with such a contingency.

All persons are equal in the sight of the law but the fine is, to a very large degree, dependent on the material prosperity of the offending party Considerable scope is thus afforded for the interminable discussions so dear to the heart of the African native who, with little else to do, takes an inordinate delight in talking over some question with which he is not personally in the least degree concerned.

The death sentence is not inflicted amongst the Nuer and I have had no hint of deformed children being made away with.

If a witch doctor casts a spell upon someone and the man dies there is no redress and no claim can be made against him as there is no ocular proof that the deceased was either struck or died from violence.

Oaths are usually taken on a spear, the witness swearing to speak the truth.* He then licks the spear and asks that if he lies the spear may take his life away. This oath does not appear to be much more binding upon the Nuer than that taken by the average native of the Northern Sudan upon the official Koran. The Sacred Spear of Kir † is, however, held in considerable respect and a Jekaing Nuer would be less likely to perjure himself on this than he would after taking an oath on the ordinary spear.

There are however other methods by which the truth may be extracted. Thus the body of a dog may be cut in half and the blood poured upon the ground in which case the guilty party is expected to die even as the dog has done. Or, as amongst the Garweir, the ear of a dog may be slit with a knife and the two contending parties must then drink of its blood, the death of the one who has lied being the anticipated result. If a woman is accused of adultery and the man denies the fact he must seize the testicles of a stud bull

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* This is the usual oath of the Shilluk who also swears by the cobra or some other snake. If anyone swears falsely the snake is expected to hear and exact vengence.

† See Part D. 15

or ram and swear that he has not committed the offence with which he is charged. *

In cases tried before a chief of the leopard skin trial by ordeal is not infrequent. Thus, when a murderer has fled for sanctuary to the Qwoar Qwaitch, and a brother or other near relative of the deceased has come to institute enquiries, the accused, if he denies the offence, has to drink some milk in the presence of the relatives and the chief. If he is sick he is regarded as guilty. Similarly in cases of theft heard by the same chief a stick of some *kakamot* bush is produced, and cut into small pieces which are then buried in the ground. If the man is guilty he will sicken and die, presumeably by a species of homoeopathic magic, in sympathy with the rotting *kakamot* scrub.

Trial by ordeal was also common amongst the Shilluk not so very long ago. The two disputants were either tied and placed in a river where crocodiles were known to abound or they were made to swim about in it. The one who was taken by the crocodiles was regarded as the guilty party.

A rather less exacting test is in vogue to-day, when ashes are taken from the dung of a sacred herd of cattle. Anyone who swears falsely by them is expected to die. A case in which this actually occurred quite recently may be quoted as an instance.

Here a man put some money in the grass thatch of his hut and being unable to find it again he made a general accusation against the village. The villagers insisted that the money must still be there but that he could not find it. The man then brought some ashes from the sacred herd and put them in his house. Some little children found the ashes and scattered them on the ground and a panic ensued amongst the villagers who feared they would all perish. As a matter of fact it was the man who died shortly afterwards (apparently from pneumonia) and the villagers were once more at peace.

This trial by ordeal is not so extravagant an idea as might appear at first sight. Imagination plays so important a part in the lives of this people that there are actual cases on record where a man has died simply through fear of the relentless fate that he regarded as pursuing him. Even so sensible an individual as the King of the Shilluk went in real terror of his life last year when he found that an enemy had sprinkled the lintels of his door with blood and left a still-born body near the compound of one of his relatives.

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* Is this a similar oath to that referred to in, e.g., Genesis 24.2?

Apropos of witchdoctors Captain Fergusson writes :

"This description of the witch doctor does not in the main agree with my views. When taking over the Nuong I recognized that the witch doctor had destroyed the powers of the hereditary chief and I therefore decided that, since they had almost complete control over the people, it was the best policy to recognize their authority. I made it a very special point to work through them and so far the result has been amazing. At first I held Jackson's views but since I have been working with them I must say that I have found them very fair in their dealings with the people and ready to take extreme trouble over cases. They certainly enriched themselves enormously when they were at liberty to carry out unrestricted raids on their neighbours, but since this has now been stopped they are unable to do so any longer to the same extent as, I find, none of my Nuer will tolerate injustice in his every-day life even from a witch doctor. I have seen several appeals against their decisions in cases and on only two occasions had I reason to admonish the witch doctor for showing favouritism to a relation, which after all is only to be expected from any one, let alone a native.

Amongst my Nuer the spirit of a witch doctor is not hereditary"

ED.

In reply to this Mr. Jackson makes the following comments :

"I regret that I have not made my meaning clear. I was merely describing the state of affairs as I found it. I quite agree that it may be possible to enlist the sympathies of these Kujurs on behalf of the Government, and I think it will be found useful to do so. For instance in 1921 I had the Kujur Gwek and, I think, his brother definitely recognised by Government. Gwek since that date has dealt with a great number of cases under Nuer tribal law and, as far as I could ascertain, his decisions gave general satisfction.—H. C. J.

H. C. JACKSON.

NOTES.

SUDAN ARABS IN NIGERIA.

The "Notes on the Tribes, Provinces, Emirates and States of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, " of which the second edition was published in 1922, provides, in the section allotted to the Arabs (pp. 22-25) some valuable evidence of the extent to which branches of certain of the Arab tribes of the Sudan pushed westwards in early days and became incorporated in the Shuwa congeries.

For instance (p. 22) we have "Joama" (i. e. Gawāmaa) mentioned as one of the four clans who "early in the seventeenth century" sent offshoots westwards from Darfur and Wadai to what is now British Bornu.

There is evidence of Gawāmaa from Kordofan having at about the same date settled in Darfur and founded a dynasty in Wadai (see vol. I. p. 223 of my "History of the Arabs in the Sudan").

Again, the five main groups into which the Shuwa of Bornu are divided are given as follows:

1. Kwalme, one of whose septs is named "Wulad Sarar" and another "Beni Wayil". The former are probably of Bedayria extraction, Serār being a stock ancestor of these people in our *nisbas*, and the latter may correspond to the Wāilia section of the Hamar.

2. "Wulad Himet, with three subsidiary groups, all descendants of Ahamet Al Ejedum, who flourished in Southern Wadai about 1400 A.D." These are obviously the same as the Haymād Baggāra, and Ahmed El Ajdum is a stock Baggāra ancestor, occurring in all their *nisbas*. The name "Jubarat" (Gubārāt), too, which occurs twice among their septs, is that of a main section of the Taāīsha. The three subsidiary groups are given as (a) "Hamadiye", divided into "Hamadiye" proper and "Habaniye", the latter being obviously the Habbānīa Baggāra of the Sudan; (b) "Salamat", who are a large Baggāra Tribe in Wadai and closely related to the Baggāra of Kordofan and Darfur; (c) another group.

3. "Khuzam", i.e., the Beni Khuzām of Darfur and Wadai.

4. "Juhaynah, who claim descent from Abdullahi Juhaynah", i.e., that best known of all Sudanese Arab ancestors, Abdulla El Guhani.

5. "Tunjur", who, the authors admit, "are possibly not of Arabic descent at all," and who in fact are almost certainly of Nubian extraction (see vol. I, pp. 66 *ff* of the History cited above).

H. A. MACMICHAEL.

OLD KHARTOUM.

In the December 1922 number of Sudan Notes and Records there is a very interesting article on the Foundation of Khartoum by Mr. F. A. Edwards. May I add some items of evidence which were, I gather, not within the writer's cognizance?

The anonymous history of the Fung period and the Turkish period down to about 1871 which I have incorporated under the title of "D.7" in my History of the Arabs in the Sudan (vol.II) and which was written during the Turkish period, at a time when the foundation of Khartoum was no doubt fresh in the memory, generally corroborates the view that Khartoum until 1830 was no more than a military camp and temporary headquarters.

Then, says the author, speaking of 1830, when Khurshid Agha had been in power for four years and had just returned to Khartoum from the district lying east of Roseires, "Khurshid Agha . . . began the building of the mosque in the same year, and ordered the people to build houses, for most of them lived in tents of hairmatting and cowhide and there were no buildings in bricks, excepting those of the family of the *Feki* Arbāb near the mosque and those of the families of the *Kādis* and of the *Feki* Hammadnulla and those of the Budanāb." *

Similarly he ordered work to be started on barracks for the troops and storerooms for the equipment of the *Gehadīa*.

The government building, that is the present *hakimdārīa*, had been begun by Mahhi Bey." §

In 1835, says the author, Khurshid Agha visited Cairo and returned as Governor General to Khartoum, where he held an important conference of notables.

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* These were Mahas by tribe. Hammadnulla was "Wallad Malak" a follower of Sheikh Khogali. The Budanab are represented at Burri at present.

§ 1825—1826, according to the author

In 1837 "His Excellency pulled down the mosque which he had begun to build in 1245, (1830 A.D.), because it was too small: so, when El Khartoum increased in size as a settlement and the population multiplied, he demolished it down to its foundations and began building on its site the present mosque, which is much more spacious."

In 1845, we are told, Abd el Latīf Pasha, the Governor General, "stayed at El Khartoum busying himself with hearing cases and petitions innumerable, and he did no other work unless it were what he did in the matter of renewing and beautifying the buildings of the present *hakimdārīa*."

In 1862 Muhammed Rāsikh, a man "fond of ease and enjoyment", "did no work except to begin building the fort which stands on the east bank of the Nile, opposite the fort of the *hakimdārīa*."

H. A. MACMICHAEL

"CITY" MOUNDS IN THE BAHR EL GHAZAL PROVINCE.

About the junction of the R. Pongo with the R. Voll and thence Eastwards to the R. Jur occur a number of circular mounds varying in size from roughly one to five acres and in height from fifteen to forty feet. These rise abruptly from the surrounding flat plain and are quite isolated features and usually lie about a mile from a permanent water-course—ancient or modern: there is a depression or spoilpit at the foot. In an area of about 50 miles by 40 I have seen twenty-five of these mounds and there must be others. Moreover I have not seen them anywhere else except in this area although there is plenty of country exactly similar where they do not occur.

Their similarity to the ancient city mounds of Irak is striking and it is increased by some of them being covered with scraps of pottery some of it of the thick coarse water pots now made and used by the Dinka but some of it finer and lighter with a smooth red surface inside such as the Dinka cannot make.

The Dinka say that long ago before they themselves came to this country, from the South East, that the land did not dry off in the winter as it now does and that these mounds were thrown up for dwelling places by a race called Barrjo who later left Northwards. The names of the chiefs of the Barrjo are forgotten and nothing is known of them except that they were tall men.

Certainly, if these mounds are the work of their hands, they must have been superior to the present inhabitants in energy and powers of co-operation. The mounds appear too large and regular to have been formed by the chance debris of the dwellings of some people who lived in compact villages—as the Dinka do not—and they must decrease every year as the rains wash down material from them.

G. W. T.

"MATTIANG GOH" WITCHCRAFT.

About the year 1902 an Agar Dinka called Mattiang went to the Gok country of chief Kashual near the Gell river with the object of settling there with his seven relations. He was out in the grass one day when he came upon a hartebeeste caught in a native trap, he speared the animal and took the meat home and divided it amongst his relatives. After eating the meat, all of them, which the exception of Mattiang, died and in each case death was caused by the stomach swelling out to an abnormal size.

Suspecting witchcraft Mattiang inspected the hide noose which had caught the hartebeeste and found attached to it a root which he had never seen before. This he took to a certain Jur man, who lived in the vicinity of Tonj, and explained everything to him. The Jur instructed him to return home and bring back with him all his sheep and goats in return for which the Jur promised to give him medicine which would greatly benefit him and also be a source of income. Mattiang agreed but stated that as he had left his house empty without anyone to look after the goats he feared that he would find they had been eaten by animals or died. The Jur however assured him that such would not be the case. Mattiang returned with the goats and the instructions he received from the Jur are said to have been as follows:—

The special root, which is only known to big medicine men, is to be carefully covered with fat, rolled up in leaves or a piece of cloth, placed in a small pot and then hung up on the roof of the owner's house. Other roots of the same kind may also be worn round the neck or wrist if desired. The root is merely a visible sign that the owner is possessed of a wonderful 'Spirit' known to the jurs as 'Mongork'. This spirit only appears before medicine men as a kind of mist taking no special from. It is extremely faithful to its

owner who however must be careful not to offend it in any way. The owner cannot give an order to do anything at all but must comply with its wishes. 'Mongork' lives in the wall of its owners house and should be offered every evening a dish of either meat or fish potage. The food will not be taken by it but should be eaten by the owner after he has allowed a reasonable time for the spirit to see that his dish had been prepared. It can speak aloud to its owner or control his thought and words. It will protect the owner against the loss of his belongings by theft and should a theft take place the spirit on its own will attack the thief and strike him down. The form of punishment inflicted on the thief lies in the hands of the spirit, his cattle may die of disease, his house be burnt down, his goats eaten by wild animals or he and his relatives may be rendered ill. In causing illness or death 'Mongork' only attacks the stomach and kidneys. If the theft has been serious the stomach will swell out to an abnormal size causing severe pain accompanied by acute diarrhoea and the stricken enemy die within an hour. On the other hand if the offence has been light the stomach or kidneys may swell out and remain so until the stolen property has been returned with suitable compensation. The spirit strongly object to people wailing over any of its victims and if people do so they immediately die.

Theft alone does not constitute the only offence punishable by Mongork it is quite sufficient for an owner to be annoyed with anyone to render themselves liable to the most awful penalties. Owners however most never call on the spirit to avenge, if they do so nothing will happen. Owners have the power of selling the root to others who can likewise resell it.

Having thus been let into the secrets Mattiang was asked what his father's name was and on stating that it was Goh the Jur said that amongst the Dinka tribe 'Mongork' should henceforth be known as 'Mattiang Goh'. Mattiang then returned to his house with instructions to cut the throats of two hens and sprinkle their blood on the crops and the door of his house. The story soon spread but did not attract any special attention until two people were struck down dead for merely walking over Mattiang's crops. Others who offended him also became ill with the result that those afflicted came with presents of cows and goats to have the evil spell removed.

Mattiang became possessed of great riches and the deadly effects of the medicine became so exaggerated as to instil fear into all the Agar who lost no time in procuring the root to protect themselves.

To day it is universally used throughout the entire Eastern and Rumbek

District and many Dinkas are enriching themselves by introducing it into the Nuer country.

It have personally known Mattiang Goh ever since I took over the Eastern District in 1919 but never paid any special attention to it until recently when the seriousness of the practice was forced on my notice by an Atwot chief being reported to be using it as a means to lower the prestige of the Government in the eyes of the Nuers.

You will see by the above that there is no poison attached to it and it is merely one of the many 'medicines' of its kind which gain such fame through merely acting on the suspicions of the people.

It is known throughout the Dinka country as the most deadly thing of its kind. It undoubtedly does enormous harm by instilling fear into the people and giving the medicine men power to commit atrocities with little chance of their being brought to light.

V. FERGUSSON

TEBELDIS.

A few notes on Tebeldis gleaned during 18 months in Kordofan Province, A dicotyledonous tree of the Order Mavlaceae, Latin name Adansonia Digitata. Linn, probably named by Mr Adanson on account of its appearance, (Tebeldiya and Homera-Arab, Uffa-Hameg, Fak-Nuba. The Baobab or Monkey bread tree.) The bark yields a strong fibre which is used for ropes, basket-making, etc, The fruit, called Gangaleis by Arabs, contains seeds covered with a pleasant sub-acid farinaceous pulp, which has cooling properties. The seeds yield a valuable oil; the yield of oil in the Sudan trees, is unfortunately small. This tree is one of the oldest, if not the oldest living tree in the world and is of great interest in the botanical world. Being almost entirely fibre and not highly specialised like a more modern tree it makes it exceedingly difficult to estimate its age by the usual method of counting the annual rings. Also the oldest trees are naturally hollow. The flowers are large, white measuring 6 inches with a massive staminal column and crown of stamens. Fruit large 8 to 12 inches, pendulous. Seeds 15 mm, embryo large and much crushed.

DISTRIBUTION. The approximate zone for Tebeldi appears to be a belt between just North of Latitude 14 and 11 and they are found on the

most Eastern and Western boundaries of Kordofan. Scattered Tebeldiya are found in South Africa but this is out of their proper zone. The most noteworthy. area of Tebeldi lies in Western Kordofan, namely the great Forest of Zernakh It is a longitudinal belt of Tebeldi stretching North and South from Teis Um Bona to Um Kuda. It has a uniform breadth of about a mile. Of individual trees perhaps the most famous is Mahmud's tree at Saata.

HISTORY. The age of individual trees is a much debated point, and the combined lore of the geologist, archaeologist, and forester must be brought to bear before even an approximate solution be obtained. I am prepared to assign a life of 1000 to 2000 years as a maximum on the grounds of (a) its slow growth (b) the monstrous size attained by certain trees and (c) the local beliefs, and the fact that even the oldest men say that the trees were already old in their father's and grandfather's time.

Their root surface is in some places very shallow and one might presume that they could not stand for such an age during the ravages of a thousand or more kharif. The oldest trees in the British Isles are the Yews. In spite of all the legends current concerning them and the belief that certain yews, e.g., the famous yew of Fountains' Abbey, go back to the times of the Romans, or even beyond as it is alleged of the great yews of Kingly Bottom on the Sussex Downs,—it has been conclusively shown in Johnsons "Byways of British Archaeology" that no existing yew can be proved to have been standing before A. D. 1300. It is thought by some that the yew in a damp climate with its tenacious fibre and its broad based build might seem to have a better chance of surviving than the Tebeldi, this Queen of trees. But the Tebeldi has a far more tenacious fibre and its base is even broader and as regards the climate it is only now that the gradual drying up of the country and cyclic change from steppe back to desert is in progress. The absence of young Tebeldi in western Kordofan is a proof that this change is taking place and that this shortage of water is a sufficient reason for the non-germination of the seeds.

With the above conclusions Tebeldi appear to have been in just as damp a climate as the yew. Again the root surface of a Tebeldiya adapts itself to the conditions and where they are shallow it proves the water must have been available near the surface in years gone by but where the Tebeldiya has to go deep for its water it has a long tap root which in some countries has been estimated as deep as 60 feet.

Hamar folk-lore ascribes a hoary past to all the bigger trees, and in some of the Northern Omadias it is held that the Anag hollowed them with their

giant finger nails, but no weight can be attached to this pleasing fancy. The Tebeldis appear to be hollow naturally.

UTILITY. In Western Kordofan the Tebeldiya forms the chief source of water supply for the inabitants. There are some 30,000 Tebeldi holding water in Western Kordofan. It may be said with approxmate accuracy that probably 1/3rd of the trees now in use were hollow in and before the Turkia, when, it must be remembered the Hamar were considerable more nomad than they are now. During the Mahdia many of the Tebeldi shared in the wanton devastation caused by the successive overrunnings of the Dar Hamar by the Western tribes culminating in the famous march of the Emir Mahmud to the river 1896, when every patch of corn was burnt or cut, and many fine Tebeldi pierced at their bases so as to be incapable of holding water again. Examples of these trees can be seen on the Nahud road near Saata. It is no exaggeration to say that the siting of 90% of the Hamar villages in Western Kordofan must have originally been determined by the location of the Tebeldi. On standing on some prominent places such as Goz Shuāf the meeting place of Bara, El Obeid and Nahud Merkaz one sees sporadic patches of Tebeldi and within these spinneys some 10 villages can be easily located. The same can be seen at Jikka only 15 miles from El Obeid. Some villages are entirely dependant on its Tebeldi for water, i.e,Um Chawo in Shallota Omodia, this village in June 1921 owing to the late kharif and emptying of Tebeldi was entirely deserted for 6 weeks. Zerga was another example before the Government made a well at Saata. One can only estimate the cubic capacity of each tree by the number of burmas put into a tree and not the maximum quantity the tree can take. Taking a burma at 3½ gallons and estimating the average capacity of the tree as 70 burmas, this would make a total yearly storage of 7½ million gallons. District Commissioner of Nahud stated that the population of Dar Hamar had been estimated at 60,000 excluding the non-Hamar elements at Nahud. This works out roughly at a consumption of 1/3rd gallon per head per day. Of course this only applies to those areas without wells, but such areas are considerable. It is of interest to compare this consumption with the adult Londoners daily consumption of 27.8 gallons but the latter of course includes ablution.

NOMENCLATURE. Every Tebeldi in Western Kordofan which is in use has a name, invariably of the feminine gender. Each tree is listed under its name in the Merkaz registers. The great majority of the names are compounded with "Um" (=mother) and a substantive, e.g. Um Khiban (from "Khaban" to store provender for a time of want,) Um Asal (=full of honey) Um Tiyūr

(=home of birds), etc. The names range from the poetic and picturesque, e.g., Um Fakha Khir (=mother of glories) to the frankly coarse. But they are always descriptive even to baldness, e.g., Quweima (=the upright) Um Tahy (=the spreading). A lot of the names relate to water, e.g., Um Asiha (=the flowing) Um Dhirafa (=the tearful). Besides the names of individual trees there is a name applied to a certain class of Tebeldi, viz: Um, or El, Lagai or Lagat. This name is given to those trees which by the configuration of their upper branches are self filling.

ADMINISTRATION. The administrative value is no less than the economic. The Tebeldi forms the basis of village life to a far greater extent than the crops do. No boundary can be demarcated, no site of a new village established, no transfer of individuals be considered without reference to it in Western Kordofan. Its importance in boundary disputes is immense whether of village, omodias, merakiz, or Province. The most noteworthy trees on Merakiz bounderies are Um Ral and El Tirgawia on the Nahud-Bara border, and Um Ferrik in Abu Dazza Omodia is a good example of a Province frontier tree.

H. S. BLUNT.

THE LANGU. (A CORRECTION.)

The Langu now in the Sudan are limited to the villages on the S. W. slopes of Dongatolo between Kekerek and Momoi, and those of Logīre and Wásagan on the S. E. slopes of Imatong.

They were long subject to the Lotuko chiefs of Logúrun, not Ibrahim (Loinyong) but his predecessors Lomóro, Logwîyuro, etc., and had no proper chiefs of their own. Lopwenya, until he made himself useful to the K.A.R. was merely headman of Ikoto village.

The people on the eastern slopes of Dongatolo are known as Lógir. Their chief was Loléka, alias Lokóng (not Tumbo). He has now been succeeded by his son Inón. The Lógir are more closely related to the Lotuko than to the Langu.

Lokorînyang belongs not to the Langu but to a small sub-tribe called Lômu, who are intermediate between the Langu and the people of Imatong.

The people who live on the summit and northern slopes of Dongatolo are called Dongatolo. They speak the Lotuko language and have no connection with the Acholi.

RAGLAN

A LOCAL CALENDER.

In the course of deciding land cases in Geteina Merkaz White Nile, I found that it was impossible to get dates according to the No. of the year either Arabic or English. As some accuracy was essential in dealing with questions such as prescriptive rights, completing sales and mortgages, etc., I found it useful to draw up the appended calender of the years by their local names as given by the natives themselves.

It is forwarded in the hope that its publication in Sudan Notes and Records may be of assistance to Assistant District Commissioners and others who may have similar work to do in that District in the future.

The absolute accuracy of the dates given is not guaranteed but is sufficiently accurate to be of practical value.

The spelling of the names of the years is as pronounced by the people themselves and as understood by them. In many cases the names are colloqial.

Name of Year	*Meaning of Name*	*Arabic year.*	*English year.*
سنة البساعوضه	Plague of flies-mosquitoes	1295	1877
سنة الفار	Plague of rats	1296	1878
الفكي ادريس	The Feki gathered a body of men to fight the Turkish Government which sent troops and a gunboat against him and he was killed near Gerrassa	1301	1883
سنة ام كويسات	A famine year — A measure denotes the bowls used for measuring out the corn	1301	1883

Name of Year	*Meaning of Name*	*Arabic year.*	*English year.*
سنة الجدري	Small pox outbreak	1301	1883
سنة العيش الكرجي	Red dura imported from Gedaref ...	1303	1885
سنة الجدري	Small pox outbreak	1304	1886
سنة ولد تور ام بوك	A dervish Emir of the Shekhab Tribe ...	1304	1886
سنة كرة الاربعاء او سنة الترحيله	*Wednesday.* The Khalifa used to collect the White Nile people every Wednesday and transplant them to Omdurman ...	1304	1886
سنة الضيق	Famine Year	1306	1888
سنة ابو بيض	A high Nile. The people were attacked with boils under the armpits	1307	1889
سنة الترحيله	Year of Abundance	1308	1890
سنه الغنيمه	The Khalifa took a third of everything—animals, crops, money etc. off any misdoer—is a famine	1309	1891
سنة ولد دكيم	A Taashi Emir who was sent from Khartoum to administer justice from Omdurman to Jebel Aulia	1311	1893
سنة نيل فضل المولي	A Dervish Emir—A high flood Year ...	1312	1894
سنه صرف الخيـل	Dervish Horsemen were sent to the White Nile and the people had to provide grain and forage. In this time came in the Gaaliīn, Gaafara, Danagla, etc., who found the lands empty, the people being driven out by the Baggāra Arabs. The newcomers bribed the Dervishes not to turn them off	1312	1894
سنة احمد السني	The biggest of the collectors of the "Tulba" for the Government. He was *the first settler at Wad Medani* and others followed his example. He was Omdeh of Wad Medani...	1312-15	1894-97

Name of Year	*Meaning of Name*	*Arabic year.*	*English year.*
سنة محمود احمد	Year of death of his brother of the Khalifa. Also a year in which the people were much oppressed and became rebellious and armed themselves for war preferring death to the Government	1315	1897
سنة حلول الحكومه سنة الفتوح سنة الضربه	Year of occupation of the Sudan by this Government...	1317	1899
سنة ابراهيم عوض	Name of first Mamur at Dueim ...	1317-21	1899-03
سنة ام سكيكون	Plague of small grass hopper, also called سيار بالليل "fly by nights".	1318	1900
سنة السيله	High flood.	1319	1901
سنة ابو فرار سنة ابو نقيله	Epidemic of stiff necks from excessive heat of the sun, symptoms were blood rushing to the head and white froth at the mouth	1319	1901
سنة ولد برهام	Effendi who was president of Ushur Board (He is now a Petition Writer at Geteina)	1327	1099
سنة التسجيل الاولاني سنة تسجيل الحجر	Stones put in by Land Settlement in River land and rain land East of River	1327-32	1909-13
سنة الكنوز	Immigration of Berberines from the Halfa Reach, there being a famine there that year. They came to buy dura in the White Nile. The name is derived from كنز to store. Long ago the Romans were in occupation of this Country which is all stones and gebels and dug holes in the rocks in which to store their treasures and the name has stuck to the people of that District since then ...	1328	1910

Name of Year	*Meaning of Name*	*Arabic year.*	*English year.*
سنة ام سفايه سنة ام سفيفية	Storms—A Year of Haboubs ...	1329	1911
سنه المساح مرسي	Name of first Surveyor who came to the White Nile	1331	1912
سنة الهـابور	Crops were planted but came to nothing and cattle died	1332	1913
سنة الجوع	Hunger		
سنة الضيـق	Want		
سنة الفينو	Imported flour		
سنة الادره الهندي سنة عيش الهنـد	Imported grain from India		
سنة ام رطـل	Measure of the corn in rottles which was not known to the people before ...	1333	1914
سنة ام سوط	Police had to beat the people with whips to keep them back in line when the corn was being distributed		
سنة الذهب	Gold paid for the corn		
سنة عيش ودلند	Woodland who distributed and largely paid for it.		
سنة ابو فرار	Neck stiffness Cf 1319 previously ...	1334	1915
سنة الدوده	Plague of beetles who destroyed the crops and miolons	1335	1916
سنة التسجيل الاخراني سنة تسجيل الحفر	Judge Osborne's Settlement	1336-38	1917-19
سنة الخـيران	High Nile-Khors all full	1337	1918

P. F. HAMILTON-GRIERSON,
District Judge,
W. N. P.

Geteina,
21.1.1923.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIRDS.

One of the first things which strike the visitor to the Sudan is the variety and beauty of the birds of the country. As a result of work done by officials and others—notably Mr. A. L. Butler and Rear-Admiral H. Lynes—a very considerable amount of information on the species and distribution of these birds has been placed on record, but comparatively little is known of their habits. I am not infrequently asked whether any book dealing with the bird of the Sudan can be obtained but the answer is that no such book has as yet been written. It is to be hoped that a book of nature will be produced sooner or later and then it should, to be of real and general interest and value, contain not only a mere list of the birds with their known distribution and possibly discriptions of their plumage, but also accounts of their nests and eggs, their feeding and general habits, whether residents, visitants or passage migrants and if either of the two latter, details of when they come and go, and so on. Such information can only be acquired by officials and other who live in the Sudan and are in a position to watch the birds throughout the seasons.

Many officials take a keen interest in the subject and possess a considerable amount of information on the habits of the birds, but unless this information is placed on record it is apt to be lost, and certainly is not readily available to others who may be interested.

I suggest therefore that officials and residents in the Sudan, should, as opportunity offers, note the occurrence and habits of the birds of the district in which they are stationed and record their observations in the Sudan Notes and Records. Such notes would be of the greatest interest to many of the readers of this journal and further would in time render possible the production of a really useful handbook of the birds of the country.

There is a fairly extensive collection of named bird skins and mounted birds in the Natural History Museum in Khartoum, which is continually being added to and by means of which many of the birds of the Sudan may be identified. Needless to say, I shall only too be glad to give what assistance I can to anyone who having made observation on the habits of a bird requires details as to its identity, known distribution or any other point, to enable him to furnish a note for publication.

H. H. KING.
Curator, Natural History Museum,
Gordon College.

SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS



VOLUME VI.

1923.

THE
HADARET EL-SUDAN PRESS
KHARTOUM.

BB

SUDAN NOTES

AND

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SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS.

(FOUNDED 1918)

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Transliteration of the Arabic Alphabet

adopted by the Editors of "Sudan Notes and Records".

ا	at beginning of word omit, hamza elsewhere ʾ.	ذ	dh (coll. d)	غ	gh
ب	b	ر	r	ف	f
ت	t	ز	z	ق	q (coll. g)
ث	th (coll. t or s)	س	s	ك	k
ج	j	ش	sh	ل	l
ح	ḥ	ص	ṣ	م	m
خ	kh	ض	ḍ	ن	n
د	d	ط	ṭ	ه	h
		ظ	ẓ	و	w
		ع	ʿ	ي	y

Vowels.

fatḥa	a,	lengthened	ā
kasra	i,	,,	ī
ḍamma	u,	,,	ū

Diphthongs.

ـَـي — ai (as in aisle)

ـَـو — au (as in mauser)

The ل of the article always remains *l*.

The silent *t* (ة) is omitted.

Notes.

1. The system is not applied to well-known names, such as Khartoum, Omdurman, &c.
2. The vowel sounds of *e* in "get" and *o* in "hot" with the corresponding long vowels (*a* in "gate" and *o* in "home") which occur only in the colloquial are expressed by e, o, ē, ō.
   e.g. beled, Moḥammed, bēt (or beit), ḥōsh.

Ei may be used as an alternative to ē.

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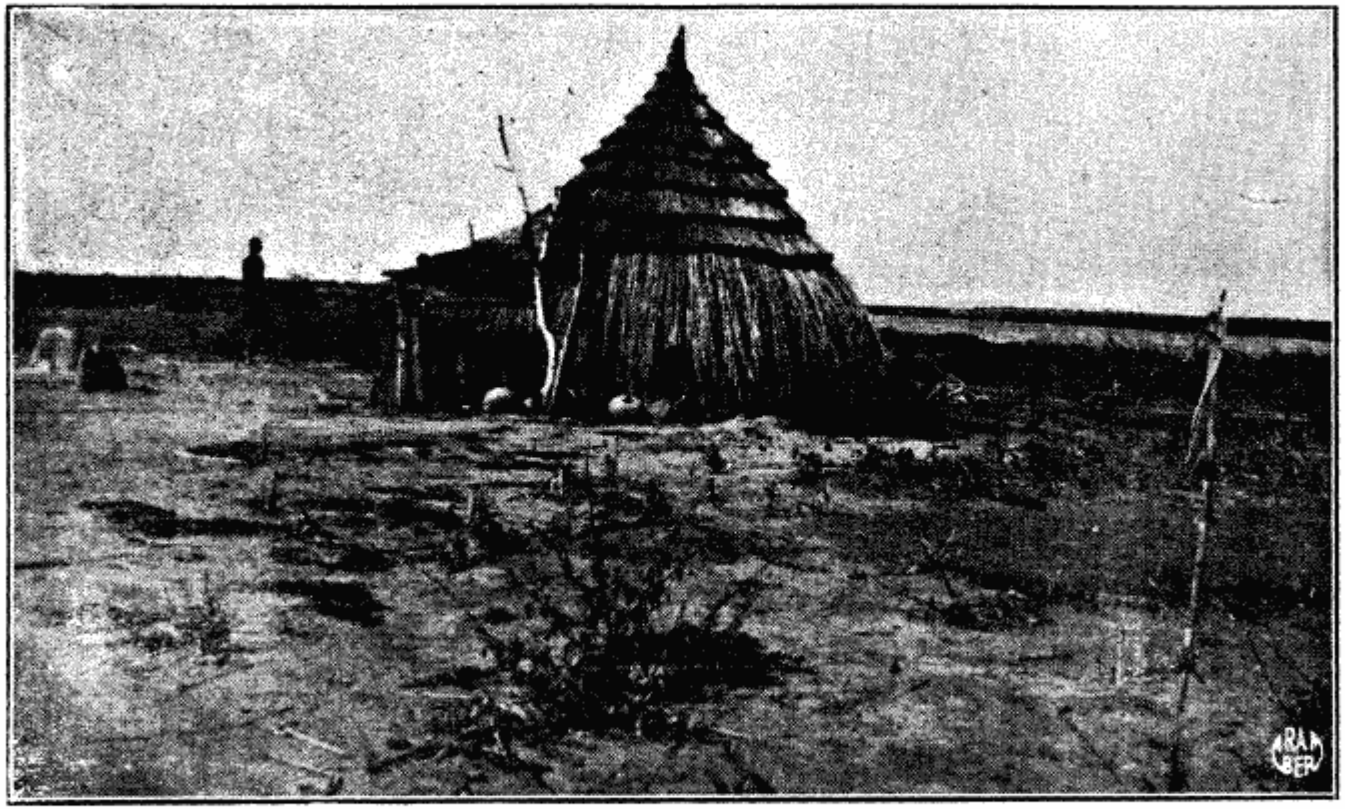
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A Nuer Hut.

Frontispiece.

SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS

Volume VI. 1923 No. 2.

THE NUER OF THE UPPER NILE PROVINCE.*

by H. C. Jackson.

PART C.

1. Houses.

The huts in general use among the Nuer are of two main types, one for a temporary residence with the cattle during the dry months of the year, the other of a more permanent character for the rainy season. The former is made simply of grass with a few small boughs or bits of brushwood for supports. These temporary huts are slightly rounded at the top and are not more than five or six feet in height: frequently they are very much smaller. A hole, some two feet high, does duty for a door through which the owner and his family crawl. Often there is not even a mat of reeds or grass to keep the draught out. Sometimes the Nuer do not even trouble to make a roof over their heads; a screen of grass to protect then from the keen north wind is thrown roughly up and behind its slender shelter the Nuer crowd close to their cattle. Dung fires are lit to keep away the buzzing swarms of mosquitoes and flies and to supply a certain amount of warmth: a copious smothering of wood or dung ash also contributes to this end.

As a result of living continuously in an atmosphere of dense smoke the eyes of the Nuer are usually blear and bloodshot, an asset that in no way enhances their appearance.

The other type of hut, which really constitutes the home, is circular in shape with a conical roof. The roof is of grass and the walls are made of grass and mud supported by logs of any tree, such as the *higlig*, which happens to be available. The huts are often sand-plastered and are sometimes ornamented with crude drawings in colours of red, white or black. These usually take the form of pictures of cattle, sheep and goats, such animals as the crocodile, for instance, not being represented. Cow dung and cow urine

(*) Continued from Vol. VI. No. 1.

are boiled together and a kind of red distemper made from them. Black paint, which is also occasionally employed, is obtained by scraping a burnt jar and mixing the result with water.

The doors of the Nuer houses face in any direction that suits the householder and are not, like those of the Arab, turned towards the east.

The site chosen for a village is a debba, or sandy ridge, rather above the waterline either of a river or the rainfall.

Villages are scattered over considerable areas and in many cases it is difficult to see where a village of one name begins and another ends. A newcomer who wishes to live in a particular village must erect his house away from the centre of the existing settlement and towards the lower ground.

The building grasses in order of importance are *ol*, *lum*, *dud* (near the Bahr el Zeraf) and *dik*, from which the Shilluk make their ropes. (*)

The return from the cattle *luwaks* (cattle-kraals) to the more permanent habitations commences as soon as news arrives that the grass and water supply near the village is assured.

The Nuer, being usually the attacking party, make no stockades as do the Anyuak. In the case of the latter there is a special reason, as the slave-raiding expeditions of the Abyssinians have compelled the Anyuak to crowd together for mutual protection and to surround their villages with a ditch and rampart of stakes.

When an entirely new village is to be built a small bull is sacrificed and merissa drunk, after which work commences.

2. Household utensils.

The *Lares et Penates* of the average Nuer household consist of the following: —

Spears and shield, or rifle.

Neckrest.

Spoons made out of the horn of an antelope or head of cattle, or merely a shell of a snail or river mussel.

Dancing stick.

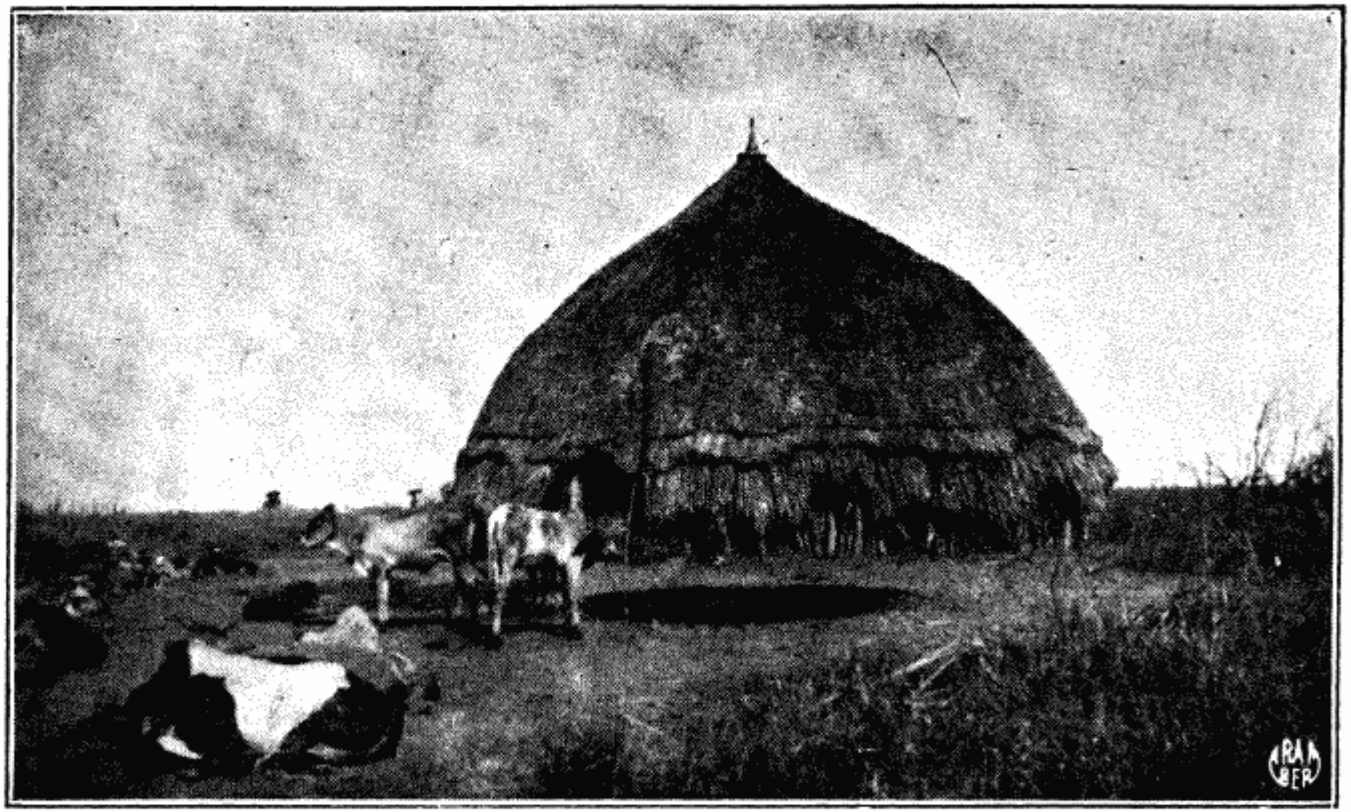
Jars and calabashes.

Skins for sleeping on, etc.

Ambatch log for tobacco, etc.

Ornaments.

(*) These I have not at present been able to identify.



A NUER CATTLE - HUT.

Face page 124.



A BARUN HUT OF AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT TYPE FROM THAT OF THE NUER.
Note the doorway raised above the ground.

Face page 125.

Harpoon and fishing spears.

Pipes.

Baskets of reeds or woven grass.

A sharpened stick for hoeing (*).

Yig-yig, a gourd with seeds inside used as a rattle to lull children to sleep.

All of these are for the most part of the crudest possible description.

As may be naturally supposed the armoury of the Nuer is limited. Schweinfurth, writing about the year 1868, mentions that they used the bow and arrow, but these have long been superseded by spears although the more primitive weapon is still in existence amongst the neighbouring Burun. (†)

Spears were originally made from the horn of an antelope—such as a tiang, white eared cob, waterbuck, roan, Mrs. Grey's cob—or were fashioned out of the legbone of the giraffe or a piece of ebony. The horn of an antelope was softened in water and straightened out until it formed an interesting though primitive weapon. Since iron and steel have been procurable through the Abyssinians and traders, metal is today largely used in the manufacture of their spears with the result that the older and more curious variety is fast tending to disappear.

Clubs are made of any hard wood, *higlig* and *talh* being most commonly used for this purpose though occasionally examples are found of ebony. A rough shape is first obtained with an axe and then the keener edge of a spear is used for completing and improving the weapon.

Shields are fashioned out of any thick skin, preferably that of a buffalo or hippopotamus. They are shaped roughly like a pear, pointed at the top and gradually broadening towards the bottom. With the introduction of rifles, however, the Nuer realises that a shield is but an ineffective weapon with which to stop a bullet, and this too is not so frequently met with as formerly.

Canoes are regarded as the private property of the owner, each man being more or less capable of making one for himself. The procedure, which was originally learnt from the Anyuak, is simple. The bole of a dom palm or sycamore, with a length of from twelve to fifteen feet, is usually selected and is roughly hollowed with an axe and then burnt out by charcoal or some slow-burning wood. The canoes of the Zeraf Nuer are for the most part made from the dom palm, those elsewhere from the *gemaiza* or *kuk* tree. A more crude or unstable looking object than the finished product would be hard to

(*) See later under Agriculture.

(†) c.p. also Werne "Expedition to discover the Sources of the White Nile." 1840. II. 203.

imagine for no attempt is made at adornment or obtaining any symmetry of outline. Floating on his native river in his canoe the Nuer is as completely at home as any of the waterfowl, and the dexterity with which he propels and steers this crazy little craft by means of a wooden paddle is nothing short of marvellous.

Pipes, *toing*, are very commonly used amongst the Nuer and are made by trained artificers, the bowl being moulded of special earth taken from the vicinity of a watercourse. This is fitted and bound for greater security to a wooden or reed stem from two to three feet in length which terminates in a clumsy mouthpiece made from the neck of a calabash. The smoking mixture consists chiefly of live charcoal with a few shreds of tobacco mixed with cowdung sprinkled on top, the tobacco being grown locally or imported from Abyssinia. The receptacle for the charcoal and tobacco is a shield called *kot urka* and consists of a piece of ambatch some four feet in length with a maximum diameter of three or four inches. This *kot urka* has a hole in the middle to allow a handgrip, the shield being also used as a pillow.

The practice of smoking is as much indulged in by the women as the men, a common sight in the Nuer country being that of a woman walking along a track smoking this particular form of pipe which she supports with one hand whilst she steadies a reed basket upon her head with the other.

These reed baskets, or *reika* as they are called in Arabic, are made by the women from choice reeds specially selected for their strength and fineness. The duty of cutting these reeds devolves upon the women who do so with a small spear, the husband being expected to prepare the leather thongs for binding the basket together. The reeds are left for fifteen days to dry and, when ready, are put in water for a night to achieve the required pliability. The women then make the baskets which are for the most part about two and a half or three feet in length, eight inches high and rather under a foot broad. They serve the purpose of a cradle or a portmanteau and are frequently used for carrying a puling infant, the household's supply of flour, or both.

In each *luwak* are special women skilled in the making of these baskets which they provide for any one who wants them usually without receiving any remuneration for their labours.

For making fire, other than that for the cattle kraal, almost any kind of wood is utilised. A slit an inch long is made in a small block of wood into which is inserted a pointed stick. This is rapidly twirled by the two palms working from the top of the stick to the bottom. Dried grass is spread



A NUER VILLACE WITH DURA IN THE FOREGROUND.

Face page 126.

underneath for tinder and the friction resulting from the rapid revolutions of the pointed stick in the lower piece of wood causes sparks which, alighting on the grass, speedily kindle it into a flame. The actual process of ignition takes about forty seconds but is only resorted to on such occasions as a hunting expedition when the ever smouldering dungfires of the *luwak* are not within easy reach.

The general flatness of the cotton soil plains precludes the possibility of finding caves or grottoes except for an insignificant representative of the former in Jebel Zeraf. There are no traces of pictures or signs upon the only rocks that there are in the district. The Nuer have no beliefs or stories concerning either giants or dwarfs, and the past is a book almost completely closed to them.

Owing to the character of the country that they inhabit the Nuer have left behind them no remnants of monuments or stone buildings and as they do not event understand the burning of bricks it is extremely doubtful if any such have ever existed. Thus, for reasons not altogether unconnected with topography, they do not work in stone of which they make no use, except to sharpen their spears with any piece of rock or similar substance that they may come across.

There is also no iron in the district inhabited by the Nuer. This is imported either from the Jur country, or Abyssinia, or exchanged for animals or grain. The art of smithying is as a rule handed down from father to son but the smiths as a class are not a special caste nor do they possess any privileges or honours. They are usually paid in sheep or goats for any work that they perform.

The remaining household possessions of the Nuer consist in a sleeping skin, a jar for cooking, a gourd for holding water or fat, and fishing pots.

For carrying heads of grain a basket, called *usz*, is made of reeds pointed at the bottom which make a receptacle rather like a lobster pot. There is also a utensil called *kum* made of the shredded leaf of the dom palm into which flour for a fishing expedition is put.

The duties of providing these various possessions is divided between the husband and his wife. Thus the man cuts the tree trunk for a pillow and splits the gourd for eating out of. He also plants the gourd (*) and cuts it in half when ripe. Snail shells, mussel shells, and cattle horns which are to serve as spoons or drinking goblets are collected by him. The woman makes the earthenware jars, and cleans out the inside of the shells or gourd.

(*) See C. 4.

In the accompanying photograph may be seen some of the possessions referred to above. These include two shields, a basket, giraffe traps with nooses, neckrest, snail and mussel shell (*) ambatch wristlet, spoon made of horn, a *dang* (—), and an Anyuak drum. I failed to obtain a Nuer drum which is very similar to that of the Anyuak except that it is relatively less broad at the top.

Reading from left to right the following different types of spears are represented: steel, steel, waterbuck, ebony, Mrs Grey's cob, giraffe bone, ebony, roan, giraffe bone, tiang, iron (or steel ?), white eared cob, ebony and steel.

A drawing is also attached of a headdress which is no longer in use amongst the Nuer and is perhaps epecially interesting for that reason. It was brought by Petherick from the Nuer country and is thus described in Wood's Natural History of Man (I). "It is white, in imitation of the white clay with which the head is decorated, and is made of cylindrical beads shaped as if they were pieces of tobacco pipe. These beads, or bugles, as they ought perhaps to be called, are threaded on string, and fastened together in a very ingenious manner. The singular point in this headdress is the exact resemblance to the soldiers' casque of ancient Egypt and to the helmets now in use in India and other parts of the world".

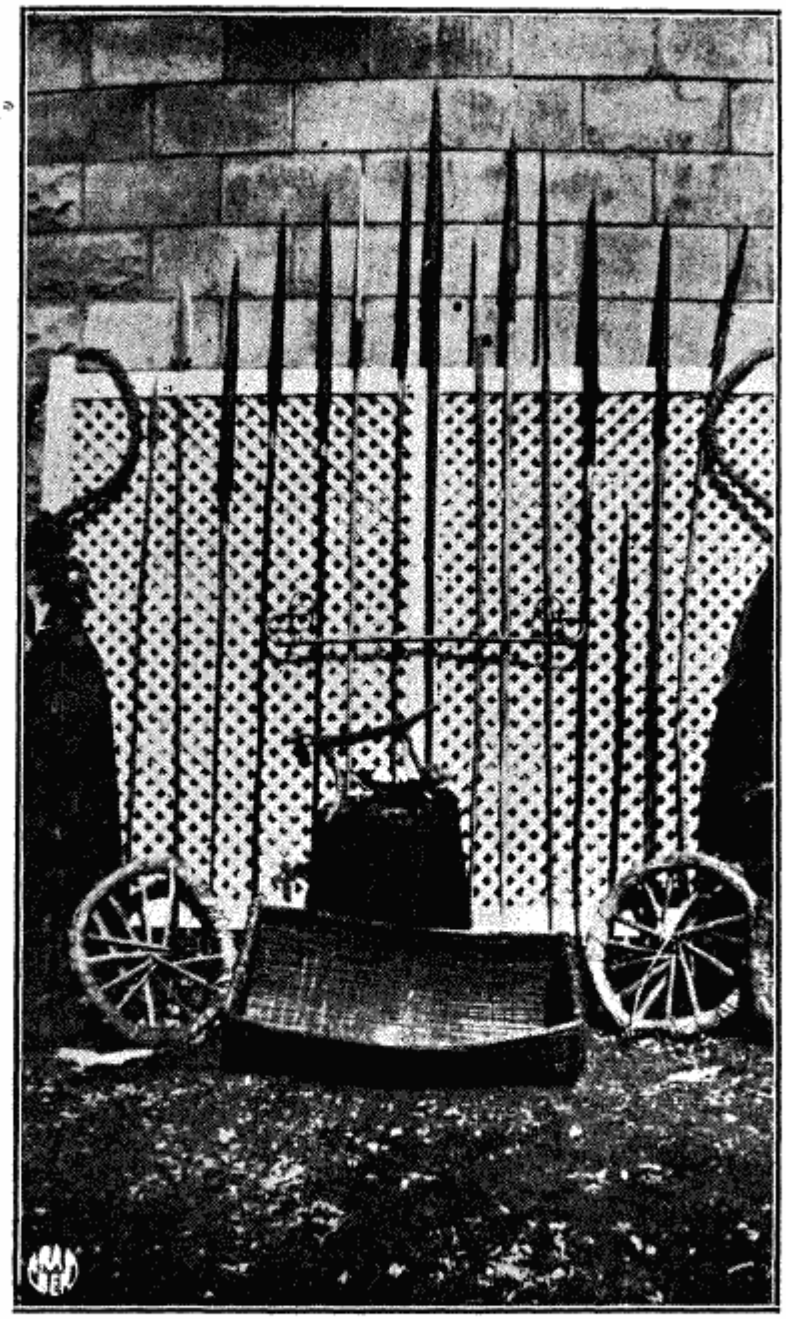
3. Food : profane.

The Nuer can, and does, frequently go for two or three days at a time without eating, and, if necessity compels, he is capaple of fasting for as many as five and not suffer any real inconvenience. After the expiration of that time he realises that the pangs of hunger can no longer be denied and he must bestir himself in order to obtain some food. In the ordinary course of events, however, he has two meals a day which are taken at about eight in the morning and seven at night. The food is served on large wooden platters or in a gourd and, as the Nuer—unlike the Shilluk, Arab or Egyptian—does not eat with his fingers, each one helps himself with a crude spoon—most commonly nothing else but the large mussel or snail shell so abundant in the country: but occasionally an attempt is made to fashion a more serviceable article from wood or horn.

(*) *Cypraea moneta*.

(—) See C. 10.

(I) London 1868. Africa p. 522. Browne, The Story of Africa. (II) 42, refers to a "shell-studded cowl with tuft" as a form of headdress.



SOME NUER POSSESSIONS.

Face page 128



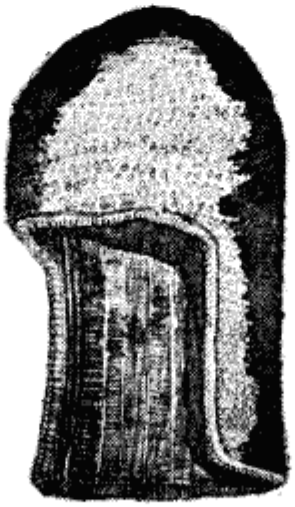
1



2.



3.



4

1. A NUER NECK REST.
2. A DINKA DANG COPIED FROM SCHWEINFURTH, THE HEART OF AFRICA 1.155.
5. A DANCING STICK. IN ORIGIN IT MAY DATE TO THE TIME WHEN ALL FIGHTING WAS DONE WITH STICKS AND THIS WAS USED FOR PARRYING BLOWS.
4. A NUER HELMET FROM COLONEL LANE-FOX'S COLLECTION.

Face page 128.

A porridge of dura and cows' milk supplied by the family herd is the staple diet, and a deficiency of these products is overcome by the substitution of such roots as *ful*, *lung*, *luweir*, *miak*, *pingni* and *lau* (*)—a species of potato with a pungent flavour. A kind of wild rice, gum, and the fruits of the *higlig*, *nabbak* and sycamore are also eaten. Of these roots and fruits perhaps the most popular is *miak* which is boiled with the *higlig* fruit. Honey is eaten when it is found, but it is never deliberately sought except in cases of extreme hunger. The method of procuring it is to smoke the bees from the hole or comb by the application of wisps of smouldering grass, the store of honey then being extracted by the hand and eaten at once: the mellifluent repast is followed very necessarily and rightly by a wash.

Choice delicacies such as worms, grasshoppers, ants, and rats, though appreciated by some of the Dinka, are not included in the bill of fare of the average Nuer, nor is he, as is the Beir, geophagous. Unlike the Burun too he has no fancy for mussels or similar shell fish.

The flesh of birds is only eaten on very rare occasions, and in secret; the reason for this somewhat unusual abstention from an easily available food supply will be discussed later. (†) Crocodile and hippopotamus are not as a rule taboo however and are devoured even when in an advanced state of decomposition.

Meat is occasionally eaten after a successful hunt or a bull or aged cow is sometimes consumed on the occasion of a marriage feast or when it is deemed necessary to make a burnt offering. A very fat bull has its throat tied up and a man, who is regarded as a specialist in this particular line, severs a vein. When sufficient blood is forthcoming it is boiled and swallowed.

The hams of any animals killed in the chase are put into a large jar and boiled. When cooked the meat is placed on a skin where it is minced up by women with spears. A little fat or buttermilk is poured over it and it is then eaten. Otherwise the flesh is usually consumed raw.

Fish plays a very large part in the daily menu of the Nuer: in fact as his little store of dura runs low he is almost entirely dependent, during the months that immediately precede the rains, on the fish that he manages to catch in the rapidly drying watercourses. If a big fish is caught a feast is held to which all the near relatives are invited, a small fish being given to the children. Similarly

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(*) Awaiting identification.

(†) See C. 14. Totemism and Exogamy.

for a crocodile, hippopotamus or anything speared or captured in the chase the family is asked to join the festive throng. When too much merissa is made this is divided amongst the relatives. If a family is hungry and the relatives cannot spare a bull to eat or to exchange for dura some animal is loaned on condition that a cowcalf is restored in two years time : no sort of guarantee is required though it is customary to have witnesses to the transaction. In fact the communal spirit is still a prominent characteristic of the family and tribal life of the Nuer.

When a head of cattle is killed the whole of it, including the skin is eaten, the sole exception being the hoofs which even a Nuer cannot tackle. Salt is never consumed, the deficiency apparently being made good by copious draughts of urine-reeking milk, all milk bowls being washed out in cow urine.

The Nuer eat by classes according to age and sex : thus the old people have their meals together and each section of the village or cattle kraal according to the age of the diners. The food and merissa bowls are apportioned to suit the age and requirements of the different parties: thus the older men have larger bowls than the middle-aged who are in turn considered worthy of a larger portion than the younger men and children. The meal is prepared by a woman in a special hut, the women of the village taking it in turns to see about the food.

Witchdoctors of importance such as *gwek* (the frog) usually eat in private but there is no harm done if anyone chances to see them eating. The Nuer, like the Dinka, and sometimes the Shilluk, eat with spoons made out of a mussel shell or a ladle shaped out of the horn of a bull or piece of wood. Horns of cattle are also used as drinking goblets where milk or a concoction of dura soaked in water is to be consumed. The Nuer sometimes fast voluntarily for a period and there is some evidence that they occasionally refrain from partaking of milk and meat together. They do not know how to make cheese, but they allow stale milk to coagulate, pour off the whey and eat the solidified result which is called *ruott*.

If several people hunt together for wild fruit, such as *lalob*, they agree to fill all the joint baskets before returning. There are no proprietary rights in trees or fruit.

The foods in order of importance are porridge with butter, fat or milk : meat or fish : grain or merissa. Wild fruit is little esteemed and is regarded as supplementary to the ordinary diet. In a lean year, however, it assumes considerable importance ; as it embraces the fruit of the *aradeib*, *nabbak*, *higlig* as well as the roots (called *suteip* by the Arab) and seeds of the waterlily. (*) ***Aradeib*** seeds are soaked in water and the resulting concoction drunk.

(*) called *gweitch* and *garung* by the Nuer.

The following fish are eaten by the Nuer. It will be seen from the list given below that while the Nuer have separate names for the various classes of fish they do not differentiate the species.

	Arabic.	Nuer.
Polypterus (Bichir : Endlicheri : Senegalensus)	*dabib el hot.*	*gu-osz.*
Protopterus Æthiopicus.	*abkur.*	*lusz.*
Mormyrops (Anguilloides : Castive : Kannumi)	*khashm el banat.*	*nott.*
Hyperopisus Bebe.	*souwīa.*	*lamluāl.*
Gymnarchus Niloticus.	*wīr*	*riell.*
Heterotis Niloticus.	*nōk*	*leik.*
Hydrocyon (Forskalii : brevis).	*kaas.*	*joqlāg.*
Distichodus Niloticus.	*kheireisha.*	*fullum.*
Citharinus (Citharus : Latus).	*bidquoia.*	*liett.*
Labeo (Niloticus : Forskalii : horie).	*dabsa.*	*qwoi-alett.*
Varicorhinus bes. / Barbus Bynni etc. } several kinds.	*binna.*	*nyungleik.*
Barbus Loati.	*kārāri.*	*kōrqwaish.*
Clarias Anguillaris.	*gurmut.*	*raishar.*
Schilbe Uranoscopus.	*shilbaia.*	*ta-ān.*
Bagrus Bayad.	*bayāda.*	*lām.*
Auchenoglanis Occidentalis.	*gargur.*	*yiow.*
Malopterurus Electricus.	*barada.*	*dārnai-i.*
Tilapia (Zillii : Nilotica).	*bulta.*	*ruesz.*
Tetrodon Fahaka.	*tambeira.*	*būliāq.*
Heterobranchus Bidorsalis.	*surta.*	*shūr.*
Lates Niloticus.	*eigl.*	*shull.*

EDIBLE ROOTS, FRUITS AND GRASSES OF THE NUER COUNTRY.

Arabic name	Nuer.	Dinka.
None ?	*liaou.*	*aleit.*
None ?	*gau.*	*gau.*
Lubia el Ghazal.	*gnwor gnyaish.*	*aqwemror.*
None ?	*gniok.*	*gniok.*
Addar.	*wusz.*	*abeit.*
Rihan ?	*gniar.*	*agnier.*
None ?	*dik.*	*dik.*
Bambun.	*waar.*	*adigaak.*
	luweir.	*arroak.*
Suteip.	*kei (root).*	*kei (root).*

Arabic name	Nuer.	Dinka.
Suteip.	*yil (head).*	*goar (head).*
Gebbein.	*toloar.*	*atchitaak.*
Bamia.	*barar.*	*pabwong.*
Gurtom.		*kornoak.*
		kor.
None ?	*woar.*	*anyeir.*
None ?	*lung dartchin.*	*addub.*
	pool.	*abok ? apool.*
Basl el kilab.	*miak. gurbioak.*	*agurbioak.*
Ruz el khala.	*laap.*	*loab.*
None ?	*goak.*	*agoa.*
TREES.		
Nąbbak.	*bao.*	*lang.*
Higlig.	*tao.*	*tao.*
Aradeib.	*koatch.*	*shoaa.*
Gaddeim.	*powr.*	*apowr.*
Gemeiza.	*gnoap.*	*naghap.*
Samagh.	*loatch.*	*adok.*
Samagh talh.	*lor.*	*rett.*
Kakamot.	*neir.*	*ashwaydok.*
Kuk.	*teip.*	*teip.*

The roots of *liaou* are boiled like potatoes and in years of starvation the following seeds are eaten : *gau*, *wusz*, *woar*, *yel*, (N.B. Suteip is the ordinary waterlily, Nymphaea Lotus), *dik*. *Laap* is boiled with milk and is much appreciated, *goak* too is boiled with milk.

Children dig up and roast *waar* and *gniok*, *pool* and *lung dartching* are dug up and eaten fresh. *Gnwor* and *kei* are boiled. The Dinka eat *pabwong* : *toloar* is used as a medicine for cows' eyes and is apparently not eaten. *Luweir* I have not yet obtained sufficient information about, a remark that applies to *kornoak* (which has a seed rather like that of a sunflower) and *kor*. *Miaq* is reported to be eaten by some people but opinion seems divided on this point.

4. Food: Sacred.

Certain fruits, animals, fish and vegetables are taboo amongst the Nuer for reasons that will be given in a later section dealing with Totemism and Exogamy. In these cases not only will the Nuer refrain from eating the object of his veneration but he goes so far as to avoid desecrating it in any way.

Thus the Jekaing will not eat out of a new gourd through respect for the memory of their ancestor Kir: the large pumpkin (*koza* in Arabic and *busz* in Nuer) is not eaten at all by this division of the tribe as *busz* and Kir (or Keir in its original form) are regarded as belonging to the same family and, accordingly, held to be sacred. The men of the Jekaing are not even allowed to sow the gourd, a duty that falls upon the womenfolk; and, when the gourds begin to grow, the men avoid the place where it is planted, otherwise it will wither away.

Those related to, or descended from, twins do not eat any feathered creature, the reason ascribed being that it is a disgrace for a large man to eat so small a thing as a duck or a fowl. Others similarly refrain, possibly from an uncertainty as to their own ancestry. Children are said sometimes to trap and eat guinea-fowl, but this point requires corroboration.

Neither Shilluk, Dinka, Beir nor Nuer eat snakes with the exception of the python, which is devoured by certain sections of the Dinka and also the Beir generally.

None of the Nuer eat carnivora. They would in their own opinion, as soon think of devouring a dog. In the days of the Turkish Government a man called Bim Loing found a dead hyaena. Everyone in the party who were accompanying him were starving but Bim alone sampled the food and, after eating the liver in the evening, became mad during the night and died in the early morning. Abstinence from the flesh of carnivora is said to date from that episode though it is probably an older custom than this.

5. Ornamentation and Tattooing.

Almost any form of ornamentation, however bizarre, is welcomed by the Nuer. Typical amongst their various aids to beauty in the case of men is string after string of watery blue and white beads tied tightly round the middle. A three inch nail, or even dura stalk, or piece of stick fixed in the upper or lower lip at an angle of 45° from the face is a common adornment of the women (*).

Anklets take various forms: a dozen or so of inch long pieces of ambatch wood strung on a bit of grass, telegraph wire, a circle of giraffe hair or a piece of woven grass.

Spiked wristlets are common (†) and are employed to scratch a disobedient wife or clinch a friendly argument. (A cow hide rope is also used for the correction of a wife but a woman is not as a rule severely chastised unless

(*) cf. Driberg, The Lango p. 62.

(†) This can be seen on the wrist of the Nuer, Vol. VI. I. p. 58.

the husband has received very considerable provocation: some mutual friends are sure to intervene before any real injury is inflicted).

Ornaments are used for the hair, ears, neck, wrists, loins, ankles. Giraffe hair is much appreciated for this purpose but, as a general statement, it is true to say that there are few if any special fashions. Almost any form of ornamentation is employed, bits of ambatch wood, grass or the rind of a dura stalk, beads, wire, a thin strip of the skin of some animal, and so on.

Cicatrisation is done by experts. The design is first made in wood ashes and then each piece of skin is nipped and cut with a knife. Cold water is inserted in the cut every day until the eruption is fixed but nothing else is used to assist the inflamation. Keloids, however, are not uncommon and are illustrated on opposite page.

There are no tribal fashions for this cicatrisation which varies in individual cases. As a rule the excisions are made in groups of perhaps twenty five nodules, five horizontal and five perpendicular. These groups are continued across the belly in two or three rows or in a semicircular fashion round the breasts. They are also made on the back.

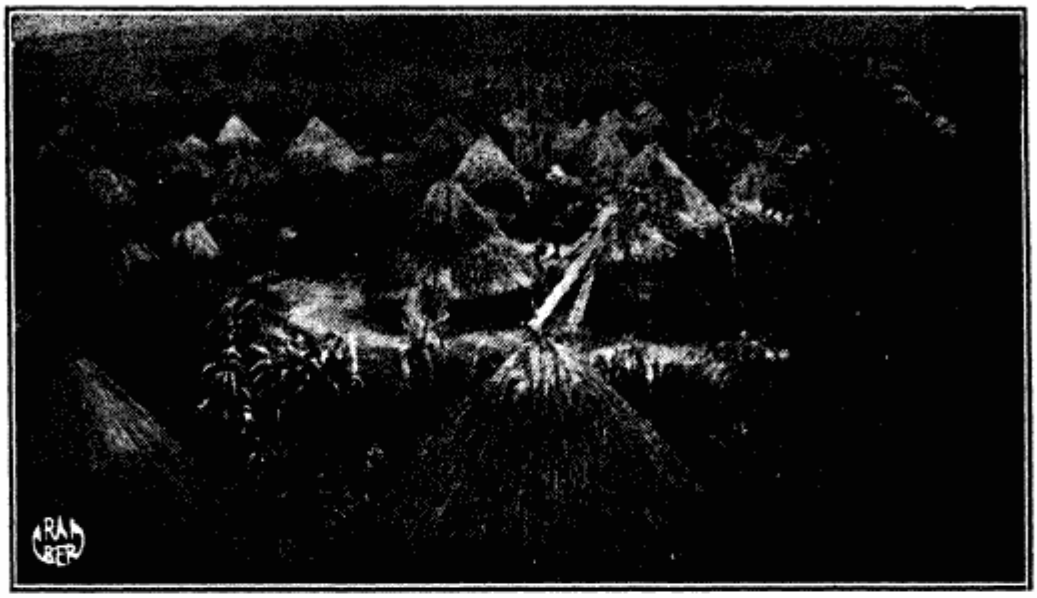
At the age of six or seven boys and girls have their six central teeth in the lower jaw removed, a custom that is practised also by the Ja-luo (*). A bit of iron such as a spearhead is inserted between the teeth which are then forced up by the roots. Anyone is permitted to perform this ceremony which is carried out in the privacy of the hut with no dancing or sacrifices to mark the occasion except in the case of twins when a small sheep or goat is sacrificed.

The object of this mutilation is said to be to distinguish a human being from the carnivora, e.g. dog, leopard, crocodile. It is a term of abuse to say to a Nuer "you have many teeth". The teeth are buried as soon as they have been extracted, a remark that applies to any case where human blood has been shed. The Nuer is in great fear of any part of the human body being devoured by some scavenging animal. The teeth need not be put in any special place but are usually buried close to where they happen to have been extracted.

This custom of removing the teeth is also practised amongst the Kavirondo (†) Dinka and Shilluk. In the case of the last named the royal family alone keep their teeth intact and, for this reason, some of the Shilluk explain the removal of their lower teeth as being due to a wish to show respect to the King and his relatives. Others maintain that these particular

(*) C.W. Hobley, Eastern Uganda (London. 1902) P. 20.

(†) See Frazer, The Golden Bough (London 1910) 4.192.



AN ANYUAK VILLAGE WITH DURA AND TOBACCO GROWING IN THE FOREGROUND.

Face page 134.



NUER CICATRISATION THAT HAS "TAKEN" TOO WELL.

Face page 134

teeth are most liable to decay and so must be removed, while others hold that if these teeth are not extracted the eyes will be deep set or become sore.

I am told by a dental surgeon that the six lower central teeth are the most liable to the initial ravages of pyorrhoea. Similarly an abscess in the upper eye tooth might affect the antrum and, in rare cases, the inflammation might extend to the eye socket and tend to diminished acuteness of vision and even blindness. The teeth, however, of Shilluk, Dinka and Nuer are for the most part exceedingly good so that the various theories put forward to account for the removal of these teeth are not at present very convincing.

6. Agriculture.

When the ground has been well watered men, women and children go out to the plot that is to be cultivated. The men have pointed sticks called *shop* (Arabic *seluka*), with which they make little holes in the ground; the women and children, coming behind, drop the grain into these holes (as do the Arabs) and cover it over with their feet. When the man becomes tired a woman takes his place. Rough hoeing is done with an iron *pur (melod* in Arabic) or, in some cases, if the cultivator has not the means with which to purchase a *pur*, with a stick.

This sharpened stick is called *duwot* and in origin is probably identical with that used by the Shilluk. When Okwa ceased to be King of the Shilluk country Nikawng and Duwot were rivals for the throne. Nikawng was defeated and compelled to emigrate. As he started to leave, Duwot threw a long sharpened stick after him as a symbol of death. The Shilluk have now adopted this stick for use in the planting of their crops.

Dura (millet) forms the staple product of the Nuer, although scraps of of tobacco are planted in the immediate vicinity of their houses. Here and there is a little cotton to supply some thread on which to string their beads. The Nuer have no ideas as to the rotation of crops but, when the ground is worn out—say after ten years continuous cropping—the people remove to a new site.

The Southern Cross, called in Nuer *Sheir Pizka*, is the cultivating star of the Nuer. When this rises near the dawn the people prepare to sow.

The cultivating period is divided into various stages. The first month is called *Jwak*, the second *duwott* and the third, when the rains are at their heaviest, *Kur Gnuott :* the month when the grain has formed but is not ready for cutting is called *Pai Yedni* and the month of harvest *Toarr.*

Each month, *pai* in Nuer, is divided into two, *Kang* when there is a moon, and *Musz* when there is no moon: one has sometimes to be careful in explaining to a Nuer who has to return in two months time that when one says two months one means four Nuer months (*).

The man cuts a primitive stick for digging up the ground in order to sow: this stick, which was referred to above as *shop*, must be kept by his wife in the house.

Each hut cultivates for its own inmates, but if one man finishes before another he usually goes to assist his relatives. Anyone who helps in this way is entitled to a meal in the evening but otherwise receives no remuneration.

When the grain is ripe for cutting, large parties of as many as twenty or more collect for mutual help. These are given porridge, merissa, a kind of butter and a sheep. If the number of assistants totals about fifty a bull or barren cow is slaughtered, the same sort of custom apparently holding good among the Dinka and Shilluk.

A scarecrow of grass, roughly shaped like a man, frequently adorned with an old jar, is placed in the crops in order to keep away marauding antelopes. A broken black jar, or blackened stick, is also erected there to avoid the Evil Eye. If the Evil Eye, called *pezz* in Nuer, falls on these blackened objects no harm can come to the crops, but nigrescence in whatever article is exposed is essential.

If the rains are late, or fall in insufficient quantities, a message is despatched to one of the Garweir tribe who is renowned for his rainmaking virtues. As the ancestor of the Garweir fell from Heaven in a storm of rain, and his descendants in years gone by were regarded as producing the best results, a member of this tribe is always called in if possible. The Jikull, whose ancestor also came from the skies during a storm, are not regarded with the same favour. At the time of asking for rain, which may take place at any time either by day or by night the ancestor of the Garweir is appealed to. A sacrificial bull is produced and water poured on its back. The rain-maker produces a sprig of young *Inderab* (†) wood, about one or two feet in length, bends it over and ties the wood in a new gourd filled with water. The two ends are spliced or tied together and a prayer is uttered "*Kosz gnoakka az nial dam:* oh spirit of the *inderab* tree, rain, may it fall" There is no

(*) The Shilluk also recognise the lunar month, which they divide into two, the light of the moon and the dark of the moon.

(†) *Cordia Abyssinica.*

definite agreement come to between the rainmaker and his clients but if rain falls in answer to his activities it is customary to give a bull to the medicine man who sacrifices it and divides the flesh with the people.

This simple and inexpensive method appealed to the indolent avarice of others among the Nuer with the result that there are now many rainmakers amongst them, though those of the Garweir tribe are supposed to produce the best results. Almost any witchdoctor of influence or standing sets up in the cloud-compelling business.

A sacrifice of a bull, or failing that of a sheep or goat, was usually made at one time to the sacred *aradeib* tree of Lit at the beginning and end of the rains, the tree being thus addressed "*Manddoong yungda mo kanni:* Manddoong this bull it is yours take it." This custom now appears to have fallen into disuse.

As a general rule the common people do not make any sacrifice at the commencement of the rainy season, a privilege that is reserved for the more important witch doctors such as Gwek (a frog) the chief medicine man of the Lau Nuer. A prayer that may be used on this occasion is "*Kott manni yung moisch koh bell:* oh spirit take this bull and give us corn." The elders then cut the bull up after it has been sacrificed, the several joints being all boiled together. When ready the elders draw near and partake of the feast. If a good crop results each of the cultivators rewards the witchdoctor with a portion of it.

If the rains are excessive the witch-doctor puts a stone in the fire in order to stop them.

7. Hunting.

During the dry season the Nuer frequently collect in large numbers for the chase, their methods of hunting varying with the nature of the quarry. Thus wild cats—*thaang*—of which the skin is highly prized as a loincloth, are driven out of the grass by dogs and despatched with clubs, but giraffe and elephant are snared or trapped along the places where they go to drink. Elephant traps consist of a series of deep holes, some six or seven feet across and ten feet in depth, the bottom being about four feet in diameter. Sharpened stumps of wood are sometimes also placed in them in order to impale the wretched animal. The holes are covered with brushwood and grass, the position of the hole being disguised as far as possible. Periodic visits of inspection are made to see if any unfortunate creature—cows and young elephants are the chief victims—has fallen in. Giraffe traps, of which an

illustration was given above, consist of a circular frame of plaited ropes with concentric spikes nearly meeting in the middle. Here a small gap is left into which the giraffe puts its foot. To the trap is attached a slip knot and a long rope with a heavy log at the end. When the giraffe puts its foot into the gap the spikes gradually close on the leg and the giraffe is prevented from limping very far owing to the log tied to the trap. The actual trap measures about two feet across and the thongs binding the spikes to the circumference are smeared with hyaena dung in order to prevent that voracious brute from eating the straps.

Certain big game, such as the roan or giraffe, are also hunted on foot. A large crowd of natives collect and form a gradually closing semicircle, leaving a gap where the fleetest of foot are hidden. These specially selected runners are all well known and are summoned to a central spot from where it is proposed to undertake the hunt. The game is worked towards the gap which has been left in the circle and the young men then run the quarry down and despatch it with spears. The first spear takes the buttocks and a hind leg. The second spear takes the part just above the buttocks but below the ribs, and a hind leg. The rest of the meat is divided amongst the huntsmen.

As rifles and ammunition, on which the Nuer set their hearts, can be exchanged for ivory in Abyssinia elephant hunts are not infrequently organised in which about fifty sportsmen take part. The hunting party is divided into three groups the first of which comprises the ten swiftest runners available while the other two groups contain about twenty huntsmen each. When a herd has been located one of the larger groups stops about 600 yards away: the second proceeds another 300 yards and halts while the ten fleetest runners approach the elephant they propose killing. These hurl their spears into the unfortunate beast and attract its attention. They then allow it to chase them on to the nearest of the two waiting groups who in turn try and spear the animal in the head. All the huntsmen then retire upon the third party who are expected to give the *coup de grâce*

Certain privileges attach to the sportsmen. Thus the first spear is entitled to the off tusk and the second spear to the near tusk. In return the first spear usually makes a present to the local witch doctor (who is supposed to have brought him success in the chase) of a small bull. If any dowry is still unpaid the balance is made up out of the proceeds of the ivory, but if the dowry has been paid in full the uncle of the succesful sportsman takes one cow calf from the sale of the ivory and any balance left over goes to the father.

For lesser game such as gazelle, waterbuck or cob, dogs are usually employed. At one time the Nuer encircled the game with fire, leaving an opening in the ring of flames towards which the game rushed on to the spears of the huntsmen. If the game escaped it was then coursed down by dogs. These dogs are specially cared for by the Nuer. A cow is often allotted to a favourite dog from which it may drink as much milk as is required to keep it fit and strong. If a bitch is about to have a litter a kennel of mud is made for her, about three feet in height with a small entrance hole: the general shape of the kennel is rather like that of an Indian wigwam. These dogs have special names given to them, as for instance *qweiyun*, a dog with a white forehead and yellowish body.

Kongapin was a name given to a dog under the following circumstances. A man, having some surplus merissa *(kong)* buried it in the ground *(pin)*. The merissa was however discovered and the man's niggardly behaviour, in not sharing the merissa with his friends, was rewarded by his having a puppy named after him.

Before starting out on a hunting expedition the party usually repairs to a witchdoctor who produces a hollow gourd and a mussel shell. The latter is thrown at the gourd and the success or failure of the expedition is determined by the direction in which the broken fragments of the mussel shell fall. Otherwise the Nuer do not seem to have any superstitions concerning the chase. It is not, for instance, unlucky to encounter soldier ants when on the warpath, or when proceeding on a journey or a hunting expedition.

Children are said to trap guinea fowl from time to time and eat them but neither the men nor the women, as has been seen above, partake of their flesh. (*)

The diet, however, on which the Nuer most rely is fish which is so abundant throughout their country that they have never troubled to develop any really efficient methods for capturing them. Thus they neither net them nor catch them on a rod and line. They either spear them with a broad spear *(kokab* in Arabic and *bisz* in Nuer), catch them in baskets not unlike lobster pots, impale them on a thin spear by jabbing in the reeds along the banks of a river or pool, or harpoon them with a *koor*.

(*) In this connection it may be interesting to record a story told me by the Burun as to the method they adopt for catching the guinea fowl. Along the path where the bird goes down to drink there is placed a gourd of water into which has been poured some juice of the *salala* climber, (*Vitis quadrangularis*, called by the Burun *munda*). The guinea fowl drink this preparation which sets up a violent tingling in the throat. This causes the guinea fowl to scratch its throat so continuously as either to kill the bird or to render it so weak that it can be captured with ease.

This *koor*, or harpoon consists of a stout but smallish rod about eight feet long and shod with iron. On the head is placed a detachable iron tip—about four inches in length with a barb at the end. The harpoon is hurled into the water and, if the cast is successful, the barbed tip is released from the rod and remains embedded in the fish. The fish then runs at the end of some ten yards of thick string. The ends of this string are wrapped round a stick about two feet long held in the fisherman's left hand and uncoils as the fish endeavours to escape. The Nile fish, however, as a rule shows little or no fight and the fisherman finds no difficulty in hauling in even a heavy fish.

Towards the end of the winter, as the pools and streams dry up, organised fishing parties of a hundred persons or more take place. In these some of the men line the edges of the watercourse or lake that has to be driven and stab with spears into the reeds. By this means the fish are forced into open water where other men transfix them with harpoons. As the water becomes cloudy with their efforts the womenfolk come behind with baskets of plaited reeds about twenty four inches in diameter and the same in height. These baskets have a hole at the top through which to insert the hand and are open at the bottom. They are conical in shape and rather reminiscent of a lobster pot and are jabbed indiscriminately on the bottom of the stream. When a fish is caught it is taken out by the hole at the top.

No special rites mark the commencement or close of the fishing in which the whole settlement may, and usually does, take part. If, however, the water is suspected of containing crocodiles a special man, of the crocodile totemic clan, is sent for. A sheep is presented to him and he proceeds to the scene of the fishing where he mumbles some special incantations in order to appease the crocodiles. He then offers the sheep to the crocodiles and as soon as it is devoured the fishing party are supposed to be able to enter the water. (*)

8. Birth.

When a woman is pregnant she goes to stay with her female relatives and only the midwife and mother, or other near female relation, is present at the actual parturition. One or other of these has to cut the umbilical cord.

If a child is still-born a sheep is slaughtered. A baby born with bandy legs is looked upon as akin to the monitor lizard: a sheep is accordingly sacrificed and prayers made to the lizard.

(*) See C.14. The same custom is practised by the Shilluk.

The legs of a fish-eagle tied round the neck of a fisherman are expected to bring him good luck.

The father is not allowed to make any enquiries concerning the sex of his newly-arrived offspring, but the wife's relatives arrange that if it is a boy a cow with a bull calf is taken to the wife's house and if a girl a cow with a heifer calf. The husband then draws his own conclusions as to the sex of the child. From the cow that is brought to the house the baby must have its first milk before being returned to its mother.

Women seem to recover from child-birth with extraordinary rapidity. I have seen a woman walk a long way with a two day's old child for vaccination, and two others do the same although they had given birth to twins within fifteen days.

A strange child is adopted by the finder and, if more than one person happen to come across a foundling, they agree among themselves as to who is to bring it up. The child is treated as if he were the own flesh and blood of the foster parent and it is said that there is usually no dispute over its allocation.

The wife remains in her father's house until her first born is about two years of age when she joins her husband in his village. Even if the wife lives a distance of as many as three days journey away this rule of separating the husband and wife holds good. (*)

On the wedding night the bride does not join her husband, and no intercourse takes place until the night after or, in some cases, not until later if the dowry has not been paid in full. A day should always elapse after the payment of the dowry before the consummation of the wedding rites. Women during their monthly periods do not drink milk, nor for a space of one month after giving birth : during this time they live on flesh and meat. Were they to drink milk the cow that supplied it would be expected to die.

A rather similar taboo is to be noted amongst the Shilluk. Though a woman may at all times drink the milk of goats and sheep she may not drink cow's milk from the time that her monthly flow commences until she becomes pregnant.

After the baby has been weaned and the menses recommence the woman must again give up the drinking of cow's milk. After she has passed her change of life she may drink cow's milk.

The Shilluk theory is that every woman, liable to menses, is dangerous to the herd and the cows will die.

(*) See later C. 10.

A child is named when it is about a week old by the father if he is near at hand but otherwise by the mother. Names are usually given to commemorate some event that occurs about the time and nicknames in addition are not uncommon. Thus a man called *kor yom* (i.e. the grasshopper) had also the soubriquet of *kutt*—the lean or dry one.

The same system of nomenclature is to be found also among the Dinka. Thus *dyu*, a funeral, was so-called because a burial took place about the time that the child was born.

Duott is the name given to a posthumous child.

Tut, the Government translator, was named "the stud-bull" for the following reason. As his mother had twice given birth to girls the father, who desired a son, took a stud-bull and sacrificed it with this appeal "I am going to kill you and if my wife bears me a son I will call him after you". When a son was born shortly afterwards he was given the name of Tut which means in the Nuer language a herd-bull. This sacrifice appears to have been simply an offering to Kosz in order that the father might obtain his heart's desire, and not with any idea of the spirit of the bull being transferred to the offspring. On this occasion the God of the Dinka, as the father was a Dinka, was appealed to: "*Kot kanni tut scha kammi aschiekda diez doal :* Oh spirit, take this bull I give you; my wife may she give birth to a boy".

Names are not changed if bad luck dogs a man's footsteps.

Twins, called *shuaq (Ċuaq)* in the Nuer language, are regarded as exceptionally lucky and a special mark of divine favour. The first is always called either Busz and the second Dooasz, or Bishok and Dit (which means a bird). After being weaned they are cared for by the father and always eat together until they grow up when they are married on the same day. They consummate their marriage at the same time and then pass out of their father's control. If one of the twins dies before being married it is regarded as likely to bring evil upon the survivor. The latter, accordingly, marries in due course two wives on the same day, one for himself and one for his departed brother. Similarly, if one of the twins dies after marriage the survivor marries his deceased brother's wife after a period of about a month has elapsed. Bol is the name given to the firstborn of either sex after the mother has given birth to twins.

So close is the connection between twins and a bird that a Nuer, who had a twin brother, on seeing a bird may address it thus: "*Dit abbi an Ċuaq, gin Ċuaq*: Oh bird I am a twin, you are a twin".

Twins are similarly welcomed by the Shilluk who prefer them to be of opposite sexes. If both the twins are boys it is feared that one of the twins or the father will die. If both the twins are girls one of them or the mother is expected to die. The Shilluk as the Nuer of naming twins have the same sort of system. The first born is named Nia Juok (child of God) or Nior while the second is practically always called Ashan (the one who follows). A little variety is however occasionally introduced and one of the twins may be named after a king, Deng, Dok or Nikawng.

The next child that a woman bears after she has given birth to twins is called Bol (the one they slipped away from). This is followed by Ashwil—a kind of hawk—and Nia Tuk which are the clods of earth placed under a cooking vessel to keep it out of the fire.

The Shilluk, in common with the Nuer, make a sacrifice when twins are born. In this case a sheep is slaughtered for each of the children and the skin is used as a covering for the infant. A cloth should also be purchased for them. When the twins are of marriageable age if both are girls they are married on the same day. If both are boys one cannot get married until there are sufficient cows for both of them to be married on the same day. If the twins are of opposite sexes the boy is married with the proceeds of his sister's dowry and they too must be married simultaneously. In all these cases a sheep is offered up for each of the twins on their wedding day.

It will thus be seen in this, as in so many other customs, how great is the similarity between the Nuer and Shilluk.

Pregnancy is attributed to Kosz, with the assistance of the husband. During this time the woman will not sleep much in order that the unborn child may grow up fat and strong. She also evinces a desire for certain foods on varying occasions though normally she will partake of the daily food provided.

If a pregnant woman sees a fish eagle catch a fish neither she nor her husband may eat of this particular kind of fish until after the baby is born: otherwise the child will have a face like that of a fish eagle. The Shilluk also hold the fish eagle in superstitious regard: for, although they often obtain the fish that the eagle has caught by scaring the bird and causing it to drop the fish, neither a pregnant woman nor her husband may eat of a fish caught in this way. Were they to do so the offspring would only be able to crawl and never to walk upright. It is unlucky if a snake enters the hut of a pregnant woman.

The umbilical cord is buried just inside the threshold of the house, I omitted to ask on which side of the doorway. The placenta is interred behind the house. In both these instances the substance in question is regarded as part of a human being and, therefore, to be carefully preserved from the ravages of dogs, hyaenas etc. (*)

An interesting illustration of the erroneous association of ideas not uncommon amongst a primitive people is afforded by the Nuer theory to account for the prevalence of frogs at the commencement of the rains. As the frogs make their appearance as soon as the rains commence the Nuer have jumped to the conclusion that all frogs are of the female sex and in some mysterious manner are impregnated by the rain.

If a woman dies before giving birth to a child all the dowry has to be returned to the husband's family. The Qwoar Mo-ong has the unwelcome task of collecting this cattle from the unwilling relatives of the deceased.

The object of marriage, in fact, appears to be to obtain children either to tend the family cattle, if the offspring are boys, or, if they are girls, to enrich the family with more cattle on their marriage. Love, as it is known and appreciated among more civilised communities, plays a minor part in the Nuer scheme of things, though a Nuer at the same time does choose a wife for himself. Women are really regarded as an instrument by which the family herd of cattle may be increased or benefitted.

If a man seduces a girl and marries her sister without paying the dowry the offspring are expected to die. If he seduces another man's wife he may obtain the resulting offspring after it is weaned provided he pays the aggrieved husband two bulls (†).

Shilluk custom differs slightly from that of the Nuer practice of separating husband and wife. A Shilluk woman lives with her husband until some two or three months before she is expected to give birth. She then goes to her paternal home for confinement but returns to her husband in two weeks or so to look after him and manage his domestic affairs for him. She need not

(*) For the burial of twins see later C. II.
The Shilluk bury the umbilical cord just outside the house to the right of the door. The placenta is buried in the enclosure near the house. It is supposed to be interred near the little shelter of sticks and cornstalks which are erected as a screen in which to give the mother a bath. If a dog should try and dig up the placenta it would be killed as the people would think it was trying to become a *Jal yat* an evil medicine man.

(†) A custom of the Garweir: the two bulls are presumably over and above the adultery fine but I omitted to ask whether this was so or not.

however go back to him quite so soon if he has another wife who can prepare his food for him and supervise the household.

Before she takes up her active duties again she must give the house another coating of mud. Others may get the mud ready for her, but the actual daubing must be done by her own hands. After childbirth and until this daubing has been done the woman must take her food out of a special dish which she must clean at the same time that she covers the house with mud. Her hands are then said to be clean.

As with the Nuer the Shilluk women cohabit with their husbands during the first six months of pregnancy. They are too expected to abstain from conjugal relations until the child is weaned. This rule as will be seen later is not however very strictly adhered to, either by the Nuer or the Shilluk.

9. Initiation Ceremony and Age-classes.

All boys between the ages of ten and twenty, and preferably between the fifteenth and eighteenth year, have six horizontal incisions made across their forehead, extending from ear to ear. The making of the linear stripes takes place periodically and so it sometimes happens that a boy is too young to take part in the ceremony and has to wait until he is past the ordinary age for initiation. The ceremony is usually held in the winter or at the beginning of the rains when the weather is cool and commences with the new moon. Previous to the initiation no special rites are performed but, on the day itself, the boys, who are collected *shieng* by *shieng*, have their heads shaved. As a rule the oldest surviving member of the senior existing age-class gives the order for the ceremony to be held and, by way of example, initiates the first boy himself, who should be either his own son or a near relative. This man must be a Qwoar Moong, or chief of the leopard skin, but after the first cicatrisation has been completed the Wud Oak in each division of the Nuer is responsible for the sectional arrangements. (*)

Special doctors then make the incisions, the name for the operation being *gar*. Some two hundred boys can be initiated in a day, each boy having the operation begun and completed on the same day. The doctors, move from village to village when the boys are collected. They receive no special remuneration, the office itself being regarded as one of great honour.

No special medicines are given to the boys or any preparation beyond the shaving of the head, but, as the operation not infrequently has a fatal termination, it is customary to make a public sacrifice, each father producing a bull—

(*) See above, Part B.

as a kind of scapegoat—saying "Oh Spirit take this bull and the cutting may it not prove bad or dangerous."

Each boy then makes a little hole in the ground and lies down with the back of his head in the hole. The blood from the incisions passes round the cuts and drops into the hole. The wounds are washed by means of a feather of any kind of bird dipped in cold water. If the knife cuts too deeply and arterial bleeding sets in the fur of a wild cat's skin is applied to the wound in the same way that a cobweb was employed at one time in England, in order to stop the effusion of blood.

During the month following the operation the boys are too ill to do anything but rest in seclusion and no doctor visits them.

They are segregated in a special hut a little distance from the village. They eat no solid food and live chiefly on porridge with a little minced meat, and copious draughts of milk. Each boy has a skin of a goat, sheep, or bull to keep away the sun and a fan of feathers with which to whisk away the flies. He does not leave the hut except to perform the ordinary processes of nature.

The object of the cicatrisation is said to be to make the initiates unafraid of the spear and the boys are expected to endure what must be very considerable pain without a murmur. If any of them cries out or makes any complaint his fellows all laugh at him. Each section of the tribe (Lau, Jekaing etc.) has its own dance in honour of the occasion but no special steps distinguish it from the ordinary dance held in honour of a marriage or other festive occasion. Much feasting, accompanied by copious draughts of native beer marks the recovery of the boys from their unpleasant ordeal, but relatives of those who have succumbed from loss of blood or shock take no part in these festivities. After the wounds have been completely healed the boys approach their parents and say they wish to go into camp. A group of about a hundred youths is then formed and a bull is provided for every pair of them. With these cattle the boys go away into the wilds and gorge themselves with meat in order to develop their strength. They settle down in a spot about an hours' distance from the village and are divided up into classes of about a dozen who live in specially provided huts. A very young boy or very old woman prepares their food for them and, during the period of this segregation, they may not be visited by young women or girls. Various feats of strength and endurance—notably in running—are indulged in while the youths are in the camp and, if one of them can overtake a giraffe and spear it he is regarded as having passed the supreme test of manhood: he is then marked down for a leading

part in future hunts. When the food has been consumed the youths all return to the village where the father or, if he be dead, a near male relative gives the young man a large and a small spear and a share in the family cattle. He is now regarded as a man and may join the warriors when they go out to fight. He is soon allotted a wife and the father gives him three cows and a bull with which to start a herd of his own.

A man may not marry the daughter of another who has been initiated at the same time as himself as all members of one *rek* are regarded as blood brothers.

They must help each other in every way, by affording sanctuary from an enemy or by assistance with the marriage dowry.

These age classes are called *rik* or *rek* in Nuer and vary in the different sections. Thus those of the Bull division are named as follows :—

Riār, heads of dura. These heads which are hung up in the hut in preparation for the rains were eaten prematurely at the time of the cicatrisation.

Juuk, an illness, apparently chicken pox, which occurred during the year.

Gnuaish, porridge and minced meat which were mixed together and apparently formed the staple diet of those who were initiated.

Keir nyung. Wud oak searched for a crocodile in the water with a spear until he found and killed it.

Barwaish. The cicatrisation took very badly with the result that no one could eat meat without starting the flow of blood again. In consequence the initiates were given a kind of porridge which made all the small children cry in envy.

Liel Kell, the latter word meaning a cough accompanied by diarrhoea.

Kazz, sparrows which ate the crops.

Kott Koll. Many fat cattle died. The people put the fat upon the fire and drank it when it was melted.

Tharpi. Exceptionally heavy rains made the country very uncomfortable for those who wished to ease nature.

Liel Kang, *Liel*=fundamentum, Kang the name of the Wud Oak who desired to have the cicatrisation called after him.

Liel Tchuak, fundamentum mulieris.

All members of the above age classes are dead.

Liel nyung. Fundamentum crocodilis.

Roap (of which class Peich, aged about 70 is a member).

A year of famine in which the people produced some fish and the seeds of the waterlily which they boiled in a jar. The bobbing of the lid up and down made a noise like rub rub.

Wung dell. Some small children found a dead goat and were in such a hurry to eat it that they roasted it in its skin.

Nyung, the year of the locusts (apparently 1917) which ate the dura.

Qwi, 1919, a black bull with white face which was sacrificed by Wud Oak before the initiation ceremony was commenced.

The age-classes that I have been able to trace of the Zeraf Nuer are as follows:—

B(w)oin, fish hook. The initiates this year held fish hooks in their hands and probed about in the water for fish.

Tunnyagaing, the year of rape.

Shod bur, the hornless bull of white, apparently sacrificed before the initiation.

Gunaish: a mixture of fish and porridge eaten by the initiates.

Gell Loitch: the heart of the slaughtered bull contained little or no liquid when put into a jar for boiling.

Tchet Tchuwoak. This class went on a foray and were reduced to such straits that they were compelled to eat the scavenging vulture.

Keir nyung: this class killed a crocodile in a pool where it had been devouring many of the tribe.

Boi Loitch (of which Wur Wunyang is a representative). The year of cattle plague when the hearts of the dead bulls were found to contain white fat.

Makeir (Bol Kong, Razz Dwol and Dwai Min belong to this class). The cicatrisator killed a spotted red and white bull which is called Makeir in Nuer.

Lajak.

Lao.

Dang Gun. The people of *gwon*, the guinea fowl. This year some guinea fowl were snared in a running noose and eaten.

Tchab(w)oi (also called *Luaish*). The former means grasshoppers which were used as a bait for fishing while the latter denotes gum which the people were reduced to eating through hunger.

Lid Gaish, the name of Wud Oak.

Karam, initiated in 1917. It is said to be the Arabic *harami* a thief. The initiates were eating porridge which so annoyed the little children that they raided the jars containing it and upset them in their hurry to obtain them.

The following list of the Jekaing Nuer age classes is, I think, incomplete.

Tut, the herd bull.

Bōi Loitch. The bull which was sacrificed had a large white fat heart.

Ruoabni, from rub rub, the noise made by the boiling of a kettle.

Wung Dell, the burning of the goat in its skin;

Kedth, the name of a Dinka section attacked this year.

Wuoani, dukhn, the year 1904 when the Nuer were starving and the Governor brought them dukhn to eat.

Karam, said to be either the Arabic *karāma*, a sacrifice, or *harami* because this class were notorious thieves.

Shoad Nyallyat, called after a woman.

Fil Nuoak.

The Garweir, Lak and Tiang sections are all included under the Zeraf titles while Lau and the Jekaing have the same classes. The initiation ceremony should in theory be held about once every fifteen years and this may have been the rule when the tribe was less numerous than it is at the present moment. Nowadays the boys are initiated when there are sufficient of them to make it worth while. It is interesting to note that the cicatrisation, which used to be universal amongst the Dinka, is tending to disappear among the Northern Dinka in the Upper Nile Province though still practised among those to the south.

The Shilluk boys similarly undergo an initiation ceremony when they are of an age to "enter the drum", that is, participate in the war dance. When there are sufficient boys ready for the operation they are taken to the river's edge. A lover holds her young man's head over a small hole in the ground while the cicatrisation proceeds. Any young girls who wish may be present at the ceremony in order to encourage the initiates to bear the pain without flinching. When the cutting of the forehead is over the young man is led by his lover to the river where his wounds are washed.

The boys initiated in the same year form an age-class which is usually named after some animal that is supposed to be typical of the character of the class. Thus *Nyakwait*, the leopard class, was always attacking its neighbours, unlike the lion class, *Nyakor*. These persons were supposed to be peaceful and law-abiding as the lion, but, like the king of beasts, were swift to retaliate when annoyed or attacked.

Nyalit, the monkey class were so-called because the young men that year were of somewhat inferior physique while *Nyawir*, the giraffe class, ran like the timid giraffe when danger threatened. *Nyalietch*, on the other hand, the elephant class, were strong and stout of heart.

As is the custom of the Nuer each Shilluk age-class forms a mess of its own and eats apart from the other members of the village.

After initiation the Shilluk boys, like the Dinka, receive from their fathers a paternal bull and two cows with their calves. If the father is too poor to supply a bull a near relative must do so. The bull has a large bell suspended from its neck and some hairs from a buffalo's tail are made into a tassel and fastened to the horns. The bull is rubbed down with ashes by the owner and generally regarded with much esteem and affection. The bull becomes the friend and guardian of the young man who dances and jumps about before it: he pretends to fight with it and sings to it, for instance, "I am Akol, the son of Okong, my bull is named Kalaiti: I am a great man, let no one dare touch me. I am a rich man, I own many cows." Unless a man has such a paternal bull his wife will not go to join him in his house.

Like the Nuer too the Shilluk and Dinka both have double names, their birth name and their manhood or bull name. Thus Okong Kalaiti represents the name Okong given soon after birth and Kalaiti the name of the paternal bull. Okong, which means "burial to-morrow", was bestowed for the reason that all Okong's brothers and sisters had died soon after birth: his mother remarked that she expected the same unhappy ending would be the fate of her latest born and so gave him the name of Okong.

The Shilluk and Dinka, as the Nuer, have a vast number of names by which to distinguish their various cattle. Thus, with the Dinka, *Marial* is a white bull with a black rump, black head and a black stripe in the middle of the belly. *Nijoak* is the name given by the Shilluk to a white bull with a black belly.

This initiation ceremony of the Shilluk is fast tending to disappear, much to the regret of the older generation. Nowadays if a young man or boy wishes to take part in a dance he applies for permission to do so from one of his elders. He is given a string of beads and the pelt of a cheetah or wild cat. Once he has joined the dance he may be killed in a feud and, as a matter of fact, there have been instances of boys killed in recent years owing to this.

10. Marriage.

Soon after the initiation ceremony has been completed and the youth has arrived at manhood he is instructed by his father to look for a wife. The young man dresses his hair, puts two ivory bracelets on his upper arm, wire on the lower, and, with such other adventitious aids to beauty as are supplied by fancy waistcoats and coloured socks in a more civilised community, he makes a tour of inspection of the local belles.

When he has found a lady after his own heart he proposes matrimony and discusses the question with the girl and her young female friends. If an agreement is come to the man returns to his father and tells him that he has found a prospective wife, who must not however be even distantly related to him.

The father makes enquiries about the girl and her relatives, whether the girl's parents are quarrelsome or talkative, two idiosyncrasies that are regarded as a complete barrier to matrimony, and in particular whether she may not be even remotely connected by blood with the son. If these enquiries prove satisfactory a meeting is arranged between the parents of the young man and the girl to take place some seven days ahead.

The father and the son supported by some male relatives go to the village of the girl's father where the girl's female friends have been warned to collect grain and beer for the visitors. The respective parties sit down on mats a little distance from one another and a *qwoar yika*, or chief of the mats, who is a kind of arbitrator or assessor assumes control of the proceedings.

This office, which corresponds in some ways to that of a Cadi, is hereditary, and amongst the Nuer there are several of them who are always called in on these occasions. He is as a rule chosen by the parents of the prospective bride and is responsible for seeing that sufficient mats are provided as well as tobacco and charcoal for the contracting parties.

As soon as the assembly has been convened and all the pipes are alight the discussion of the marriage portion commences. The uncles of the man and the girl bear the brunt of the conversation, each trying to make the best bargain he can for the nephew and niece respectively.

When an agreement has been finally reached, possibly through the more or less disinterested interposition of the Chief of the Mats, the father of the girl produces a bull. Or, if the father be dead, this duty devolves upon the girl's uncle, or failing him a brother.

A dance is then held, drums are beaten and, after a date has been fixed for the payment of the dowry, the parties separate to their respective villages.

The prospective bridegroom, however, may not take any part in these festivities. On the contrary he is expected to fast for twenty four hours. He then sets about procuring beads, brass wire, rings of various sorts, and the skin of a male or female goat—that of a sheep not being considered so good.

Some fifteen days later the bridegroom goes to the mother of the girl and demands his wife. If the dowry has been paid in full—or at any rate as much of it as has been agreed upon—the man is told to return on a fixed date in order that the marriage may be completed.

A bull is then sacrificed, either the father, uncle or brother in the order named supplying the animal. Merissa is provided and feasting and dancing occupy the rest of the day. The girl's young female friends, who correspond in some ways to bridesmaids, are responsible for seeing that sufficient merissa is ready for the guests. These bridesmaids, as a rule, consist of all the unmarried girls in the village. When the day's festivities are over the bridegroom, newly shaved and with all his hair carefully removed, and escorted by his friends leave the bride who has had a special hut built for her near her father's home. The girl is escorted back to her father's house by her bridesmaids each of whom carries some of the sacrificial meat.

On the following day the bride, who is tricked out with the various presents that have been given her by her husband, goes to his village, accompanied by her girl friends. The father of the bridegroom provides meat for them and beer and milk for the bride. The bridesmaids remain in a special hut near that of the bridegroom, eating meat and drinking merissa while the marriage is consummated. Next day they return home gorged with food and carrying with them any meat that has been left over from the feast, and take the bride to her father's village. Here she has to reside until she has given birth to her first child. The bride herself is not allowed to partake of the meat that her bridesmaids have brought back with them.

The marriage rites are never consummated on the wedding night for the reason that the bride is tired from seeing that her bridesmaids keep the company plied with beer, while the bridegroom himself is expected to be so drunk as to be an undesireable acquaintance.

Until the first child is born the bride and bridegroom live in separate villages. If the girl has no one of any sort with whom to live and who will supply her with milk she may as an exceptional case go and join her husband though such a proceeding is regarded as most irregular. If, however, she has female relatives she should remain with them for as long a period as three years.

During this time if the husband wishes to see his wife he must make a special journey for the purpose. After the expiration of the period of separation the respective fathers each supply a goat to be eaten and the bride joins her husband in his village.

Until this period has elapsed, and often until long afterwards, the husband is not allowed to eat with his wife's parents nor she with his: nor may any of these see the newly married couple eat. A special arrangement may, however, be made if necessary by which the husband may purchase food from his father-in-law.

If a married man wishes to interview his father-in-law or mother-in-law he must send a message to advise of his visit. On his arrival the mother-in-law wears the skin of a sheep or, failing that, some sort of covering, while the man sits down on a skin after putting a cheetah's pelt over his lap. The father-in-law, similarly, should try and borrow a cheetah's skin though if he cannot do so any kind of skin will suffice provided it covers his person. The covering should extend from his breast and be effective,.

If the husband meets either of his wife's parents on the road he must at once cover his nakedness, or, if he has nothing with him, he must leave the path at once.

The same rules apply to the wife and are to be found also amongst the Shilluk who must make way for the mother-in-law if encountered on a road.

The explanation for these regulations is quite simple and consists merely in a feeling of modesty that has arisen on account of the intimate relations that have been established between two members of the respective families.

This avoidance of relatives is common to other Nilotic tribes. Thus among the Lango (*) "The bride's mother is regarded with extreme reverence . . . . . and her son-in-law may neither see her nor speak with her . . . This avoidance by a man of his mother-in-law and the reverence paid to her is said by the Lango to be due to the idea that it would be unseemly for a woman to see the nakedness of a man who has had sexual relations with her daughter. This idea is natural enough and is supported by the custom of the Jaluo; among whom a man visiting his mother-in-law must wear a small skin apron suspended from his waist."

No intercourse is allowed after the sixth month of pregnancy, nor for a period of two years afterwards, as any child born of such union is expected to die. This latter rule however, is more hallowed in the breach than in the

(*) Driberg, op. cit. p. 159.

observance, though, theoretically, disgrace attaches to the husband who does not pay any regard to it.

The number of wives that a man may have is only limited by the number of cattle that he owns. Diu Machar, for instance, is supposed to own over a hundred wives.

When a man dies the wife and her cattle are taken over by the brother of the deceased. If there is no brother then the son or, failing one, a near relation. The cattle is thus always kept in the family. If a son takes over all his father's wives he may have intercourse with any of them except his own mother.

The dowry varies in different cases according to the wealth of the respective parties. The average today is somewhere about thirteen to fifteen, a number that in recent years has been tending to diminish owing to the ravages of cattle plague. Some ten or a dozen years ago it is said that forty head of cattle was not an unusual sum to pay as a dowry.

This dowry is divided amongst the relatives of the bride in the following proportions:

The paternal uncle takes one bull and one cow.

The maternal uncle takes one cow.

The paternal aunt takes one cow.

The maternal aunt takes one cow.

The eldest son, if married, takes one bull and one cow.

Every other married son receives one cow. Any balance that there may be is kept by the father until his sons grow to marriageable age.

If a man cannot beget a child the wife is handed over temporarily to some one or other in order to achieve the desired result. If a child is born he is regarded as the heir and child of the mother's husband and not of the man who has actually begotten him. This custom, so repugnant to Western ideas, is, I believe, to be explained on the ground that the whole aim and object of the existence of the Nuer is the acquiring of a large herd of cattle. As has been seen above a son is welcomed because he can tend the herd and a daughter because she can increase it by the dowry that will be paid on her marriage. For the proper understanding of the psychology and customs of the Nuer one must always bear in mind the extraordinary respect, not to say love, with which the Nuer regards his cattle.

If a girl on marriage is not a virgin the dowry is smaller than it would otherwise be.

Every Nuer woman has a husband provided for her unless she is suffering from some chronic disease or is a divorced woman with part of the dowry unpaid.

Neither circumcision nor mutilation of the male or female organs is practised.

Divorce is not uncommon amongst the Nuer though it is naturally complicated by squabbling over the return of the marriage portion. A marriage may be diissolved for various reasons, barrenness, infidelity, incompatibility of temperament, illtreatment, if the wife is given to stealing or if the husband is a gross feeder and is never satisfied with his meals. If the woman is to blame the husband recovers all the cattle that he or his father has paid as dowry. But if the husband is responsible for the dissolution of the marriage he leaves one bull calf and one cow calf with his divorced wife. The chief of the leopard skin is responsible for collecting the dowry from the unwilling relatives among whom it has been distributed.

When a divorce is being contemplated the fathers of the parties concerned discuss the question in all its bearings and if no agreement is arrived at the matter is referred to the chief of the leopard skin.

An important and essential part in all wedding ceremonies is played by the *dang*, an instrument about three feet six inches in length and crooked at either end rather like a shepherd's staff. This is made out of the roots of the *inderab* tree and is covered with alternate strips of thin brass and tin. It is fairly common throughout the Nuer country and is fashioned by various experts who inherit the right to make it. It is said originally to have been used as a shield before the Nuer had discovered the art of making shields for themselves. Its invention is ascribed to Kir. When engaging in single combat the Nuer is said to have held this rod in front of him while he attempted to hook the enemy's shield in the crooked ends and wrench the shield from the other's grasp.

This explanation, which is the one usually given, is not very satisfactory. I tried to use the instrument in the manner indicated and the only material result was to take all the skin off my knuckles.

At any rate it serves a more peaceful purpose now and, when a wedding is being celebrated, the bridegroom and father of the bride grasp the *dang* by the middle and, seizing a spear, brandish it in the presence of the assembled multitudes in order that the marriage may be blessed with children. On such occasions Kir and Muttiang are called upon to prosper the union.

The real explanation for the invention of this curious weapon is probably to be found in the fact that it was originally a parrying club for warding off missile clubs and possibly boomerangs. (*)

(*) See later C. 17.

11. Death and Burial.

When a man realises that he is about to depart this life he collects his relatives and advises them to behave well after he has gone. These then reply, "Yes, so we will, and, as you are going to meet Kosz ask from Him that we may be left alone in peace and comfort."

If an illness threatens to become serious a bull is sacrificed to Kosz (or Kott) (1)—the Great Power—in order to appease it and make the sick man recover. Should no improvement take place all the near relatives of the person who is ill are gathered together so that they may be present at the actual passing away. They depart immediately afterwards and only leave the burial party behind. If the deceased has any sons living the duty of burial falls on them or, failing them the man's wife. In the event of his having no wife then a near relative must carry out the burial: if no such person can be found a cow is given to a poor stranger to inter the body.

A similar reward of a cow may be claimed from the relatives by anyone finding a dead body and burying it. A corpse found in the bush is always buried where it is discovered. Otherwise bodies are buried just behind the hut (2). The earth over the grave is made level with the surrounding ground so that no signs of a grave are visible. The day after death a bull is slaughtered and a bigger sacrifice is made later on, some two to four months after death, in the presence of a large concourse of mourners. Blood on both occasions is sprinkled on the grave and merissa poured on it. The deceased is thus addressed: "You have joined the great host of those who have died in the past, allow us to live in peace."

There seems to be a vague idea that the dead are with Kosz and that they can persuade Him to let the rest of the tribe live untroubled. A sacrifice at death is thus regarded in the light of an offering to appease the wrath of Kosz which has manifested itself on the occasion in question.

A smoking pipe and neck rest are put on the top of a grave: porridge, butter milk or butter and merissa are poured upon the grave in order to supply the wants of the deceased wherever he has gone. Blood of the sacrificial bull or cow is also sprinkled on the grave as a propitiatory offering to Kosz.

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(1) It is interesting to note that Kott is applied to 'Rain' in the Lango tongue. See Driberg. 262.

(2) I regret that I have been unable to obtain any satisfactory evidence about the all important point of the position in which the body is buried. It has been suggested to me that in some cases the body is buried with the face to the west, i.e. the direction from which the Lau and Jekaing divisions came, but my information is at present too unreliable to arrive at any real conclusion.

As a sign of mourning all the women wail and the relatives discard their brass ornaments and beads etc: the men also tie a wisp of rope around the middle. Nor do they shave or practise depilation for a period of two months or so until the second and greater sacrifice is made.

The usual wailing is as follows:
"*Aiyo, aiyo, Ce gwar liu*", "Alsa, alas, father is dead."
"*Aiyo, aiyo, Ce damaar liu.*" "Alas, alas, brother is dead".
The head of the deceased is shaved and all ornaments taken away.

It is regarded as a sure presage of ill if any article of embellishment is buried with a corpse, and death will ensue for some of his relatives. Ashes are not used nor is there any preparation of the body except in the case of a chieftain when the corpse is washed in butter fat. No talisman is buried with the dead but a small bed of wood, covered with a bull's hide, is placed in the grave of a chief. Burial takes place by day or night as soon as practicable after death. There are no special processions or feastings and as soon as death is an accomplished fact the house is closed up and the grave commenced at once.

An important chieftain is often buried secretly in his hut which is then shut up. He is supposed to have made many enemies in his lifetime who, if his grave were known, would dig up the body and break the bones, thus bringing disaster upon his followers and disgrace upon the departed. As the Nuer shift their dwelling-places so constantly the whereabouts of the grave soon becomes lost sight of altogether.

At the time of burial Gwandong, who made the spring Lil and is regarded as the ancestor of the human race, is appealed to, "Why did you let our relative die"? Kott, Gwangdong, and Kosz Liel are all names for the same idea of the Great Spirit. The spirit of a man, *yei* in Nuer and *rûh* in Arabic, is the spirit of a man alive or dead.

When one of a pair of twins dies he is buried as a chief because twins are looked upon as a special mark of divine favour. Similarly in the event of a twin being stillborn he is put in a reedbasket which is placed in the fork of a higlig tree if one is available, and only as a last resort in the ground. The body is cleaned with ashes and placed inside a skin which is put in a basket the idea being that as a bird lays two or more eggs the twin is like a bird and must have a similar residence. The body is left alone and no one visits it or bothers about it If a leopard or bird of prey devours the body this fact has no significance and does not cause any alarm or despondency.

An exception to the ordinary mode of burial is to be found in the mausoleum erected at Dengkur over the ancestors of the witch doctor Gwek. This takes the form of a mud and clay pyramid some sixty feet high surmounted by a spear which is decorated with an ostrich egg and ostrich feathers. The whole was originally surrounded with elephant tusks and formed a conspicuous landmark for many miles round.

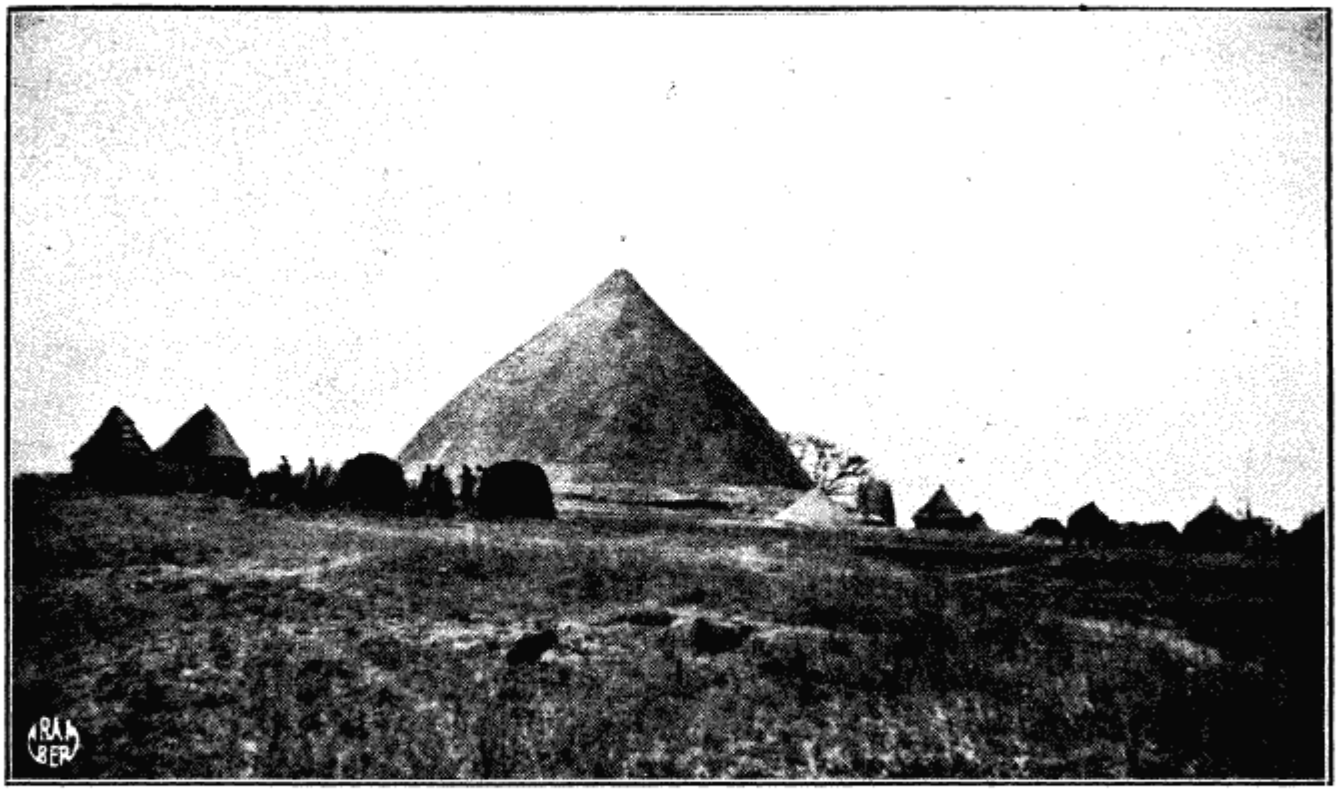
The Shilluk dead are buried in the village just outside the house where the deceased lived, a custom that also holds good amongst the Anyuak. If the dead person is a man of importance he is buried just inside his house. This house remains empty for a year when it is pulled down.

If a man dies when on a journey he is taken to the nearest village, or preferably to one of his own *kwa*. At the end of a year the man's dishes and his water pitcher are buried in a little grave near his own and the horns of an ox are set up to mark the place. From time to time a little food is put upon the grave in order that the dead man may have something to eat. The pillow or sleeping stick is usually thrown away near the village though that is not always the case.

12. The Spirit world.

There is a word in the Nuer language, *gooaq*, which seems to have the same connotation as the Arabic Efreet, an Evil Spirit. The word is said to be a very old one, and the original meaning has been lost. Whether it is connected with the Nuer word *giaq* or "bad", or with the Dinka *Jok*, the spirits of certain of their ancestors, I cannot say and, as the Nuer themselves are so excessively vague about their metaphysical beliefs, it is difficult to extract any information from them. They seem to have a shadowy conception of a spirit which attaches itself to a dead person, a kind of spiritual second self. As a dead person presumably through his spirit is able to do a certain amount of harm and, as with the Dinka, send sickness and disease, sacrifices are occasionally made to the deceased as has been seen in the preceding section. The dead in fact are said to have become *gooaq*.

Apart from this the Nuer conception of a life hereafter or a Great Power seems to be limited to a general kind of belief in someone or something referred to as Kott or Kosz Lielli. This Great Spirit is supposed to have made the world though the Nuer do not seem to have formulated even the wildest conception or theories as to how this came about. The world is there, they accept it as a proved fact and do not bother their heads with any ætiological discussions. This Spirit is regarded as having powers for good or for ill. For



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instance, when the Nyawar, Dungrial, Gong and Nyabulli sections (and probably most of the others too) offer a sacrifice they say that they are making it to Kosz Lielli. Similarly a sacrifice on the occasion of a wedding is made in order that Kosz Lielli may bless the marriage with children. Rain too comes from Kosz Lielli, called by the Beir tribe Jong Koaszei.

This Spirit has several names by which he is addressed indiscriminately: they do not appear to be different attributes but are employed just as the name happens to come to the lips. Gwang Dong is a title under which the Great Spirit is often appealed to. It appears to have rather the significance of ancestor just as Man Doong is applied to Alyett, the wife of the Dinka Deng Dit. That these different names are capable of fairly wide application was illustrated in the Garjak patrol when the aeroplanes were referred to as Kott, or God.

The Great Spirit is regarded as having made the sun, in which connection it is interesting to recall the fact that Akol (which means the sun) was supposed to be the offspring of Deng Dit and Alyett.

Various superstitions are not unnaturally connected with the heavenly bodies and any unusual occurrences in connection with them. Thus comets and eclipses foretell sickness and disaster. The eye of the sun or the moon as the case may be is said to have blood in it and thus to denote that the Great Spirit requires the sacrifice of a bull. Thunder and lightning are similarly regarded as manifestations of the Divine wrath which is seeking a victim. To appease it a sheep or a bull is often made a scapegoat.

When the new moon first makes its appearance it is appealed to in order that the coming month may be a happy one and the people free from sickness.

East and west are recognised by the Nuer from the rising and setting of the sun. Other points of the compass are unknown to them for though they have a word *kai nuak* and *wud joak* to denote what at first sight might appear to be the north and south the words really mean the wind that blows from the northerly direction in the dry season and a southerly in the wet.

Time is reckoned by months, each month being divided into two halves of about fifteen days each, distinguished by the presence or absence of the moon. Six months approximately constitute the winter and six rainy months the summer: the year ends at the close of the rains.

Years are named after some outstanding event in the particular district such as the visit of the Governor or a herd of elephants or, the outbreak of cattle plague or influenza. The nomenclature thus varies from place to place.

The following names have been collected from the Bull section in the Bahr el Ghazal Province :

1914. The year of hunger.

1915. The year of *gennitot*, a peculiar kind of bead brought by a Kodok merchant.

1916. The year of the liver disease among the cattle.

1917. The year of the locusts.

1918. The year of the tiang which devoured the crops.

1919. The year of cattle disease.

1920. The year of cattle plague.

1921. The year of Deng Nial, a wellknown Nuer, who was killed in intersection fighting amongst the Nuer.

1922. So far unnamed. (*)

13. Superstitions and the Evil Eye.

Various superstitious beliefs are common amongst the Nuer.

Some of these are more or less practical. Thus it is lucky to find a dead animal, which can be eaten, or a dead elephant with tusks. The bones of the *lau* serpent, are also highly prized, possibly on account of their rarity. Other beliefs however are not so simple of explanation, though some cases as for instance the idea that if anyone drinks out of a bowl of milk or eats any flesh from a bowl into which a snake has spat he will die may have an obvious explanation. The real reason for this belief however may quite well lie in the fact that the snake is universally reverenced by the Nuer and, as in the case of the umbilical cord, it is cannibalistic to eat or drink anything that issues from a human being or his totemic ancestor.

Grass is frequently tied in a knot along the roadside, a custom common also amongst the Shilluk. This is done in order that a journey that is about be undertaken, e.g. to look for some missing cattle may be lucky and no harm may befall the wayfarer. The custom is said to be of Dinka origin and to be becoming extinct amongst the Nuer. A prayer is also offered on such an occasion e.g. *Eo kwosz gwarr ajigga meschamme*. "Father may there be found something for me to eat" A bat hooting by night is a sure presage of death.

During a bad thunderstorm tobacco is sometimes thrown into the air, apparently to appease Kott.

(*) i. e. in October of that year.

Sacrifices to avert evil or danger are made on frequent occasions, of which the following examples may be given.

Firstly at a marriage feast to ensure fertility. Secondly in order to keep off sickness or danger from the people or the cattle if, for instance, a comet or shooting star of exceptional brilliance were to appear in the sky. Thirdly when anyone is actually sick. Fourthly if a woman after a period of married life still proves barren. Fifthly to bring rain.

On all these occasions prayers are offerred up. Thus when anyone is sick "*Kosz keni yung arang tig;* Oh Spirit take cow, man let him live". Or to obtain a child,"*Ei Kosz yungdu moh anyada diesz gai*" : "Oh Spirit this cow take it, my daughter may she give birth to child".

The bull sacrificed at a wedding may be of any colour or breed. If no suitable bull is available a barren cow may take its place, the sacrifice being made in the presence of all the wedding guests. When the bride returns to her parents after the consummation of the marriage rites another bull is sacrificed outside the bridal dwelling : if the bull, in dying, falls with its head towards the door this is regarded as of happy augury. If, however, the omens are inauspicious a further sacrifice of a sheep is made.

In the cattle kraals each owner of cattle possesses a *riek* and a *goal*, which are called after his name. *Riek* is a forked stick or pole some ten feet in height decorated with a tuft of hair : *goal* is the smouldering dung fire lit near it.

A sacrifice to avoid sickness or after someone has become ill must be made near *rīek* and *goal*. The sacrifice is made by the father of the sick person if he is alive or by his son if the patient is an old man. Failing one of these two the uncle, brother or near male relative in the order named.

Some of the Lau and Raiyung sections make sacrifices to the lightning owing to the fact that Gull, the brother of Lau and Raiyung, was struck dead in a thunderstorm. They address their prayers on these occasions to Kosz Gull, the Spirit of the lightning, *gull*.

If a hut is struck by lightning a sheep is killed and thrown on the fire : a bull is afterwards slaughtered and its flesh eaten. If anyone is actually killed by lightning, apparently a rare form of death, a big sacrifice is made of as many as a hundred head of cattle, all the near relatives of the deceased being expected to participate in order to avoid a like fate. Such a hecatomb would however be very exceptionally made. An animal is also occasionally sacrificed for a falling star of unusual brilliance, a custom that holds good amongst the

Shilluk who stretch out their hands to it and exclaim "*Kwaiya*," that is, "my ancestor".

A lett (? plover) flying over a village foretells internecine brawling.

There are vague beliefs current amongst the Nuer of men and women who can turn themselves into lions at night, an unsavoury practice that they usually attribute to the Dinka. Thus the Agar Dinka of Rumbek are commonly believed to be able to effect this transformation. Any of this section found in the Nuer country would be accorded short shrift if they were thought to be contemplating such an unwelcome transmutation. The Shilluk similarly believe that the Nuba in particular can become animals at will. On one occasion within human memory some Shilluk killed an elephant which was destroying their crops. It was said that it had in its ear a ring of the type that the Nuba affect. The Shilluk in consequence were convinced that the elephant was simply a Nuba in disguise who had come to steal their dura. A woman Kerfail who (I think) married a man called Qwai some years ago, and was the ancestress of a large section of the Garweir (*) was also said to have converted herself into a lioness by night. She came from the Dok section on the Bahr el Jebel and, being unable to find sufficient food in the Garweir country, adopted this method of assuaging the pangs of hunger.

Dreams are of three main kinds, those that come from Kott, or from a dear departed friend or just an ordinary dream.

If Kott appears to one in a dream and warns the dreamer that he is to die a bull is sacrificed as happens also if Kott, in a vision of the night, says that one's wife is soon about to give birth. If a deceased friend appears in a dream a sheep is slaughtered and the friend is appealed to and asked not to make another unwelcome visit.

Ordinary dreams are of good or bad omen. Any dream connected with death is regarded as unlucky and a sacrifice made to avert disaster. But it is lucky to dream about water or swimming, rain or cattle giving birth. Of good omen too in a minor way are dreams of weddings or dances or success in the chase. If a man dream about a hunting accident, for instance being caught by a hippopotamus or bitten by a crocodile, he makes a sacrifice to avoid the calamity.

Sacrifices, too, are very common amongst the Shilluk. They make a sacrifice e.g. when digging a grave, or laying the foundations of a house, if a person is sick or dies or if someone sets out on a long journey.

(*) For this and some of the other information concerning the Garweir I am indebted to Mr Coriat, Assistant District Commissioner at Aiyod.

Brun-Rollet (1) has a short account of the Nuer which may be quotod here. Though his speculations as to the origin of the tribe do not strike one as being particularly happy he describes a state of affairs that may quite well represent an era in the development of the Nuer race which has already passed away. "The Nuer tribe has very much preserved the Ethiopian traditions. The connection between their language and that spoken by the Ethiopians in Jebel Gouleh, west of Sennar, leads one to the belief that the tribe was formerly enclosed in the Meroe kingdom and that it was dispersed into the plains occupied by the Dinka and Abu Rof Arabs between the mountains Tefafan and Emahia, and round Jebel Moya. The Nuer recognise one God Near (2). The head of the cultivation is Dowa (3) a kind of pope for whom they express an extreme veneration akin to worship. Immortal, not subject to human wants e.g. hunger, his death is completely hidden by his followers and assistant priests of whom the eldest replaces him. His dwelling is surrounded by a palisade and is inaccessible to all except his disciples and King or chief warriors. If he travels he is carried in a litter covered with leaves. Consulted on everything, in communication with the spirit world he instructs his disciples in medicine, herbalism and divination. When war is declared he sends his followers to curse the enemy, and they hurl three spears over the frontier of the country that is to be invaded.

They live on fish and wild fruit only. Every evening they pray to heaven and to the spirits that rule the elements. Old women are consulted for the ordinary daily affairs of life and these prophesy to the people by means of dura which they shake in a gourd and pour on to the ground". (4)

There are individuals with the Evil Eye which is generally regarded as being passed on from father to son. The Nuer chiefly attribute its possession to their enemies, the Dinka. The Dunjol, Niel and Ageir sections of the Dinka who live in Melut district have the worst reputation in this respect. It is, however, only fair to add that the Dinka in turn regard certain members of the Nuer tribe as being the possessors of the Evil Eye.

If a cow's milk turns to blood or water it is a sure sign that it has been overlooked: a sacrifice of a sheep or a goat must then be made in order to

(1) Le Nil Blanc et le Soudan. Paris 1855. p. 222.

(2)=*Nial*, the sky.

(3)=*Diwot*, see C. 6.

(4) The first and last paragraphs of this section hardly seem consistent. That dura is grown is indicated also in the fact that the Nuer have "a head of the cultivation",

counteract the maleficent influence. If anyone becomes ill shortly after the visit of one possessed of the Evil Eye—most of whom appear to be wellknown characters—it is assumed that he has been bewitched. The illness is usually supposed to have been caused by the secret insertion of the bone of some animal or at any rate some foreign substance which a medicine man is called in to remove.

No mark is caused when the bone or whatever it is enters the body: nor, when the medicine man produces before the assembled throng something which is supposed to have caused the malady, is any mark made upon the body of the patient. The object that has been extracted is then shewn to the people who are present in order that they may handle it.

These medicine men are paid by results, whether for making rain (as has been seen above) or for the curing of illnesses.

14. Totemism and Exogamy.

There are certain objects of the animal and vegetable kingdoms which are held in especial esteem by the Nuer and protected by them: and, although the reason for this consideration is not the same in all cases, a totemistic origin is clearly indicated in most of them. Thus, while certain sections do not kill the Giant Lizard *(warana)*, others respect the gourd family and the sacred spear of Kir, while others again refrain from the flesh of the crocodile, waterbuck, snake and some species of fish. The abstention from the flesh of all feathered creatures is also, I believe, to be ascribed to totemistic reasons as will be seen later.

Originally the Nuer do not appear to have accorded to the Giant Lizard the protection which it now enjoys and, though some accounts state that, as in other similar cases, a lizard was born as a twin of a human being, the more generally accepted account for its immunity from attack is as follows.

Many years ago the Gaang division of the Nuer (who are descended from Ga'a and lead a more or less nomadic existence scattered amongst the Lak and Garweir) were on the march when they lost their way and were on the point of perishing from thirst. Suddenly they saw a *warana* upon a tree and made to spear it. The lizard came down from the tree and ran off pursued by the Nuer until it unexpectedly disappeared in a hitherto unknown watercourse containing a little water. The Nuer were so elated at being saved from a thirsty death that the whole section have ever since that time venerated the *warana* and refrained from either killing or eating it. So much so that if a

warana is seen near a village the Nuer milk a cow and pour the milk out into a bowl for the creature to drink.

This story finds rather an interesting parallel among the people of Senegambia. When Dr Rancon was stopping at a place called Dikhoy he saw his servant playing with a little bird of the sparrow family.

A chieftain who was present claimed to be a relative of the bird and told the following story to account for the relationship. His grandfather, the first of the Sidibe tribe, was out hunting elephants, and having lost his way in the forest was like to die of thirst, till one of these little birds, fluttering before him, led him to a stream of water. "From that time", said he, "the Sidibes have been relations of the bird, since but for it our father would certainly have died. Hence we are all forbidden to eat its flesh, and to allow any one to hurt it in our presence." (*)

A rather similar idea is connected with the reverence shewn by the Bull section of the Bahr el Ghazal to certain trees and shrubs.

The ancestor of the Bull section in the Bahr el Ghazal territory once killed a man of the Tiung subdivision, now established in the Upper Nile Province. The bereaved kinsmen gave chase and were close on the heels of Bull when he espied before him a large *duruba* tree (I). Hard pressed the murderer sprang into the tree and, noticing a crevice in the trunk, he crept into it, the better to hide from his pursuers.

The aperture at once closed over him so that Tiung's relatives, arriving a few minutes later, could find no trace of Bull although they peered and probed among the leafy branches long and diligently. With the coming of darkness they were forced to abandon the unprofitable search and returned crestfallen to their homes. The crevice then obligingly reopened and liberated the grateful Bull. As a mark of appreciation for this kindly act the *duruba* tree has been venerated by the Bull section every since, no part of it being damaged or utilised by any of the tribe in question. In fact so great is the regard entertained for this tree that a special cow is dedicated to it. The first bull calf born to it is sacrificed to Kosz when it grows to maturity.

Another story concerning Bull where a tree is the object of similar veneration originated in a walk which he was undertaking. As he was wandering along he found a boy who had just come out of a river sitting beneath a sycamore tree. Bull took the child and brought him up to man's

(*) The Golden Bough, 2. 544.

(I) *Soymida Roupalifolia*.

estate, and from that time the sycamore has been regarded as sacred. None of the Bull section eat of the fruit of this tree, nor cut it down for any purpose and, as in the case of the *duruba*, a special cow is allotted to it. When a sacrifice is made to it the tree is thus addressed: "*Kosz gnoap yungdu moh;* Spirit of the Sycamore accept this animal."

A rather different type of totem is to be seen amongst the Jikull. As the ancestor of this section is popularly supposed to have arrived from heaven wrapped up in a skin the totem (1) of his descendants is a skin (*kull* in Nuer). When one of this section wishes to clean a skin he will not beat it, out of respect for Jikull, and, before going to war, the Jikull people call upon the skin to aid them. If in a fight first blood is drawn by the enemy the Jikull expect to suffer severe losses but if they wound an opponent first the victory will be theirs. A bull is occasionally sacrificed to *Koz Kull* (the spirit of the skin).

In the same way the ancestor of the Garweir section is reported to have fallen from the skies. When he arrived on earth he had a bit of the *inderab* tree (2) in his hand and this tree is held in much esteem by the Garweir in consequence. (3)

These examples, however, are rather different from the ordinary beliefs held by the Nuer to account for the respect that they shew towards certain animals and fish. In origin these all have one common factor, the birth of a human being as a twin to e.g. a crocodile or waterbuck. Thus *shieng* Tchaang, of the Kunjokjak division, have a crocodile for their totem because the sister of Tchaang was a crocodile. Similarly *shieng* Qwisz, a subdivision of the Bull section, *shieng* Bor in the Bahr el Ghazal Province, and *shieng* Ging, a subdivision of the Tiung section in the Upper Nile Province, all reverence the crocodile, as their eponymous ancestors were twins of this creature. As soon as the crocodile was born it was put back into the river and, whenever any of the Nuer wish to cross, with their cattle, a watercourse where crocodiles are suspected of lurking they send for someone, whose totem this reptile is, in order that he may ensure them a safe passage. A sheep is produced and the crocodile is asked to come and take it instead of the Nuer or any of their cattle. Or a shell, called *gargur*, is filled with mud, and this shell, together with the sheep, is thrown into the stream. The crocodile is thus addressed; "Oh you who are our grandfather take this offering of a sheep, take neither the son

(1) The commonest term for what we call totem appears to be *Kott*, the Great Power.
(2) *Cordia Abyssinica*.
(3) See also section 6.

of man nor his animals while we wish to cross your stream but leave us in peace and safety".

Twin birth is the explanation also given for the totem of the Kar and Tchuak sections respecting the giant lizard. For the same reason an ostrich is the totem of the Wutt section, and a snake that of the Lang people on the Bahr el Jebel. Bishok, Bwoap, Nyabang, Lok, Shum and Nyafir all claim the spitting viper (*) for their totem as do the Bang section of the Tiung division in the Upper Nile Province. Snakes of various kinds are also the totems of *shiengs* Nyawar, Dungrial, Gong, Leiq, Lak, Lang, Reill and, possibly, Raiyun and Lau. In all of these cases the reason ascribed for the Nuer veneration of these creatures is the twin birth of their totemic ancestor and their human forefather.

The greatest respect is shewn to every kind of snake by the families who claim one as their totem. If anyone kills a snake disaster will immediately befall the family. Some years ago the present *temergi*, or dispenser, in the Malakal hospital was travelling with a party of pedlars and killed a snake which he came across. Although only a boy he was at once attacked by the Nuer of the Longaish section and beaten into unconsciousness.

When a girl of a snake totem family marries, a special cow is set aside for the ancestral snake, and if a snake approaches the cow it is offered milk which is either poured upon its back or on the cattle peg of the cow devoted to it. Similarly if a dead snake is found by one of the family, milk, fat or butter milk must be poured upon its back by way of decent burial. Among the Lak it is said that a small bunch of green grass must be set before it or put in its mouth (†). A witch doctor should also spit upon its back for luck. If a snake enters a hut it must be very carefully removed with a stick or the women may come round and sing to it in order to persuade the creature to leave the premises(†). When a cow calves for the first time its first milk is devoted to the snake or the giant lizard as the case may be by the people whose totem it is. The owner of the cow has to go and look for one of these creatures and make it an offering of the first milking.

Amongst the Lau there is a yellowish snake with black lines down the belly which is called *tcholaka*. A bull is sometimes sacrificed to it and an offering of the blood made. The best cow is also milked and milk poured

(*) *Naia nigricollis*, called *fatutt* in the Nuer language.

(†) Information supplied by Mr Lee, Assistant District Commissioner at Nasser. The latter custom is said to be in vogue among the Jekaing.

down the crack in the ground where it resides: a dance in its honour is also held now and again and its bones are preserved as charms.

If a spitting viper is found coiled round a cattle peg or makes its way round a *luwak*, milk is offered to it or poured on its back. If any harm comes to it the people believe that they will die. It is addressed, "*Nyaddul Kang tchaku toa*, Nyaddul Kang (which is said to be a term of praise) accept this milk".

If a dead viper is found anywhere it is reverently covered with grass so as to prevent the vultures etc. from eating it. This quasi-burial of the snake is interesting as it seems to indicate on the part of the Nuer a wish to treat the snake in the same manner as they would a human being.

If so it brings the Nuer totemic theories into line with the identification of the person with his totemic animal or reptile that some regard as the essence of a totemic belief.

The Jekaing reverence the sacred spear of Kir, on which they take such oaths as they consider binding: they will not eat of the gourd or cucumber family owing to the circumstances that attended the birth of Kir. The spear is looked upon as their guardian.

The Juwal section of the Gaang is scattered among various Nuer settlements and do not eat of the the waterbuck as Juwal's wife gave birth to twins, a boy and a female waterbuck.

The latter was turned loose in the wilds on the same day, but what became of her is unknown. It is, presumably, this uncertainty as to whether she survived in order to give birth to other waterbuck that prevents this section from eating or killing the waterbuck. Some sections of the Juwal do not eat the fish called in Arabic *gargur* (*), *surta* (†) and *shilbaia* (‡), as these also were supposed to have been born at the same time as the waterbuck-a somewhat heterogeneous progeny that is regarded by the simple Nuer as quite in accordance with the processes of nature. I am inclined to think, however, that it is only certain families that refrain from these fish as there is a story current about Juwal which is hardly in keeping with their present abstention. Juwal and Wurr, the ancestor of the Garweir, were once walking together. Juwal had a fish but no means of cooking it. Wurr had a jar but refused to

(*) *Auchenoglanis occidentalis.*
(†) *Heterobranchus bidorsalis.*
(‡) *Schilbe uranoscopus.*

lend it with the result that Juwal was forced to go hungry all day. In the evening Juwal found a gourd which he coated with mud, in order to prevent its destruction in the fire, and in this he cooked his fish. But, although up to this time the Juwal and Garweir families had been friendly, they became sworn enemies from that date: so much so that if two members of these respective tribes are caught in a rainstorm they will not enter the same hut, nor will any of the two tribes intermarry.

These two accounts are not quite consistent and a possible explanation lies either in the supposition that only certain sections of the Juwal abstain from these fish (of which at present I have not sufficient information), or we may suggest that it was not until after this episode that Juwal's wife gave birth to the fish. If this is so there is almost a parallel among the Gaang who, apparently, did not at first pay any special regard to the *warana*.

The Nuer, almost without exception, refrain from eating any of the feathered creation. The reason is not, as might at first have been supposed, because they fear by eating of so insignificant a creature that they will thereby inherit its puny nature. Nor do they appear to have any special distaste for its flesh, which is not considered unclean. One explanation put forward for this abstention is that the bird can fly in the skies and is accordingly in communication with the Great Spirit. The more usual reason assigned however is that it is a disgrace for a big man to eat so small and insignificant a creature as a duck or a hen. Questions as to why they do not eat so large a feathered creature as an ostrich either remain unanswered or are greeted with a supercilious smile.

On a visit to Dengkur in 1921 I was requested by a prominent witchdoctor not to shoot whistling teal near his settlement, the (obviously insincere) plea being that I might frighten some of his friends.

If the pangs of hunger are so insistent that they can no longer be denied a bird is sometimes eaten in secret away from the village. The feathers are afterwards burnt, no trace of the obscene meal is left and no mention of the occurrence is made. But however dire the straits to which the Nuer is reduced he will not, as far as I have been able to ascertain, eat of the feathered world if he is descended from, or a near relation of, a twin. If it were not for the fact that small children do apparently trap and eat guinea fowl one would be tempted to presuppose a totemistic origin for this practice. That the immunity shewn to birds is in some way connected with twin birth I feel strongly inclined

to believe, but the causal connection between the two has not as yet been satisfactorily established. (*)

As amongst the Baganda there are "no magical ceremonies for the multiplication of or control of the totem", a feature which in the opinion of Frazer "bespeaks its high development or rather decay" (†).

As to the origin of these totemistic beliefs it is difficult, and perhaps presumptuous, for the amateur to hazard an opinion. That they are closely connected with birth, and probably twin birth, seems to be highly probably. Of the various instances given above the snake, ostrich, spitting viper, crocodile, waterbuck, fishes and giant lizard are all reverenced owing to a twin birth. The respect shewn for the skin by the Jikull, the spear and gourd family by the Jekaing, and the *inderab* by some of the Garweir are all intimately connected with birth. The totems of the Bull section seem at first to be on rather a different plane though a possible explanation for these totems will be put forward later.

In all of these examples of twin births a special magical origin is ascribed to the descendants of the ancestress of the respective clans. This origin at the same time introduces an element of good fortune as the birth of twins is held by the Nuer to be a special mark of divine favour. Twins are held in a certain superstitious regard as can be seen by the particular reverence shewn to them at death and also, if my supposition is correct, by abstention from the flesh of the feathered creation. An illustration of the close connection that is supposed to exist between a twin and a bird was given above where a twin addresses a bird as his twin brother. These various examples have one common factor, a belief that certain sections of the tribe are consuanguineously related to the animal or bird in question which it would be homicidal to kill and cannabalistic to eat.

Sir J.G. Frazer, in assigning a conceptional origin for totemism suggests—if I have understood him aright—that a woman in her conceptual stage may be influenced by some striking incident of the outside world (preferably at the exact moment when for the first time she feels the unborn child stir in her womb) and evinces a particular desire for some special nourishment which must be eagerly sought for by the devoted husband. "If a woman" of the Central Australian aborigines "felt the first premonitions of maternity near a

(*) See § 11. Burial of Twins.

(†) Op. cit. 2. 503.

rock tenanted by spirits of Emu people, then her child will be of the Emu totem; and so on throughout the whole length of the totemic gamut".(*)

These conceptional totems seem to be unknown amongst the Nuer, although my information at present is far too scanty to permit of my being dogmatic on the subject. Moreover the origin of these totemistic beliefs lies hidden so many centuries ago that even if the Nuer had ever had any very definite notions on the question instead of the dimmest and haziest of ideas these might quite well have long since faded away with the passing of the years.

I would suggest that natal rather than conceptional is the correct term to apply to the origin of the Nuer totemism and that a totem was adopted on account of some event that took place, or something that struck the mother's imagination, either about the time when she gave birth to the child or preferably on the actual day when the baby came into the world. In order to try and discover whether this theory could find any support I questioned seven Nuer chieftains at Nasser as to their natal as distinct from their adopted "bull" names.

These names were as follows:

Fet Nyafet : As this man's father was unable to beget a child he lent his wife, in accordance with the Nuer custom, to another man, (in this case an Anyuak) and the child that resulted from the union was called after his Anyuak father.

Giet was so called because he was born on a sandy eminence, *giet* in the Nuer language.

Rumbung (meaning lazy or useless) : The father was always abusing the mother for being lazy. "At any rate" replied the woman "I can do more than you can and give birth to a child ".

When the child was born he was named Rumbung in consequence.

Maja: The children of this man's parents all died soon after birth and a bull called Maja was sacrificed to break the run of ill luck. As the child born soon afterwards lived he was called after the bull who was supposed to have brought his mother luck.

Yuoatt, grass: The chief's mother being unable to return to her hut in time gave birth to this man in the grass. If this chieftain encounters a snake he appeals to Kott Yuoatt, the god of the grass, in order that the snake may do him no harm.

Lwoingwejh Goak, i.e., the river Sobat son of the father Goak: As the mother of this man was constantly having miscarriages or stillborn

(*) Frazer op. cit. 4.58.

children she went to a witch doctor who washed her in the river Sobat. Shortly after the woman gave birth to a healthy child who was named in honour of the river. This river is now regarded as the guardian spirit of the man in question, who cannot be drowned in it: before crossing he makes a libation of some tobacco to it.

Lau Wunyang: The mother wanted to cross a river but gave birth to this chief on the bank. The father then took a paddle, *lau* in the Nuer language, and while the child was barely born transported the mother and child safely across. The canoe and the paddle are in consequence held in especial respect by this chief. Before crossing a river he makes offerings of tobacco and merrissa to the canoe.

Of these seven instances three of the chieftains quoted above have, in the circumstances that attended their birth, what might quite well have been in days gone by the embryo of a totemic clan. That these episodes will however form the basis of such clans in the future is extremely improbable in view of the different stage of civilisation with which these people are now being brought into contact. Is it, however, fanciful to assume, with these sorts of instances actually occurring to-day, that some such event was responsible in the dim past for the origin of the present totemic clans? In two cases, at any rate, those of Lau Wunyang and Lwoingwejh, there is a distinct element of good fortune implied in the circumstances attendant on their birth; in one case the interposition of a witchdoctor broke the spell of ill luck that had accompanied previous births, while in the other the river was kind to the newly-made mother and her babe.

This system of nomenclature holds good on the Bahr el Zeraf and apparently throughout the whole of the Nuer country. In almost every case a child is named after some particular event that took place, if possible on the actual day of the birth, or at any rate about that time. Thus (on the Bahr el Zeraf) Garwijh, the son of the cattle kraal, was so named because he was born on the day when the kraal was begun.

Muk, buffalo, was named after a buffalo which was killed on his natal day.

Nyal Tut (the python stud bull). So called on account of a python which was killed on the auspicious day.

Genyung (crocodile). A crocodile marked bull was sacrificed on the day when the balance of the dowry was paid. The first born was called after this bull in order to commemorate the episode.

Garung: "seeds of the waterlily". A man born when famine stalked

the land and the people were reduced to eating the seeds of the waterlily would be called garung.

Similarly among other sections of the Nuer: Gnyawijh, a girl born on the day when the cattle kraal was commenced.

Kor, war, born on a day when a fight took place.

Nial, rain, born when it was raining.

Sometimes villages are similarly named as for instance, Pwoar, a waterbuck, so called because a waterbuck was killed on the day the village was begun, or because that animal was very numerous in the neighbourhood. Occasionally the husband names his child after his totemic animal out of gratitude for the assistance that the creature is supposed to have afforded. Gnyung, a crocodile, and Gaang, the giant lizard are names not infrequently met with among the Nuer.

If in fact a woman gives birth to a child on the day on which a crocodile, tiang, waterbuck or buffalo, etc., is killed the baby is named Gnyung, Tiang, Pwoar or Muk in order to commemorate the event. I would, therefore, suggest that the totemic clans of the Nuer originated in some circumstance, probably fortunate, that attended the birth of one of their ancestors. Whether these ancestors were the men whom the Nuer believe to have been the founders of their various sections but whom, with a vagueness only natural under the circumstances, they have postdated, or whether they are men born dim ages ago I cannot pretend to say. That totemism only dates from the time ascribed to it, namely some three or four centuries ago, can hardly be so seeing that such people as Kir, Lang, Bor, etc., who are regarded as the ancestors of the various sections and in some cases the originators of the totemic clanship, had a large following at the time of their first coming into prominence.

On the other hand these ancestors may quite well have been famous individuals who either led their followers on successful forays or established them in their present surroundings. Totemism appears to have originated at different epochs. Thus while all Nuer appear to have their individual totems some have double totems owing to the fact that one totem was developed later than another. *Shieng* Tchaang of the Jekaing and *Shieng* Juwal may be quoted as instances of this.

That there was a period in the evolution of the Nuer race when reverence was not shewn to animals, etc., that have now come to be regarded as totems is seen in the two cases just quoted of *shieng* Tchaang and Juwal, as the ancestors of these two sections were not crocodile or waterbuck totemic peoples.

The same theory appears to hold good with regard to the Giant Lizard clan. In this connection the double explanation of the origin of the *warana* (or giant lizard) clan, firstly, that the ancestress of the clan gave birth to twins (one being a human being and the other the *warana)* and, secondly, that this creature saved the clan from a thirsty death seems to me to mark the transitional stage between the real explanation of the Nuer totems and that accepted by them. The real explanation, I suggest, is that some well-known woman in the clan (who may very well have been the ancestress of a sufficiently numerous progeny for her descendants to form a section of their own) gave birth to a child on the day when the *warana*, by divulging the unsuspected water supply, came to the rescue of the wanderers. The Nuer, regarding a twin birth as exceptionally fortunate and knowing that his particular totem was the *warana* combined the two ideas and presumed that his ancestress gave birth to a *warana* and a human being at one and the same time. If she had given birth to twins on that particular day the explanation that I have put forward might possibly be more readily accepted. In the case of the *warana* clan it is to be noted also that the element of good fortune is once more introduced. This appears to be a necessary concomitant of the Nuer belief in the origin of his totemic creed.

There are difficulties to be surmounted before this theory of natal totemism can be accepted. Firstly, one might have expected to find the ancestors of these totemic clans called after their totem. In this connection, however, it is to be remarked that my investigations into the nomenclature of these has been very perfunctory. The names may quite well convey some hitherto unexplained interpretation, or they may even be Dinka names. More probable to my mind is the theory that the totemic ancestors are not the tribal ancestors and founders of the various sections as the Nuer believe them to be. The totemic ancestors would have preceded these tribal ancestors by many centuries. But, as the Nuer has no traditions that go beyond these tribal leaders he has attributed to them, quite naturally, as the earliest personages of whom he has record or any customs for which he has no explanation.

Secondly, there is the difficulty of associating the snake totemic clans with good fortune. The snake is abhorred, feared and at the same time reverenced by the Nuer to such an extent that they will inflict serious bodily harm on anyone who hurts the offensive creature. How to combine these three dissimilar attitudes of fear, abhorrence and reverence towards it ?

There are possibly several explanations that would account for the fact though they cannot be considered as anything more than conjectural. Possibly

a woman was visited by a snake or saw a snake when about to give birth and out of gratitude for having been spared from death she named the child after it. Or, perhaps, someone died from snake bite on the day that she had a child who was named, and afterwards instructed to reverence the snake that he might not meet with a similar fate. Snakes are so common a feature of the Nuer country, from the dreaded puff adder, cobra, spitting viper and python down to the innocuous grass snake of various species, the harm they do is so generally recognised that it is perhaps not unnatural for so superstitious a people as the Nuer to hold the snake familly in some particular awe.

It is to be noted that the Dinka, who have many totemic affinities with the Nuer (e.g. many of them are similar and are attributed to twin-birth), also pay great reverence to various kinds of snakes and, in particular, to the python.

Casati remarks (*) that "the Dinka have an especial regard for serpents, for in nearly every house some of them are to be met with, generally pythons, boldly reposing and coiled up: the tameness of the reptiles, which are fed upon milk, even reaches the point of answering the calls and signs of the housewife".

The information contained in the above pages as to totemic beliefs among the Nuer may be summarised as follows:

Most, if not all, Nuer clans have totems and some clans, in fact, have double totems.

These are all, with perhaps two exceptions, connected with birth, either miraculous or twin.

Instances of a miraculous birth as the origin of a totemistic belief are the Spear and Gourd family of the Jekaing, the Skin of Jikull and the *Inderab* tree of the Garweir.

A twin birth is the origin of the totems in the following instances:

Snake, *shiengs* Nyawar, Lau, Dungrial, Gong, Leiq, Lak, Reill and Lang.

Giant Lizard; Kar, Tchuak and Riaq.

Ostrich, Wutt.

Waterbuck, Juwal.

Crocodile, Tchaang, Qwisz, Bor and Ging.

Fish, Juwal.

Spitting viper, Bishok, Bwoap, Nyabang, Lok, Bang, Nyafir and Shum. (†)

There remains the double interpretation of the *warana* totem which has been discussed above and the totems of the Bul clan in the Bahr el Ghazal.

(*) Ten Years in Equatoria, 1.45. Compare also Schweinfurth, The Heart of Africa 1.158.

(†) See also Part 1, page 81.

In the latter cases I would suggest that a birth that afterwards proved of importance in the history of the tribe took place on the day when Bul was saved by a lucky episode from almost certain death.

If a birth was commemorated by some event that took place about the time there are obviously many embryonic totems in almost every birth. These may have been fined down in the course of time and limited to twin births only or to those that seemed to the ignorant and superstitious native to have been accompanied either at the time or in the years to come by some particular good fortune or succession of good luck.

The unlucky totems would be forgotten, or only preserved in the case of the snake possibly through fear of the vengeance of this creature if he were insulted. (*)

Exogamy is the universal rule amongst the Nuer and is carried to extreme lengths. Thus none of the descendants of Kir, who amount to nearly 150,000, may intermarry. The Jekaing are therefore forced to conclude alliances either with the descendants of Ging Marang (†) or with a Dinka or a Burun or with any Nuer not of the Jekaing tribe who happens to be domiciled among them or they have to go further afield. Persons however of the same totem may intermarry, as far as I have been able to ascertain, provided that they are not descended from a common ancestor. Thus the snake totemic peoples of Nyawar and Gong may intermarry unless they are known to have had a common ancestor. The Dinka in this respect are stricter than the Nuer and persons with a common totem, even though they are not of common descent, are debarred entirely from intermarriage.

As a general rule the *shieng* follows the *shieng* of the husband as with the Arabs, a man of *shieng* Dungrial marrying a woman of *sheing* Gong the children would belong to *shieng* Dungrial. Occasionally the husband adopts the *shieng* of the wife. Thus Qwoin Kieish of *shieng* Gung married a woman

(*) It has been suggested to me that I am probably putting the cart before the horse in this discussion of the totemic beliefs of the Nuer.

The attempt to explain away the totem, for instance, that originated in the twin birth of a human being and a Giant lizard by the account of the tribe being saved from a thirsty death owing to the divulging of the water supply would indicate the efforts on the part of a more sophisticated section of the community to discover some more or less reasonable explanation for a belief that in their heart of hearts they found it hard to credit.

Totemism has, however, played so important a part in the evolution of the races of the world that anything that would help to throw light upon its origin would be as interesting as it would be welcome. I, therefore, put forward this theory of the natal origin of totemism as one for other searchers after truth to investigate.

(†) See above, Genealogical table, to make this point clear.

of Nyawar and calls his *shieng* Nyawar while his brother Gung Kieish calls his *shieng* Gung. Even however in these cases, which might at first sight be supposed to have been introduced in order to break the exogamy and conclude an endogamous marriage, the old relationship is remembered and the fact of the adoption of one's wife's *shieng* does not remove the obligation to marry outside the clan.

Similarly Woll Wung of *shieng* Wung, near Nasser, has married a woman Koal of the Lak division and calls his *shieng* Qwoll or Koal, but he is universally recognised to be a member still of the Jekaing and not the Lak.

If anyone, consciously or unconsciously, eats of his totemic animal his throat swells up and he dies. A man of the waterbuck clan, finding his throat beginning to swell, will hastily make a sacrifice to his tutelary spirit and ask the waterbuck to forgive him and take the malady away. Similarly a baby of the *warana* clan born with bandy legs is regarded as being shaped like a *warana*. A sheep is sacrificed and the *warana* is besought to make its legs straight again.

The members of the snake and crocodile clans also stand in a special relationship to their respective totems. Thus if one of the snake totemic people is bitten by a snake he only has to spit on the affected place and it is expected that the man will recover from an injury that would have proved fatal to another. If a member of the crocodile clan is bitten the same simple remedy is supposed to heal the wound. If, however, anyone of the crocodile family is eaten by his totem there is, perhaps not unnaturally, no hope.

When a man of the crocodile totemic family marries a woman with the snake as her totem both respect the spouse's totem and the children are also expected to reverence both totems, but their children revert to the father's totem, descent thus being in the male line.

If the exogamous rule is broken and a man of Longaish for instance marries a girl of the same section the parents will suffer from *ruall*, a disease which causes the nose to rot away. A similar belief prevails amongst the Shilluk where, if a man has intercourse with a woman of his own *kwa* or from the *kwa* of his mother, he will contract *dwalo*, a malady that is manifested by pains in the back. (*)

A glance at the genealogical tables given in part A of these articles will make the exogamous rules clear. Thus Bor and Ror may intermarry, or

(*) cf. the Golden Bough 2.551 for the parallel case of the Siena tribe on the Ivory Coast where a cancer is expected to eat away the mouth of anyone who eats of his totemic animal.

Bull and Lak, or Bor and Nath. But Ror and Wott may not do so as they were a twin birth.

The original descendants of Nath were not allowed to intermarry, pointing to a state of affairs when the offspring were so few in numbers that endogamy would have been fatal to the well-being of the tribe. Similarly the Gun section may not intermarry nor may the Mor: but the son of a Gun daughter may marry the daughter of a Mor daughter. So too the descendants of Raiyung may now marry into the Lau division though in times gone by this was prohibited.

Exogamy and not totemism seems to supply the key to the social organisation of the Nuer, common totems being merely accidental. Thus, though the Qwisz, Ging and Bor sections all have the crocodile for their totem they are allowed to intermarry, as their common ancestry is so remote that the sections by now are almost separate tribes.

Totemism, being the smaller, is included in the greater exogamy. Exogamy in fact is the universal rule, and intermarriage between consanguineously related totemic clans e.g. Dungrial, Nyawar or Gong is automatically forbidden, as they are descendants from a common ancestor Nyung, not because they have similar totems.

Exogamy is similarly the rule amongst the Shilluk though the practice is not carried to such an extreme length as with the Nuer.

The Shilluk race is divided into some seventy clans. (1)

These clans are called *kwa* (descendants) e.g. Kwa Mon (the descendants of Mon) and Kwa Chwal (the descendants of Chwal). A Shilluk theoretically may not marry a member of his own *kwa* nor can he go to the *kwa* of his mother, or, in fact, any *kwa* from which he has any female ancestors. As a rule, however, the Shilluk do not trouble to keep track of their ancestors for more than two or three generations back when they are looking for a wife. There are also traces of totemism among the Shilluk, some of which have been derived from the Dinka owing to intermarriage.

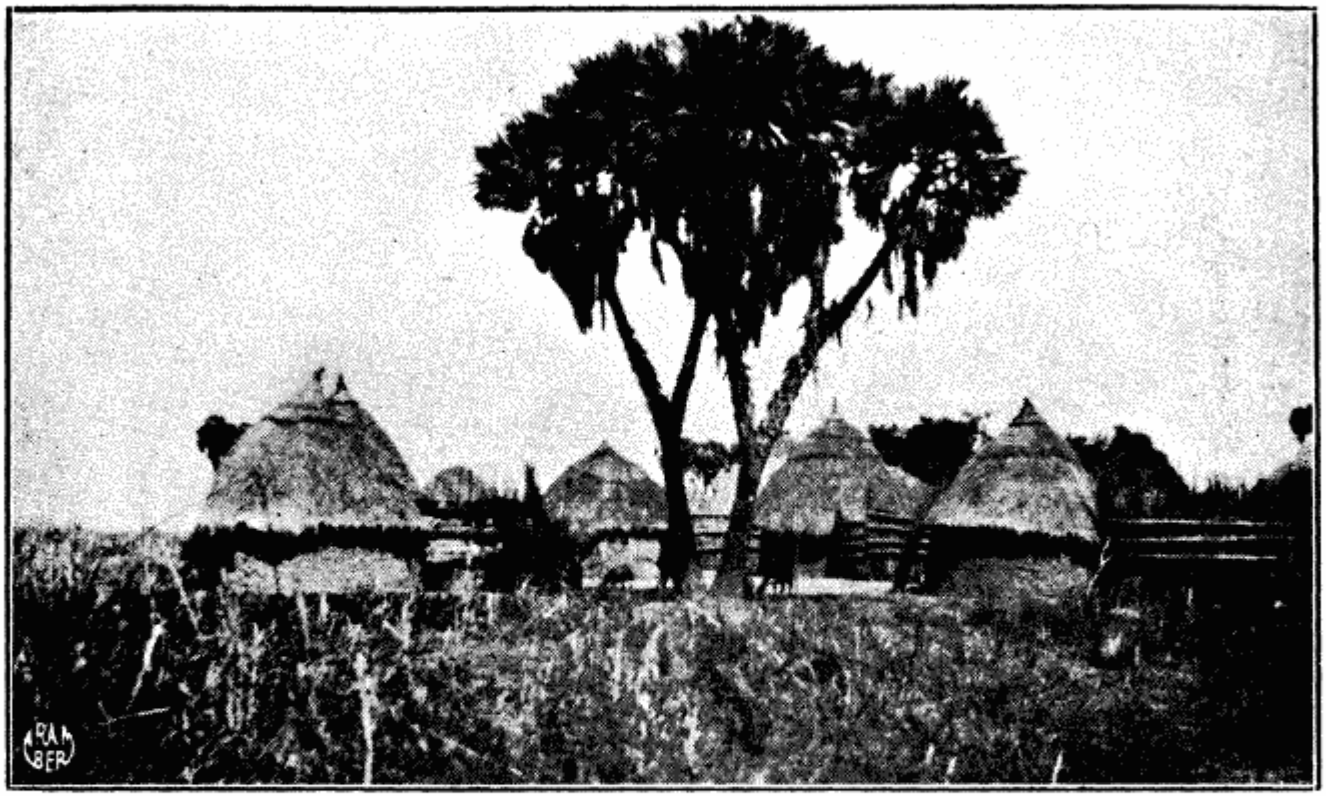
Thus Kwa Jāng have the ostrich for their totem owing to the fact that Jāng Nyikang married a Dinka wife.

Kwa Dung, of which clan the founder Adung was a Dinka, claim the same creature as an ancestor. In neither of these cases may the clans eat of the ostrich or their teeth would drop out and they would die. If an ostrich were even to touch their grain they would be unable to eat it and would have to exchange it with some belonging to a neighbour.

Kwa Wāng may not eat the fish *eshura* (2) as the ancestor of the clan hid

(1) Westerman p. 127 gives a list of seventy five.

(2) *Heterobranchus Bidorsalis.*



A Shilluk Settlement:

The Huts are of a different type from those of the Nuer.

Face page 178.

this particular kind of fish when Nyikang was looking for some to eat. They would die were they to do so.

In all these cases the totem is referred to as *kwan* (grandfather or ancestor) or *wadgin* (relative).

The crocodile is also taboo to any of the Shilluk who have the spirit *(rit)* of the King in them. Formerly none of the Shilluk would eat the flesh of this creature and the children were even said to be able to play with it and ride on its back. One day, however, a crocodile *(nang)* seized a cow of Dok, the son of Nikawn. Dok killed the crocodile and ate it, which so enraged the older crocodiles that they said that as human beings ate them so would they eat the Shilluk. Since that date all the Shilluk, with the exception of the Bāng Rit, (servants of the spirit) have eaten the crocodile.

In this connection it is interesting to recall the fact that, according to some accounts, Nikia—the mother of Nikawn—was a twin sister of a crocodile. Thus a parallel is established with the usual Nuer belief.

The fox *(ogwuk)* is not eaten by some Shilluk whose parents or grandparents were members of a certain Dinka clan.

The ostrich is said to be held in reverence by all the Shilluk owing to the fact that Nikawn was brought up in the desert with the ostriches, and when he left his foster parent he decreed that this bird should be sacred. For this reason an ostrich egg appears on the graves of Nikawn etc.

15. The Sacred Spear.

When Kir emerged from the gourd a spear fell from Heaven near the assembled Dinka who carefully preserved it until Kir had grown up when they gave it to him with the promise that anyone who attempted to deprive him of it would fall down dead. At the same time a chisel and anvil were found near the spear and, for this reason, some of the descendants of Kir afterwards became smiths and makers of spears. It was by his orders that *shieng* Dawang of the Gargwang—the offspring of Maadjok—were formed into a special guild which sharpens all spears before war is made. If a man from this section wishes to have his spear made ready for fighting he can have it done without payment though other divisions of the Nuer must make some return to the craftsmen. When hostilities commence these smiths all participate in the fighting: it is said that they do not divorce their wives, though this point at present requires confirmation.

On the death of Kir the sacred spear, which was with Maadjok's mother, was taken by Niang who gave it to Matiung. After him Taar inherited it and

Yoi, Niaq and Koriom in rotation. In the time of Diett the spear was in charge of the Garjok section of the Nuer, but Diett quarrelled with his relatives and ran away with it and since that time it has always remained with the Jekaing. Tchang, son of Koriom, is its present guardian and he takes it with him whenever he moves from one place to another. When I saw it in March 1922 it was lodged in an ordinary *luwak*, or cattle kraal, near the Pibor river and was housed in a special grass hut which had not been completed owing to the fact that the Nuer had only just arrived at the river from their summer quarters. Tchang himself was a man of some fifty years of age and a chief of the leopard skin. He raised no objection to my seeing it provided he received some small remuneration. After the sacrificial offering of an unsuspecting goat had been made the matting that concealed the spear from the vulgar gaze was drawn back and I was allowed to approach but not to defile it with my touch.

The spear was about 2½ feet long, three inches broad at the top and tapering to a point. It was not a Nuer spear and may have been an old type of spear in use amongst the Dinka. It was not unlike the modern long Shilluk spear though not quite so broad as usual. The haft, which was all of iron, was some five feet in height and thicker than the average. The topmost two feet were smothered in cowrie shells, while below were odd bits of iron and beads of all descriptions that had been left by various suppliants. Most of these votive offerings had been attached to it by women who had visited the spear in order that they might have a numerous family or be assisted in their child bearing. A couch of *debka* (*) wood, eighteen inches long with a maximum breadth of about four inches, supported the spear which was held in position by a piece of wood three feet in height and surrounded with rush matting of the same length. As the matting was drawn aside all the assembled Nuer prayed to the spear, holding out their hands at the level of the elbow with their palms uppermost and shaking their hands gently up and down.

The usual form of prayer is as follows:

Mut kwei tung Gnoak Jok mut jungemo. "Oh spear, with the white point, stick of Gnoak (a subdivision of) Jok spear of the Dinka that one (†)."

At one time all the Nuer both in the Bahr el Ghazal Province and the Upper Nile used to sacrifice a bull to the spear during the rains. This custom

(*) *Cratæva religiosa.*

(†) The spear with the white point is interpreted as meaning "that breathes fire" or glints by night".

however seems to have fallen into desuetude and the spear is now regarded as the personal possession of the Jekaing section only who make sacrifices to it on special occasions.

The guardian alone is permitted to enter the hut in which the spear is housed. From time to time, as for instance when a foray is contemplated, each *shieng* collects bulls which are sacrificed to it. If, however, sections of the Nuer wish to fight among themselves the spear is produced and placed between the hostile forces which then withdraw. The sacrifice of cattle before war is only made when the Nuer wish to attack some such tribe as the Burun or Dinka. No sacrifice was made before the Garjak patrol in 1920, as the Nuer were themselves divided over the question of taking hostile action against the Government.

When this sacrifice is made the spear is thus addressed: "*Mut kwei wyu mut junka choalli Kir*". "Oh spear that breathes fire by night our help, spear of the Dinka whose name was Kir". (*)

16. Songs.

I have not been able to obtain any cradle songs or stories told to children and do not even know if any such exist.

All songs seem to begin with a high-pitched scream *Ei——ei* or *Ya——a*, as for instance in the following examples: *Ei——ei.*" In Ningdeung the chief Bwom gives judgments. In Ningdeung his reputation is known to the lions. Oh Heaven and Earth listen to my song. When we go to war I make all the people to flee before me. I kill them all. Nial (the hero) his bull is called Leirial. Yung his bull is called Chodd'yuk. I cause the Dinka to flee away." *Ei——ei.* "Makwei and Fook" (two Dinka sections) "we will fight them. The sons of Doar, we fight them. I killed one: his body became earth. I killed one called Deng, the son of Bak. His body remained with us. His people ran away. His eye was in his armpit. I killed Parak".

Ya——a. "Oh bird you say that you are hungry. I have killed a red horse of the Baggara Arabs for you at Dai Dit. I also killed four people but the

(*) Since writing the above I see that an account of the White Spear has already appeared in Sudan Notes and Records. Although I have little new to add I have not deleted the note as no account of the Nuer in the Upper Nile Province would be complete without some record of a factor that plays a very important part in the lives of at least half of them.

Dr. Oyler tells me that the King of the Shilluk also has a spear which has been handed down from one generation to another and is more or less sacred. Each chief also has a spear that has been in the family for some time. On ceremonial occasions he carries this special spear which is looked upon with considerable veneration.

fifth ran away and hid in the grass. I searched until night fell and you discovered him forme. The birds collected and their chief was in the midst of them with his bodyguard." (*)

Ei——ei. "We went out to war, we found Dinka of the tribe of Malwoal Gieirnyang. Malwoal said 'where are you going?' "We answered we have an old man with us and we go to war. His head is in the clouds, he regards not the earth. We are the stud bulls of a herd of elephants. Our chief is like a waterspout (?) none can prevail against him.' " (*)

These songs are usually sung at dances. On these occasions some of the more enterprising of the Nuer young men not infrequently seize the rahat (a fringe of grass or leather hung round the middle) of any young girl who takes their fancy and wear it themselves. This rahat is called in the Nuer language *twott*.

17. War.

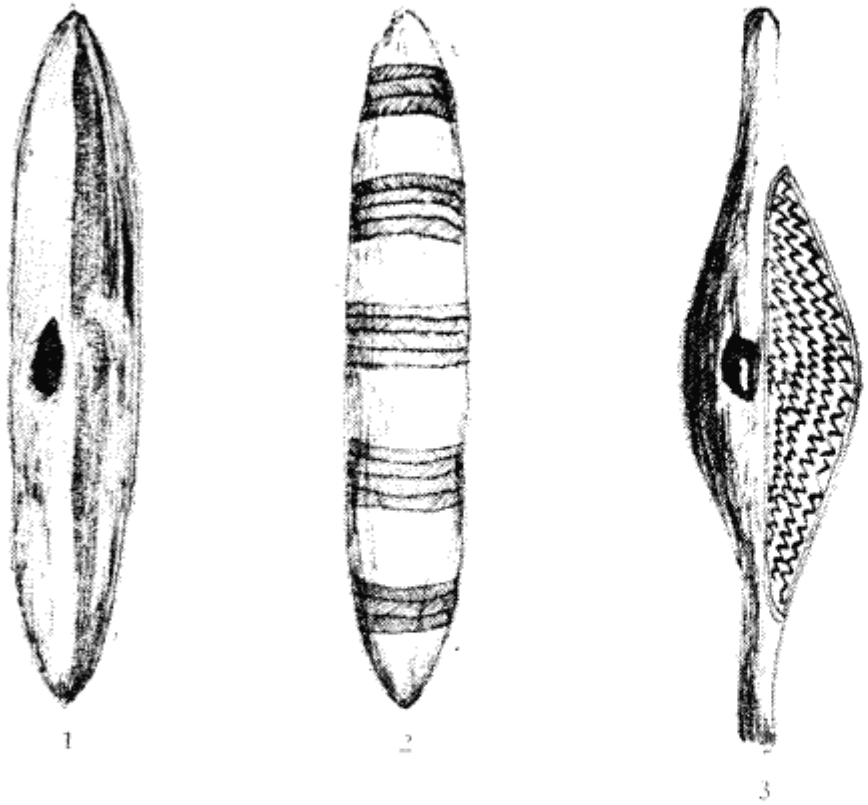
If a chief wishes to make war he sends a message secretly to a neighbouring chieftain during the rains and this man in turn passes the news on to his friends until the tidings has spread throughout the country, which it does in an amazingly short space of time considering the conditions under which the messengers have to travel. The information concerning the war or foray that is contemplated is only supposed to circulate amongst the older men who are regarded as less likely to allow any hint of the action they propose taking to leak out amongst the enemy.

As soon as the country begins to dry up and *(g)* Null has declared that the time is ripe for hostilities to commence, the wardrums are beaten and the young men collect with their spears and shields at a predetermined spot, the women at the same time making themselves scarce.

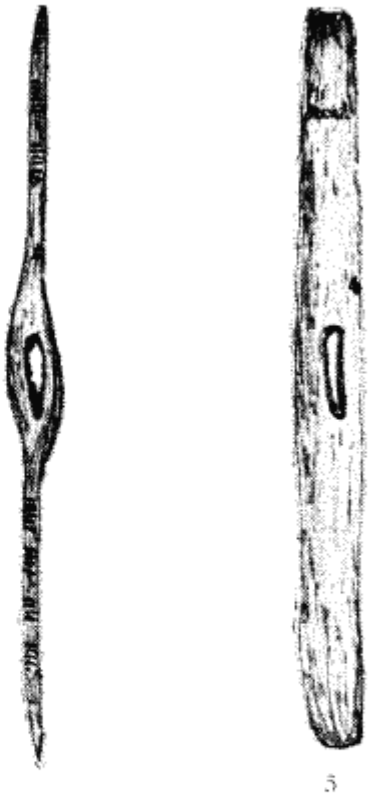
There appear to be two main methods of drumming, one for war and the other for weddings and dances, but I have not had an opportunity of hearing them. If a wedding is to take place the news has already circulated amongst the people, and the marriage settlement has been freely discussed by all the local inhabitants.

In the absence of any such information the people all realise that they are to collect for a dance only unless the special method of drumming indicates that the young men are to assemble for a more serious purpose. The men realise at once the meaning of this method of drumming and prepare for war

(*) Jekaing songs.



1. 2. 3 AUSTRALIAN SHIELDS



4. KWAI NGAL
or
dancing stick

5. KOT URKA

Face page 183/1

by shaving their heads, putting the skin of a civet cat round their loins and producing their shields which they do not carry at so festive a gathering as a dance or a wedding.

Theoretically certain age-classes are called up for a particular war or raid, but anyone who wishes is allowed to participate even if his own class has not been summoned to the fight. For warfare on a big scale the men are organised by *shiengs* and not by age groups, a method which, in all probability, applies to fighting generally.

If one section of the Nuer fights another section it is expected that each boy or man will seek out one of a corresponding age class (unless they have been initiated together) and indulge in single combat with him. A young man, for instance, would not take the lists against an elderly one. Moreover, if a third turns up in the middle of a tourney he is not expected to take sides. How far it would be possible, in the heat of a furious fight, to observe these niceties of conduct it is difficult to say. At the same time it is an interesting symptom of some latent feeling of chivalry among the Nuer that such regulations could even be formulated.

Schweinfurth (*), writing in the year 1868, states that the bow and arrow was the chief weapon of the Nuer. These primitive implements have long been extinct, the weapons of the Nuer having undergone a rapid evolution during the past few years. As recently as two decades ago spears of ebony, the shin bone of a giraffe, the straightened horn of a roan, waterbuck, white eared cob, tiang, Mrs. Grey's cob were quite common. The heads of these spears (called *git* by the Nuer and *agit* by the Dinka who also employ them) are bound by a leather thong to the shaft which is inserted in the horn. This *git* was superseded by a more serviceable weapon of steel which is now in common use throughout the Nuer country though it is tending to give way before the rifle imported from Abyssinia. The quaint old weapons of antelope horn and giraffe bone will soon become extinct.

The ordinary shield is about four feet in length and is shaped somewhat like a pear. It is made of some such strong hide as that of a buffalo or hippopotamus. In this connection may be quoted at length the account of a shield which is described in "the Natural history of Man" (†) by J. G. Wood:

"A shield also made of solid, in which the triangular form has been developed in a very curious manner into a quadrangular shape. The handle is made . . . . . by cutting through two faces of the triangle, while the

(*) Op cit. p. 91.

(†) Australia, London 1870. p. 550.

front of the shield, instead of being a tolerably round face, is flattened out into a sharp edge. It is scarcely possible to imagine any instrument that looks less like a shield than does this curious weapon, which seems to have been made for the express purpose of presenting as small a surface as possible to the enemy. The fact is, however, that the Southern Australian who uses these shields has not to defend himself against arrows, from which a man can only be defended by concealing his body behind shelter which is proof against them: he has only to guard against the spear and boomerang, and occasionally the missile club, all of which weapons he can turn aside with the narrow shield that has been described . . . . . two feet seven inches in length, rather more than six inches in width and barely three inches in the middle . . . . . Such a weapon seems much more like a club than a shield, and indeed, if held by one end, its sharp end might be used with great effect upon the head of an enemy . . . . . The name for this kind of shield is Tamarang, and it is much used in the dance in which it is struck at regular intervals with the waddy."

These Australian shields may be compared with those of the Nuer to which they bear a certain rather striking resemblance.

A description has already been given above (*) of the *kot urka* which is not unlike the figure in the middle of the illustration facing page 128.

Kot urka literally means the shield of ambatch and is usually referred to as *kom*. The Nuer themselves say that originally it was used by old men as a pillow, seat or purse. Afterwards it was found useful as a shield and was adopted by all the men. It seems more probable that this is a perversion of the evolution of the article in question. It is now in universal use for the first three purposes and would be of no value in warding off a spear or bullet. In times gone by however it might quite well have been effective against the missile club.

The same remark applies to the *dang* (†) and dancing stick which is represented opposite this page. The last named is called *kwai ngal* by the Sobat Nuer and *kot bool* or *kot* by the Garweir, Lak and Tiung. This stick is now only used by women and girls in the dance but as in the case of the *dang* and *kot urka* I suggest that it was originally used as a shield for parrying the blows of a boomerang or other missile club. If so it would be one of the most primitive of the Nuer weapons. The invention of the throwing or stabbing spear would render this particular means of defence inoperative and in consequence led to the evolving of the more modern shield of hide.

(*) Page 126

(†) Cf. Schweinfurth op. cit. I. 54.

It is interesting to note that both the dancing stick and the *dang* which are popularly supposed to have been used as shields in the first instance ar. now, like the shields of South Australia, frequently employed in the dance. (*)

The ordinary method of fighting employed by the Nuer is a straightforward frontal attack, the older men urging on the younger who sing as they march into battle. Occasionally scouts are thrown out ahead of the main body and these gradually withdraw in order to entice the enemy on to the main force. Ambuscades and other subtleties appear to have been occasionally introduced recently owing to the influence of deserters and other renegades from the Egyptian army, any finesse being alien to the ordinary methods of the Nuere

Petherick (†) remarks that they are the most warlike, noble and courageous negro race that he knew of, and certainly they are a formidable tribe against which to fight even if they are without the organisation of such races as the Shilluk or Zulu.

During the Garjak patrol in 1920 a dropping fire by night was not infrequently met with at the hands of the Nuer, but the scarcity of ammunition amongst them in the past has meant that this form of warfare has developed into nothing more than a rather ineffective and harassing nuisance.

Before making war the Jekaing offer a sacrifice to the Sacred Spear of Kir which is thus addressed "*Mut kwei wyu mut Jungka choall Kir*, Oh spear that breathes fire, spear of the Dinka whose name is Kir".

Conclusion.

At the present time the vast majority of the Nuer—with the exception of those congregated near one of the Government posts—are almost entirely untouched by European, or even Arab influence, and consequently afford a useful field for anthropological research. A gradual change in their habits and mode of living may, however, be looked for in the near future now that their pacification is more complete and administration closer.

For instance, the objectionable habit of spitting on one by way of greeting is now tending to become obsolete owing to the lack of enthusiasm with which it was received by the peripatetic Government official.

(*) Two of these dancing sticks which I obtained from the Lau Nuer measure 65 inches by 3⅛ at the broadest part, and 55 inches by 2½.

Professor Seligman tells me that he has seen a weapon very similar to the *dang* used at a Shilluk dance.

(†) Travels in Central Africa 2. 6.

Domestic cats, are now not infrequently purchased in Malakal by patients in the hospital, and others, and taken to various Nuer settlements in order to destroy the rats that often take heavy toll of their cornbins.

Wooden and other primitive hoeing tools are slowly giving way to a more effective implement of iron. Clothes are superseding the leather aprons of untanned hide—a process that will be hastened as game disappears. Half burnt match ends, variegated beads and other Brummagem ornaments are little by little ousting the ambatch necklets and grass rings that have in the past been the *dernier cri*. And, more especially, the introduction of rifles from Abyssinia, and iron and steel through the various Government posts for the manufacture of spears, is rapidly displacing the quaint old weapons made of ebony, antelope horn or the leg bone of a giraffe.

For the most part medical science has not so far been available in sufficient quantity to have had a very marked effect upon either the fertility of the people or their general welfare.

The peregrinations of medical inspectors, the extension of missionary clinics and the provision of a hospital ship, commissioned two years ago, should however bear fruit in the near future. Superstitious practices, and the baneful influence of the various witchdoctors who see, in the introduction of scientific and more up-to-date methods, an end to all their powers (and even means of livelihood) still dam the advancing tide of medical progress. By degrees, however, the people are gaining more and more confidence, not only in the Government itself, but in the different remedies that it supplies. The outbreak of small pox in 1920–21 which claimed many thousands of victims—largely owing to the recalcitrant attitude of the witch doctors who told the people that death would be the inevitable result of sampling the white man's medicine--ended by discrediting to a very large degree the maleficent practices of these reactionaries when the people saw the different results that attended the treatment by the Government and their own medical practitioners. The Nuer now evince a strong desire, not only to be treated by an itinerant doctor or District Commissioner, but even to walk vast distances in order to visit a hospital.

As a race they seem to be remarkably healthy, their worst scourges being yaws and syphilis. The latter is known among them as "the Turkish disease" owing to a belief that it was introduced into their country during the past century by the Turks and Arab slave-traders. But here too the people appreciate the benefits that accrue from an injection of neo-salvarsan which is now probably the best known medicine throughout their large territory.

In conclusion I would once more urge that the account given above must be accepted with considerable reserve, and subjected to far more searching investigation than I have been able to make about this tribe, before conclusive proof of the various customs discussed can be arrived at. The notes that I have put on record are at the best but the casual observations of one who has had no real anthropological or ethnological training. At the same time if, from feelings of modesty or fear of criticism, one waited before writing about a tribe (of whom little or nothing is at present known) until one felt that what one wrote was above all possibility of animadversion, few Government officials would have the time, or even the opportunity, to compile such a record.

Anthropology may be compared with a mosaic into which anyone, however ignorant, may put a stone. It remains for the artist with an efficient training and a proper knowledge of his task to put these various stones in their place, to shape them, colour them or curtail them until a homogeneous, flawless whole is obtained.

APPENDIX A.

There are said to be two distinct types of python in the Nuer country. One is reported to inhabit disused ant hills and to attain such proportions that the swallowing of a white eared cob or good sized antelope is a matter of no difficulty. The other is amphibious with an average length of between twelve and twenty feet, large enough to swallow a sheep or goat.

There is also a third kind of which rumours have come to my ears. I give a description for what it is worth of a creature that may possibly only exist in the imagination of the Nuer. At the same time there is no *a priori* objection to the existence of the serpent that the Nuer holds in particular awe. *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi.* It must also be remembered that stories of flying griffons and other monstrosities of nature were in the old days relegated to the realms of fiction until the fossilised remains of the mastodon and pterodactyl proved these fairy tales to have been based upon reality. These prehistoric creatures did exist at one period of the world's history and the remembrance of them was handed down from generation to generation in the traditions of a people who had in dim bygone ages only too grim a reason for their dreadful commemoration.

This serpent is called Lau by the Nuer and Dinka, to distinguish it from Nyāl a python, by which name the Shilluk appearently know it (*). It is

(*) Shilluk watching the Irrigation Department pulling in the cable after measuring the velocity of the Nile at Malakal think that an attempt is being made to catch this serpant.

reported to be of gigantic proportions and on occasion to exceed forty feet in length with an enormous girth. It is light brown or dark yellow and thus its colour differs from the green and black hues of the python: it is also characterised by a horny excrescence between the umbelicus and the tail.

This horn is about three inches long with a breadth of two fingers. By the furrow that it makes in the ground the presence of this creature is detected. The lower jaw consists of four separate bones on either side united by the chin and is of some four inches in length. The actual skeleton resembles that of a python very closely and its bones, when found, are carefully treasured for good luck and are regarded as sovereign against the power of the Evil Eye.

There appear to be more or less authentic cases of the finding of this creature.

About the year 1914 the complete skeleton of one was found near the Addar swamps and the bones divided amongst the Nuer, Bilal Tut being fortunate enough to obtain one. A few years ago one of some twelve feet in length was seen in the Bahr el Zeraf but the biggest of which I have heard any account was one, exceeding forty feet in length, sighted near Wau some twenty years ago. The serpent was killed by the local natives who are said to have made a human sacrifice to it afterwards. It is reported to be not uncommon in the swamps of the Bahr el Arab and also to be found in the Gazelle river.

Various fantastic attributes attach to it, which may be mere embellishments on the part of the Nuer without necessarily disproving the existence of some hitherto unknown serpent of exceptional size.

Thus some say that it has a short crest of hair on the back of its head not unlike that of a crowned crane: others that it has long hairs, reminiscent of some of the mud fish of the Nile, with which it entangles its unwilling victims and drags them into the river. In certain years, particularly during the rainy season, its belly is said to gurgle like the rumbling of an elephant. This noise was heard in the year 1918 in the Bahr el Arab.

The Nuer state that it inhabits holes in the the banks of rivers or swamps and spends most of its time in the swamps. They are in mortal dread of it and if they see the furrow in the ground that announces its presence they run as fast as they can in the opposite direction. If a Nuer sees this serpent before it sees him all is well but if the serpent happens to sight even a large party of them first all are expected to die.

The Addar swamps extend for some 1800 square miles: those of the Bahr el Ghazal and its tributaries must cover an area of many thousands of

square miles. Neither of these vast morasses has ever yet been explored and many parts of them have never even been visited. It is therefore not improbable that some addition to our zoological knowledge may ultimately come from these places.

There are so many stories current of this creature from places as far apart as the Bahr el Arab, Addar swamps, Bahr el Ghazal and Bahr el Zeraf that it is difficult to dismiss as untrue the existence of some hitherto unknown serpent not unlike a gigantic python. The existence of a bone or horn like substance near the tail would illustrate a step further back in the development of the serpent creation, the small rudimentary legs of the python marking an intermediate stage between the Lau and the ordinary snake as we know it.

The common factor in the various accounts given of this creature is that it differs in colour from a python, in the shape of its jaws, in its greater length and girth and there is no doubt that it is held in the greatest dread by the Nuer. They have a definite name for it and there seems no particular reason, if this serpent were not distinct from the python, why the Nuer should fear a twelve foot Lau more than he does a twenty foot python.

TABAQÂT WAD ḌAYF ALLAH.

Studies in the Lives of the Scholars and Saints.

BY

S. HILLELSON.

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1. The biographical dictionary or collection of biographies has since early times been one of the recognised literary forms in Islam. Amongst standard works of Arabic literature belonging to this class we may mention the Lives of the Prophet's Companions by Ibn Sa'd, (1) the Biographical Dictionary of Ibn Khallikān (2) and the Lives of Learned Men by Yāqūt of Hamā. (3) Biographical dictionaries were devoted to the various groups of celebrities known to the Muslim world such as wazirs and kadis, poets, philosophers, grammarians, jurisconsults of the different rites, sūfīs and saints, and the name *kitâb al ṭabaqât*—or book of classes—came to be recognised as the technical term for works of this type.

Towards the beginning of the 19th century Muhammad al Nūr b. Dayf Allāh of Halfāyat al Mulūk near Khartoum, conceived the happy idea of

(1) *Kitāb al ṭabaqāt al kubrā* by Ibn Sa'd (died A. D. 845)

(2) *Wafayāt al a'yān* by Ibn Khallikān (died A. D. 1256). English translation by M. G. de Slane, London 1843-71.

(3) *Irshād al arīb ila ma'rifat al adīb* by Yāqūt. (died A. D. 1229) ed. by Prof. D. S. Margoliouth, 1907-13.

collecting in a book of classes the mass of floating stories about the scholars and saints, who exercised such a remarkable influence on the thoughts and acts of his countrymen, and whose domed tombs form such a conspicuous feature of the landscape. His pious and conscientious labours resulted in the interesting book which forms the subject of this paper. The literary models which inspired our author appear to have been the volume of Sūfī lives by 'Abd al Wahhāb al Sha'rānī, an Egyptian mystic and miracle monger who died in A. D. 1565, and the Tabaqāt of Shafi'ite jurisconsults by al Subkí; from the former work he more than once quotes parallels to sayings and incidents recorded by him, and he refers to the example of the latter to justify the inclusion of his own father's biography amongst the lives of the scholars and saints.

The book, which is known as *Tabaqât Wad Dayf Allāh* or *Tabaqât al awliā*, contains notices of about 260 men roughly arranged in alphabetical order. These greatly differ in length according to the importance of the subject or the amount of information available. In point of time they cover the period roughly from A. D. 1500 to A. D. 1800, i.e. from the foundation of of the Fung kingdom to the author's own time. Their geographical extent likewise roughly corresponds to the political frontiers of the Fung: the author himself divides his territory into the two divisions of the North *(sāfil)* corresponding to the modern provinces of Dongola, Berber and Khartoum, and the South *(ṣa'īd)* corresponding to the island of Sennar. It is along the Main Nile to the North of Khartoum and along the Blue River between Khartoum and Sennar that the dwelling places of Holy Men and the seats of learning cluster most thickly. The White Nile, we are told, had once also been a home of learning, but the schools which had flourished of old in the country between Alays and Khartoum had disappeared by the time of the author, destroyed partly by the hunger year known as *umm laḥm* (1) and partly by Shilluk raids. Occasionally we hear of scholars from Tāka which is Kassala; but the Western Sudan (Kordofan and Darfur) contributes no heroes to the biographies, whether this be due to the fact that the author excluded from his survey lands not belonging to the political orbit of Sennar, or that the countries in question were still outside the pale of Islamic tradition.

Manuscripts of the *Tabaqāt* exist in the possession of various notables of the country: most of those seen were in a more or less tattered condition owing to the ravages of time, and a printed edition should be undertaken soon, if the

(1) A. D. 1684.

work is to be rescued from oblivion. The present writer, a few years ago, caused a copy to be made by an Omdurman scribe, who unfortunately added many mistakes to those of his original, and was incorrigibly addicted to the vice of *homoioteleuton*. The copy thus obtained has been collated with an ancient manuscript lent by the present head of the Dayf Allāh family, and apart from a few passages still unhealed, a readable text could be constituted. The text of the different copies which it has been possible to inspect represents a single recension, and the spelling of the colloquial forms is remarkably uniform.

The principal source of our author's information is oral tradition which appears to have been piously preserved amongst the descendants and disciples of each Holy Man; but wherever he has access to written materials he makes full use of them, and he freely quotes from letters and other documents: occasionally he refers to literary compositions ascribed to subjects of his biographies. Dates he records with praiseworthy zeal whenever they are known to him.

One of the most remarkable features of the work is its linguistic form, which makes it of unique interest to the student of Arabic dialects, though it renders the task of the translator and commentator somewhat difficult. With a bold disregard for tradition the author employed the spoken vernacular of his country, and apart from quotations and from such classicising forms as inevitably flow from the pen whenever the colloquial is reduced to writing, the language of the book represents the spoken idiom of the eastern Sudan, or rather a form of colloquial *koinē* based on the elements common to the many patois and sub-dialects. It thus forms a most valuable lexicographical store house, especially as it preserves a good many words which now seem to have become obsolete. There is no reason to believe that it was ignorance of the written language which drove the author to choose the vernacular, as the book itself proves him to have been well read in some branches of Arabic literature, and it is clear that he had received the usual training of the literati of his country who generally are able to use *naḥwī* Arabic with some fluency and correctness. It is rather to be supposed that he regarded it as a pious duty to record the sayings of his heroes and the stories related about them in the exact linguistic form in which they had been handed down by oral tradition, and it may be hoped that he was not unconscious of the fact that the rough and homely Doric, which so happily fits his theme, gives the book a literary merit which could not have been achieved by the use of the smooth and colourless *naḥwī*. (1)

(1) It is an interesting coincidence that an ancient Persian work of similar title and contents, the Tabaqat or Sufi Lives of Ansari, a holy man of Herat who died in A. D. 1088, is composed not in ordinary literary Persian, but in the old dialect of Herat. See J. R. A. S. 1923, p. 1 ff.

2. A study of the *Tabaqāt* has been included by Mr. H. A. Macmichael in the second volume of his History of the Arabs in the Sudan. Mr. Macmichael has justly appraised the value of the book amongst the sources for the history of the period and has given a full abstract of the contents accompanied by a selection of significant passages and explanatory notes. He has been particularly happy in elucidating the dates and family relationships of the subjects of the biographies and in extracting the historical information from the text: the merit of his study is not seriously affected by a number of slips in matters textual and linguistic and in technical points of Muslim scholarship. His study however does not exhaust the interest of the book and it is the object of the present paper to give an account of an aspect of the *Tabaqāt* which has not been fully brought out by Mr. Macmichael, i.e. to attempt a study of the religious world in which Wad Dayf Allāh's heroes lived and had their being. As Mr. Macmichael says' the value of the book is not merely that it tells one for whom the majority of the *qubbas* that stud the Sudan were built, but that one gains some insight into the ways of living and thinking and speaking of the people of the land in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Many of their beliefs and customs, their superstitions and practical ideas, are revealed: and the fact that the author is not aiming at any such effect must obviously enhance the value of the information gained.'

3. A study of these beliefs and customs is not only of historical value, but has the interest of actuality for those who strive to understand the life and ideas of the Sudan Arab at the present day. It is true that since Wad Dayf Allāh's day there has arisen an educated class whose religious ideas are fashioned in the moulds supplied by the modern Muslim world, and whose intellectual life is in contact with the schools of Cairo and India : but though the educated wage earnest war against the 'superstitions' of their unlearned countrymen, and though a flood of new things and new ideas has poured into the country ever since the days of Muhammad 'Alī, it is yet a fact that the intellectual and emotional world of Wad Dayf Allāh's heroes still lives amongst that large majority whose minds are uninfluenced by the innovations of the 'Turk'.

A variety of views has been expressed by different writers concerning the part played by religion in the life of the Arab. Stress has been laid on the alleged indifference of the Beduin to the rites, and ceremonies of institutional religion—'the Bedawi in Arabia', says Doughty, 'passes for as good as a clerk that can say his formal devotion, and Palgrave asserts the same'. As far as the

Sudan is concerned it is clear from the writings of Bruce and Burckhardt, and indeed from the pages of the Tabaqāt itself, that such prohibitions as that of 'wine' were openly disregarded by the mass of the population; from the Tabaqât again we learn that side by side with the world of the saints there existed a world of 'rulers and grandees' on whom the holy ones looked much as the prophets of the Old Testament did upon most Israelitish kings. On the other hand the world has long been familiar with those outbursts of religious fervour, of which the Wahhābī movement in Arabia and Mahdism in the Sudan are recent and famous examples. The truth of the matter seems to be that the Arab is peculiarly susceptible to the psychological experience of 'conversion' especially where it acts with the force of mass suggestion, and this owing to the fact that in spite of a healthy strain of worldliness and even cynicism, his deeper nature calls for a religious interpretation of the universe and demands a religious sanction for all the duties which life imposes on him. A second point which needs to be stressed is that the individual, in striving to know and to be saved, requires a mediator between himself and an unapproachable and inconceivable God, and it is the fact that prophets, saints and holy men are conceived as mediators—as the *wasīla* indispensable to salvation—which gives them their peculiar virtue, and explains the irresistible power with which they sway the minds and acts of their followers.

4. While it seems possible thus to reduce the influence of *fakīs* and saints to a single psychological formula, we cannot fail to notice that the men who wield this influence by no means exhibit a uniform type: we find in fact that most of the currents of thought which at different times have agitated Islamic opinion have found a channel into this remote backwater of the Muslim world, and that the scholars and saints who fill the stage of the Tabaqât reflect in their different attitudes and types a variety of the spiritual and intellectual doctrines which have been the subject of theological study and controversy in Islam. In view of the isolation of the country and the backward state of learning it is not surprising that the reflection is extremely feeble, and that the subtleties of schoolmen and mystics, when transplanted to this barren soil, are reduced to the level required by scant scholarship and crude intelligence.

Amongst the followers of Islam, as well as in other systems, we may distinguish two main attitudes towards the religious life corresponding to different psychological needs of the human mind. On the one hand there are those for whom religion in the main is a matter of the intellect, and for whom salvation lies in sound dogmatic belief and the strict observance of legal and ritual ordinances. Of this tribe are the Scribes and Pharisees whose counterpart

in Islam are the theologians, commentators and canon lawyers, whose labours have created and handed down a vast body of learning directed towards a correct understanding of the sacred texts and a minute codification of the precepts derived from them. Another class of mind sees the essence of religion in spiritual experience and seeks salvation in the religious life, as exhibited in the sphere of conduct by asceticism and the annihilation of self, and in the sphere of knowledge by intuition and mystical contact with the Divine. In Islam this latter class is represented by Sūfism *(taṣawwuf)* and the religious orders *(ṭuruq*, sg. *ṭarîqa)* which are its later development.

5. The representatives of the two tendencies did not always see eye to eye: the champions of orthodox tradition were not unreasonably alarmed at the pretensions of those who set the flights of individual fancy above the letter of the law, while the mystics scorned the earthbound narrowness of the formalists. During the earlier period the controversy was often charged with bitterness, and the Scribes and Pharisees strove hard to stamp the mystics with the brand of heresy and unbelief, but the catholicity of Islam has found it possible to retain the followers of both parties within its fold. The compromise was the work of al Ghazālī (died A.D. 1111) who after gaining eminence in the sphere of orthodox learning renounced the world and sought knowledge and salvation in the contemplative life. 'The doctrine of al Ghazālī broke down the barrier which separated sūfism from the prevailing religious attitude, and gave it a rightful place as a normal element of the Muslim faith. He aimed at spiritualising the dry formalism of the ruling theology by means of ideas derived from mysticism . . . . . but he parted company with the sūfīs in his rejection of their pantheistic aims and of their contempt for the Law.' (Goldziher, Vorlesungen uber den Islam, p. 179). The teaching of al Ghazālī has profoundly influenced the consensus of Islam, but for practical purposes it has only produced a truce and no true reconciliation of the two opposing factions. The formalism of the casuists still prevails at al Azhar, and the mysticism of the sūfīs survives in a degenerate form amongst the followers of holy men and in the organised worship of the *ṭuruq*. The populace, indifferent to theological controversies, honours the memory of pantheist philosophers like Ibn al 'Arabī, and seeks the blessings of wonder working shaykhs, while paying due respect to the be-turbaned *'ālim* who expounds the casuistry of the Law. The ancient quarrel between *Fiqh* and *Taṣawwuf* had its echo in the Sudan, but the pious author of the Tabaqât follows the popular instinct and without criticism or undue preference includes in his catalogue of worthies all kinds and conditions of men, from the modest seeker after formal learning to the antinomian

(malāmatī) and the spiritual anarchist *(magdhāb)*, about whom more anon.

6. Nor did the quarrel appear acute to the minds of the majority, and many aspirants to the religious life sought to combine instruction in the books of learning with progress on the sūfī path. Most biographies give an account of the course of studies pursued by their hero and the names of the teachers are carefully recorded, for great importance was attached to the continuity of tradition and to spiritual pedigrees, and the saying held that one who studied without a shaykh could never become a true *'ālim (mā naḥsib al beyiqrā belā shaykh yibqa 'ālim)*. The following examples are typical of many others:

Dayf Allāh b. 'Alī b.' Abd al Ghanī (died A. D. 1684) . . . a native of Halfāya. He memorised the Koran in the mosque of his native town, and studied the Mukhtasar of Khalīl and the Risāla of Ibn Abī Zayd under Shaykh al Zayn. His teacher of Tawhīd was Ahmed al Sāridī . . . and in sūfism he attached himself to *(saḥab)* Shaykh Daf' Allāh b. Abū Idrīs.

Mūsā b. Ya'qūb (a contemporary of King Bādi b. Rubāt) . . . He received initiation into sūfism from his father *(salak tarīq al qawm min abīh)* who was also his teacher in the Mukhtasar of Khalīl, the Risāla, and the 'Aqā'id, and under whom he memorised the Koran . . . He became an *imām* both in the external and the esoteric sciences.

Khōgalī b. 'Abd al Rahmān (died A. D. 1742) . . . a native of Tuti Island. He began the study of the Koran under the Faqīra 'A'isha bint Qaddāl, studied *Kalām* and sūfism under Faqih Arbāb, and became proficient in Khalīl *(tafaqqah fi Khalīl)* under Shaykh Zayn b. Saghirūn: for he was one of those who combine the study of *fiqh* and sūfism (*gama' bayn al fiqh wal taṣawwuf.*)

In another class of cases however the external and esoteric sciences are put in opposition to each other and the impression is gained that by some at any rate devotion to book learning was held to be incompatible with progress on the Path. We may quote the following instances:

'Abd al Māgid b. Hamad (died A.D. 1710). After memorising the Koran under his father and studying the Mukhtasar of Khalīl under Shaykh al A'sar he succeeded his father as teacher and lived a long life during which he gained great fame . . . He received revelations of hidden things whereby he was able to read the hidden thoughts of men, Thus when his disciples Sa'd and Hammâd, sons of Fakī Samīh, sought his advice as to whether they should pursue the study of Khalīl at al Gōz, he told them them to go and marry and beget children, for their lives would be wasted if they studied Khalīl . . . Disregarding this advice they attended eight complete readings of Khalīl

and died . . . Once the Qādī Mustafā b. Hunain went to see our shaykh: as he entered his presence he said to himself in his heart: my parents were younger than he is when they died, and he is still alive. The shaykh, reading his thoughts, addressed him saying: by Allāh, my son, I was sorely grieved at the death of your parents . . . Shaykh 'Abd al Māgid was jealous of his disciples and forbade them to seek initiation into the ṣûfī path, saying that his *ṭarîqa* was the Koran and the *ḥizb al baḥr* . . . His pupil Hamad b. 'Abd Allāh relates: I was initiated into the path by Bedawī Abū Dilayq to the great displeasure of my uncle; then I saw a vision in which I beheld my uncle seizing me by one hand and dragging me towards him, while Bedawī got hold of the other hand and drew me the other way: at last the prophet appeared and said to Abu Dilayq: do you contend with Walad Hamad about his son and disciple?

'Abd al Rahmān b. Sâlih b. Bān al Naqā (born A. D. 1708 or 1709). At first he adopted sūfism and received initiation into the Path from his father, who put him through a course of ascetic exercises and bade him go into retreats for certain periods. But when his initiation was complete and he had reached man's estate he occupied himself with the study of the external sciences (*al 'ulūm al ẓāhira*) and the acquisition of books relating to them, and spent much money on teachers and scribes. The reason for his devotion to the sciences was a dream: he saw his grand father (Bān al Naqā) flying between earth and sky and his father (Sâlih) behind him, while himself was following after the two, but they motioned him to descend to the earth and he obeyed. The dream vision was interpreted by Sharīf 'Abd Allâh as meaning that they wished him to occupy himself with the external sciences . . . . . .

A list is next given of the various teachers under whom he studied. In addition to the inevitable Khalīl and Risāla he read *'Aqā'id* and *Tagwīd*, Ibn 'Atâ Allâh, and the three treatises of al Sanūsi. He sent to Egypt and the Higaz for books of which he owned six cupboards full.

Dreams and visions are recorded on the authority of a manuscript in his own writing: The Almighty appeared to him in a dream and addressed him, saying that he had made him a successor of the Prophets and Apostles and had given him might in this world and the next. And in another dream the Prophet addressed him as follows: my love has penetrated you as the green branch is penetrated by sap. And again: You are under my protection and those you protect are under my protection also—on them the peace of Allah in this world and the next.

To our minds the difference between such men and the professed sūfīs does not appear very obvious, and it is characteristic of the age and the country that even these champions of formal learning live in a world of visions and dreams and lay stress on devotions which in their essential nature do not differ from the exercises of the *dhikr*. The following extract records the protest of a man of learning against the miracle mongering of the saints, but we notice that no disbelief in the reality of their supernatural powers is implied. It is quoted from the notice of Muhammad al Hamīm, an antinomian saint to whom we shall have to return later:

It is related that shaykh Daf' Allāh used to lie half the day amongst his womenfolk studying the books of learning for his lectures. One day his daughter Sittenâ said to him: father, the people of Walad Abū Sâdiq (i.e. Muhammad al Hamīm) have gained power over Fung and Arabs (by their miracles); for them elephants bring doleib palms from the south country to the north. His disciples take his horses from Mandara to the river, a three days' journey in in one noontide, and bring them back with their tails still wet. But from you and may brother Mahmūd we hear nothing but such words as *qāl al muṣannif* (thus says the author i.e. quotations from books). Shaykh Daf' Allâh sat up leaning on his hand and replied: The people of Walad Abū Sādiq possess the gift of having their prayers answered and thus have gained power over the world. But at the end of time all the foundations shall stand on the foundation of your father *(ākhir al waqt gamī' al asāsāt taqīf 'ala asās abūki)*.

7. It will be convenient to summarise in this place the studies and textbooks which entered into the curriculum of the schools.

The foundation of all learning was the Koran which it was the ambition of every student to memorise without troubling himself much about the meaning of the sacred words; no manuscript copies were used in the Koran schools: the teacher dictated from memory and the texts were written down, lesson by lesson on the wooden tablets (*lōḥān*, sg. *lōḥ*) from which they could be washed off, when they had been thoroughly mastered. Instruction in reading and writing thus inevitably accompanied the study of the Koran. The method of study followed a fixed tradition and the text was divided and subdivided into a number of larger and smaller sections: the progress of a student could thus be gauged from the section or chapter to which he had attained (1). Of a practically illiterate

(1) The Koran is divided into 30 *guz'*; each *guz'* consists of two *hizb*, or eight *rub'*, or sixteen *thumn*, or 32 *kharrôba*. A *thumn* is the length of a lesson or tablet written by an advanced student.

Another division is into seven parts-*sub' al dirâsa*-one for each evening of the week. Note also the following expressions: *bâdi*, a beginner; *'âda*, a second reading; *dallâ al Qur'ân*, to go through a second reading; *dâris*, an advanced student.

person, for instance, our author says that he had read no further than the *zilzila* i.e. the chapter entitled Earthquake which comes early in the first section. A complete reading was called a *khatma* or sealing.

For many the study of the Koran was the end, as it was the beginning, of their scholastic career, and the *fuqarā al 'ılm* or students of theology formed a class distinct from the *fuqarā al Qur'ān.*

Next to the Koran the most popular subject was *Fiqh*, the ritual and canon law of Islam according to the system of Mālik, which was studied from two famous compendia—the *Risāla* of Ibn Abî Zayd of Qayrawân (died about 996 A.D.), and the *Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl, a Cairo divine who died in A.D. 1365. These handbooks still form the foundation of all legal studies wherever the Mālikī rite prevails, and the existence of modern translations into French, Italian and English testify to to their interest from the point of view of the Colonial administrator.

The next subject is dogmatic theology which we meet with under the names of *Kalām, Tawḥīd* and *'Aqā'id.* With regard to the first it seems clear that the term is not used in its original significance, which indeed belongs to an earlier phase in the development of Muslim theology, and it is doubtlessly loosely applied to what should more properly be called *Tawḥīd.* The *mutakallimūn*, or exponents of *Kalām*, aimed at a rationalistic interpretaion of dogma in the terms of philosophical categories borrowed from the Greeks, but the discussions and controversies to which their dialectic gave rise had long died down, and the agreement of Islam had accepted an authoritative statement of dogmas and definitions which was studied in the schools under the name of *Tawḥīd*—the doctrine of unity.

The textbook most in vogue in the schools of the Sudan was the *Muqaddima* (or Prolegomena) of al Sanūsī, a Maghribine writer of the 15th century, whose three treatises on the Creed (*'Aqīdat ahl al tawḥīd—Umm al barâhîn* or *al sanūsīya al sughrā—al murshida* or *al sanūsīya al wusṭā*) were likewise the chief sources for the study of *'Aqā'id*, a subject closely related to *Tawḥīd* and consisting of a statement of orthodox dogma in the form of a creed or articles of belief (1).

These three subjects—Koran, Canon Law and Dogmatic Theology—were fairly extensively studied, and the comparatively few who required still further

(1) In the notice of Muhammâd b. ,Adlân, who taught at Tangassi in ihe Sha'igîya country, it is stated that only the *Umm al barâhîn* was commonly studied in the Gezira of the Fung. It is remarked on as exceptional that this Muhammad b. 'Adlân also taught the *Kubrâ* and the *Wustâ*.

learning might find teachers expounding the sciences connected with the correct methods of reciting the Koran (*Tagwīd* and *Qirā'āt*); but other stock subjects of Muhammadan higher education such as Tradition (*Hadîth*) Exegesis of the Koran (*Tafsīr*) and Arabic grammar and Rhetoric do not appear to have formed part of the regular course of studies, though references are not lacking to individual scholars who are said to have excelled in them.

8. It would be altogether a mistake to take at their face value the eulogistic terms in which our author refers to the scholastic attainments of his heroes: it is true that they pursued learning earnestly and industriously, but owing to the isolation of their country they had never drunk of the main stream of Muslim tradition and their attempts to grapple with the mysteries of law and dogma are ingenuous and pathetic rather than profound. For many attendance at a 'reading' of Khalīl or the Risāla was more in the nature of a devotional exercise than a serious attempt to study law, and there is a curious anecdote which shows how in this atmosphere, the authors of dry and matter-of-fact law books might come to be conceived of as competitors for the devotion of their disciples just as if they had been shaykhs of rival Tarīqas. Muhammad wad Medanī, the eponymous hero of the now famous town, had studied Khalîl and the Risāla under al Qaddāl b. al Fardî, and upon the completion of his studies his shaykh placed in his charge a number of students with the injunction that he should lecture to them on Khalîl. But Muhammad wad Medanî had a dream or vision in which he saw himself writing on board a vessel, when Ibn Abî Zayd, the author of the Risla, appeared and 'took the rope of the vessel out of his hands.' Next he was visited by a mysterious dervish who after conversing with him enjoined him on leaving 'to lecture on the Risāla and give greetings to his father'; this visit was repeated a second and a third time and the visitor parted with the request that Muhammad should report the incident to his father. The father immediately understood that the visitor was none other than the prophet al Khidr, and Wad Medani forthwith began to lecture on the Risāla, devoting his holidays to Koran readings under Shaykh Daf' Allāh (*bil baṭāla yiqra lêḥān al subū' 'ind al shaykh Daf' Allāh*). His lectures on the Risâla proved a great success and were attended by as many as 500 students. And once when on a visit to Muhammad wad al Tinqâr, the latter suggested that he might change from lecturing on the Risâla to the reading of the great book' (*mâ taṇqul le qirâ'at al kitâb al kebîr*–perhaps Khalil is intended), whereupon Ibn Abî Zayd appeared in a dream in the shape of a lion ready to devour him.

A few more anecdotes may be quoted to illustrate the intellectual calibre of the 'men of learning' and the kind of problems which agitated their minds. During the time of Shaykh Idrīs b. al Arbāb (the end of the 16th century) the custom of drinking coffee and smoking tobacco had become prevalent, and though coffee was generally agreed to be lawful, there was divergence of opinion with regard to tobacco. A debate was held at Rufâ'a in the presence of Shaykh 'Agīb, the temporal ruler, between Idrīs b. al Arbāb and Sharīf 'Abd al Wahhâb: the former opened by categorically declaring tobacco to be unlawful, but was asked to produce his authorities: '*min râsak aw min karrâsak*–does this come out of your head or from your book?' He replied: tobacco has been declared unlawful by Sultan Mustafa of Stambul, and the rite of Mâlik enjoins obedience to the sultan and recourse to him in cases where there is no clear text emanating from the lawgiver. Furthermore I have been informed by the Prophet that it is unlawful, a revelation to which Muhammad al Hamîm and Hasan wad Hassūna can bear witness, and even Dushayn the Judge, who smoked until the day of his death, at first declared it to be forbidden. Said Sharīf 'Abd al Wahhāb: 'for me the practice of Dushayn is good enough'; but to clinch the argument Shaykh Daf' Allāh, who seems to have been present at the debate, sent to the tomb of Qādī Dushayn to put the question to the dead man and out of the grave came the answer: 'tobacco is unlawful, bid the shaykh pray that I may be pardoned for smoking'. This is a bit too much for our pious author who remarks parenthetically that a voice from the tomb may be a miracle, but cannot be used as an argument on which to base a legal ruling (*su'âl al mayyit lâ yatarattab 'alayh ḥukman* (sic) *shar'ī, innamā hūwa min bāb al karāmāt lil awliyā*). To make assurance doubly sure Idrīs referred the problem to Cairo where there were two doctors of the Malikī rite enjoying special fame, 'Alî al Ughūrî and al Laqâni, who held opposite views concerning the question and debated it publicly and dramatically in one of the Cairo mosques. As soon as the Friday prayer was over al Laqânî enjoined all believers to keep their places and addressed al Ughūrī as follows: tobacco has been brought by the Christians out of the Frankish country to cause trouble amongst the Muslimîn, and now you are stirring up trouble by ruling it to be lawful, whereas it is forbidden for three reasons: because it is an innovation (*bid'a*), because it is wasteful extravagance and because it is burnt in fire. Said al Ughūri: 'as for it being an innovation what do you say concerning the wearing of garments such as the Prophet never wore? and as for extravagance may not a man whose alimony for the support of his family has been fixed at three dirhems lawfully give

them ten? and as for it being burnt, is not coffee burnt likewise, yet may be drunk lawfully? Al Laqānī, worsted in argument, thereupon challenged his opponent to the ordeal of *mubâhala*—the mutual curse—praying that whichever of the two was wrong in his ruling should be struck blind. And soon afterwards al Ughūrī was stabbed in the head by a Maghrabi shaykh whom he had offended by one of his decisions and became blind in consequence.

He subsequently had a vision of the Prophet which convinced him of the virtue and holiness of Shaykh Idrīs and sent him 'the famous flag bearing the date of 981, and his turban and belt and length of cloth'. The debate may well be historical: for according to Brockelmann (Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur, vol II, p. 316) Ibrahim al Laqānī, a Maliki shaykh of al Azhar who died in 1631, composed a diatribe against smoking entitled *Naṣîḥat al ikhwān bigtināb shurb al dukhān*, while his contemporary 'Ali al Ughūrī (died 1656) is the author of a treatise entitled *Ghāyat al bayān li ḥill mā lā yughayyib al 'aql min al dukhān*—a full explanation of the lawfulness of tobacco in so far as it does not impair the mental faculties.

Al Medawwī b. Muhammad al Miṣrī (died 1684) lectured to large crowds at Shendi on the Risâla, on grammar, dogmatic theology, the sources of canon law, and logic; and in addition to his teaching work composed voluminous works 'worthy to be written in letters of gold', amongst them four commentaries on al Sanūsī's *Umm al barâhîn*. Yet when one of his disciples propounded to him the problem 'whether the ostrich is an animal or a bird' he owned himself defeated and set out with his disciples to Sennar, in order to discuss the puzzle with his friend 'Umāra al Khatīb who possessed a library of 'strange books on all subjects', and in these he hoped to find the answer. Our author relates how al Medawwī was honoured and loaded with gifts by king Unsa at Sennar, but omits to tell us how the problem was solved.

Saghīrūn al Shaqalāwī, who dwelt at Umm Markha and lived to an age exceeding a hundred years, was in the habit of permitting a wife to return to her husband after the triple divorce, without an intervening marriage to another man as required by law. For this he was reproved by 'Abd al Qādir b. Idrīs on the ground that he was making bastards of all the people. Saghīrūn referred him to his own mother who confessed that 'Abd al Qādir himself would have to be accounted a bastard if the decision of Saghīrūn were reversed: for she had been thrice divorced by her husband, and after remaining single eight years returned to him in obedience to a decision given by Saghīrūn, and subsequently gave birth to 'Abd al Qādir.

Of Ya'qūb b. Bān al Naqā, one of the forty disciples of 'Abd al Rahmân b. Gābir who reached the most exalted rank of sainthood called *quṭbanīya*, our author quotes, from an autograph manuscript, a judgment concerning a commonplace lawsuit which he regards as evidence for his hero's deep knowledge of *Fiqh*, although no legal principles are enunciated and the Arabic is ungrammatical. He is even more impressed by Ya'qūb's philosophical learning as displayed in the following passage in which the concept of *hayūla* (the *hylē* = *materia* of the classics) is discussed: 'know then that the controversy between the people of the Sunna and the materialist philosophers (*al ḥukamā*) concerning *hayūla* is not as to whether it exists, or not. It does exist, but the controversial point is whether it is created or uncreated. Now the *hayūla* of our father Adam is dust, the *hayūla* of the devil is fire, the *hayūla* of the angels is light, and the *hayūla* of the staff of Moses (which was changed into a serpent) is wood.

9. We thus form a picture of men earnestly striving after knowledge, eager to serve the cause of religion and good learning, but hopelessly handicapped by their isolation from the great seats of learning and by their thaumaturgic prepossessions. It should be remembered that even in Cairo and Stambul the period was one of great intellectual stagnation—the darkest hour of night between the brilliant day of Baghdad and Spain and the new dawn which began with the 19th century. In the matter of obscurantism and credulity there is perhaps not much to choose between the doctors and saints of the Tabaqât and their contemporaries at al Azhar, but the former were still further handicapped by the dearth of books, the poverty of their country and the barbarity of their surroundings, Their services to their faith and their country should not be underestimated: it was no small thing to keep alight the torch of learning amidst a desolation of barbarism and it may be said with some truth that they were the real missionaries who established Islam in Nubia and Sennar. No doubt the Fung and Arabs who overran the kingdoms of Dongola and 'Alwa were Muslims before their final victory, but their adherence to Islam seems to have been little more than nominal, until there arrived in their midst that first generation of scholars who started a tradition of preaching and teaching., The Fung' says our author, 'possessed and conquered the country of the Nuba, and early in the tenth century, the year 910, the city of Sennar was founded by king 'Umāra al Dunqasî. The town of Arbagi was founded thirty years previously by Higāzî b. Ma'în. Now in these countries there flourished neither schools of learning nor the reading of the Koran: it is said that a man might divorce his wife and she be married by another man the self

same day, without any period of probation (*'idda*) until Shaykh Mahmūd al-'Arakī came from Egypt and taught the people to observe the period of probation, and dwelt on the White Nile where he built himself a castle known to this day by no other name than the castle of Mahmūd al 'Arakī. And early in the second half of the tenth century Sultan 'Umāra Abū Sakâkīn gave lordship to Shaykh 'Agīb al Mangilak, and early in the latter's reign Shaykh Ibrahim al Bulādī came from Egypt to the Sha'igiya country, where he taught Khalīl and the Risāla; whence learning and *Fiqh* spread to the Gezira. Then after a short time came Shaykh Tāg al Dîn al Behārī from Baghdad and introduced the path of the ṣūfis into the Fung country. Then came al-Tilimsânī, the Maghribine, to Shaykh Muhammad b.' Isa Suwār al Dhahab and initiated him into the sūfi path, and taught him dogmatic theology (*Kalām*) and the sciences of the Koran, such as Grammar and Tagwîd and the Variant Readings etc. whence the scinces of Tawhîd and Tagwīd spread in the Gezira, for it is said that 'Abd Allâh al Aghbash and Naṣr, the father of Fakî Abū Sinayna, were his pupils in Koranic subjects. Then arose the saintship of Shaykh Idrīs b. Arbāb without the coming of any shaykh to teach him, though it is said by some that he studied under a shaykh who came at al Khatwa (?). Next arose the saintship of Hasan b. Hassūna by the grace of the Prophet on whom be blessings and peace. Further there came Hamad b. Zarrūq at al Sabābī, and Shaykh Muhammad al Miṣrī at Berber, who taught Tagwīd and Grammar and the Risâla, and his knowledge of Tradition spread abroad. All these shaykhs flourished during the reign of Shaykh 'Agīb which lasted 41 years until he died in the year 917. (1) Shortly after his death Shaykh Saghîrūn and 'Abd al Rahmân b. Hamadtu migrated from the Sha'igiya country to the Dâr al Abwâb (i.e., the district of Kabushia and Shendi); this happened during the reign of king Bâdi (2) while authority was divided between Qanīs and 'Agīb b. 'Arabī b. Agīb. And after a short time there came Rābi'a the daughter of Sayyid 'Abd al Rahmân b. Gâbir, that divine *Quṭb* and *Ghawth*, with her two sons Hamad al Aghbash and 'Abd al Rahmân, from the Sha'igiya country to Hilaliya in the time of King Bâdi and of 'Othmân b. 'Agīb. (3)

(1) This date given in the Ms. is obviously wrong. Shaykh 'Agib died some time between 1604 and 1611.

(2) Presumably Badi Sid al Qawm, who died in 1614 after a reign of three years. I do not know who were Qanis and 'Agib b. 'Arabi.

(3) This passage has been translated by Mr. Macmichael, op. laud. Vol. II p. 220, but apparently from an incomplete manuscript.

10. The tradition thus created was never allowed to die, and there were never lacking zealots and preachers who, undertook the ungratefeful task of 'commanding right and forbidding wrong, *(al amr bil ma'rūf wal nahy 'an al munkar)* amongst a people largely ignorant of their duties or indifferent about their performance. An interesting account of one of these zealots for the faith is contained in the notice of Hamad b. Muhammad, known as Umm Maryūm, a native of Tuti Island who was born in 1646. It is too long to quote *in extenso*, but a few of the more characteristic ancedotes will show how the influence of this grim puritan combated the worldliness and indifference of his contemporaries.

Umm Maryūm reproved his shaykh, Arbāb al 'Aqā'id, for reciting the prayer for the dead at the grave of a sinner, wherein he was acting contrary to the teaching of Khalīl. For a while Arbab refrained from this practice in deference to his disciple's zeal, but at length fell back into his ancient error, wherefore Umm Maryūm left him and settled on Tuti Island. Many came to him to seek forgiveness for their sins *(tāb 'alā yadayh)* and on these he imposed harsh conditions before he would be convinced of the sincerity of their repentance, bidding them give up fornication, usury, hypocrisy, pride, envy, tale-bearing and vanity. They were enjoined not to associate with evil livers or to give their daughters and wards in marriage to such. He insisted on the seclusion of women with such strictness that even their voices were not allowed within the hearing of men, and his disciples were taught to fix the eyes on the ground when passing a woman. He opposed the excision practised on the pudenda mulierum (which nevertheless still remains the custom of the country) declaring it to be contrary to the sunna of Islam. Penitents were required to give away in charity any illgotten gains in their possession, and to fast till the flesh raised up by forbidden or unlawfully acquired food had wasted away. His sons-in-law were obliged—under pain of divorce—to leave their wives in their father's care, lest his daughters should be corrupted in strange surroundings,—a custom which, I am informed, is still observed by the Maryūmāb, as the descendants of Umm Maryūm are called. And if any of the people of the Court (*al saltana*) would have dealings with him, he insisted that they as well as their attendants and servants and children should know the six pillars of belief *(arkān al imān)* and the five pillars of Islam. (1)

(1) The five pillars of Islam are (1) the confession that there is no God but God, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of God (2) the five daily prayers (3) payment of the poortax (4) the fast in Ramadan (5) the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The six pillars of faith are belief in (1) God (2) Prophets (3) the Scriptures (4) Angels (5) the Resurrection and Judgment (6) Predestination.

He found many followers amongst the Mahas and the Banī Gerār, and most of all amongst the women of the Fezāra tribe, a fact alluded to in the following verses composed by one of his disciples:

Our father of the patchèd cloak uncouth,
a bubbling well of wisdom and of truth,
who turned our hearts from wrong and sins away,
and taught Fezāra women how to pray. (1)

He was equally strict in the obligations which he imposed upon himself, and took the greatest pains to deal justly with all men: characteristic details are given of the meticulous care he took to distribute his favours equally amongst his wives, lest one should be preferred above the others, and of the domestic discipline to which he subjected his household.

11. Taking into consideration the general lawlessness of the times, the rapacity of princes and rulers, and the low level of public and private morality, there can be no doubt that the influence of the zealots and puritans was highly beneficial, however short-lived it may have been in individual cases. Though superstitious fears largely account for the estimation in which they were held, they often used their power in a way which made for a better and more civilized life, and it is interesting to find this impression, formed from reading the Tabaqât, confirmed by Burckhardt's account of El Damer, that 'little hierarchical state' governed by the Magādhīb, a family of Holy Men, whose founder Hamad b. al Magdhūb (died 1776) is the subject of a short notice in the Tabaqât. The date of Burckhardt's voyage (1814) takes us right to the end of the period covered by the Tabaqât, but it is reasonable to assume that his description is equally valid for an earlier date, and that the influence of the Magādhīb at El Damer provides an analogy to the influence of earlier fakîs in other localities. Burckhardt was struck by the contrast between Berber and El Damer, a contrast entirely to the advantage of the latter town, which not only was a centre of learning, but also enjoyed better government and order under the benevolent rule of her religious men. Even so, he was 'somewhat surprised to find that, notwithstanding the austerity of the Fakys a great number of Bouza shops, and houses of debauchery, were established all over the town'.

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(1) *Abûnâ abû dilqan muraqqa'.*
abûnâ l 'indo l rày wal sihh mufaqqa'.
abûnâ l mana' min al manâkir wal kabâ'ir
abûnâ l khalla l fazâriyât faqâ'ir.

Reference may lastly be made to the severe discipline of Khalwa life, which not only required disciples to render every kind of menial service to their shaykh, but imposed upon them aşcetic habits and long hours of study. The notice of 'Abd al Rahmân b. Asîd (died 1715) preserves the formidable time table of a Fakîs' College, in which lessons began immediately after the morning prayer, and continued with little interruption until the morning prayer of the following day. Put in tabular form it reads somewhat as follows:

(1) The Morning Prayer. (2) Repetition of the last day's lesson from Khalîl. (3) Correction of the tablets of the the *fuqarā*. (4) Opening lesson from Khalîl. (5) Lesson on al Kharrāzī, the Gazariya, and the Shātibīya (books on Koran reading). (6) Lecture on *'Aqā'id* and al Akhdarî and al 'Ashmâwī (the last two being writers on *fiqh.)* (7) The Noon Prayer. (8) Midday lesson from Khalîl. (9) The 'Aşr Prayer. (10) Lecture on *Tawḥīd*. (11) Same subject as number 6. (12) The Maghrib Prayer. (13) Evening lesson from Khalîl. (14) Parade of the advanced Koran students to recite their lesson. (15) The 'Isha Prayer. (16) The students' dinner. (17) Reading of the *sub'* of the Koran appointed for that night. (18) Retirement of the shaykh to this *khalwa*. (19) Private study of the shaykh in the presence of the students. (20) Tablets are washed clean, and a new lesson written. (21) Correction of the tablets of the advanced Koran pupils (*durrās* sg. *dāris*). (22) Call to the Morning Prayer.

On holidays the shaykh gave judgments and decisions (*yaḥkum wa yufīī*) and wrote amulets, and thus he carried on until his death.

It does not apper that this routine is quoted by our author as being of exceptional severity—for I am told that eighteen hours a day were the usual working hours of a khalwa even in recent times, but rather to illustrate the wide range of Ibn Asîd's teaching in contrast with that of other shaykhs who generally confined themselves to one book or subject.

12. On ṣûfism there is an immense literature in the East, and great store of Western scholarship. Its rise has been ascribed to an Aryan reaction against Semitic Islam, to the influence of the Neo-Platonist philosophy, to contacts with Gnosticism, and to borrowings from Buddhism and other Indian systems. It may be said more truly that it had its roots within Islam itself, but owed much in its development to the various influences mentioned. In accordance with its syncretistic development it presents a variety of forms and aspects, and has in the course of its history been many things to many different types of men. To some it was in the main a creed of asceticism and flight from the world, others developed the speculative side and founded philosophical

schools and systems of theosophy, in Persia it acquired a curious association with fine letters and especially the poetry of wine-bibbing, and to the populace everywhere it presented the welcome gift of an hagiology and boundless opportunities for the cult of saints.

Western students and admirers of ṣūfism have been chiefly attracted by its philosophical speculation and its poetry, but neither of these two features is prominent in the ṣūfism of the Sudan. The aspects of the Path, which most powerfully appealed to the heroes of the Tabaqât may be grouped under three heads: the ascetic life, the ṣūfic forms of devotion and worship, and the spiritual experiences and miracles of the saints.

13. Asceticism, to judge from its wide distribution in all countries and and creeds, appears to answer to a powerful human need, and in spite of the Prophet's express disapproval of monasticism, an ascetic strain existed within Islam since a very early period : similarly the association between the ascetic life and the mystical path goes back to the very beginnings of ṣūfism. The use of the words *faqīr* and *darwīsh*, both originally meaning 'poor', to denote persons who devote themselves to the religious life is characteristic of this association of ideas. The author of the Tabaqât is fond of relating the acts of self-denial and mortification to which his heroes subjected themselves, such as the wearing of the dervish cloak *(dilq)* with its ostentatious patches, the use of coarse food and frequent fasting, avoidance of worldy talk and the company of women, and frequent periods of seclusion in the retirement of the khalwa. As an example of the ascetic we may select Hamad al Nahlān (died 1704), better known as Wad al Turābī, who is the occupant of a qubba a few miles north west of Kamlin. Hamad, after attending ten *khatmas* of Khalīl devoted himself to the Path and lived the ascetic life : in spite of the entreaties of his friends he shut himself up in a khalwa, the entrance of which he caused to be bricked up ; of provisions he had three handfuls of *garaḍ* (the bitter pods of the *sunṭ* tree) and seven dates ; a little water and a *muṭṭāla* (a kind of bread cooked in ashes) of the size of a camel's eye were handed in daily through a small window. He came forth after 32 months of seclusion, and it was found that none of the food had been touched and that his *rakwa* was still full of water. Later he spent another 30 months in similar seclusion and come forth bereft of flesh and blood, with the skin sticking to his bones whence he was called *al naḥlān* (emaciated). His wife al Hāgga relates : when I went to massage the shaykh, I found naught on him but the skin upon his bones. And he said ; Hâgga, I have let all human attributes waste away from

me, take my cousin Abū Kasayba who is young and will beget sons. His poet said of him :

He has divorced this torn and broken world,
he has suspended it from the seventh heaven,
neither money does he ask of it nor the worth of a needle;
the covenant he made with his Lord he has not broken. (1)

There follow highly curious stories of Hamad's pilgrimage to Mecca, where he claimed to be the Mahdi, and of his dealings with Sulaymân al-Tamāmī, a general of Fung armies—but these must be omitted as being inappropriate to our present context.

It should be noted that the ascetic life as understood by Muslims, does not involve celibacy, but even of this supreme form of self-abnegation there are examples: Khalīl b. Bishāra, a native of Shambat, remained unmarried all his life, as did also al 'Agamī b. Hassūna who even refused the daughter of the Sultan of Stambul, when her father, believing in the saint's virtue, offered her in marriage together with vast wealth.

14. Closely connected with asceticism is the devotional or liturgical element of ṣūfism i.e. the forms of worship denoted by the terms *dhikr, wird* (pl. *awrād*), and *rātib*. The five daily prayers of Islam did not satisfy the ascetics and devotees, who desired a more emotional form of worship than that of the formal prayers: hence the institution of the *dhikr* which is founded on the Koranic injunction 'to remember God often'. (2) Each of the great fraternities instituted its own form of dhikr, and though the Tabaqât tells us nothing on the subject, we may assume that the rites of the Qādirīya and Shādhilīya were those most in vogue in the Sudan. Attention may be drawn to the term *karīr* used in the Arabic of the Sudan, to denote the dhikr, especially that of the Qādirīya: it is a word of onomatopoeic origin and discribes the noise made in drawing up and emitting the breath when repeating the name of God.

A *wird* is defined as a recitation of certain litanies or orisons performed at appointed hours of day or night (see Dozy s. v.). Such a litany consists of

(1) *Al dunyā um qudūd ṭallaqhā*
fi sābi' samawāt 'allaqhā
fihā ma bdūr ibra wa lā muḥallaqhā
al 'uqda al 'aqadhā ma' rabbo ma fakfakhā.

(2) Koran XXXIII 14.

يايها الذين آمنوا اذكروا الله ذكراً كثيراً وسبحوه بكرة وأصيلا

koranic passages and prayers arranged in a certain order, and there are several of these which enjoy great vogue amongst the faithful. The Tabaqāt mentions the *Hizb al baḥr*, and one famous all over the Muslim world, called *Dalā'il al khayrāt*: others now in use in the Sudan are the *Hizb al sayf*, and the *Hizb al Nawawī*. It is the custom for a devotee to adopt one of these for daily recitation, and his choice ought to be directed by his shaykh, as unguided selection is attended by various dangers.

The *awrād* are used for private devotion, and the word *rātib* is applied, at least in the Sudan, to similar litanies recited in assemblies or prayer meetings. Well known examples are the Rātib of the Mahdi, and those of the Sammāniya and Mirghanīya Ṭarīqas. The term does not seem to occur in the Tabaqāt.

Yet another form of devotional exercise is the repetition, a large number of times, of the 'majestic name' *(lafẓ al galāla*—Allah*)*, or of such formulæ as *astaghfir Allah*—I ask pardon of God—or the invocation of blessings on the Prophet. Thus Shaykh 'Abd al Rahmân b. Sâlih b. Bân al Naqâ imposed upon himself the pious duty of repeating the invocation of blessings 50,000 times a day for the period of a year, after which he contented himself with 12,000 times each morning, and at night repeating the majestic name 100,000 times; at the same time he used to read through the *Dalā'il al khayrāt* twice every day. For the purpose of keeping count a rosary of a thousand beads *(sibḥa alfīya)* was used.

15. The goal of the mystic's progress is the attainment of a state of spiritual perfection, an idea which is capable of various interpretations, but seems to be always associated with a process of acquiring transcendental knowledge by means other than those of the intellect. The mystic, who is suitably prepared by ascetic exercises or who, without effort on his part, becomes a vessel of the divine grace enjoys ecstatic experiences called 'states' *aḥwāl* which convey a certitude of conviction concerning transcendental truths surpassing that which is attainable by reason or the intellect.

The content of the truths thus experienced varies to an astonishing degree, and they are frequently expressed by means of metaphors derived from the vocabulary of erotic poetry and drinking songs.

The culminating point of the ecstatic states is a stage called *fanā* (annihilation, absorption), in which there is no consciousness of individuality and no sensation capable of being expressed by the imperfect instrument of language. 'This state', says al Ghazālī, 'is called absorption by the doctors of

mystical lore, when a man is so utterly absorbed that he perceives nothing of his bodily members, nothing of what is passing without, nothing of what occurs to his mind—yea, when he is, as it were, absent from all these things whatsoever, journeying first *to* his Lord, then *in* his Lord. But if the thought occurs to him that he is totally absorbed, that is a blot; for only that absorption is worthy of the name which is unconscious of absorption.' (*)

The spiritual experiences recorded in the Tabaqât resemble those with which we are familiar in other parts of the Muslim world, and the same vocabulary is in use. The ecstatic state is referred to as *hāla* or (*gazb, gadhb*—rapture) whence a person subject to this condition is called *magzūb* (maghdhūb). It is compared to fainting or sleep, and the return to normal consciousness is called awakening *(fāq)*. During such states of rapture the mystic may give utterance to sayings or verses which are unintelligible to those present; or he may display knowledge or learning which he does not possess in his normal consciousness. This language of ecstasy is called *shaṭaḥ*.

An example of such *shaṭaḥ* is preserved in the notice of Muhammad al-Hamīm b. 'Abd al Sâdiq, a notable representative of the extravagant type of *magzūb*, to whom we already had occasion to refer above. This man was a disciple of that Tâg al Dīn al Behârī, who is regarded as the fountain head of sūfī teaching in the Sudan, and it is related that Tâg al Dīn said of him: ordinarly it is the disciple who goes forth to seek his shaykh, not the shaykh who goes to seek the disciple, but I have come from Baghdad for the sake of this boy. Al Hamīm, though a saint and the spiritual successor of Tâg al dīn, was illiterate and knew the Koran only as far as the *Zilzila*, yet he gave utterance to this *shaṭaḥ* which, in the opinion of our author, is equal to the sayings of such men as 'Abd al Qādir al Gīlānī, Ahmad al Bedawi and al Rifā'i:

(*) Quoted from E. H. Whinfield, Lawa'ih, p. 70.

Though you have read, oh Qādī, (*) the laws of all the rites,
yet are you ignorant, oh Qādi, of the laws of our rite.
By your rite some part of our religion benefits,
but our rite is unintelligible to you, if we speak of it.
we have crossed the seas which were raging behind us,
and the Lawyers knew not whither we made our way.
We alighted in a wadi called amongst us 'annihilation',
and the wadi would not hold us, but we did not feel hemmed in.
We alighted close to the 'Two Bow Lengths' distance,
we halted at suns which put the sun of our light to shame.
We alighted on the Throne and the exalted Footstool and its Tablet,
By the beauty of our splendour we were clothed in garments of light.

16. A type of spiritual experience which Wad Dayf Allāh delights in relating, is the initiation of an aspirant into sainthood i.e. the first occasion when enlightenment came to him, and he found himself accepted amongst the holy men of God. It will be noticed that the ecstasies related in these initiation stories bear little resemblance to the annihilation of the Neo Platonists: it is not absorption in the Absolute, beyond time and space and attributes, which is experienced, but an introduction to a mythological world of Prophets, angels and saints, full of anthropomorphic details. We select the following two amongst these stories:

Shaykh Hasan b. Hassūna (died 1664) related as follows to his disciple al Kūfī: I well tell you, oh Kūfī, of my initiation (lit. the reason for my beginning and my first stage—*sabab bidāyatī wa awwal amrī*). I went forth to seek me a shaykh of the Path, and I came to Islang Island, where they honoured me and entertained me hospitably. So I said: these men who honour me are not my shaykhs. And I went to the island of Anqāwī, and there they honoured me also, and I knew they were not my shaykhs. Next

(*) ان كنت ياقاضي قرات مذاهبا فلم تدر يا قاضي رموز مذاهبنا
فمذهبكم يصلح به بعض ديننا ومذهبنا يعجم عليكم اذا قلنا
قطعنا البحار الزاخرات وراءنا فلم يدر الفقهاء اين توجهنا
حللنا بواد عندنا اسمه الفنا فضاق بنا الوادى فنحن ماضقنا
حللنا بقرب القاب روحاً من الدنا عرجنا شموساً اخجلت شمس نورنا
حللنا على العرش والكرسى المعلى ولوحها لبسنا ثياب النور بحسن جمالنا

Qadi Dushayn is addressed. Cp, the incident related below.

I made my way to al Matrafīya, where I found an old man, called Fakī Abokr (variant reading: Abū Bakr), and with him many people, assembled for a feast. Abokr said to one of those present: is there any meat? He replied: yes. Is there any seasoning (*mulāḥ*)? He replied: yes. Then he turned to me, saying: ho you fagīr, take the leavings of the bread, season it with water (*malliḥhā bil mā*), and eat. Thereupon I said to myself: this one who does not honour me is my shaykh. After a while he ordered me to fill his water bottle (*rakwa*) from the river, and when I went down to the bank, the bottle filled itself of its own accord, and came back to me without any human assistance. When I returned to the shaykh I found that he had assumed the shape of a young man, and thus he made his ablution and prayed, then he flew in the air until he reached the roof of the khalwa, and changed back into his former body of an old men. I said to myself: this is my shaykh, but he said: I am not your shaykh, go dwell in retreat at Ba'ūda; there your shaykh will come to you, and you will rise to great things; be a friend to my descendants after me. (And in aftertimes, says the relator, whenever one of the sons of Abokr visited Hasan, he used to embrace him and say: his father was a saint.) Thus I proceeded to Ba'ūda and went into retreat devoting myself to the dhikr and the worship of God. There the Prophet upon whom blessing and peace, came to me accompanied by 'Alī (or, it is said, Abū Bakr) and instructed me in the dhikr. And once, oh Kūfī, while I was lying in the khalwa, I saw a great star in the sky, and my soul attached itself to the star and left my body and flew upwards and penetrated the seven heavens, and I heard the scratching of the pens (*ṣarīr al aqlām* i.e. on the book of fate), and, oh Kūfī, if there could be a prophet after Muhammad, I would say I became a prophet. Then I came back (*) and fell upon an island in the salt sea, where there came to me a man dressed in two garments of wool and taught me two names, and walked with me two steps, and brought me to the hill of the Saghīrūnāb. There I came upon Shaykh al Zayn lecturing to 800 disciples, and as I approached them I spoke to them in a strange foreign tongue, so that they interrupted their lesson. Then I went forth and found a boatman, who put me in his boat, and I went to look for my khalwa. And I came upon my father, and found him busy breaking up a sakia rope. (†) (Not recognising me) he said: ho you fagīr, wait until we can take you to the khalwa, there is a

(*) Perhaps we should translate: my sould came back, and so on in the ensuing passage.

(†) *alas*, a very thick rope of palm fibre to which the buckets of the sakia are tied; when it is worn out it is broken up and used as fuel.

fagīr there in retreat. When I entered the khalwa, oh Kūfī, I found my own body there lying dressed in a gibba, (and so lifeless that) it would not have moved, had they sawn through it with saws. My soul melted to it and entered within the body. My father came and asked after the (strange) fagīr who had gone in, and I said that nobody had come in. So he went following my tracks, and I with him, until we came to the boatman, and he asked him who had crossed with him that day. He replied: a fagīr came and I took him across; then he looked at me as if he wanted to say: this is the man, but he kept silence. My father said: Hasan, the saints come to you, and direct you."

Our second initiation story is that of Sālīh b. Bān al Naqā (died 1753) who, incidentally, is the authority for the preceding story, having received it from the lips of al Kūfī. His own tale is related by Wad Dayf Allāh on the authority of a manuscript in Shaykh Sālih's own writing, and runs as follows:

When I was still quite young I saw my father initiating people into the path, sitting on an 'angarēb with me beside him. I prayed him to initiate me, but he replied that my uncles, Abū Nāib and al Zayn, would initiate me, hinting as it were at his death. After my father's death seven years passed, before I reached the age of puberty, then I was initiated by my uncle Sālīh Abū Nāib, and received the awrād from my uncle al Zayn, the two being brothers, sons of Shaykh 'Abd al Rāziq. After this Hamad al Samīh raided Shendi with an army, killing the king of the Gamū'iya and upwards of a hundred men; he ravaged the country, and carried off our slaves, our cattle and our sheep, amongst them two excellent camels belonging to me. I and my cousins went after him to recover our gear, and found him at al Bargōba: he restored to us some of it, and bade us meet him again at al Khashshāb, where he would restore the rest. In this very night I (had a vision and) saw Shaykh 'Abd al Qādir (al Gīlānī) sitting on an 'angarēb facing the Qibla. By each leg of the 'angarēb a man wearing a white turban was sitting. They put a white turban on my head, and adorned me with a necklace of ancient agate beads, of white and black colour, very bright. I made my complaint to 'Abd al Qâdir saying that Hamad had carried off my camels, but he pressed his face against me and said to the men who were sitting by his side: I want to speak to him of the world to come, but he talks of this world. Go forth, light the fire. When I was awake I heard the beating of a drum above my head, and told my uncle Abū Nāib of it. He laughed and replied: revelations begin with the beating of drums (*awwal al futūh naqāqīr*). Then certain men came to me saying that they had been sent by the Prophet and Shaykh 'Abd al Qâdir and they said to me: we have accepted you (as one of us) and we impose upon you

the recitation of the words '*yā ḥayy yā qayyūm*' a thousand times at the passing of the days and nights. When I informed my uncle Abū Nāib of this, he replied: as you serve God so will He aid you. Then the messenger of the Prophet took me to Shaykh Bedawī, and when I had given him the salutation, he lifted up his hands saying: may God increase your efforts towards Paradise (*Allāh yukattir maṣrūfak lil ganna*), amen. And an angel above him repeated: amen. After this, while I was in the khalwa, my soul left my body and went forth penetrating the heavens, and it heard the speech of God Almighty, or may be of an angel, saying to it: repent. And my soul replied: I repent in thy presence, Thou noble one. Then He said: will you mention me each day 100,000 times by the majestic name? My soul replied I will, my master, my lord. He said: will you mention me (again) 50,000 times. My soul replied: I will, my master, my lord. He said: will you mention my name 6000 times? My soul replied: I will, my master, my lord. And when I was in the khalwa I saw the Prophet, blessings on him and peace, and he turned to his left saying: Shamharūsh and Maymūn, arise with him. But I did not see them. Now this Shamharūsh is one of the companions (of the Prophet) and he is the Qādi of the Ginn. And he commanded me to read the Dalā'il eight times every day, and I replied that I would do more than that. But they (i.e. Shamharūsh and Maymūn) said: nay, more you are not able. Then they said that if ever the temptation of the devil (*waswasat Iblīs*) were to assail my heart, they would tap me above the liver. Then once again, while I was between sleeping and waking, the Prophet came to my khalwa with Gabriel behind him. And Gabriel said: dost thou give this exalted rank to this sinner? but the Prophet turned towards him and said: it is I that brought him (to this state). And the Prophet, peace and blessing upon him, commanded Gabriel, on whom be peace, to carry me up and he penetrated the heavens with me, until I came to a heaven where I was constrained to ask that he should take me back. But he replied: nay, the Prophet has given you (this privilege), and he took me even to the Well built House (*al bayt al ma'mūr*). Then he took me to Mecca and gave me access to the House, then to the City of the Prophet, on whom be peace, but the gatekeeper would prevent me from entering. But Gabriel said: hast thou not seen how he has filled the heavens and the earth with prayer? So I was given permission to enter, and found him (the Prophet) seated, facing the Qibla, and with him Shaykh 'Abd al Qādir and Shaykh Idrīs and Shaykh Hasan and Shaykh 'Abd al Rāziq and my father Shaykh Bān al Naqâ and al Khadir, on whom be peace, and 'Ali and Bilāl, God's grace be with them.

And the Prophet commanded me to press the right side of his body, and I said: oh my lord, Apostle of God, how dare I press thy body? You have attained (to this privilege), said he, by your invocation of blessings upon me. Then the Prophet commanded Gabriel to cover my head with a white turban, and brought a thread wherewith to bind the turban. Said I: oh my lord, Apostle of God, how dare I use thy thread? And he: if you wear not my thread, who will fear you, who show you reverence? Then the Prophet commanded the men (who were present) to endow me with gifts. Shaykh Idrīs, a dark man, big, but with little flesh, arose first and made obeisance, saying; I endow him with the sword of my power and the sword of my sainthood. Then came Shaykh Hasan, a thin yellow man with a bald head, saying the same words. Now the sword of his power had a silver handle, and the sword of his sainthood a handle of gold, and they placed them in front of the Prophet. Then came Shaykh 'Abd al Râziq, a thin dark man, verging on black, saying: I give him the sword of my power, but the sword of my sainthood is in the keeping of my son Sâlih. Then the Prophet commanded Shaykh 'Abd al-Qâdir to bring the fire from Shaykh Bedawi, and Shaykh 'Abd al Qādir sent for it, and they brought it from Baghdad; it was a darwīsh cloak twisted as a wick (? *khirqa fatīla*) with fire burning on it; they brought it in a red ruby resembling a copper war drum. Shaykh Bedawī came behind 'Abd al Qādir and said: I want the fire for my son, but 'Abd al Qâdir replied: your son is not sitting amongst us . . . . . (Six lines which are unintelligible and appear to be an interpolation, omitted). When the People of God had endowed me with their gifts they put some thing on my foot, which made a clanking noise, and said: we have made you to appear like the sun and the moon: we have made your exterior to be the Law, and your inner self the Truth, we have raised your head even unto Fez and unto Cairo.'

The author of the Tabaqāt informs us that the claims put forward by Shaykh Sālih in the preceding narrative are repugnant neither to the Law, nor to the human intelligence, and quotes a number of parallels from sūfī literature.

17. The saint is called *ṣālih*—righteous—or *walī*, a friend (of God).

The dignity of sainthood is not acquired by study, or by ascetic exercises, or by purity of life, but by the action of the divine grace which is conferred regardless of what mortals regard as merit or its opposite. For the ignorant and illiterate may be chosen as often as the learned, and the conduct of the saint may be such as to challenge the condemnation of those who judge by earthly standards. A glance at the pedigrees drawn up by Mr. MacMichael

will suffice to show that a predisposition to the saintly office may run in faimilies, but it would be a mistake to regard sainthood itself as hereditary. The *khalīfa*, or earthly representative of a holy man, is not himself a saint by virtue of his office or his descent, but only the carrier of a tradition, and the virtue and power inherent in him are not his own, but those of the dead saint.

It would be difficult to define sainthood in precise terms, but a sketch may be attemped of the most characteristic attributes by which saints are distinguished. There is first of all the enjoyment of spiritual experiences and ecstatic states such as have just been described, and by means of which the saint possesses esoteric knowledge concerning divine mysteries. He holds intercourse with the Prophet and the great Sūfī hierarchs, and he meets that mysterious personage al Khadir, a prophet sometimes identified with Elijah, who lives for ever in this world wandering from place to place. In the second place the walī possesses control over nature, whereby he is able to work miracles or rather, as Islamic orthodoxy will have it, miracles are performed by nature in his honour whence they are called *karāmāt*—honours; they are also designated as *khawāriq al 'āda*, which literally means acts or events contrary to the normal behaviour of things; or again the saint may be described as *mugāb* (or *mustagāb*) *al du'ā* i.e. one whose prayers are answered. Accounts of miracles occupy much space in the Tabaqât, and afford tempting material for quotation, but we may dispense with the relation of examples in this place, partly because they differ little from the wonder tales of other hagiologies, and partly because characteristic instances may be found in Mr. MacMichael's extracts.

It is sufficient to state that the miraculous powers of the saints have an exceedingly wide range, including as they do a knowledge of the hidden thoughts of men and of future events, power over animals and inanimate objects, ability to fly in the air and walk on the surface of the waters, the art of healing by prayer or incantation (*'azam*) and even of restoring the dead to life. These powers are usually exercised for purposes benefiting mankind, but may be used to punish the wicked who are overtaken by sickness or sudden death in answer to the walī's prayer. In this character of avenger the holy man is called *'aṭṭāb lil ẓalama*, from the verb' *'aṭṭab* to destroy.

The most important earthly office of the saint is to confer spiritual benefit on those who come in contact with him, a result not achieved by preaching or teaching, or by the example of a holy life, but through the virtue (*baraka*) inherent in him, which acts as an influence on his surroundings. He is visited

by the faithful with the object of partaking of this influence *(lil tabarruk)*, and though he may give material assistance as a healer and a worker of miracles, it is the spiritual comfort of his presence which is most eagerly sought by disciples and pilgrims. This *baraka* survives after the holy man's death in his descendants and in places and objects associated with him, more especially his grave which thus becomes an object of pilgrimage. Visitors to a grave are conscious of the feelings of awe and spiritual comfort (*sakīna wa waqār*).

The doctrine that the intercession of a saint may benefit the believer in the next life does not appear to be strongly held in Islam, but something of the sort is hinted at in the saying ascribed to Bedawī Abu Dilayq: be of good cheer, ye women of the Kawahla, I will be your (strong) rock on the day of resurrection, a saying also recorded of Daf' Allāh b. Muhammad.

According to theory the saints on earth form a hierarchy presided over by a *Quṭb*, or Pole, below whom there are various ranks such as the *Awtād*, and *Nugabā* and *Budalā*, who according to a saying of Shaykh Hasan walad Hassūnā are the troops of the Qutb. It does not appear however that these distinctions are observed with any attempt at consistency, and the title of Qutb is freely bestowed on numbers of men who are known to have been contemporaries: it is stated for instance that forty disciples of Ibrahīm b. Gābir attained to this exalted rank; and it is probably with a view to accounting for such inconsistency that we are told, in another place, that the term Qutb may be used in a general way, and not only to designate the 'Qutb known to the sūfis'. A saying of Idrīs b. Arbāb distinguishes three degrees of saints, high, middle and low: 'The lowest degree is this that the saint is able to fly in the air, and to walk on the water and to talk of hidden things. The middle degree is this that God grants him the creative power *(al daraga al-kaunīya)* whereby he says to a thing 'be' and it is. The high degree is that of the Qutb.' This saying well illustrates the boundless extravagance which prevails in the claims made by enthusiastic disciples and by the saints themselves, and it is not surprising that Muslim orthodoxy was occasionally shocked. It should be noted, however, that such language is not peculiar to the Sudan, for parallels abound in the hagiologies of other Muslim countries. (*) From the ascription of such attributes it is but a step to the assertion that the saint by virtue of his mystical absorption in the divine nature, is identical

(*) Cp. the saying of Ibrâhîm al Dasûqî, Ahmad al Bedawî, and 'Abd al Qâdir al Gîlânî quoted in Goldziher's Muhammedanische Studien, vol. 2. p. 289.

with God, and it is well known that there have been mystics who did not shrink from this last consequence. In the Tabaqāt we read the following curious statement, which occurs in the life of Daf' Allāh b. Muqbil al 'Arakī: 'Shaykh Balal al Shayb said: the name of my father Daf'Allāh is the Great Name of God. When writing amulets Daf' Allāh used but to write his own name, repeating it a number of times.'

18. The esoteric knowledge of the saints is regarded as infinitely superior to the formal learning of the schools, and lawyers and grammarians who deride the holy men for their apparent ignorance, are sadly discomfited. Thus Hasan b. Balīl, a *magḏūb* of Dongola, used to perform the miracle of walking on the water by virtue of the formula *ya ḥayy ya qayyūm*, but in his foreign way *(min al 'agāmīya)* he pronounced the latter word with *kāf* instead of a *qāf*. A forward disciple presumed to correct his pronunciation, but he sank in the water, and was only able to perform the feat when he imitated his master's mistake. Similarly in the anecdote of Hasan walad Hassūna quoted below a presumptuous disciple is taught that the saint's 'broken recitation' of the Koran is more acceptable to God than his own observance of all the rules of Tagwīd. The same point is brought out forcibly in the story of Abū l Qāsim al Gunayd, a grandson of that Muhammad al Hamîm, who is perhaps the most typical example of the antinomian type of saint:

'Like his grandfather Muhammad al Hamīm, this Abū l Qāsim was ignorant of reading and writing, yet when his father 'Alī al Nīl was about to die and they asked him who was to be his successor, he replied: the herdsman, meaning Abū l Qāsim who was herding the cattle in a shirt black with dirt and stained with the dung of his animals. And though the dying man's brothers, al Sūfī and Mustafâ both sons of Muhammad al Hamîm, were learned men knowing the Koran, as was also his son Sharīf, yet he pointed to none of these, and they said: Shaykh 'Alī is greater than we are and more advanced in divine knowledge; if he did not see good in him he would not appoint him. Shaykh 'Alī said: the true function of the saint is to guide aright in his coming and in his going; then he called Abū l Qāsim and embraced him exclaiming: what is mine is his, and whoever disobeys him disobeys me in my grave. Shaykh 'Abd al Râziq Abū Qurūn was present when 'Alī al Nīl died, and al Gunayd entered on his succession. Said he: oh my uncle, I have no learning and 'Abd al Rāziq replied: be of good cheer, you have spiritual comfort and power. *(abshir bil khayr sakanta wa makanta).* Then al Gunayd took his father's place and initiated disciples and taught, and was acknowledged both

by the elect and by the commonalty. Shaykh Daf' Allāh b. Zayn al 'Abidīn relates : when my grandfather 'Abd al Rahmân was dying at a place called Bayla during the dispersion which followed the Hunger Year *Umm Laḥm*, he enjoined upon my father that he should go to pay his respects to Abū l Qāsim al Gunayd. When the dispersion was over Zayn al 'Abidīn accordingly visited al Gunayd who welcomed him and said : your father's injunction was not in vain, Then (says Zayn al 'Abidīn) there came the call to prayer, and al Gunayd prayed perfunctorily so that I doubted about him in my heart. He turned towards me and said : Zayn al 'Abidīn, when you sit with people guard your thoughts, and do not imitate the Lawyers (*al fuqahā*) whose hearts are veiled from (the vision of) God.

19. The claim to freedom from the restrictions by which ordinary humanity is bound, was extended to the sphere of the moral and ritual law, and there arose a class of antinomian saints designated as Malāmatiya—the bearers of blame, whose standpoint is described by our author as follows: 'The Malāmatīs are a class of sūfīs who do things that are blameworthy and contravene the sacred law, wherefore they are repudiated and rejected by the people ; now some of them bring destruction on those who reject them, but others seek such repudiation in order to mortify their souls, and from fear of gaining fame.' (*) In this as in other things the saints of the Sudan did no more than follow a tradition which had arisen in other Muslim countries where antinomianism and sūfism had been associated since an early period. Wad Dayf Allāh relates examples of *lawm* from the Sūfī Lives of al Sha'rānī, such as the case of Ibrāhīm b. al Khawwās, who stole the clothes of people in the bath and walked about ostentatiously with the stolen goods under his gibba till he was set upon and beaten ; and a learned man of Nishapur in the tenth century discussed the tenets of these people in a special treatise, which has recently been studied by a German scholar. (†) A number of different ideas and tendencies are mingled in the teaching ascribed to this sect. There is first of all the protest against the hypocrisy of those who pray and do good works in public in order that they might gain the fame and praise of holiness : the Malāmatī argues that there is greater merit in leading the holy life under

(*) الملاماتيه طائفة من الصوفية تفعل اللوم وتخالف الشرع وتنكر عليهم الخلق بعضهم يعطب المنكر عليهم وبعضهم قصدهم انكار الخلق هضما للنفس وخوف الشهرة

Inkâr is the technical term for doubting or repudiating a holy man's claim.

(†) As—Sulamî's Risâlat al—Malâmatîja by Richard Hartmann. Der Islam, vol, 8, p. 157.

the cloak of profanity and even of evil fame. There is next the ascetic motive which causes the indignities and the persecution provoked by such a reputation to be welcomed as a form of spiritual discipline, and from this it is but a step to the deliberate provocation of blame and punishment by acts of immorality and crime. Professor Hartmann has pointed out contacts between these ideas and certain tendencies in Cynicism and in Early Christianity, and al Sulamī interprets the Malāmatī movement in terms of Islamic orthodoxy, as a form of supreme self-abnegation which makes the Ego an object of blame and detestation. Regarded in this light the Malāmatī teaching should be distinguished from the tenets of the Ibāhīs or antinomians proper, who set the moral law at naught from motives of libertinism or through disbelief in its sanctions; but it is easy to see how the pursuit of 'blame' could be made to serve as a cloak for unblushing immorality, or how the shocking behaviour of mentally deranged saints could be excused, and even glorified, as an expression of the Malāmatī spirit.

With regard to the saints of the Tabaqâ', to whom the term Malāmatī is applied, it may be said that the motive of 'blame' is not very conspicuous in their acts. There is Muhammad al Naqar, a son of 'Abd al Râziq Abū Qurūn, who may more properly be described as a type of the *'aṭṭāb*: he let his cattle graze in the cultivation of other folk, and brought sickness and death on those who objected. His victims were many, and his father said of him that if he did not tie his hands to his neck, he would leave no one unharmed: hence people called him al Naqar after the poisonous herb which kills the cattle that graze on it. In another famous case the violation of the moral law is represented as authorised by esoteric revelations from the Prophet: the tale is related by our author in two places, and we follow the fuller version given in the life of the protagonist, Muhammad al Hamīm:

'Now these are the acts of 'blame' committed by this shaykh: the number of his wives reached ninety, and he carried off a slave girl called Zurrayqa from her owners at Arbagī, and kept her as his concubine. He married the two daughters of Bân al Naqâ Abū Ya'qūb, whose names were Um Kultūm and Khādim Allâh, concerning whom he said, that a master could not be prevented from taking his slaves. He also married another pair of sisters, the daughters of Abū Andōda at Rufa'a. And it is related that he married a beautiful woman, called Halīma, at Atbara and as he travelled from al Mandara to the wedding feast, there went with him twelve led horses without riders, and his concubines mounted on others, and large crowds. (When they arrived)

the people were kept at a distance and a rope was tied and people said to one another; now the shaykh is going into his house. When he went inside he put his foot on the bed and pressed his breast against it, saying: now have I become the guest of God, my dwelling place is in the grave, it is incumbent on a host to show hospitality. This he kept repeating from evening until the break of day. Then the mu'adhdhin came to call him to the morning prayer, saying: Remember the right of God, my lord, the day has dawned. But he replied: why do they talk to me of prayer? am I not in the next world? did you not say, the shaykh has gone into his house? I have no house but the grave. And one day the slave girls sang songs praising themselves and jeering at the Arab women, and the bride wept. The shaykh asked what they had sung, and they repeated to him the verse:

He curses the Devil and worships the Lord,
and is swayed by Halīma's lightest word. (*)

To which he replied: aye, even thus.

Now it must be known that many opposed him strongly, and amongst them Dushayn the Qādī of Arbagi. One day Muhammad al Hamîm came to Arbagi to attend the Friday prayer, and as he left the mosque and mounted his horse, Dushayn seized the bridle exclaiming: you have married five and six and seven, and you take two sisters to wife, defying the book of God and the Sunna of the Prophet. Al Hamîm replied, that he had received permission from the Prophet, and that Idrīs (b. Arbāb) knew of this permission. Turning to Idrîs the judge asked, whether this was true, but Idrīs replied: leave him alone, this is a matter between him and his Lord. Said Dushayn: I asked for your testimony and not for your advice. And Idris: if one manumits a slave does he go back on the manumission? God has granted manumission to this man. Thereupon Dushayn pronounced the annulment of all those marriages, and al Hamîm cursed him saying: may God split your skin. And Dushayn was struck by sore illness which caused his skin to split like the skin of a serpent. Yet he did not change his mind concerning Muhammad al Hamîm, but on the contrary was but confirmed in his certitude, wherefore he was called the Just Judge.'

Thus far our author; but a sequel not related in the Tabaqāt is known to oral tradition; it is stated that the Prophet appeared to Dushayn in a dream, and revealed to him a fact which exonerated al Hamîm in the matter of the

(*) الشيخ يعبد الله ويلعن ابليس ويكون لحليمة طايعاً حنيس

two sisters: for the two women were daughters of different mothers, and the secret revealed by the Prophet was this that one of them had been conceived in adultery, wherefore the two wives were not sisters at all. Dushayn therefore let the matter drop, and was cured of his skin disease.

20. The border line between *gadhb* and mental disorder is exceedingly thinly drawn, whence the phenomenon of the mad saint is familiar all over the East. The reader of the preceding pages will have become aware of the psychopathic element in many of the incidents related, and our account of this side of the subject may be supplemented by reference to some of the eccentric saints to whom the term *magdhûb* is applied par excellence:

Salmān al Tiwâlī before his conversion was a sinner and acted as attendant on drinking parties, for whom he prepared their marîsa. He lived at al-Labaytor, a day's journey from Rufā'a, and his conversion came to pass through Muhammad al Hamîm, who met him when travelling from Rufā'a to al Mandara, and asked him to give water to his thirsty disciples. Salmân readily complied, and al Hamīm prayed that he might be filled with faith, whereupon he repented of his ways and attached himself to the shaykh to be instructed in the ṣūfī path. Enlightenment came to him, and he became lost in divine mysteries (*ingadhab wa sakar wa gharaq*). It was his custom to wear above his gibba a woman's waist fringe (*raḥaṭ*) and he fixed a bell to his right and one to his left, and thus he uttered *zagharīt*. His former boon companions at Rufâ'a called him mad, but he exclaimed: (*)

They call me mad—I am not mad—there met me the people of hidden treasures—and gave me pure honey to drink.

He abducted a slave girl, called Mannāna who was skilled in all drum rhythms, to beat the drum for him, and he used to call to her thus:

Oh Mannāna, beat the drum—thou hand maiden of God, not a slave of man. (†)

He performed many miracles and instructed many disciples in the path.

When Muhammad al Hamîm married the two daughters of Abu Andōda, as related above, one of the brides wept, because she would not be her sister's co-wife, and refused to let herself be combed for the wedding. The shaykh called on Salmân who said: oh my lord, and lord of Salmân's mother, what troubles the bride that she refuses? Then he went up to the girl clapping his hands and dancing, and sang to her:

(*) Gâlô lai magnûn—ana mâni magnûn—lâgônî nâs nâs al maknûn—isgônî 'asalan mashnûn

(†) Yâ Mannâna duggî l dallûka—khâdim Allâh al mâki mamlûka,

Oh you weeping bride—the people of knowledge have rushed upon you—they have carried you off and made you my mistress. (*)

During the dance he bent over her, as girls do in dancing when they shake their hair over the man of their choice, until she burst out laughing and became reconciled to the marriage.

One day his slave girl Mannāna, the drummer, addressed him saying; Master, you have initiated and instructed disciples, and your disciples have initiated and instructed others; will you not now give up this dancing? He gave her his promise, but when the 'state' came over him, he called on her to beat the drum as before. Said she: my beloved, my darling, what of the promise you made? And he replied: you lie, you traitress, I promised nothing. He died at the age of 120 and is buried at al Labaytor, where his grave is visited by pilgrims.

Similar stories are related of Ismâ'îl surnamed the Lute Player, a son of Shaykh Makkî al Daglâshî; though unlike Salmân he was a man of learning who had gone through the usual course of studies and lectured on the Risâla, on Dogmatic Theology, and the Koran. He was the author of a book on the Sūfî Path and on the ceremonies of the Dhikr, and composed odes in praise of the Prophet. He also composed verses (in the colloquial) in which he sang of women called Tahug and Hayba, using these names as the ancients did when singing of Layla and Su'dâ. (†) But, relates one of his disciples, when the mystic state befell him, he would collect wedding parties in the enclosure of his house, and play the lute for them while they danced: for every drum beat he had a tune, and his tunes would restore the mad to health and bewilder sane minds, and even move animals and inanimate objects. If his lute was placed in the sun it would play accompaniments to his tunes, at the mere sound of his voice without being touched by any one. He had a mare called Bint Bikr which they decked out in silk trappings with bells hanging from her: thus a man would lead her while the shaykh sang martial strains to her, to words such as these:

Bint Bikr al mardā wa aywā wa aywā (‡)
salaṭīyat al 'arḍa wa aywā wa aywā.

(*) Ya dâ l 'arûs al bakkai—ghârô 'alêki ahl al râi ga'alôki ghasîba wa sittai.

(†) The text of the specimens quoted is unfortunately too corrupt to admit of quotation.

(‡) Which perhaps may be translated: Bint Bikr the smooth haired, the broad spear of troops in ranks.

And the mare would dance to the sound of his voice, bobbing up and down, and playing with her fore feet and nodding her head, while the bells were tinkling on her neck.

On account of his amatory verses our author includes this man amongst the Malâmatîs. He was killed by Shilluks near Alays together with more than forty disciples.

21. To conclude our survey a sketch may be attempted of the position occupied by the saints in the social order and of the part they played in the general life of the country, subjects on which the Tabaqât provides many interesting sidelights. The ascetic ideal counselled aloofness from worldly affairs, and it was held by the men of religion that the powers of this world belonged to an order of things which had no relation to their own aspirations and pursuits. As it appeared hopeless to convert kings and rulers, it was best to pass them by and men are commended for not seeking the courts of kings, or for meeting the representatives of earthly power with indifference or haughty superiority. Yet there were those whom such aloofness did nor drive into the seclusion of the hermit, for a man might without inconsistency live amongst the splendours of this world and yet despise them. To live in the world and yet to be above it requires a higher degree of spiritual perfection than mere flight from temptation a point which is well brought out in the following anecdote culled from the notice of 'Ammār b. 'Abd al Hafîz (ca. 1770 A.D.):

This man was married to Fātima bint Sâlim, a lady of vast wealth whose slaves traded to Egypt and India, yet during the twenty seven years of their married life he never ate any food provided by her, and never used a lamp, saying that her wealth had come to her by right of inheritance whereas he had but married her person. Once when Fakî Muhammad walad 'Uwayda was visiting Shaykh 'Izz al din b. Nafi' al Monagil they discoursed concerning the merit of different shaykhs. Said 'Izz al din: Fakî Muhammad, you visit many shaykhs, now tell me, how does our shaykh Daf' Allâh compare with your shaykh, Qaddāl b. al Fardî, and with our brother 'Ammâr b. 'Abd al Hafîz? Muhammad replied: When I visited Daf' Allâh I found his disciples by the river, some of them revising their lessons (*yuṣawwirū*), others telling their beads, and others again engaged in the dhikr. The shaykh himself during the forenoon (*ba'd al nāfila*) would lecture on Khalîl, the Risâla, 'Aqâ'id, Tagwîd, Tafsīr and books of sūfism, and during the days I stayed with them I heard no reference to the things of this world except where it entered appropriately into the subject of the lectures. As for our shaykh al Qaddâl, his village has

grown so much that it is now continuous with the villages of Ghashaynāb and Faragāb. His disciples are Takruris and Arabs, and there is constant trouble: the Takruris muster to the number of 1700. He holds five courses of lectures: Khalīl, the Risāla, 'Aqā'id, al Gāmi' al saghīr (a work on Fiqh by the Imām Abū Hanīfa), and Ibn 'Atā Allāh (a mystic, died A.D. 1389); by his side there lay seven pebbles for the purpose of keeping count of any worldly talk which might be uttered: whenever this occurred he put a pebble in his mouth. 'Well done', said 'Izz al dīn, 'he saves himself from worldly temptation'. As for Hāgg 'Ammār, continued Muhammad, when I visited him I found crowds of horses, mules and asses at his door, and rows of shoes of the different kinds called *sarmūga*, Fung shoes and Arab sandals. Inside there were people sitting around in many circles, some discussing the trade of the Higāz, others conversing about the west country or the south, and others again of the king's court. The shaykh was right in their midst, with a rosary in his hand telling his beads, and when the visitors had risen he began his lectures of which he held twelve courses. And if one asked him concerning the conversation of the people he replied: I take no interest in a single word of it. Said 'Izz al dīn: 'All this worldliness does not tempt him; he has attained to greater perfection than the other two.'

There were in fact many ways in which the world obtruded itself on those who impressed their contemporaries with their spiritual power. Wealth would be showered upon them in the form of lands granted by kings and rulers, or of pious gifts brought by the faithful. Though the sterner sort might refuse all offerings others did not disdain to make regular charges for cures and amulets. The crowds of disciples surrounding the holy man had to be maintained at the expense of their shaykh, and though visitors might bring gifts, their entertainment was apt to prove costly. In an age of feudalism the holy man's village, inhabited by his *fuqarā* and his slaves, would form a small independent state, and we have already seen how El Damer in the eighteenth century was actually ruled by a dynasty of saints. The kings of Sennar and Halfāya, and the numerous small dynasts of the country fully shared the superstitious fears of the commonalty, and we hear much of the respect they showed to the saints and the gifts with which they endowed them.

The holy men were thus a power in the land, and Mr. MacMichael quotes several anecdotes which show them as intervening, with their influence or their miraculous powers, in the affairs of state (Cp. the notices of Khalīl b. al Rūmī Khōgalī, and Mukhtār b. Muhammad). Their way with kings and rulers may

aptly be likened to that of the prophets of Israel, and just as the latter sometimes met with persecution at the hands of the wicked, we read of troublesome fakīs who were slain and despoiled by the rulers of the land. Those who slew them came to a bad end, but supernatural powers and threats did not always afford protection against the ambition and the covetousness of tyrants.

Three forms of action, pertaining to the affairs of this world, are much lauded in the saints: to offer lavish hospitality to travellers and pilgrims, to intercede with kings on behalf of the oppressed (*al shifā'a 'ind al mulūk*), and to give asylum to fugitives whose blood is sought (*al marqūb*). The times were such as to provide ample opportunities for the exercise of the last two, and we gather that the influence of the saints did something to alleviate the horrors of which the land was full. We read of cases where even the grave or sacred place of a dead saint afforded sanctuary to those in danger. (*)

With regard to political conditions it should be noted that the modern centralised organisation of the Dervish Fraternities had not yet come into existence during our period. Readers of Mr. Willis's paper on the religious confraternities of the Sudan (S.N.R., vol. IV, 4) will remember that the Tarīqas which are of most note at the present day hardly date back further than the Turkish era, and their centralised government is of comparatively recent origin. The holy men of the Tabaqât derived their initiation into the Path either from 'Abd al Qādir al Gīlānī, or from al Shâdhilī, and in this sense they and their disciples were members of the Tarīqas instituted by those two saints. But the followers of the Tarīqas were not organised under a common head, as they are at the present day, and each holy man of repute formed an autonomous body of adherents, which continued after his death under the rule of his *khulafā*. The office of khalīfa was hereditary, though it did not necessarily descend to the eldest son. In many cases the appointment was made by testamentary disposition, failing which the succession might be disputed amongst several rival claimants. It was a favourite device on such occasions to appeal to the tomb of the dead man for a decision. The khalīfa inherited his predecessor's teaching office, and the right to initiate disciples into the Path; he was the guardian of the tomb, and administered the revenues derived from lands and slaves, and from the pious gifts of pilgrims.

(*) Cp. the Shukriya story in S. N. R. vol. III p. 48: they slew large numbers during the pursuit and none escaped save those who took refuge with Wad Abu Sadiq (read Wad 'Abd al Sâdiq, i.e. Muhammad al Hamîm), because the Shukriya respected the sanctuary of his masgid.'

There also might pass to him the guardianship of certain sacred relics left by the saints of old. Concerning such relics we read as follows in the life of Daf' Allāh b. Muhammad Abū Idrīs (died 1683):

'After leaving Shaykh Saghīrūn, Daf' Allāh lodged with his uncle Menōfalī b. 'Abd Allāh al 'Arakī at Um Shāniq in the up country *(ḍahra)* of Kīran, and he married his cousin Nūr al Hudā, who was his principal wife and the mother of his son Muhammad and of his daughter Sittenā. At this time Muhammad b. Da'ūd al Agharr came to him from 'Agīb and brought him the stools (*kakāra*) and flags and the gibba and kūfīya of Habīb Allāh al-'Agamī, likewise the spear of 'Abd Allāh al 'Arakī, called *Umm Krayshа*, on which were engraved the Names, and he said to him: these are the implements *(ālāt)* which your fathers deposited with me charging me to deliver them to Daf' Allāh, when he was grown up; now take your trust.'

It was in keeping with the wealth and influence enjoyed by many of the holy men that they surrounded themselves with the outward semblance of royal state, even aping the ceremonies and pomp of the court. A graphic description of such magnificence, taken from the life of Hasan walad Hassūna, is worth quoting on account of the vivid touches which it contains:

'The tradition amongst the people is that he had 500 slaves, each of whom bore a sword with scabbard tip and plate and pin of silver, and their commanders bore the titles of Sīd Qawm and Gundī, (*) and they also carried clubs. They used to trade in their well groomed horses to Taqalī and Dār Borqū and Darfur and Sennar and to the Awlād 'Agīb. His slaves became whole villages; and so many were the visits paid to him that they made two large zarības for the flocks, from which all through the day animals were led forth for slaughter or as gifts, while others took their place . . . . . In his enclosure there were many straw huts (*balawāt gaṭāṭī*) equalling in number the huts in the king's enclosure at Sennar, each hut being reserved for a special class of people, and there was a reception daïs (*dikkat al dīwān*) in front of the enclosure. Fakī 'Abd al Sādiq walad Hasīb, the famous scholar relates: Shaykh Hasan sent for me in order to consult me about certain matters. On my arrival I found that he was absent, and they told me that he had gone into the desert for devotional exercises. We lodged with the Makādī, (†) and after some days I heard a commotion in the village and the noise of *zagharīt*, and they told me the shaykh and arrived. We went forth to see the spectacle, and there came a short bald man wearing a horned cap (*qurūn*) and dressed in a *farda* of dammur; in his hand he carried a staff (*? mushkār*) wherewith he dispersed the people, and thus he went inside the enclosure. When the sun was down drums were beaten, and as the day grew cool, a big European bed *(farsha rūmīya)* was set on the reception daïs, and the shaykh came dressed

(*) These are titles borne by functionaries of the Fung sultanate.

(†) The Abyssinian, obviously a slave acting as steward or major domo.

in a long shirt, and sat down on the bed. The slaves then paraded before him to salute their master: they were carrying clubs, and each stopped in front of him saying: I am so and so. After them came the *fuqarā* to give the salute. Then came litigants and petitioners to give the salute and talk (of their affairs). After them came the Makādī saying that there was a woman with a sick daughter who was asking for a cure. Said the shaykh: let her bring an ounce of gold, otherwise I will not cure her. 'She has brought an ounce'. 'Then test it and weigh it'. After a while he came back to report that he had found the weight correct.

Now there was a faqīr amongst those sitting there, who murmured in his heart saying: he makes us write copies of the Koran, but does not pay us any ounces of gold. Also he mispronounces his words in the koranic passages recited in prayer, and all the gifts of God he retains in his own hands. The shaykh ordered the sick girl to be brought in and to be placed on the ground by the daïs: there he told her mother to clothe her in her waist fringe, and when this was done he addressed her saying: arise, and she got up as if there was nothing the matter with her. Then at the shaykh's order the mother clapped her hands, and the girl began to dance, and in her dance she bent over the aforesaid faqīr and shook her hair in his face. The shaykh turned to this faqīr and said: my broken recitation was acceptable to the Lord, but your recitation, though correct according to the rules of Tagwīd, was not acceptable. The Lord has seasoned my food with milk, and yours with water; what have you to say? The man replied: pardon, my master, in sooth you are a servant whom his master loves. And pardon was granted.

And the shaykh said to the shepherds: do not let my lambs perish but let them loose amongst their mothers, and milk their leavings. And later when he asked concerning the leavings the milking was found to be 18 *waybas* . . . . .

'Abd al Sādiq next describes a Ramadān breakfast to which Hasan entertained his guests. It was served by 120 gorgeously dressed slave girls, adorned with precious jewels, carrying dishes of *kisra*. Each of these was followed by another, still more gorgeously dressed, who carried a plate, and after each of these followed another with a gourd. The food served to the narrator consisted of two cocks, and inside each cock there were two pigeons and two small birds. But Shaykh Hasan's own breakfast was that of an ascetic: to him the gate keeper brought a basin of water in which *qaraḍ* pods were soaked, and a tray of *muṭṭāla* cooked in ashes. 'The shaykh drank the *qaraḍ* water, and dipped his bread in the *qaraḍ* before he ate. Then he rinsed out his mouth and arose to pray.'

With this we take leave of the Tabaqāt. The interest of the book is not exhausted in the extracts presented in this paper, for the writer's difficulty has not been to find passages of interest, but rather to decide reluctantly on the omission of many that could not be included. It is hoped that the reader has gained a not inadequate impression of that remarkable world which is so effectively presented in the pages of the Tabaqāt.

Note:—It is regretted that owing to typographical difficulties the translituation of Arabic words and names is not free from inconsistency.

A NOTE OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF COTTON.

by R. E. Massey.

In the course of his recent excavations in the western pyramid field at Meroe Dr. Reisner discovered various textiles which proved on microscopic examination to be woven of cotton. Textiles very similar in appearance were found some years ago at Karanog by Messrs Randall-MacIver and Woolley, and there can be little doubt that these also, though described by the discoverers as linen, (*) are really cotton. It is thought that a brief note on the early history of cotton in Egypt and the Sudan may be of interest.

We understand that the tombs at Meroe where these cotton fabrics were found belong to the Greco-Roman period, but there is some evidence that the cotton plant was known in Upper Egypt at a much earlier date. De Candolle (†) in his "*Origin of Cultivated Plants*" mentions that Parlatore, an Italian botanist, affirms that the seeds found by Rosellini in a Theban tomb of the New Empire were obtained from the tree Cotton, ***Gossypium arboreum***, Linn. De Candolle adds that as no sign of the cultivation of cotton in Egypt is found either in the writings of early historians, or on the carvings of monuments the seeds must have been considered as a rarity "peut être le produit d'un arbre cultivé dans le jardin, ou encore elles pouvaient venir de la Haute Egypte, pays ou nous savons que le cotonnier arborescent est sauvage". Balls states however that Fletcher visited Florence in 1908 where these seeds were said to be deposited, and failed to trace them.

The earliest literary reference to the use of cotton for textiles known to me is given by Herodotus (450 B. C.), Book III. Chapter 106, who in an account on the invasion of India by Darius (circ. 521 B. C.) writes as follows: "And further there are trees which grow there, the fruit whereof is a wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep. The natives make their clothes of this tree wool". Also in the same book, Chapter 47, when describing a corselet sent by Amasis, king of Egypt to the Lacedaemonians (569 B.C.)— "it was linen, and had a vast number of figures interwoven into its fabric, and was likewise embroidered with gold and tree wool".

(*) Karanog. Philadelphia, 1910. p. 27

(†) De Candolle, L'Origine des Plantes Cultivées, 1882.

The Egyptian priests and the Egyptian embalmers, according to the same author, used linen, but there is no doubt that cotton also was known in various parts of the ancient world at a very early period. The first good description of the plant is given by Theophrastus (*) who describes a wool-bearing tree: "They say that the island (Tylos- Bahrein in the Persian Gulf) also produces the wool-bearing tree in abundance. This has a leat like the vine, but small and bears no fruit, but the vessel in which the wool is contained is as large as a spring apple, and closed, but when it is ripe, it unfolds and puts forth the wool of which they weave their fabrics". Again, "They plant them in the plains in rows, wherefore seen from a distance they look like vines".

Other descriptions which may be quoted are given by Pliny in the 1st. century of our era and by Julius Pollux in the 2nd. century. Pliny writes.—"They call these trees Gossypinum. Tylos, the lesser, which lies ten miles away is even more fertile . . . . but the trees of Arabia, from which they make their garments are called Cynae with a leaf like a palm". And in his description of Ethiopia Pliny says "The Upper part of Egypt towards Arabia (i.e. the Sudan) produces a herb which is called Gossypion, or more generally Xylon, and the fabrics made from it, Xylina. It is a small plant and carries a fruit resembling the bearded nut in the outer husk of which the wool is borne. It is not to be surpassed in softness of touch or texture and whiteness withal. Garments made from it are worn for preference by the Egyptian priests". Julius Pollux writes.—"Byssine cloths and byssus are a kind of linen of the Indians. And even now a kind of wool is made by the Egyptians from a tree, cloths of which wool one might compare to linen except as regards thickness. The fruit grows even more thickly on the tree, like a nut with three divisions. This breaks open, when the seed is dried up, and a sort of wool is taken from inside from which the thread is made. They weave this with a warp of linen."

The literary evidence is thus enough to show that cotton was well known in antiquity in India, in the Persian Gulf and in Ethiopia, and Virgil refers to it in an interesting passage in the Georgics, Book II. V. 116 *ff.*

Divisae arboribus patriae. Sola India nigrum
Fert hebenum; solis est turea virga Sabaeis:
Quid tibi odorato referam sudantia ligno
Balsamaque et bacas semper frondentis acanthi?
Quid nemora Aethiopum molli canentia lana?
Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia Seres?

(*) Theophrastus, Historia Plantarum, Heinemann 1916, IV. VII—7—8 and IV.5—8.

There is another interesting reference to cotton in the well-known inscription of Aizana, King of Axum about 350 A. D. The king describes in his monument a successful raid which he had conducted against the Ethiopians. He sacked "Both towns of masonry and towns of grass huts, and sent expeditions up and down the Nile from the point of its junction with the Atbara. He seized their grain and their bronze and their iron and their copper, (?) destroyed their figures in their temples, and their implements for cultivating (?) dura and *cotton*" (*) (the word used for cotton in the Ethiopian version being the modern Abyssinian word). Though Meroe is not mentioned by name in this inscription, there has never been any real doubt that the reference is to Meroe, and the discovery of a fragment of an Ethiopian inscription by Prof. Sayce on the site of Meroe has settled the reference finally.

That the industry lasted on into the medieval period we know from a reference in Abu Saleh to the capture of a large quantity of cotton at Ibrim in Lower Nubia by Turan Shah the brother of Saladin in 1172–3. (†)

More than three hundred years later Pierre Belon, a French naturalist (A. D. 1517–1564) who travelled extensively in Egypt and the Near East (1546—9 A. D.) found the cotton tree in Arabia near Mt. Sinai, and mentions that the Arabs made cloth from the fibre, but apparently he did not see the plant in Egypt.

A most interesting reference for our purpose is in a curious volume on Egyptian Plants by Prosper Alpinus, (‡) in which a quaint illustration is found of Gossypium arboreum, Gotnem segiar (i.e, Tree Cotton Qutn esh shegar). Alpinus states definitely that the cotton used in Egypt is imported from abroad, but that there exists in Egypt a tree cotton which is grown only in gardens. The "wool" of this same tree cotton is used in Arabia to make those fine fabrics (believed to be the byssus of the ancients) which are commended by all for their beauty.

With Prosper Alpinus we enter into the modern stage; his evidence was required merely to strengthen the conclusions arrived at from the evidence of earlier writers that the cotton industry entered Egypt from the Sudan rather than *vice versa*. Whether the material found by Dr. Reisner was spun from the indigenous Tree Cotton or was imported from abroad is at present uncertain; from analogy with present day methods there is no reason why the short coarse hairs of the indigenous cotton should not have been employed in the manufacture of the fabrics so wonderfully preserved in the pyramids of Meroe.

(*) Crowfoot, The Island of Meroe, 1911. p. 37.
(†) MacMichael. History of the Arabs, I. p. 176.
(‡) De Plantis Aegypti, Venice, 1592.

ZANDE NOTES.

by Major P. M. Larken.

"La Langue des Azande" by C. R. Lagae and V. H. Vanden Plas, Missionnaires Dominicains. 2 vols. Published by Editions Dominicaines "Veritas", Gand, Belgium.

Vol. I comprises a grammar, some exercises and Zande legends, following some introductory historical notes. The latter are the work of M. Vanden Plas, M. Lagae being responsible for the grammar.

Vol. II is entirely devoted to a French-Zande vocabulary and is the joint work of both authors.

The first 65 pages of Vol. I are taken up by the historical notes referred to above. They contain a mass of information of the greatest interest and importance to all who are in any way connected with the aboriginal tribes of the southern Sudan and northern Congo. The author has remarks to make on no less than 40 of them and, though one would have liked fuller and more precise information regarding the Zande, he deserves the highest credit for his most valuable work.

The tribes of the region are many and some have been of considerable importance and must have played no small part in the kaleidoscopic history of this region. But as time goes on they are becoming permeated by the Zande influence, which is the master force of the country and in a generation many will only be remembered by name and the ethnologist will seek in vain for traces of their histories, languages and customs.

M. Vanden Plas has by his labours rescued them from oblivion and we trust that he is continuing his researches on the Congo side of the Divide. There are, however, several tribes and remnants of tribes on the Nile slopes that he is unable to reach, particularly in the Meridi District, and these call urgently for examination before it is too late.

It may be of interest to others besides M. Vanden Plas if some of the latter's notes be amplified a little from such information as has been collected in the southern Sudan. Did space permit, it would be advisable to extract the author's remarks on the various peoples and to shew them side by side with the

notes at our disposal. This being impossible, those who are interested will have to compare them with the book itself which could no doubt be obtained without difficulty.

BUGURU.

The Buguru tribe occupied, in the first half of the nineteenth century, a country on the left bank of the Were River, south of their neighbours the Bangminda and Huma. They claim that they were a people quite apart from these two, though their language contains points of resemblance to the Bangminda, and is practically identical with the Huma, language.

Like all the other aboriginal tribes of the part and at the time, they had only reached the clan stage of development. They possessed no paramount chief and inter-clan quarrels and feuds were the order of the day.

They were thus an easy prey for Bazingbi, father of Budwe (Yambio) who, some time before 1850, led a Zande army agains them. Their lack of cohesion rendered them incapable of resisting a force of invaders whose military organisation was comparatively high. Moreover, they say, there were in their country no convenient ranges of rocky hills up which to retreat and where they might have adopted a defensive attitude with reasonable hope of success. Their shields, too, were only leather ones, and not of plaited cane, which gave them a great disadvantage in battle.

Thus only flight was left to them. They crossed the Were and fled northwards to the Yiba River, and over it to the Iro River and the land of the Baka. The Baka attacked them, and the Buguru, being between two enemies, decided to return, though not as far as their original home, and submit to the rule of the chiefs, that is to say, of the Vungara, who were the ruling caste of the Zande tribe.

The Buguru are now to be found principally in the valley of the Sue River, north of Yambio. They speak their own language to a great extent, and still retain many of their tribal characteristics. For instance, they have no totems, their souls passing straight into the spirit world and only appearing to mortals in dreams. They have no knowledge of oracles or omens, or rather they had not until they learnt the art of consulting them from the Zande. They do not circumcise as a tribal custom, but the habit is now becoming general owing to Zande influence.

PAMBIA.

The name Pambia was given by the Zande to a large collection of clans living in the rocky country close to what is now Tembura Station and to the

west of it in the French Congo. They seem never to have possessed any collective tribal name, and M. Vanden Plas also finds that "leur nom authentique est jusqu'ici inconnu". It is very interesting to learn from his notes that a colony of them exists so far to the S. W. as the Gurba-Api watershed.

Our Pambia claim descent from the chimpanzees. They say that once a poor and lonely bachelor named Rumbe fled from somewhere in the West to the Tembura hills. He was out, one day after his arrival, looking for *gbara* roots to eat, when a female chimpanzee came out to him from the thick forests by a stream. He explained his poverty to her and she agreed to marry him. They lived together and she bore him first a son Gbungboruko, than a daughter Natagi and last a chimpanzee. Rumbe gave the girl to the boy in marriage, and from their union resulted the Pambia tribe. It is averred by the Pambia that if a baby cries in the forest and a chimpanzee hears it, it will carry it off to the tree tops for a day or two and then restore it to its mother. They look on the chimpanzees as their relations to this day.

In pre-Zande times, according to the present day Pambia historians, the tribe inhabited the valley of the Mboku river (27 E., 5 N.) and also the area between the Sue River and the Nile-Congo Divide bounded on the south by the Mongu and the north by the Dumo rivers. The clans composing the tribe were as follows :—

Bodugo, Vozupu, Obeli, Vobagida (Bukpwa), Vonomengi, Bokumburu, Batunga, Vokpira, Balubu, Vude, Bakuma, Bo'oga, Banzua, Vugaru, Baginangwa, Bungeti, Mabua, Bwegeti, Bashimbu, Bogbwaia, Bwendima, Bo'ombwo, Opakeri, Opia, Ombaragba, Merengo, Ndogu, Boseko, Obongbwa, Bakowe, Bagoma and Vonduga. The biggest and strongest of them all was the Bodugo. They have always inhabited the territory defined above, and retain no traditions of having come from elsewhere. They were so numerous that they say there was no unoccupied land along any of the streams.

They had no paramount chief, each family or clan being under its own head, and independent of any other. Fights between clans were frequent and at the conclusion of battles the victors ate the vanquished.

Some 70 or 80 years ago, a member of the royal (Vungara) house entered their country. He was Liwa, father of the late Chief Tembura, flying from his nephew Sanango with whom he had had a quarrel. He settled down in the Pambia country and was joined later by his wives, and from time to time by odd Zande. Eventually there were enough of the latter with Liwa to make it safe for him to announce that he intended henceforth to rule the land.

Only two clans resisted him, the Vozupu and the Bukpwa, and their opposition was easily quelled. His rule, though severe, was popular. He forbade inter-clan fighting and instituted a court of justice for the settlement of cases and discouraged cannibalism.

As more Zande drifted into their country, and bullied them considerably, they dispersed by degrees and found homes elsewhere, though they are still in very considerable numbers round the Tembura hills. They are a poor-spirited people and much looked down upon by the Zande.

Their language is very similar to that of their neighbours on the south-east, the Barambo, and is still much spoken.

BANGMINDA.

This is probably the biggest and most important tribe in the Yambio District to-day.

Before the Zande invasion they occupied the Congo-Nile watershed between the head waters of the rivers Kisi and Yubo (28.30 E. 4.30 N.) They were in the usual clan stage, though some of these were so large and powerful that they were able to wage war on their own account. They had no paramount chief. They deny that they were cannibals though they are charged with being so by the Barambo. The latter say that a Bangminda, on a rainy day, would excavate a hole in the floor of his hut and wait for a passer by. As soon as one came, he would be invited to enter the hut to shelter from the storm and be requested to sit on some freshly prepared leaves. As these were placed over the hole, he would of course, fall in, when boiling water would be poured upon him and he would be eaten.

Totemism existed among them, and the custom of consulting oracles obtained. They circumcised before the arrival of the Arab slavers. Males were buried facing east, females facing west, in the usual way.

Somewhere about 1830 they were driven east by the advancing Zande armies, and following a line more or less parallel to the crest of the Nile Congo watershed, they came to Mount Bangenze, at the sources of the Sue River. Here they found the Baka in occupation and drove them out. They continued to spread out in a north easterly direction until they arrived at the Yiba River, which they did not cross. They had to submit eventually to the Zande yoke, and they are back again now in their old home. Their dialect, though akin in some respects to that of the Huma, Barambo and Buguru, shows a marked difference to these languages. Readers of

Sir Harry Johnston's monumental work on the Bantu and semi-Bantu languages will find, in the second volume, some exceedingly interesting remarks on this point.

BARAMBO.

As M. Vanden Plas says in his notes, the Barambo "semblent avoir été un grand peuple". He continues . . . "Ils ont traversé le Mbomu peu de temps avant les Azande, qui en trouvèrent quelques uns au nord de l'Uele . . . . . Les descendants de ces quelques familles forment aujourd'hui des groupes minuscules vers la haute Api . . . . . "

As a matter of fact, these Barambo who broke away from the main body of their tribe must have been more numerous than M. Vanden Plas thinks. For, advancing beyond the source of the Api, they settled along the Nile-Congo divide from the River Mongu, (27.30 E. 5.15 N) which was their boundary with the Pambia tribe, to (they say) the River Lingasi, some 50 miles to the South-east. They are still in this country, and outnumber any other tribe of the Tembura District.

Their story of their northward emigration is this:

In the time when Mabenge, great-grandfather of the late Chief Budwe (Yambio), was ruling the Zande, they were attacked by the latter under his leadership on the river Katinga, a tributary of the Mbomu, and a flight to the north began. The first fugitives reached the Divide and found the Gbogu tribe there, and drove them out. The Gbogu are now extinct. They appear to have been of the Pambia type. According to a Barambo informant, "they wore skins and climbed rocks, and spoke a strange language which nobody knows now".

While they were settling themselves into the Gbogu country, Mabenge was occupied in persuading those Barambo who had not fled, to accept his rule. In this he appears to have been successful, for after a while he arrived on the Divide with a mixed army of Zande and Barambo. The original emigrants, seeing that their brothers whom they had left behind, had acknowledged Mabenge as their chief, doubtless decided to follow their example. At any rate there does not seem to be any record of fighting, and a Zande-Barambo expedition was sent out to the north which reached the Kito stream, some hundred miles distant, and, after defeating the Huma tribe, returned to the divide. The above information was supplied by a man whose family had been among those who fled from the Mbomu valley at the first approach of the Zande. An elderly Barambo whose ancestors had enlisted in the Zande army after the subjugation of the tribe on the Katinga stated as follows;

When the army reached the Divide and, crossing it, entered the valley of the Biki River (27.45 E. 5 N) they found there five clans of the Barambo, living between the Biki and the Lingasi which rises some 30 M. S. E. of the Biki. These were the Nguli, Bananga, Bupuru, Metanga and Bakaia. They were absorbed in the advance and became Zandeised. East of the Lingasi were the Meteri, Baboga, Bukuru and Bakpoto tribes, who all fled to the right bank of the Sue River and settled with the Huma there.

One clan of the Barambo deserves special mention—the Beudi. This clan either withstood the shock of the first Zande invasion in the Mbomu valley and never quitted their country at all, or, (for accounts differ), after accompanying the Zande-Barambo army in its northern expeditions, returned to the Mbomu and their old home.

At no time, it is said, did the Beudi acknowledge the suzerainty of the Chiefs. And if ever any Barambo who belonged to the other clans entered their country, he was killed and eaten as a traitor.

Though this pleasant story of the Beudi is generally accepted by the Bahr el Ghazal Barambo, it is curious that M. Vanden Plas does not mention their name, unless, indeed, the "Abodi, ... terme genérique, designant chez les Azande, jadis, et parfois encore maintenant, toutes les populations zande ou etrangères qui vivent à proximité de l'Uele," are identical with them.

It will have, therefore, to be treated with reserve. The state of the Barambo before the Zande conquest was as that of all the other aboriginal tribes of the region. They were divided into clans, each hostile to the others, and had no paramount Chief. They were by their own admission cannibals. The men wore bark cloth, and not skins. They consulted omens. They had (and still retain) the belief that after death it is not the spirit that enters the totem animal, but the right hand only, of which the wrist forms the head, the little finger and thumb the fore legs, the index and third finger the hind legs, and the middle finger the tail. The spirit departs into one of the impenetrable ravines at the sources of the streams, sometimes taking up its abode in an enormous tree. A spirit will occasionally revisit its earthly home, when it is seen in a dream.

The Barambo cut off the little finger of the left hand after death to be used in the ceremony of consulting the omens as to whether death was due to magic or natural causes. Males were buried facing east, females facing west. The Barambo language is practically identical with the Pambia,

VUNGARA.

M. Vanden Plas is not able to raise the veil that hides the origins of this wonderful race who were able of their own intelligence and administrative power to impose their domination over such a vast number of jarring clans and tribes and to start the process of welding them together into some semblance of a nation.

Many generations ago—thirteen according to M. Vanden Plas and eleven according to the computation of various members of the tribe now living, or only lately dead, in the Bahr el Ghazal, appeared Basenginunga, the first Vungara of whom we have any record.

M. Vanden Plas quotes a story to the effect that this man was one of the Kulangba tribe, his father, a Kulangba, having married a woman of the Bokundeu. The Bokundeu family were, it seems, the ruling caste of the day. Basenginunga went to pay a visit to his Bokundeu uncle, his mother's brother, and when there was elected to the position of chief in his uncle's place, owing to his superior ability in deciding cases.

Legends extant in the Bahr el Ghazal tally with the above to the extent that they speak of Basenginunga as being the first ancestor and of having been elected Chief by the people who preferred submitting their differences to him for arbitration rather than to fighting them out. But his advent among mortals is shrouded in mystery. Either he dropped from heaven or else he grew out of the ground like a *nunga*, which is an oval shaped bulb about two inches long which grows with its top half exposed. No trace could ever be found of his parents, and he was adopted and brought up by the Vurunaze clan of the Zande.

We may take it, perhaps, that Basenginunga was the first Vungara to make his mark in the world. But that he came of local stock seems open to question.

The Vungara, though they are degenerating, are a finer race physically than any other in the Southern Bahr el Ghazal.

They have customs that are peculiar to themselves such as the right of marrying in their own tribe, (which they carry to the point of incest), a thing prohibited to all other people, and the sacrifice of slaves or slave wives on the death of one of their number, (which seems to argue the existence, in the dim past, of some idea of a life after death).

Could we get at their language the problem might be solved. But this language is a secret that is most jealously guarded. That they had in the past a language of their own is undoubted. If not the last generation, then

the preceding one, spoke it. And it is known to a few of the present. Many efforts has the reviewer made to obtain information on the subject. Several young chiefs have at various time volunteered to tell him all about it, but when it came to the point only either excused themselves saying that they had forgotten it or else spoke the childish jargon consisting of Zande words with reversed syllables, i.e., saying *nda-gba* for *gba-nda*, manioc, and so on. One even tried to evade the question by speaking Zande. Twice only the chance to capture it was given. Casual enquiries elicited the fact that the individual knew it, and a few words were recited. Both times circumstances prevented notes being taken on the spot, and on following the matter up one man could not be traced and the other said that he had been quite misunderstood and that he knew nothing about it. This man looked particularly uncomfortable and had obviously been warned by his older relations not to divulge anything. The news has now gone round all the chiefs that information regarding their old tongue is being sought for, and from the attitude of those recently questioned, it is clear that they have been warned to disclaim any knowledge of it, for whereas at first one obtained such replies as "I heard it when a boy, but have forgotten it", or "It was spoken by my father, but he never taught it to me" or "I dont know our ancestor's language but only this (which would turn out to be the transposed-syllable one)" the answer nowadays is "I have never heard of any old language. My ancestors always spoke Zande".

Only three words have remained in the reviewers memory: *dua*, yes, *duarati*, no, *dimo*, bow.

HUMA.

The author does not mention the Huma, a shy folk who used to live round about Mount Bangenze. The Zande invasion drove them from there, and they fled northwards between the Sue and Yiba Rivers. Defeating some Bungu on the way, they reached the hills on the Sue-Yiba watershed 70 miles N. E. of Tembura station. Here they found a colony of their own tribe, and settled with them. The late Chief Tembura got them to come to hand after a lot of trouble and some long sieges of the hills. They are now mainly concentrated in this neighbourhood, though many are to be found in the Sue valley to the south.

They are by nature a hill-loving people, like the Pambia, and their language is identical with that of the Buguru.

Note.

How the Vungara established their sovereignty over the Zandes as related by the late Chiefs Kangua and Mabiko.

A long time ago the Zande inhabited the country which lies between the Were and Bima rivers. The latter was of such width that a man could not see across it.

The clans of the Zande were the following. There may have been others, but Kangua and Mabiko could only recollect these :— Bokundeu, Ngbwepieu, Vurunaze, Bamingda, Kowe, Dio, Kerenga, Vundua, Ngbaga, Vungbiri, Vundukura, Ngbaduma, Ndebiri, Bandogo, Vunduma, Bagua, Giti, Nzekada, Kurungu, Bogbwengi, Mbuki and Mbari.

They all spoke the Zande language and looked down on their neighbours the Barambo, Basisi, Ngada, Pambia and Huma as being very inferior people. The Dio, or Diyo, knew how to use boats and lived along the banks of the Were and Bima. There was no chief paramount over the clans, which were all quite independent of each other.

A hunting party consisting of members of the Bokundeu, Ngbwepieu and Vurunaze were out in the forest one day setting their game nets. They were apparently on friendly terms with each other and lived together. In the undergrowth they saw a small naked boy with one leg buried in the ground. The Bokundeu claimed to have been the first to have seen him, but this was disputed by the Vurunaze, who told them to to prove their claim by pulling his leg out of the ground. The Bokundeu tried in vain to do so, and the Vurunaze succeeded in freeing him, and the party took him home. They brought him up between them. To start with he could not talk, but when he had learnt to do so, and was asked how he came to be alone in the forest, he replied sometimes that he had dropped from the sky, and sometimes that he had come out of the earth. No trace could be found of his parents, and the accepted idea was that the Almighty had made him and put him where he was found.

About this time a feeling of enmity seems to have been growing between the three clans. Difficulty was experienced in settling cases that arose between their members, and even between members of the same clan. The Bokundeu used to put their meat away until it got smelly, and then eat it among themselves, issuing no invitations to the Ngbwepieu or Vurunaze. The Ngbwepieu were equally exclusive, while the Vurunaze were even more selfish than either, as they not only refused to invite their neighbours to eat with them, but went so far as not to share their food with anybody, each man devouring his own and not lifting his head from the pot till it was empty.

The foundling, who is known to posterity as Basenginunga, had different ideas, and when he had any meat to make a feast with, he asked everyone to

come and eat it with him, irrespective of their tribe. This open-handedness appealed greatly to the people. The young man's system, they said, was a better one than theirs. So they elected him Chief over all three tribes, and gave him a wife from among the Vurumaze, whose men succeeded in freeing his leg from the ground when he was first discovered. To start with he ruled over these three clans, but soon his fame spread and other people left their clans and came and settled under him. As his power increased he conquered one by one all the other clans, and the non-Zande tribes also. He died, leaving a son Senginunga, who succeeded him. Senginunga had married a wife from among the Bokundeu, who bore him his heir Piko. Piko married a lot of wives and from him are descended all the great Vungara Chieftains. His grandson was Mabenge, great grandfather of the late Tembura.

The very excellent grammar by Monsieur Lagae contains clearly expressed and concise rules, elucidated everywhere by examples, (the latter being of the greatest help to anyone not at home in the French language).

The spelling of the Zande words is that adopted in the Congo, and does not quite fit in with Zande as spoken in the Bahr el Ghazal, though they would be quite comprehensible enough to a Sudan Zande, even if pronounced as spelt, to make the work of the greatest use in the southern Bahr el Ghazal.

The liquid "r" is obviously much more prevalent in the Congo Zande than in the Sudan. "W's" are heard there, of which there is not a sign in the Zande spoken on the Nile side of the Divide, but the grammar and syntax are the same.

(The reviewer would like to say here that he is painfully conscious that his knowledge of both the latter is excedingly limited in all languages including his own, and that there are others far more competent than himself to write these notes.)

In M. Lagae's work, the paragraphs are numbered consecutively from the beginning of the grammar to the end of the syntax, which facilitates reference.

Speaking always as a child in these matters, the reviewer submits the following remarks on the various paragraphs, which he refers to by number only for the sake of brevity.

21. The author omits to state the important fact that, with few exceptions, it is only nouns denoting animate objects that take the plural prefix a–.

28. There is an obvious slip or printers error on p. 80, lines 3 and 4.

29. This paragraph deals with degrees of comparison. The author goes a little too fast for the student. He rightly says "Le rapport d'égalité se rend par l'adverbe *wa;* comme ex. *Gu ango le ni bakere lu, wa kina gulu.* Ce

chien est aussi grand que celui là (litt: Ce chien en grand lui comme celui là). But it would have been easier, to follow if he had given the translation of *kina* namely 'just', and made the translated line read: This dog is *just* as big as that one, or if he had left out *kina* altogether, and written *Gu ango le ni bakere lu, wa gulu*, which would have been quite grammatical.

Wa kina implies usually a higher degree of exactitude in the comparison than the simple *wa*.

45. This paragraph points out the alteration of the word *de* (wife) to *diya* when the possessive suffix *re* is added. It would have been interesting to have found here an explanation of the curious change from *de* to *dere*, when the word procedes *vuru* (subject, follower). One could not say in Zande, *de vuru Renzi* the wife of a subject of Renzi but *dere vuru Renzi*. *De* only seems to make this change when used before *vuru* 'subject' but not in any other of the various meanings of the latter word.

46. The author's remarks on the use of *gi de* (my wife) instead of *diyale* are a little misleading to a student of Sudan Zande, where *gi de* would impart an emphasis to the possessive, stressing the fact that she was *my* wife, (and nobody else's).

58. There is a misprint of *ba* for *ka* in the first example. Ch. VI. Throughout this chapter the author omits the word *ka*, (in order to) from his infinitives. It may be perfectly correct to do so, but it is confusing for the beginner. For *ka* is just as much part of the verb in this mood as is the word 'to' in English. *Ka ta* is 'to strike', not *ta*.

97, 98, 99. These should not be looked on as full lists of conjunctions and interjections. In 99, *susu* is with us hardly 'halt', but more a cry of slight alarm. *Heke* and *se* are pronounced in the Sudan *ekie* and *soh*.

100. This somewhat qualifies the statement about plurals in paragraph 21, but still does not go far enough for our Sudan Zande.

101. The author spells the Zande word for water *him*. The aspirate is not sounded by our Zande, who say *ime*. He gives *anoge, age adiude* (or, as we should spell them *aiegye, agye adindeu*) as being words only used in the plural. Our Zande invariably use the singular when speaking of a single bee, termite, or red ant.

109. *Gbwa* is given here as an adjective, but on our side of the Divide it is never used except adverbially, meaning 'for no reason'. It is the exact equivalent to Sud. Ar. *sākit*.

134. *Ko-yo du ko ni*, 'vers là ou il est'. This curious construction gets, as it deserves, a paragraph to itself later on (No 160). But the reviewer

searched in vain for the rule that in expressions of place, the noun or name denoting the locality must be followed by *yo*, (thither, there) or *no*, (hither, here), and can never stand alone, until by chance he found it in the vocabulary under 'vers' and 'à'. It would have been useful to students if this rule had been given more prominence.

137,138. These paragraphe are devoted to 'Les augments, *ka*, *naka*, *nika*, *aka*'. The author states that they give to the verb 'une modalité speciale'. For example, *Ku nakandu*, il est sur le point de vouloir s'en aller. *Zile nikamela*, l'oiseau va s'enfuir. *Ka mi akakpi*, quand je serai sur le point de mourir. In the reviewer's opinion these 'augments' are merely the verb *ye* (come) used as an auxiliary to form the various tenses. It is clearly heard in the Sudan dialect, where a Zande would say *Ko naye ka ndu* he is coming (i.e. about) to go, *Zire niye ka mera* the bird is coming to fly off, *Ka mi aye ka kpi*, if I should come to die.

The verb *ndu go* is very commonly used instead of *ye* come in the same manner, though it expresses perhaps a more remote future than *ye*, as one would say in English 'I am going to do so,'

145. The following of a verb by *nga* in the Sudan dialect merely emphasises it slightly. *Nga* is often found following a verb when no object is expressed. Respect is shewn by the use of the third personal pronoun, and not the second, in address, coupled with the employment of *gbia* chief e.g, *Ka mo fo he fe re* 'If you give (a) thing to me' could be more politely expressed *Ka gbia fo he fe re* 'If the chief gives (a) thing to me'.

Another method is to use the third person plural instead of the second person singular thus—

I fo he fe re 'Let them give (a) thing to me' instead of. *Mo fo he fe re* 'Give a thing to me'.

The reviewer could not find any remarks on the use of the word '*vuru*' with the verb, conveying the sense of the English expression "even though" for example

"Even though you imprison me,....."
Ka mo vuru kisi re,.....

This is very commonly heard in Sudan Zande.

Following the Grammar and Syntax, are about thirty pages of French-Zande dialogue 'sur des sujets de la vie courante au Congo', and sixty pages devoted to Zande legends and stories. These are particularly interesting and

give an excellent idea of the language, for they have been written down by Zande pupils of the schools. A French translation is printed side by side with the Zande.

Volume II contains a French-Zande vocabulary of about five or six thousand words.

While obviously of the greatest value to residents in the Congo, it will be less useful to students of the Sudan dialect, owing to the differences between the latter and that of the Congo. Though a great number of words that are rare on the Sudan side are included, the authors have overlooked many very common ones. Sportsmen will note with regret the scarcity of names of animals.

It seems a pity that volumes of a work of this description, that will have to sustain the rough usage inseparable from African travel, should not be bound in some more substantial manner, than in the ordinary continental "paper-back" fashion.

NOTES.

CIRCUMCISION SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN BAHR AL GHAZAL.

While travelling in the neighbourhood of Kafia-Kingi, I had with me for six months Babaki, the son of Sultan Said Bundas. This native had been educated at the Mission at Wau, though he was a Mohammedan like his father; he spoke English and was an exceptionally intelligent and capable man.

At a village of the Kreich Jebel at Kissingori a circumcision school was in progress when I passed through. Two years before I had read Junod's Life of a South African Tribe, and I questioned Babaki about the ceremonies at the school. Even if he had been prepared to volunteer information, he would probably have found it difficult to formulate a description, and I therefore asked leading questions based upon what I remembered from Junod's book. However I do not think it at all likely that Babaki's replies were influenced by the suggestions conveyed by my questions. The gist of what he told me is as follows:

Circumcision takes place at irregular intervals, whenever a number of boys are about the right age (nine years). The customs of the Kreich Nakka (Babaki's own tribe) and the Banda are more Spartan than those of other tribes in the neighbourhood, such as Binga, Kara, Ferogi, Kreich Jebel, Kreich Hofrat, Bornu and Arabs. The Kreich Jebel and Kreich Hofrat appear to be the oldest residents of the Kafia-Kingi area. The Binga and Kara are comparatively recent immigrants from West of the Shala mountains. The Banda generally come from points further distant in the French Congo, and the Kreich Nakka from the Shinko river. All the tribes mentioned practise excision of girls except the Binga and Kara, who are acquiring the custom by imitation.

In the case of the Banda and Kreich Nakka the school is situated two or three hours away from the villages in the bush. It lasts four or five months, and everything relating to it is kept secret from women and small boys. The boys are circumcised at the beginning of the school, and when well after ten days or three wéeks, they are taken hunting, and to look for honey in the bush, and trained generally in the vocations of men by the bigger boys who are in charge of them. Older men, of say 45 years of age, stay at the camp and exercise a general supervision. They instruct the older boys, who pass on the

instruction to the smaller boys belonging to the school. These latter are not in direct touch with the older men, by whom they are treated very severely. If they should happen to meet one of the older men in the bush, they would fly from him, as he would beat them, possibly to death, if he caught them. When meat is killed by the hunting parties of the school, it is eaten only by the older men and bigger boys: if women or the small boys ate it, they would probably die from the effects.

At night the small boys must sleep on their backs, and their feet are tied in stocks so that they cannot turn over. They have fires at night, but for four or five days before the school ends, they are not allowed a fire, and must wash in cold water in the early morning. Should a boy die while in the school, no one is told, but at its conclusion when every one returns to the village one of the older men takes a log and flings it into the mother's house, saying: there is your son. She must show no emotion, or she would probably die. The boy is buried secretly. On returning to the village there is a special wide-skirted kilt made of leaves, not grass, by the boys.

This description applies to the Kreich Nakka and Banda. In the case of the other tribes mentioned, the school is close to the village. That at Kissingori was 25 yards from the nearest hut. It consisted of a rectangular lightly built grass shelter. In it were the light stocks in which the boy's feet are tied at night. The school only lasts a couple of months and the boys have a fire all the time. Of course the women and people in the village can see them constantly, but they must not talk to them. Should a boy die, his body is given to his mother, and it does not matter if she cries. The small boys cannot go into the village, but the older men and boys take part in the ordinary life of the village. At the final dance at the end of the school they do not wear a special dress, but an ordinary loin cloth. In the case of Arabs, who hunt only in parties with spears; the prohibition as to the eating of meat killed in hunting is not brought into the question.

Babaki told me that the Zande do not circumcise, and I understood from the Rev. M. Hadow, that circumcision among them is only a matter of individual imitation and not a tribal rite. But an article by Major R.S.G. Brock describes a ceremony at Meridi very like that referred to in Junod's book.

J. E. BOWER.

THE BALANDA.

The so called Balanda Tribe mainly inhabit the country in the triangle formed by the Rivers Wau (Bussuries), Sueh and Bo. They are also found in numbers on the east bank of the River Sueh especially in the neighbourhood of Rafille. A large section lives in the neighbourhood of Deim Zubeir. There are still others who live under Azande rule in the country between the River Bo and Tembura.

Balanda is the name given to them by the Bongo from whom the Arabs copied it and hence this name has been carried on by the present administration. The Azande call them Bari. Both terms it is believed mean Strangers or Wild Men. In reality the term covers two distinct tribes, the Amberidi and Ambegumba. These tribes speak different languages and amongst themselves always use these names although when talking to outsiders they call themselves Balanda in order to be understood. In addition there are the ruling tribes, the Fujiga and the Kamum.

The Amberidi originally, that is, as far as native history relates, inhabited the district between Tembura and the Bo River particularly the hilly country lying between latitudes 6° & 6° 15" to the west of the River Sueh. The Fujiga say they lived on the River Jur in the neighbourhood of Lake Ambadi and were a section of Jurs or Shilluks. These two latter tribes were undoubtedly in the past either one or closely allied. Jur is a Dinka word apparently meaning people e.g. Jur Matiang=Arabs, Jur Nuer etc. etc. The Raik Dinkas call the Jur of the neighbourhood of Wau, Jur Shula i.e. Shilluk people and the Jur of Rumbek neighbourhood Jur Billi.

The Fujiga can speak the Jur language and they have similar songs and dances. Their totem is an ostrich. It is related that the Fujiga on account of family quarrels seceded from the rest of the tribe and marched south under their Chief Dumbo. This migration must have taken place not more than 150 years ago as the grandfather, Banyikongo, of the present Fujiga Sultan, Peili, lived on Lake Ambadi.

Dumbo and his followers journeyed south as far as the hills already mentioned as being inhabited by the Amberidi and bought from that tribe the hill M'bula for a large number of spears. It should be noted that the Jur are great manufacturers of spears and the fact that the Fujiga had a sufficient quantity with which to purchase a hill, tends to bear out the statement that they were either a section of, or closely akin to, the Jur. The Fujiga

increased in numbers and being a more virile race than the Amberidi were able gradually to conquer the whole tribe except one section and set up as the ruling family.

The Ambegumba lived further south than the Amberidi inhabiting the country round Tembura and across the Divide, which is now in the French Congo. The advance of the Azande under the Avungera forced the Ambegumba northwards and many settled amongst the Amberidi.

Liwa, the father of the late Avungera Sultan Tembura, tried to drive the the Amberidi out of their country. The latter led by the Fujiga and assisted by the Arab Slave Traders under a certain Osman Bedawi repulsed the invaders. In the fighting Liwa was killed and Tembura was captured and turned into a *bazingari* (irregular soldier). Later Osman Bedawi released him no doubt on a promise of providing slaves. Meanwhile the slavers with the assistance of the Fujiga Sultan Bungurru raided the surrounding hills and these raids resulted in the Ambegumba marching off west and settling to the south of Deim Zubeir. A few remained however and eventually moved north with the Amberidi and are now living to the South of the River Bussuries under an Avungera called Geddi. There is another separate section of the Ambegumba, called the Amfungeri who speak the same language as the former and live in the country between the Rivers Bussuries and Pongo. Bungurru became Osman Bedawi's chief agent in the south and on demand sent him children as slaves, whom he obtained in native cases and by collection from his subjects. When Bungurru died, his eldest son Peili, the present Fujiga Sultan succeeded him.

The ill feeling between the families of Tembura and Peili caused by the death of Liwa and the capture of Tembura by Bungurru continued, and Tembura killed Peili's brother. Generally the Avungera were gaining the upper hand and so Peili determined to move north of the River Bo. He was accompanied by a large portion of the Amberidi and they settled in their present country.

A section of the Amberidi as already stated succumbed to the Fujiga. They were ruled by a tribe called the Kamum, mentioned above, who assert that they inhabited the country before the Amberidi and three generations ago ruled over four sub-tribes who eventually were merged into the Kamum. The totem of the Kamum is a lion or leopard. The genealogical tree of the Kamum Sultans for these three generations is Uziboko, Zaga and Julukunda the last named being the father of Tuji, the present most important Kamum Sultan. The Amberidi and later the Ambegumba joined them during the reign of Zaga.

After the death of Julukunda family quarrels caused a split in the tribe and the various sections, under Azande pressure, lead by sultans Tuji and Worrass followed Peili and moved north of the River Bo the majority going to the West of Peili. Tuji however crossed the River Sueh near Rifille and settled there. As was natural a number of Amberidi refused to leave their country preferring to remain and submit to the Azande and they are still there.

M. J. W.

INDEX TO SUDAN NOTES AND RECORDS.

An index to Vols. I-VI of Sudan Notes and Records is in course of preparation. It will be ready in the course of this summer and subscribers who wish to obtain it are requested to communicate with the Secretary, at the same time remitting the sum of P.T. 20 (Four Shillings) which includes postage.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DREAMS.

My thanks, delayed through illness, are due to the gentlemen who have recorded dreams in reply to my request in *Notes and Records* for 1921. Those supplied by J. W. C. *(N. and R.* Vol. IV. 1921. pp. 228-229) and by E. H. *(ibid.* Vol. V. pp 108-110) leave little to be desired, the analysis of the latter being specially valuable. Mr. MacDiarmid's note *(ibid.* IV. 227) would be more valuable if he had stated whether his informant was present or took part in the affray mentioned, whether he could identify the site of the grave dug in his dream, the identity of the man buried, and if so, the relation in which the latter stood to himself (co-villager, enemy or ?). Perhaps even now it is not too late for these particulars to be supplied.

My own attempts at collecting dreams among the Blacks south of Khartoum were of little avail but the following seem worth recording: A bright light seen in a dream may be recognized as Nyakang or Dag (Shilluk) or as Dengdit (Dinka), moreover it is probably true to say that these are conventional and generally recognized interpretations and not individual symbols. As usual I received the frankest assistance from the Rev. Archibald Shaw. One of his converts, Chol, a Dinka of the Bor tribe and long associated with the Mission, gave me the following interesting dream, the result of religious "conflict" preceding conversion.

"In his sleep he saw a bright light and heard a voice like that of a man asking him why he lingered and why he did not give heed to what he was taught at Malek. The bright light seemed to pass above him and then with his companion (a Dinka whose wife had a conversion dream more than a year before Chol) he seemed to rise up into the air so that he could neither see the earth nor the sky. When he awoke he found he was scratching himself. He was clear that the bright light was God, but no associations could be elicited beyond this which as already stated is sound tribal lore. If as may be presumed he had heard the story of the conversion of St. Paul, the two ideas would reinforce each other.

Conversion dreams after acute conflict have recently been recorded for another black African tribe, the Basuto.* Of these the following is perhaps the most interesting:

* Robert Keable. A People of Dreams. *The Hibbert Journal*, Vol. XIX. 1921. pp. 522—531.

"The heathen wife of a Christian husband, who had steadily resisted baptism, dreamed for four nights running as follows: (1) that she was lost on the veld, in terror, and running over rough ground on which she finally stumbled and woke; (2) that she was again on the veld, but running towards a light in the sky ere she fell and woke; (3) that she was again running, but that the light was clearer and in the shape of a cross; (4) that she reached a deep kloof and saw on the other side, beneath a luminous cross, the figure of a woman clothed in white, holding up and out a child. The kloof was full o worshipping people on their knees, through whom she could not make her way, and in the course of a frenzied attempt she awoke."

I may also refer to a series of dreams of a political nature with interesting symbolism dreamt by Ibn Sa'ud and recorded by Mr. H. St. J. B. Philby in *The Heart of Arabia* (I. 335)

C. G. SELIGMAN.

THE DODOTH.

In your December 1922 number I see that Mr. Driberg, in his account of the Didinga, states that the Dodoth inhabit the South Shore of Lake Rudolf. Can you inform me if this is correct? There is a tribe of Dodoth who live in the Karamojong District of Uganda round Kopus and Loyoro. This is roughly 150 miles west and 100 miles north of the south end of Lake Rudolf. Is there another tribe of Dodoth and if so are they related to that tribe mentioned above?

Yours truly,

W. R. BARKER.

THE MOBBING OF A LIZARD.

During high Nile, a *Varanus Niloticus* lizard measuring a metre and a quarter in length was captured in a garden on the river front in Khartoum. It was given to me and was kept alive in my garden for a few days. At first I had a certain amount of confidence in being able to persuade the animal to settle down, but it proved untamable for whenever anybody approached, it would deal out a blow with its tail: a blow which I received on the leg I thought was equivalent to one from a whip. The servants, of course, would not handle the lizard and it was only after the animal had been confined to a sack that one of them was persuaded to carry it to my house.

The natives have many superstitions about this lizard (which they call "waral el bahr") some of which I notice are similar to those told in the Zoology of Egypt, Batrachians and Reptiles. There is, however, so little reliable information recorded on the habits of the Varanus lizard that observations are particularly valuable.

The above mentioned specimen after being released from its confinement was fastened to a post on the verandah by a rope around its body until a more suitable place could be provided. A loud chattering of sparrows on the verandah was heard while I was at lunch, but no importance was attached to that, till a servant roused me by asking if I would come out at once to see the sparrows fighting the lizard. There must have been nearly eighty sparrows and bulbuls on the verandah, some of them within a foot of the lizard, which appeared to be very frightened; as the latter retreated backwards the birds advanced and kept on chattering. The mouth of the lizard was open, the throat puffed out, and the tail rigidly curved and ready to strike, but the hissing of the reptile appeared to have little or no effect upon the sparrows. The inference made at the time was that the lizard had caught and eaten one of the sparrows and although there was a little blood on the verandah no trace of feathers could be seen.

I regretted my camera was not on the spot for the birds were persistent in their attitude for half an hour. The next day, however, the lizard was mobbed again, and although the rope round its body had been extended to give the reptile a run of ten metres in the garden it preferred to retreat under a bush while the birds advanced and kept up a continuous chatter. There were six bulbuls among the sparrows on this occasion. I managed to take a photograph of the incident but the failing light prevented the picture from being suitable for reproduction.

Why the sparrows in my garden should mob the Varanus lizard is a matter for conjecture, unless the reptile had taken and eaten one of their kin. It is common knowledge that hawks and owls are often mobbed by birds, and I have even observed an improvised scarecrow mobbed also. It is said that *Varanus niloticus* and *V. griseus* prey on birds' eggs, but this is surely based upon the fact that they will eat the eggs of fowls when kept in confinement. It is suggested also that these lizards dig up eggs of other lizards and crocodiles. Many people have told me that natives find the eggs of the crocodile by watching the "waral" scraping in the sand. Probably many people have observations on the habits of our Varanus lizards which have not yet been put on paper, and I think that if attention was drawn to the opportunities

which officials and others stationed in the provinces have of recording the required data in the *Sudan Notes and Records* and especially if it was pointed out to them that such particulars were of considerable interest, those observations would be recorded frequently.

Khartoum, 10.1.1924. R. COTTAM.

THE GECKO LIZARD.

In their very interesting article on "Some Native Superstitions about the White Spotted Gecko Lizard with Notes on its Habits", (S.N.&.R. Vol. No. VI No. 1. p. 40) Mr. and Mrs. Cottam state that I informed them 'that similar superstitions about a Gecko Lizard contaminating food occur in South America'. There has been a slight misunderstanding on this point which I should like to correct.

When Mr Cottam told me of his intention to write on the Gecko and superstitions relating to it, I happened to call to mind the fact that I had read, sometime previously, in Bates, "Naturalist on the River Amazon," of some sort of superstition relating to a Gecko which occurs in that country. I was somewhat hazy, however, as to the exact nature of such superstitions and as there was no copy of Bates, "River Amazon" available, we were forced to leave it at that.

I have recently obtained a copy of the above mentioned book and have looked up the matter, which is mentioned about the middle of chap. 1, as follows:— "The geckos are very repulsive in appearance. The Brazilians give them the name of Osgas, and firmly believe them to be poisonous; they are, however, harmless creatures'. There is no mention of its contaminating food, and the statement to that effect in Mr. and Mrs. Cottam's paper was made through a misunderstanding.

W. WEDGWOOD BOWEN.

Gezira Field Laboratory
Wad Medani
30th November 1923.

THE MIGRATION OF STORKS.

During the kharif of 1922 a native found in the vicinity of Wad Hassuna (60 miles E.N.E. of Khartoum) two white storks, *Ciconia alba*, one dying and the other dead, and each bearing a ring. He took these rings to El Sherif Yusef el Hindi who in due course gave them to Mr. J.W. Crowfoot, who in

turn handed them to me. I communicated with the naturalist (Herr P. Skovgaard, Viborg, Denmark) whose name and address was inscribed on the rings and received the information that one of the storks had been ringed—presumably as a nestling—at Tender, in Schleswig, Denmark in the summer of 1920 and the other a few miles north of the same town in the summer of 1922.

Herr Skovgaard asked for replies to the following queries concerning the migrations and habits of this bird:

1. When do the autumn and the spring migrations respectively, begin, and for how long do they continue?
2. Do the migrations start with the arrival of a few solitary birds or large flights?
3. Does the white stork ever spend either the winter months (November, December and January) or the summer months (May, June and July) in the Sudan?
4. If the answer to query 3, is in the affirmative, in what type of country is it to be found, on what does it feed, and is it ever noticed to breed?

Herr Skovgaard further asked for similar information on the habits of the black stork, *Ciconia nigra*. I was able to furnish him with a few notes on the occurrence of these two storks in the Sudan, but he would be very grateful fo- further notes and observations on the subject, which might I suggest be comr municated to the Editor of this Journal.

H. H. KING.

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