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*The Usambara Country in East Africa.*

By the Rev. J. P. FARLER, B.A., Universities' Mission.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, November 25th, 1878.)

THE country under notice is not altogether unknown to the Royal Geographical Society. Its reports contain notices of the travels and discoveries of the veteran missionary Dr. Krapf, of Messrs. Burton and Speke, of the lamented Mr. New, and of my predecessor, the Rev. Charles A. Alington; each of whom has left on record some of the salient features of the country.

Dr. Krapf was the first European traveller who visited Usambara. Starting from Mombasa in July, 1848, he reached the northern spur of a mountain called Pambiri. Then crossing a river which he called Engambo, he went westward and ascended the range of mountains called Makaeri. I have never heard of this name, but from the description it must have been the Mkaramu Range. After five days' "weary pilgrimage" in a south-west direction across the Usambara Mountains, he arrived at Vuga. He was well received by the king, who gave him two soldiers to accompany him on his return as far as the Luvu River, and in six days he arrived at Pangani. In his account of this journey, Krapf gives no description of the country or people. In 1851 he made a second journey into Usambara, starting from Pangani. He then seems to have been taken a very circuitous route to Vuga, going north of Mringa, but I suppose Kimweri's officers had received orders to bring him that way. Kimweri was at that time in the zenith of his power. Dr. Krapf returned to Pangani along the northern bank of the Luvu. The names of many of the places Krapf passed in his journeys seem to have been changed since he visited them; it is therefore difficult to make out his actual course.

In 1857 Messrs. Burton and Speke made a journey from Pangani  
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to Vuga and back. At Vuga they were admitted to an interview with Kimweri, at that time an old man dying of age and decay; the town then contained about 500 huts and 3000 inhabitants, and the surrounding highlands were thickly populated. Mr. Alington, of the Universities' Mission, was the next traveller who visited Vuga. He started from Mworongo on September 18th, 1867, and reached Vuga on September 27th. There he saw Sekalavu, Kimweri's eldest son, who represented his father, and gave him permission to build a mission-house at Magila, on the condition that it was not built of stone so as to serve as a fort. In June, the following year, Mr. Alington again visited Kimweri, but the old man was very ill and could not see him. Kimweri died in October of the same year. He was said to be more than one hundred years old, and to have left nearly one hundred sons.

In 1874, the late Mr. New, of the Livingstone Relief Expedition, marched from Pangani to Vuga, and through Usambara to Mombasa. He made the acquaintance of Simboja, one of Kimweri's many sons, now the chief of the Wakalindi tribe. He seems to have told him that his son Kimweri was the paramount chief, but a year afterwards, in 1875, when I went to Usambara, this was certainly not the case, and although Simboja has left Vuga to live at Mazindi, Kimweri is still subordinate to him. After a stay of more than a week at Vuga, New made his way across the Usambara mountains in a north-easterly direction; he then descended to the plain on the northern side of the range, and advanced to Mombasa through the lowlands of the Wadigo. Unfortunately, he gave no account of this part of his journey, although, from its being through an entirely new country, it would have been especially interesting.

I will now proceed to describe the Usambara country as it is at the present time. Usambara has been called the Switzerland of Africa. It forms a link in the great East Coast Range which extends from Abyssinia to Natal. Speaking roughly, it lies between 4° 20' and 5° 25' lat. S., and 38° 20' and 39° 10' long. E. The mountains form four detached lines running due north and south, rising in the higher peaks to about 6000 feet above the sea-level. They are separated from each other by elevated valleys, table-lands, and terraces. The whole range was evidently thrown up by volcanic action, and consists of granite mixed with spar, with sandstone in the lower spurs containing plumbago. As a rule the mountains are covered with jungle to their summits, but in some of the higher peaks the granite is exposed in the shape of massive blocks which take the most fantastic forms. Some of the hill-tops are without trees, and then they are covered with a soft elastic turf. The scenery is beautiful and varied; now soft valleys and hill-sides with hanging woods, then wild ravines with precipitous cliffs of bare granite. The country is well watered; every mountain has its spring,



and every valley its streamlet. It is divided into four districts, inhabited by people who call themselves by different names. First, the Wakalindi, living upon the fourth line of mountains, and on the northern spurs of the second and third ranges; next, the Wasambara, inhabiting the first three lines of mountains; then the Wabondeis, which means "people of the valley," or lowlanders, living upon the lower spurs of the eastern side of the first range, and in the plain between the Mrima and the sea-coast; and lastly, the Wambugu inhabiting the plain to the north of the Mkaramu Mountains. On the banks of the Luvu and in the valleys between the ranges, the people are mostly Wazegua settlers. All this country was ruled over by Kimweri, who was fifth in descent from Mkande, who founded the dynasty.

I have frequently written letters for the present chiefs, Kibanga and Mkange, to summon their *akidas*, and always wrote them in the name of "the sons of Mkande." The story told me by one of Kimweri's sons was that Mkande was a great hunter, who lived in a country north of Chaga. In one of his hunting expeditions he came down to Usambara, and there killed a huge buffalo. The Wasambara were so struck by his prowess in the chase, that they invited him to be their king. He must have been a man of some force of character; for he at once commenced to organise his new kingdom, bringing into subjection the Wazegua, who inhabited the plains and valleys north of the Luvu, the Wabondeis, and the Wambugu. The Wakalindi claim descent from him, and continued to be the ruling caste until old Kimweri's death. They were constantly increasing their numbers by adopting favourite slaves, who thus became Wakalindi; but we can easily understand their becoming a numerous tribe in five generations, if every member of the family was as prolific as old Kimweri, with his hundred sons and unknown number of daughters.

At the death of old Kimweri in 1868, according to the order of the succession, Sekalavu his eldest son succeeded him, taking the name of Kimweri. He lived but one year after his father's death, and was succeeded by his son Kinyassi, at that time, in 1869, a boy eight years old. Simboja, the second son of old Kimweri, now rebelled, and collecting a large force, fought Kinyassi's followers, who were led by his uncles Kibanga and Mkange. The young king's forces were defeated by Simboja, and Kibanga and Mkange fled from Vuga carrying Kinyassi with them. The Wakalindi followed Simboja, while the Wasambara clung to Kinyassi. Simboja reigned at Vuga, but the kingdom was broken up, and Vuga destroyed; and it is now only a small village. Kibanga and Mkange divided Usambara between them and ruled it in the name of Kinyassi; Kibanga taking the southern portion to the banks of the Luvu, while Mkange rules over the northern portion, including the Wambugu; Kinyassi, now a lad of seventeen, lives at Hundu, a town in the north. The Wabondeis took advantage of these

troubles, and declared themselves independent. Maliko, Wali of Fort Tongwe (a slave of Seyyid Majid, the late Sultan of Zanzibar), assisted them with arms to drive out their Wakalindi governors; this they succeeded in doing, and since then they have called themselves Wakiva, which literally translated means, republicans. Michael Kifungiwe, a son of Kimweri, and the governor of Magila, on account of his kindly disposition, alone was allowed to remain in the country, but he was reduced to a private station.

Vuga having been nearly destroyed by the revolution, Simboja made Mazindi his capital, a town about two days' journey to the south-west of Vuga, and gave Vuga to his eldest son Kimweri.

Usambara is drained by four rivers: the Zigi, with its affluent the Kihuwi, the Mkulumuzi, the Ukumbini, and the Luari rising in the Vuga Mountains and running south into the Luvu. The Zigi rises in the Hendei Mountains, near a town called Mgambo, and running south-east through a gorge in the second line between Mount Mlesa and Mount Msasa, runs north-east through the Mananasi Valley, and then running round the base of Mringa, it takes an easterly course into Tanga Bay. The Mkulumuzi rises in the southern peaks of the Magila Mountains and takes a north-easterly direction into Tanga Bay. This river supplies a great portion of the Bondei country with water, and it never ceases to run even in the seasons of the greatest drought.

The Ukumbini rises in an isolated hill called Kilima Nguruni, south-east of Magila. At first it runs north-east to Umba, and then takes an easterly course into Tangata Bay. In the dry season it ceases to run. None of these rivers are navigable, and the Zigi has rapids about 15 miles from its mouth.

The nearest port to Magila is Mworongo, a town on Tangata Bay, and it was here that we usually landed. This bay is defended from the monsoons by Yambo and Karange islands. The entrance to it is a deep channel about 100 yards wide. Except in the channel cut by the Ukumbini River, the bay is shallow, with a sandy bottom; but I have no doubt that by dredging it could be deepened sufficiently to form a commodious harbour. It is almost circular in shape, and about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile in diameter. Tangata Bay is about 65 miles north-west of Zanzibar town.

Mworongo is surrounded by a low, well-built coralline wall, loop-holed for guns. This was built about fifty years ago to defend it from the attacks of the Wasegeju, who live on the opposite side of the bay, and along the coast as far as Tanga. They were accustomed to sweep into the bay with well-manned galleys, make a raid upon the Swahili villages, and plunder them completely, carrying off the inhabitants for slaves. I have been informed that Tangata Bay was once dry land. One old man pointed out to me a spot, now several feet under low-water mark, where his father's house stood in which he was born; and another patriarch showed me a spot, now entirely covered by the sea, where he

remembered a village and a grove of coco-nut trees. Evidences of the rapid encroachments of the sea are visible in many parts of the bay. After crossing a creek about 200 yards wide, forming the mouth of the Ukumbini River, which is fordable here at low water, we land at the town of Tongoni. Here the inhabitants keep up a perpetual struggle with the sea, which has left them now nothing but a narrow ridge of sand. They have built a coralline wall at the back of the town, and defended it from the water with the trunks of coco-nut trees. Their labours are, however, in vain, for the sea at high water forms a creek at the back of the town. Many of the coco-nut trunks are gone, there are great breaches in the wall, and the dreaded mangrove is now within. After leaving Tongoni, our path takes us for a mile along the creek covered with mangroves, and then we mount a low cliff of red-yellow sandstone, blackened here and there with oxide, with quartz scattered about on the surface. This cliff is about 50 feet high. For two miles the path goes through well-cultivated farms, and then the cultivation ceases and we find ourselves in the Nyika or wilderness. This is a rolling plain of coarse grass and thick bush, with here and there a thicket or a fine clump of trees. At times I have fancied myself in a well-kept park, and I have looked out for the mansion upon some knoll. In some parts the soil is sandy, but in others it is a rich vegetable loam. In the bottoms there are beds of whitish clay, and quartz is found in the dry watercourses.

Trees are in great variety, but for the most part of stunted growth. Euphorbias, fan-palms, and mimosa thorns are seen everywhere, and occasionally baobabs, tamarind-trees, and clusters of the *Borassus* palm. There is also a kind of wild plum-tree, called *Mguaju* by the natives. There are various kinds of animals found in the Nyika: antelopes, from the Kurungu, the size of a cow, to the Funu, the size of a small goat; gazelles, lions, leopards, hyenas, and big apes, which cause great destruction to the crops of the coast people. The lions here, as elsewhere, chiefly infest the sea-shore. Occasionally the path goes through thickets of euphorbia and acacia, and the trees are often full of monkeys feeding upon the edible berries. About three hours' walk from Mworongo there is a deep well, never dry, also a grove of coco-nut trees, marking the site of a town called Kwamkembe, which was destroyed by the Wadigo. In the dry season this well is frequented by splendid butterflies and dragon-flies, but in the rainy season it overflows and forms a small lake. During the rainy season the path through the Nyika is for the most part under water, and even where there is a rise in the ground it does not improve, for then it acts as a watercourse, and it is far from pleasant walking to have to make your way against a small stream from 6 inches to 1 foot in depth.

It is impossible to avoid the path, on account of the giant grass and tangled thorns on either side. In the dry season the natives fire these

grasses, and if there is any wind the flames rage rapidly over the plain. I was once nearly caught in them, and it was only by a rapid flight that I saved myself.

Three hours' walk from Kwamkembe brings us to a great baobab tree, upon which is inscribed the names of various members of the Universities' Mission. One hour later we reach "Mzungu's Well," dug by Mr. Alington. One hour's walking from this well brings us to the limits of the Nyika, which I should put at 16 miles wide, allowing that we walk two miles per hour. Many parts of this Nyika are most fertile, and I believe healthy; for I have frequently passed nights in it, sleeping in the open air, without experiencing any ill effects.

The country now changes its character; it rises considerably, and consists of hills and dales, with ridges 500 or 600 feet above the sea-level, forming a foundationary elevation for the Usambara Mountains. On the edge of the desert, and just where the ground begins to rise, there is the same formation of pisolitic limestone, containing marine fossils, which Speke observed in the Somali country, and again in the Wazaramo country, thus proving, I think, that this formation runs along the base of the East Coast Range from Somali-land, in  $12^{\circ}$  N. lat., to Uzaramo in  $8^{\circ}$  S. lat., and will probably be found to continue to Natal. The country is now cultivated, and the path takes us for about a mile through fields of rice, sorghum, and Indian corn; then, ascending a hill, we reach Vumba, the nearest Bondei town to the coast, which was, however, destroyed by a Wadigo raid last July. Passing this, we enter a jungle about a mile wide; still ascending, we reach the other side, and turning to the left, the path takes us up the hill, passing on the way a small village, to Uмба, a town on the top of a hill 600 feet above the sea-level. It is stockaded and surrounded by jungle; it has three gates, one within the other, and near the outer gate there is an open shed, in which a guard is stationed every night to give an alarm in case of an attack of the Wadigo. Semkali, the chief of the Uмба district, has a residence here. A large *gulio* or market is held in the immediate neighbourhood of the town every Thursday, and it is frequented by the coast Swahili, who bring up dried fish, salt, iron hoes, and cotton cloths, to barter for rice, Indian corn, tobacco, and wild honey. The whole of the coast district, called Tangata, is supplied with grain from this market. Uмба is not at all unhealthy, for two European members of the Universities' Mission have lived there for two years, without any serious illness or attacks of malarial fever. After leaving Uмба, four hours' hard walking through a thickly populated and well-cultivated hilly country brings us to Magila, the chief station of the Universities' Mission in Bondei. The name Magila applies to the district as well as the mission-station, which is in lat.  $5^{\circ} 9'$  S. and long.  $38^{\circ} 48' 40''$  E. It is situated on the top of an isolated hill 790 feet above the sea-level, at the head of a valley running up between the southern spurs of the Magila Mountains.



This range, or rather group, is isolated, and rises directly out of the plain; it is about 12 miles long, with a tolerably straight ridge inclined due north and south. It has three principal peaks: Mringa, at the northern extremity, with bare granite head, 3500 feet above the sea-level; Kituli, the centre peak, 3100 feet; and Gazi, the southern peak, 2700 feet high. Besides Gazi, there is a cluster of lower peaks at the southern extremity: Quamgobo, 1500 feet high; Manga, 1980; and Mgambo, 2200. This range is mostly covered with jungle and trees of large size. Numerous villages are dotted about on the mountain side, and the huts with their conical grass roofs peep out from among the trees. On the lower spurs of the hills there are larger villages admirably situated either for defence or flight. North of the Zigi, in the same longitude as the Magila Mountain, there is another group rising abruptly out of the plain, the ridge forming a kind of right angle north, south, and east. It is called Mount Lukindo, and is 3000 feet above the level of the sea. It has several peaks with jungle at the bottom, and bare granite heads. The country around is called Bamba, and it is well cultivated, with a large population. The latitude of this mountain is  $4^{\circ} 58' S$ .

South of the Magila Mountain, and nearly in the same longitude, is the peak of Tongwe, 2000 feet above the sea-level, and across the Luvu, in the same line, the southernmost peak Genda Genda.

The River Mkulumuzi rises between the two peaks Manga and Mgambo; it dashes down the sides of the mountain, forming numerous beautiful cascades. In the rainy season it becomes a torrent, flooding all the valleys, carrying down great trees, and frequently drowning the natives in their attempts to cross it.

The stream has cut a deep bed for itself in the granite sides of the mountain, and exploring this bed in the dry season, I have found perfectly round well-like basins in the rock, varying from 1 foot in diameter and depth to 10 feet in diameter, and from 8 to 12 feet in depth. There is always a stone at the bottom of these basins, and they must have been formed by the torrent giving, during the rainy season, a rotary motion to the stone.

After we had been living at Magila some time, messengers arrived from Hendei bringing a letter from Kibanga, begging me to meet him and Simboja at Msasa, and arrange a peace between them. They had been fighting since Sekalavu's death in 1869, and they were now heartily tired of it. But each fearing treachery from the other, they did not like to meet without some better guarantee than their own promises. The coast slave-traders encouraged this warfare, and supplied at one time Simboja with powder and at another time Kibanga, on the condition that all captives taken by either party were to be sold to them for slaves. I at once accepted the invitation, and the next morning, August 28th, 1876, we set out. Our party consisted of six of my own

men, Michael Kifungiwe, Kibanga's brother, with two or three Bondeis, and the two messengers of Kibanga.

After leaving Magila our path took us at first in a southerly direction to avoid a spur of the Magila Mountains. It was a rolling, hilly country, well wooded and watered. We passed a good number of villages in clearings in the woods, also plantations of rice and Indian corn. Four hours from Magila we arrived at Hababara, a market town. We found no beach-people at the market, and no Swahili was spoken. The women were the chief traders, bringing their bananas, Indian corn, and tobacco, to exchange for beads, cotton cloth, and shark. After leaving Hababara we descended to the Kihuwi, an affluent of the Zigi, rising in the Mlesha Mountains, a clear mountain stream, 30 feet wide and 3 feet deep, with sandy bottom. Our path now led more to the north, and we passed Matukuru, Masangombe, and Vumba. The character of the country now changed, all signs of cultivation and life ceased, the hills became steeper, and the walking proportionately more difficult. The forests had no jungle, but a light undergrowth of ferns. On our right were bare granite peaks, about 3000 feet above the sea-level, called Magomba, the western slopes of the Magila Mountain. Two hours after leaving the Kihuwi we reached the Zigi, running N.N.E., here about 60 feet wide, and shallow, the bed being full of great boulders of granite brought down by the floods. Resting on these granite blocks were the trunks of large trees, sometimes 20 feet above the level of the river, showing what a mighty torrent the Zigi becomes in the rainy season. Immediately after crossing the Zigi we commenced the ascent of the Msasa Mountain, 3500 feet above the sea-level. It is covered at the base with jungle and large trees. Bamboos of great height, and 3 inches in diameter near the ground, grew among the trees. Higher up we found plantations of tobacco and Indian corn. Two-thirds up the mountain we rested at the village of Nguwye.

The Msasa Mountain is extremely difficult to climb on account of the excessive steepness of the sides. Even the natives admit that they can neither go up nor down in wet weather. On reaching the top, after two hours' hard climbing, we found a soft bed of turf, consisting of short grass and scented herbs. There were numerous wild orange trees, filling the air with fragrance. We also saw herds of cattle and goats browsing.

After a walk of a mile along the narrow ridge through groves of bananas, we arrived at the town of Msasa, and fired off our guns to announce our arrival. The next morning Kibanga arrived from Hendei with about 150 men who form his body-guard. As he entered the town, drums, horns, and a kind of bassoon were played before him, while all who possessed guns fired them off. He had with him a Comoro man, named Abdallah, who acts as his secretary and factotum. Our interview was cold and formal; but the chief became more confidential and

friendly in the course of our stay, and we left after an affectionate farewell, and a promise on my part to visit him again.

On the 6th of November we set out for Hendei. As we stood next day upon the Msasa Mountain, looking west, we saw before us an elevated valley covered with forest; on the opposite ridge, called the Hendei Mountain, we saw the smoke curling up from the trees and were told that there was Hendei.

We descended into the forest, which quite fulfilled my idea of a tropical forest. The trees were large, there was no jungle, only an endless variety of splendid ferns. We were six hours crossing this valley, and the trees entirely kept out the sunlight. When the men were not talking, there was a silence that became painful. The country is undulating, with now and then a great granite boulder covered with a growth of ferns. We saw no signs of life, neither men nor villages. When we arrived at Hendei, Kibanga gave us a hearty welcome, but said that it would not be safe to go through the country then, for he had received information that same morning that one of Simboja's sons had collected a force with the intention of making a raid upon Hendei. I had many applicants for medicines, and having brought some with me I prescribed for the sick. They took whatever I gave them with a faith that must have worked half the cure. Kibanga lived in a large well-built house containing several rooms, and a wide verandah before it, where he sat to receive his guests. The doors were well made in strong square frames. I thought it better to leave next morning, lest our presence should hamper Kibanga in his defence. At parting, Kibanga gave me one of his boys to take back with me to live at Magila, and he also gave us several cold roast fowls, and baskets of Ugali to eat on the journey, as it would be late before we reached our halting-place for the night. We returned by the northern route. Soon after leaving Hendei we crossed the Zigi near its source, here a narrow mountain streamlet. We then came to a village called Mgambo, which Kibanga has recently made his capital on account of the strength of its natural fortifications.

The hills frequently took the form of grassy cones, with clumps of trees and patches of jungle. For miles along the upper heights of the Hendei Mountains no trees were visible, only a short turf.

To the right and left of us, but at some distance from the path, we could see the smoke rising from tiny hamlets. In the valleys the foliage was most luxuriant. There were new species of orchids on the trees, ferns looking like miniature palm-trees, forming a trunk by the twisting stems of dead fronds, and palms of varieties unknown to me. Six hours' walking brought us to Bulwa, a town on the same range as Msasa. Here we saw Tanga harbour due east of us, and the Zigi meandering through the plain. This mountain is about 5000 feet above the sea-level. We descended into the valley, the path taking us near

the towns of Mashanika and Zimbili, and arrived in the evening at Marua, where we slept. The hut was so stifling that it was impossible to sleep in it; I therefore went outside, but the growling of the leopards warned me that it was hardly safe to sleep outside. I found a wattle house not yet plastered or thatched, and slept in it. We set out in the morning, southward through the Mananasi Valley, and crossed the Zigi at a ford called Ufinga. The river was here about 80 feet wide, and deep enough to conceal hippopotami, for we saw their fresh footprints on the bank. This valley is inhabited by Wazegua settlers.

We soon afterwards left the valley, the path taking us up the mountains, and now we went along the sides of the hills until we turned the peak of Gazi; then crossing the ridge, where we had a splendid view to the south over the Luvu, we descended into the Magila Valley, and arrived at Magila by noon. The ridges of these mountains were well cultivated, and there were several villages on the top.

The soil throughout Usambara is a red disintegrated clay upon a granite and sandstone foundation, and covered with a rich vegetable loam. The bottoms of the valleys contain beds of alluvial clay. I should say no more fertile soil could be found in the world, and it will, I am sure, produce every tropical plant. The flora of Usambara is extensive. In the forests we find ebony, copal, teak, acacia, the indiarubber-tree, the orchella weed, the betel-pepper climber, prickly smilax, with several varieties of the strychnos tree, and many other trees producing valuable wood. On my return next summer I should be happy to welcome a scientific botanist as my guest, and should feel well repaid if he would teach us how to turn the vegetable wealth of the country to account.

The Wasambara are of the same stock as the people of Chaga. The languages are very similar, and there is a constant and friendly intercourse between the two tribes. Many of them are rather Semitic than Negro in their type, having high foreheads, while the prognathous jaw and spur heel are both wanting. In form and figure they are perfect, and they have frequently reminded me of bronze statues. They average 5 feet 7 inches in height, and are strong, though not robust. They vary in colour from a light brown to a deep black, not, however, the dead-black of many of the Negro tribes, but soft and shining like satin. They have fair mental powers; a few have learnt to write, but very badly. They have plenty of perception, and quickly reckon up the person with whom they have to deal; at first often rebellious, but if met with firmness always at last submitting. They are shrewd in the common affairs of daily life, hospitable, yet expecting a present. I have never found them ungrateful, and they nearly always repay a kindness. They are brave with a good leader, and modest, showing love for parents and respect for age.

Religion they have none, except a belief in charms and evil spirits. An offering of first-fruits is always made to the spirits, and in sickness a

sacrifice is offered to propitiate the pepo or spirit. This is usually done under the "spirit tree" near the entrance to the village. As the medicine man kills the goat, he cries, "O pepo, we bring you a present; please do not torment this person any more, but give him health again, and then we will bring you another present, a nice white fowl." The pepo, however, does not get much of the goat, for the friends of the sick man cook it and eat it, giving a very small piece to the pepo.

Their marriage ceremonies are peculiar. The young couple meet at the house of a friend; two native bedsteads are placed one on either side of the room, with a big fire between. On these the bride and bridegroom recline in the sight of each other for four days without food. Luke-warm water is allowed them when they are thirsty. On the fifth day one basin of thin porridge is given them before the bridal procession commences to the house of the bride's mother. The bridegroom walks first with his friends, his best man carrying a zebra's tail. The bride follows at a little distance on the back of a matron, surrounded by her friends. The chief bridesmaid is dressed as a man, and carries a sword and a gun. When they arrive before the house of the bride's mother, the men retire into another house, and a stool is put before the door for the bride to sit upon. The women then go round her with baskets of Indian corn, dropping some before her as they pass, until a large heap is made. The ceremony is completed by a great feast in the evening.

The Bondeis are more robust than the highlanders on account of their living principally upon Indian corn, while the chief diet of the Wasambara is banana porridge. They are industrious, both men and women working in the fields. They export semsem seed, rice, Indian corn, indiarubber, and tobacco. Cotton of good quality is indigenous, but it is not cultivated. When we consider the wondrous fertility of this country, together with its vicinity to the coast, the mountains being only separated from the sea by a level plain of 30 miles, it is impossible to doubt but that it has a great future before it. I have had several pressing invitations from the chiefs to be their king; but I have been obliged to decline, as it would require far more capital to organise a government than I could command. But with a government that would develop its resources, it would quickly repay any money laid out upon it.

In September last year, Dr Kirk and Captain Wharton, accompanied by Lieutenant Gordon and Mr. Craven, visited Magila. They started from Tanga, spent several days at Magila, and then returned to Tanga, *viâ* Uмба. Captain Wharton noted the heights of the mountains near, and took observations, fixing the latitude and longitude of Magila; while Dr. Kirk explored the hills, and collected botanical specimens.

*The Masai Country.*—During my residence at Magila I frequently came in contact with men who had been to Chaga and the Masai

country. From them I learned that Mandara, who was the chief of Chaga when New visited it, has since been conquered by another Chaga chief, and has now no power beyond his own town.

The Masai country consists of a level plateau with short isolated mountain chains, and single peaks rising from the centre of the plain. After leaving Kilimanjaro, the paths entirely cease, and the traveller has to find his way as best he can over the short grass. For many miles not a tree can be seen, and herds of wild animals are visible at a great distance. The Masai always encamp upon the hills for the sake of the water; they erect huts, but abandon them as soon as the feeding in the neighbourhood is exhausted, and then they move with their herds to another place. Both sexes dispense with clothes; they are tall and muscular, but thin in the legs. They are great walkers, and move rapidly over the country. They are entirely pastoral; their food consists of the flesh of their cattle, and milk mixed with blood. They have a very strong racial odour, and the people of other tribes declare that it would be impossible for a Masai to mix with other people without being at once detected. They are divided into numerous clans under different chiefs, who are entirely independent of each other, and frequently make war upon one another. They have some system of telegraphy by which the news of an approaching caravan is at once conveyed all over that part of the country. Their arms consist of a shield entirely covering the owner, consisting of several thicknesses of cow-hide; they carry two spears with blades 18 inches long and 3 inches wide, a short sword, and two heavy knob sticks.

The Masai in the neighbourhood of Chaga have adopted many of the habits of agricultural people, they dwell in permanent villages, cultivate Indian corn, and live on friendly terms with the Wachaga. They understand working in iron, and make their own weapons.

They do not use bows and arrows, and they have no guns. They are a very hardy race and strict monogamists; but so treacherous in their dealings with strangers, that the traders always find it necessary to construct intrenched camps to live in. Last year, 2000 well-armed Swahilis from Pangani, Tanga, and Saadani, set out for the Masai country to make war upon a Masai tribe, who are reported to build their houses and stockades with ivory, and refuse all intercourse with strangers or traders. Very few Swahili ever returned to tell the tale of their defeat.

The great mountain called Doenyo Ngai, west of Chaga, is said to have a bright light over it at night, and that it thunders. The Masai call it Doenyo Ngai, which means, "the mountain of God." At its base are two boiling wells, where the traders can cook their meat by putting it into the water on their ramrods. It is possible that it is a sulphur cone.

No one can look at a map of East Africa without seeing that to open up the Equatorial Lakes, a way must be made to them through the

Masai country, to avoid both the long journey of the Nile, and the circuitous and expensive route through Unyamwezi. I have talked with the native traders to the Masai, and they consider it quite feasible. In fact, they gave me clear evidence of their belief by offering to go with me if I would make up a party. Kibanga offered me letters of introduction to his friends, the chiefs of Pari, and Chaga; while a Wazegua chief offered to go with me up the valley of the Luvu as far as Chaga.

It would be far better for an intended expedition to Masai to get their men upon the mainland instead of in Zanzibar. There are many friends of mine who know the Masai language, and I shall always be glad to assist an expedition by procuring the right men and obtaining introductions from one native chief to another, which will be found of great value in this part of Africa.

After the reading of the Paper:—

MR. ALFRED CRAVEN rose and said he had had the pleasure of visiting Magila during Mr. Farler's residence there, and partaking of Mr. Farler's hospitality for some little time. His object was to investigate the zoology of the region and acclimatise himself preparatory to a journey of exploration to the Lake regions; but he was unfortunately overcome by sickness, and forced to return to England. During the time he was there he was impressed by the great natural beauty of the country, which well deserved its name of the "Switzerland of Africa." He believed that every production of the tropics could be grown on its fertile soil. He had no doubt that higher up the mountains the climate was salubrious.

Captain C. E. FOOT, R.N., after alluding to his former acquaintance with Mr. Farler at Zanzibar, said the Paper showed that the friends of Africa might congratulate themselves on the advance that had been made during the last few years. When it was seen that Mr. Farler could live for years among the natives of the interior and enter into friendly relations with them, and even be invited to become their chief, it was evident that there was good material to work upon. He thought that the visit of the Sultan of Zanzibar to this metropolis had been of great service to Eastern Africa and to humanity at large. He (Captain Foot) was the last to say "Good-bye" to his Highness at Aden, when he left that place for England; and he was glad to know from his friends at Zanzibar, that since his return the Sultan had done all he could to promote civilisation and commerce, and suppress the slave trade. Missionaries were much indebted to his Highness for having facilitated their operations in the country. The missionaries were the true pioneers, and it behoved the nation of England to supplement those efforts and assist the Geographical Society in exploring the unknown tracts of the continent.

Sir T. FOWELL BUXTON, at the request of the Chairman, then gave an account of what had been done towards making a road from the coast, near Zanzibar, into the interior. He said: If it had not been for the Chairman's request, it would have been more gratifying to the promoters of the road to have shrouded themselves in a little modest reserve until they had something more to speak about than they had at present. Still they recognised the duty of stating what had been done, if it would tend to encourage others who took an interest in the civilisation of Africa. The origin of the work which had been undertaken dated back to the time of the conference at Brussels, where a discussion took place in reference to the best means of spreading civilised commerce in Africa and suppressing the slave trade. Among the various methods then suggested, none obtained more favour than that of opening a road

to the interior. The idea was taken up by a few who attended the conference, but it was felt that it was a kind of work which did not lie within the purview of the African Committee of the Geographical Society. It was therefore undertaken at first in a very small way, in the hope that a beginning at least might be made. In the first instance it was proposed to make a road from the coast to the north end of Nyassa. So little was then known of the country, that the starting-point was not fixed on until the men employed had reached the place. In the first instance they went to Dar-es-Salaam, just opposite the southern end of the island of Zanzibar; but after a short time the agent then in charge, Sergeant Mayes, proceeded down the coast to ascertain whether the port of Kilwa would offer greater facilities. It was perhaps rather a misfortune that he so decided, because a fine season, which might have been better employed, was thereby lost. However, it was clearly ascertained that Kilwa and another place, Kilwa Kivinji, were utterly unsuitable for any such work. Between the sea and the hard ground there was a broad belt of morass, and the hard ground itself was rock, with a sparse population. Of the two points, Dar-es-Salaam was infinitely the most useful and valuable from which to make a start. It had a well-protected harbour, with a steep shore and deep water, so that ships could approach any landing-place that might be made there. There were two or three good buildings on the coast, and further inland it was well populated. The work of road-making was begun with energy about the middle of last year, and up to the date of the last letters which had been received 40 miles had been completed. Of course that was a mere nothing compared with what it was hoped eventually to accomplish; but at all events some experience had been gained which might be of value to future travellers, traders, or missionaries. It had been proved that the natives were numerous, and were very willing to undertake labour for wages. The wages ranged from three to six dollars a month. There had been difficulties, but on the whole he thought it might be said that the natives had displayed a capacity for labour, whether engaged by the day or by the month. There must, however, be constant supervision. If European supervision were withdrawn they immediately fell into dawdling ways. Another point of some importance was that a very little training and education had taught them to receive their wages in small Indian coin instead of masses of cotton goods. It had always hitherto been the great difficulty with travellers that they had to carry such large supplies of cotton goods, and it would be a very great gain if the natives learnt to accept payment in coin. The extreme rapidity with which vegetation grew up was a great difficulty to overcome, and it might be that nothing would keep it down except the use of wheeled conveyances. It was hoped that the native traffic of foot passengers would have sufficed. There had been no lack of such traffic, for the road had been used to a great extent for the carrying of indiarubber, gum copal, and other produce; but for so many generations the natives had been so accustomed to walk in Indian file, that, however numerous they might be, and however smooth the road, they continued to walk one behind the other. Only one small thread of road was therefore kept open by the traffic. Some little effort had been made to introduce wheeled conveyances drawn by oxen, and it could not be said those experiments had failed owing to the presence of the tsetse fly. Accidents of one kind and another had occurred, and possibly there had been carelessness in dealing with the animals, and nothing definite could be concluded from the attempt which had been made to use oxen or horses as beasts of draught. There was this encouragement, however, that the donkeys which had been employed had done their work efficiently and well, and had kept in good health. The only wheeled conveyance which had proceeded along the road with any success was something akin to a costermonger's cart drawn by two donkeys, and to add to the sporting effect of the scene they were driven tandem. They had several times gone at a good fair pace along the road. The work had not



gone on as quickly as might have been expected, but the climate had presented one great obstacle. Those who had undertaken the work had been exposed to the severity of the climate more than ordinary travellers, for they had had to work in a somewhat dense jungle where the air was close and damp. The four Europeans who had been employed had all more or less suffered from the climate, and had to return rather quickly. Sergeant Mayes, who was compelled to come home, went back again; but he now wished to give up the work. On his return it was hoped that fuller accounts would be obtainable of what he had been doing; but among the various talents which he had displayed, the art of descriptive writing had not been one. There was no insuperable difficulty in carrying on the work, and in time the Sultan might become so far interested in it as to extend the road for some hundreds of miles. He could not conclude these remarks without mentioning the kind interest shown by the Sultan, and especially by Dr. Kirk, when any little difficulties had arisen. One of the chiefs objected to the road passing through his territory. Stringent directions had been given that there should be no attempt at forcible progress, but the matter having been referred to the Sultan, who claimed authority there, a small police force was sent over, and the objection was overcome without any further difficulty. He believed that in time all such opposition would be overcome, and no hostility would be met with from the natives.

The CHAIRMAN (Sir H. Rawlinson) said Mr. Farler had given a very graphic description of the district of Usambara, and had touched upon other points, regarding some of which the Society would be glad of further information; such as, for instance, the practicability of the route through the Masai country to the Victoria Nyanza. Perhaps he would be good enough to say whether there was anything like a trade route passing by the southern slopes of Kilimanjaro, because that was one line of access to the interior in which the Society had always taken the greatest interest. The African Exploration Fund, which was practically a branch of the Society, would have preferred that for their first exploratory essay; but from the best information they could obtain, they were impressed with the belief that it was absolutely impossible for a traveller to get through the Masai country. If it was possible, he hoped that the African Exploration Fund would make the attempt, because, as matters stood at present, the establishment of as nearly direct a line as possible between the Victoria Nyanza and the coast was the great desideratum for the improvement of Central Africa. While he was referring to this point, he could not help drawing attention to the really invaluable services to the cause of geography which were performed by the various missionary establishments in that part of Africa. Just now those establishments supplied almost the only means of increasing our geographical knowledge of that region. Besides those on the coast of Mombas and Zanzibar, there was a missionary establishment on Victoria Nyanza, which had been doing very good work. There were also some interior posts, and a mission was about to be formed on Tanganyika. In addition to these, there were establishments both at the north and at the south end of Nyassa. The African Exploration Fund had recently sent out a young traveller, Mr. Keith Johnston, who left England on the 14th instant for the purpose of carrying out an exploratory survey from Dar-es-Salaam to Lake Nyassa. No doubt he would work in perfect accord with the party to whom Sir F. Buxton had referred, and they would mutually assist each other.

Mr. FARLER, in reply, stated that the native traders had no regular route across the Masai country, although some had crossed that district. Quite recently one of the men who escaped the massacre of the missionary party on the Victoria Nyanza, returned across the Masai country alone. He thought it was quite possible for an expedition to pass through, but it would have to proceed with great care. The

Masai people hated and detested the Arabs, and therefore no Arab should be taken with the expedition. The travellers must not attempt to hurry through. They should first of all make their way up the valley of the Luvu, stay a certain time with each chief, and so get introductions from one to another. In this way he thought it was quite possible for a peaceable expedition to cross the Masai country from Usambara.

The CHAIRMAN, in thanking Mr. Farler, wished to add that the gentleman who had been selected for the purpose of making the attempt to cross the Masai country was Mr. Wakefield, of the Ribé Mission, near Mombas. His route would have been far to the north, on the borders of the Galla country; the project, however, was postponed for a time. If the African Exploration Fund became popular, and was duly supplied with the sinews of war, he hoped that it would be resumed, and that they would be able to secure Mr. Wakefield's services.

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*A Journey through Cyprus in the Autumn of 1878.*

By J. THOMSON.

(Read at the Evening Meeting, January 13th, 1879.)

EMBARKING at Alexandria in the Messageries steamer *Arethusa*, after a short and not unpleasant passage we anchor in the roads off Larnaca, on the morning of the 7th September.

Soon after daybreak we descry the shores of Cyprus, fringed with a belt of foam, behind which, and contrasting with the deep blue of the Mediterranean, russet and chocolate-coloured plains extend to the slopes of the southern chain of mountains. The heat is intense, for with the exception of a solitary cap on the summit of Troodos, the Cypriote Olympus, there is not a vestige of cloud to temper the scorching rays of the sun. The morning mist is rising from the valleys, obscuring the great spurs that fall away in dark masses from the central cone of this lofty range. As we approach the shore, details of the panorama come into view, and numerous villages are seen, embowered in foliage, affording an agreeable contrast to the vast expanse of sombre-coloured hills and plains.

Larnaca seen from the roads, with its domes and minarets bathed in sunshine, and its gardens shaded by fig-trees and date-palms, forms one of the most pleasing pictures in the Levant. But a closer inspection of the buildings on the Marina is not so satisfactory. True, the houses, and wreckage of landing-stages and waterside cafés, are most picturesque and rich in the forms and colours that delight the eye of an artist; but the evidences of neglect and decay are most depressing. The city proper lies in a hollow about half a mile inland from the Marina, the two places together having a population of about 8000.

A most interesting feature in the physical geography of this part of the island is the great alteration in the coast-line since the time when Citium was the chief southern port. Larnaca Marina is not only a modern settlement, but the ground on which it is built had apparently

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