NILOTICS AND AZANDE

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NILOTICS AND AZANDE

REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

ALBERT KAHN FOUNDATION

for the Foreign Travel of

American Teachers

BY

ULRICH BONNELL PHILLIPS

Albert Kahn Fellow, 1929-1930
Last winter I fared from Khartoum as far south as the steamers ply, and thence west by motor to the center of Africa. This indulged a wish of many years to broaden my grasp of Negro traits, to see the quality of primitive life where least disturbed, and to test a few theories. The facilities afforded by the Sudan government and every person within my touch were all that a visitor could hope for, and more than one could ask. What lacked was a gift of tongues. Ignorant even of Arabic, which serves more or less as a lingua franca, my ears were of service only when British officials or the missionaries were talking or when wild music was afloat. My eyes had to do double duty. Luckily, being Georgia-bred, all Negroes have never looked alike to me.

The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, comprising the tropical basin of the Nile, is a plateau so flat that its landscape, apart from out-of-the-way mountains, offers nothing but great belts of monotony. The north is a glaring desert with sandstone hills rising here and there above the horizon of mirage. The middle zone, where Khartoum stands, has a thin cover of coarse grass and permits a precarious cultivation of a drought-resistant grain which the British know as millet, though Americans would call it sorghum. To the southward, however, the grass grows denser and higher with every day of slow travel, and thin acacia scrub grows thicker and more diverse. Finally the rain-forest appears, here and there, at five or four degrees from the equator.

This gradation from desert to jungle results from the peculiarity of the tropical rainfall, which is always by season. The rains come only when the path of the sun lies near the zenith, and they are copious only in the lowest of latitudes. Near the equator, in a strip several hundred miles wide but including little of the Sudan, two long seasons of wet weather fill so much of each year that the rankest vegetation may never be stinted of sap. Trees of giant stature crowd their thick foliage aloft, and great vines writhe upward to compete for a place in the sun. But
where a dry season comprises months instead of weeks the rain-forest cannot thrust itself except in hollows kept moist by seepage.

In latitude five north, where part of my motor journey lay, the rains begin at the vernal equinox and continue almost daily, with a negligible July intermission, until November. These wet months induce a growth of coarse grasses to ten or twelve feet in height before intense drought dries the stems and leaves only dormant life in the roots. But the rainless half-year kills most of the sprouting trees except acacias, doleib palms and euphorbias, all of which are extremely frugal of evaporation. These euphorbias, huge cacti of candelabra shapes, bear no leaves; the palms merely lift their fronds into thin space; the acacia leaves are too small and sparse to obstruct many rays of the sun. Thus the grass, which has no chance under the dense equatorial canopy, may grow thick in these open woods; and an annual burning of it by the natives, killing trees here and there, keeps the woods thin. The termites whose hills dot the landscape help to keep the forest sparse, for some types of these “white ants” find their chief sustenance in the wood of living trees and eventually kill those upon which they feed.

The season of moisture in this latitude is long enough to mature nearly any crop, including cotton; and the general conditions are inviting to tillage. There are enough broad-leaved bushes in low places, however, to harbor tse-tse flies, one variety of which spreads sleeping-sickness among mankind, in the same way in which anopheles mosquitoes transmit malaria, while another more numerous breed carries death to domesticated livestock. Men must accordingly live without milk, and must carry their own burdens. They generally bear them on their heads, with a circular wisp of straw to soften the cranial contact.

In latitude ten, with a shorter season of rain, grass is lush for several months, and cattle may live with no tse-tse flies within striking distance. Crops of sundry sorts, millet in the main, may ripen their harvests quite surely.

Thus far, and irregularly to latitude twelve or thirteen, people may live without much thrift or forethought. It is the land of the Negroes, preserved from outside mass-invasion, I dare say, by the more or less conscious dread of malaria. Farther north, into the steppe zone of more laborious husbandry, the Negroes have not gone copiously except as
slaves. This northerly population of Berbers, Nubians and other local categories is Mohammedan in faith, Arabic in speech. Though doubtless a product of ancient racial blendings, it conforms to a fairly distinctive type devoid of thick lips, flat noses or crinkled hair. These people are generally spoken of as Arabs. Most of those who dwell outside the cities maintain something of a tribal régime; and even in Omdurman or Khartoum the cheeks of many men show broad scars as Arab tribal mementoes; but these markings are as distinct from the diverse decorations of the Negroes as are the brown or blackish faces which bear them. The Arabs cross the vague boundary of the Negro land in the main only as merchants. Wherever they settle among Negroes they tend to convert these to their faith; but generally, despite both Moslem and Christian preachments, the Negroes cling to their magic-respecting paganism.

Here then are two realms within the Sudan, palpably different even to an aviator far overhead: in the north flat-roofed rectangular houses with women about them clad in dark blue from head to foot; turbaned men engaged perhaps in calisthenic prayers; donkeys and camels, goats and hairy sheep as well as cattle on the plains; bullock-drawn plows of primitive type in the fields perhaps building ridges to conserve the scanty rain; and sakigehs or shadoufs on the riverbank, as in Egypt, with men or oxen operating them to irrigate lands within reach of the stream; but in the south hippos in the rivers, elephants in the high grass, giraffes in the scrub, conical thatched roofs in petty clearings, men and women more or less naked and perhaps gathered in a dance about a drum. But the southern realm is more truly a patchwork of provinces remarkably distinct from one another, though most of their contrasts are not perceptible from aloft.

The main physical differentiation among the Negroes of the Sudan sets apart from all others the Shilluks, Dinkas and Nuers who together comprise the riverain or Nilotic group of tribal stocks. The men among these, with women proportionate, range in stature from little less than six feet toward nearly seven. Their hands and feet are extremely nar-

*Far to the westward, however, the Mandingoes and some other Negro groups have been Mohammedan for a long time. At Kosti, where an east-and-west railroad crosses the White Nile, Moslems of many tribes may be seen halted in quarantine on their pilgrimage to Mecca.
row, and their bodies very slim. They are unmistakably Negroes, with complexions as black as the blackest, but their forms and faces are seldom similar to those encountered in America. Their forebears must have lived for untold ages with little infusion of alien blood. Their easterly location saved them from the transatlantic slave-trade, though it made them victims of Arab slave-catching raids from the north which continued until within the memory of the present generation. Their method of life, which arises from the nature of their land, accounts in some degree for their freedom from blendings.

The branches of the White Nile drown part of their basin instead of draining it. In some recent geologic age there must have been a subsidence of the earth's crust thereabout which reversed the slope of the surface and impounded the waters into a great shallow lake. Slowly coming sediment has raised most of the floor only to the level of low-water, and every flood season brings inundation. Much of it, in fact, crowded with high grass and equally high papyrus plumes, is a permanent marsh, known as "the Sudd." At some places there are no trees to be seen on all the horizon from the top deck of a steamboat.

The grass of the Sudd and its borders is constantly green and yields unlimited grazing when it is accessible. But in high water the cattle would bog in the mud. They are therefore driven scores of miles to higher grounds when the rains produce green grass there while flooding the Sudd, and back again when drought bleaches these upper pastures and takes all drinking water from their streambeds. By this device of seasonal droving the Nilotic tribesmen manage to make their cattle the prime support of life; and by the same token these humped bulls and cows have become the very symbol of wealth to be cherished. While his wife or wives may till a patch of millet at the family hamlet, a Nilotic man will have if he can a herd as his constant care. He tends its grazing by day; at dusk he tethers it in a selected spot, preferably behind a wind-break; and through the night he maintains a smudge to prevent mosquitoes from disturbing the bovine rumination and slumber. He is fond of making his bed in the ashes, even if on the preceding day his whole person has been made to shine with butter, and of going about next morning smeared with gray to his eyelashes—for this is a visible
token of his proud control of a herd.* He not only knows each creature by name, but its pedigree to great length. He rarely slaughters one, or disposes of it living except in the purchase of a wife. Upon meeting a compatriot of equal dignity his politest inquiry is not "How is your family?" but "How are your cattle?" He holds his own as an ancestral trust to be inherited at his death undiminished; and he rubs and scrubs the face of his favorite bull until it shines almost as his own does when greased. These cattle bear no yokes, draw no plows and carry no loads. Their master and guardian asks of them only the milk which in curdled form is the main diet of his household.

As characteristics not possessed by other Negroes these Nilotics have in common only their pastoral economy, their grave demeanor, their lanky stature, their stalking walk which makes it unpleasant for them to carry burdens on their heads, and their skill handling clumsy canoes and hunting the hippo. They diverge among themselves not only in language but in many details of tribal custom. The Shilluks, who are the first of these tribes to be met on the southward journey, are specially striking to the visitor's eye. Their men are clad in cotton togas, knotted on the left shoulder and preferably tinted red, while men among the Dinkas and Nuers, unless they be chiefs of leopard-skin rank, generally wear no shred of clothing. The Shilluks raise permanent knobs of proud flesh across their children's foreheads as an outstanding tribal mark, while their neighbors are content with long flat scars across their brows. The Shilluks have a sort of king and high priest combined in one person, and a royal family whose members are privileged to retain

*Ownership of cattle and contingent claims upon them are likely to be complicated. A student of customs among the Raik division of the Dinka people has written:

"At first the ideas of the Raik about property appear primitive and hardly out of the communal stage, especially regarding cattle and food. Closer examination shows that their peculiar economy is the cause of this. For instance, a cow belongs to the head of a household and is allotted to a wife and her babies to drink milk from; a brother hopes to receive it in return for a cow he lent toward the eldest son's marriage payment; a second son hopes to be given it towards the marriage-price of the girl he hopes soon to marry; the cow actually came to its present owner as part of the marriage-price of his daughter: she is, however, unfortunately barren, and it looks as if the marriage will be broken and he will have to return the cow and its calf; meanwhile a third son has rashly broken the head of another young warrior in a fight at a dance, and if he dies the cow may have to be paid to his relations as blood-price. So a number of people are interested in the cow and will somehow have to be got to agree to its final fate. In this case, as a matter of law, the son-in-law prevails, though, as a matter of urgency, the father of the wounded boy would receive it on the understanding that it would be ransomed for return to its rightful owner by another cow shortly."—Major G. W. Titherington, in *Sudan Notes and Records*, X, 173.
all the teeth which nature furnishes; but youths and maidens among the commonalty must suffer the extraction of the six front teeth from their lower jaws. The Dinkas and the Nuers cherish no kings but practice the same ceremonial dentistry. A Shilluk man is likely to have on his head what seems at first glance to be a crownless hat with its brim turned up in front. But this is a structure of his own growing hair felted with cow dung. To keep its walls from being broken when he sleeps, he uses a wooden ear-pillow or neck-rest. Some Nuer men bleach and partially straighten their hair with cow urine, producing a frowsy reddish halo; but their wives are likely to keep their heads neatly shaven. Young Dinka men stuff their hair with red ash and train it somewhat into the shape of an old-time English lawyer's wig; but elderly men and women alike shave their heads. Dinka men in general are most easily distinguished from the similarly naked Nuers by their unique gesture of greeting. This is a forward pushing of the upraised palm of the right hand. To an alien it seems a movement of repulsion, but it is meant as a signal of amity.

In the stage of life proper to finery, Nilotics of both sexes and all breeds are likely to be festooned with beads, buttons and shells, and their limbs high and low encircled with varicolored strips of skin and rings of ivory, wood or brass. Many a young man's whole forearm is bound so tight with brass rings that the circulation is hampered and the wrist swollen to twice its normal size. The Nuer and Dinka women pierce their lips, and some their nostrils also, and wear straws or beaded wires projecting through the perforations while each ear, converted into a sieve, is laden with small brass rings all round its edge. They are also fond of iron anklets cupped on the outer side to contain a pellet which tinkles as they shift their feet. As to clothing, Nuer women are content with a fibrous fringe hung round the hips, very brief except for a longer panel in the rear. The Shilluk women are more or less habituated to cloth, and the Dinka matrons to calf skins; but feminine fashions appear not so uniform as the masculine.

From the Sudan government's point of view the most important difference among the Nilotics is the fondness of the Nuers for making cattle-raids and their capacity for effective discipline in battle, in con-
contrast with the more peaceful, individualistic and property-respecting disposition of their neighbors.

Each of these three Nilotic peoples, of course, has its own details of tribal organization and legal procedure, its own variety of creed, mystic mummerly and sacrifice, and many another distinctive possession which only a student may slowly discover. The matters here noted are merely what a tourist may learn by taking passage on a White Nile steamer, strolling in the villages and chatting with resident officials and missionaries during the long stops, and motoring across country here and there to see something of the inland régime.

The non-riverain tribes—the pot-bellies, as the slab-sided Nilotics are wont to style them—are much less convenient of access. Ten years ago such a circuit as I swung from the Bahr-el-Jebel to navigation again on the Bahr-el-Ghazal could have been made only by months of sweltering trudge, with high grass crowding the narrow path to hide the landscape and shut off any cooling breeze. Even now for half the year anyone whose occasion requires travel must go afoot, for the mud makes motor traffic impossible and the tse-tse flies forbid the keeping of horses or oxen. But for dry-season motoring the local tribesmen under government direction have cleared a few long roads and built crude bridges over most of the streams.

The roads are there today; but in the region of my chief interest, lying nearest the center of Africa, the government, for the sake of controlling sleeping-sickness, forbids all casual traffic. Partly for that reason there is no transportation on schedule, and little on call. Anyone firmly set upon a journey thither had best procure at Khartoum and carry with him on the steamer not only a special permit from the medical authorities but camp kit, a food supply, an interpreter-servant or two, and a motor vehicle having cargo space. My own lack of this formidable equipment would have defeated my hopes of westward penetration had not fine luck befallen while the good ship Fateh sturdily paddled upstream. My fellow-passengers were mostly Sudan officials returning to their frontier posts after home-leave in England; and two of them, having learned of my wishes and having sized me up over the bridge table, invited me to join them on their journey to the very land of my desire. Part of their prompting was the fact that no American had previously
gone into their zone and their wish to see such a one's reactions. My
hosts were Major J. R. N. Warburton, R.A.M.C., director of the sleeping-
sickness and leprosy settlement at Source Yubu, and Captain H. F. Kidd,
retired from the Royal Artillery, commissioner of a district on the far
western frontier. They are veterans of the Sudan, primed with knowl-
edge of the wilderness and its inhabitants, fluent, humorous, high-hearted
and capable. They are even better than most of the British in the Sudan
service, which is saying a great deal.

"It's a rough road, Professor," and "It's a hard life, Professor,"
Kidd and Warburton warned me without impression. They harped over-
much on that "Professor," little knowing what stout fellows my craft
would furnish if the colleges were combed. So, on a December night of
1929 we disembarked at Terrakekka, south of the Sudd, with a lorry,*
a touring car and its trailer, copious kit and tinned foodstuffs, and five
servants; and made camp in the small hours with nothing but mosquito
nets between us and the silvery moon.

With cargo stowed soon after dawn, the major and the captain
stepped on the starters, west bound for "the heart of darkness" via
Amadi, Maridi, Yambio and Tambura. These are all seats of district
commissioners, a hundred miles or more apart. As additional stations
for use at will there are merely rest-houses of mud and thatch, wholly
devoid of utensils and furniture. For wet-season convenience these are
spaced at intervals of seven or eight miles, the standard half-day trudge
of laden carriers. Near each of them there dwells a keeper who fur-
nishes wood and water, and if wanted may supply scrawny chickens and
half-size eggs. Usually we stopped at such a shelter for a hot breakfast
or a cold lunch, and nearly always used one for lodging; but dinner-time
was likely to find us within hail of a hospitable district commissioner.

The first morning's drive lay through level country of high grass and
medium trees, with few hamlets and little cultivation. The afternoon,
which ended at Amadi, brought a gentle ascent into landscape which was
to be familiar through the following week. The most conspicuous fea-
tures, at longer or shorter intervals, are tall outcrops of granite or
schist, their shoulders rounded by the flaking induced by the sharp alter-
nation of temperatures from the great heat of the sunshine to the chill

*Fords, Flit and fly-swatters are America's contribution to Sudan progress.
of night. On these gray hills are perched boulders of the same stone with corners eliminated by the same process of tropical dry-season weathering. The main expanse of the land, however, has its quality determined not by these occasional igneous rocks but by great beds of porous laterite (iron-stone) which furnishes a red-brown soil. The road lies mostly in gentle undulations, though dipping steeply now and then to cross ravines which dissect the laterite plateau. Of course the surface, like all good ground in such a climate, is copiously pinnacled with termite hills, tall and conical or low and mushroom-shaped according to the varying habits of the "white ant" breeds; and when one of these excrescences has been cut off in the making of the road its insect architects begin to rebuild it.

Our second and third days of travel, slanting southward past Maridi to Yambio and crossing the fifth parallel of latitude, brought us to the zone of a distinctly longer wet season, evidenced by glimpses of dense jungle on our left, by tall trees in the open woods along the highway, and by more diverse crops in the more numerous clearings. In particular for some forty miles on either side of Maridi there is a good deal of cotton culture in response to the government’s construction of a ginnery there and its offer to buy all the cotton which the natives may bring.

This industry has had a rapid enlargement since “American upland” seed were introduced some years ago; but a great expansion is by no means assured. The plants grow as tall as those in the Mississippi lowlands; but they are beset by even more diseases and insect pests than are known in America, and the yield is not heavy nor of high grade. The natives grow the crop in their own patches under the guidance of government agents who are themselves likely to be novices in cotton methods. For example, the agricultural director who manages the Maridi ginnery was interested to learn that in America cotton seed are highly rated as fertilizer. His own practice, under bureaucratic instruction, has been to burn all seed not needed for planting, in order to prevent them from serving as food for multiplying rats.

The future prospect hangs partly upon the course of prices in the world’s market. If lint at Liverpool should steadily bring a shilling per pound there would be no doubt of prosperity; but at prices much lower than this the industry must languish by reason of the heavy charges of
transformation. Not only the costs of ginning but those of carriage by motor two hundred miles to Terrakekka, by river to Khartoum, by rail to Port Sudan and by sea to Liverpool must all be deducted in ascertaining the price which can be afforded at Maridi. But the natives who produce the crop confront not only the labor of planting, cultivation and harvest but a trudge of hours or of days with heavy baskets on their heads. A man’s maximum load of say sixty pounds brings the price equivalent of hardly twenty pounds of lint, because at least two-thirds of its weight is virtual tare in the form of seed. If the path from the farm to the gin stretches more than thirty or forty miles the prospect loses charm. There are very few ginneries as yet in this latitude, and the present level of prices does not encourage their multiplication. The local agriculture is likely to retain as its essential purpose the feeding of the farmers themselves.

At Maridi, having passed through the lands of several mixed and minor tribes, we reached the beginning of the Azande, whose praises both of my hosts had been singing; and I quickly came to share their esteem. The Zande speech is one of the many “prefix” languages of Africa, forming a plural for example by prefixing a. Thus a single member of the tribe is a Zande; more than one are Azande.* Numbering perhaps a million souls, this people dwells on both slopes of the Nile-Congo divide, partly in the Belgian, partly in the French, and partly in the Anglo-Egyptian jurisdiction. They are sociable chatterers, alert for what may come before their eyes and eager to share in such slender trickle of money as may come within their grasp.†

In contrast with Nilotics, the Azande readily work for wages, traveling sometimes a fortnight’s journey on the prospect of employment at river landings. They offer themselves copiously as recruits for the Equatorial Defence Force, and make a smart appearance in its uniform of khaki shorts and blouses and cockaded hats. Erect posture is already theirs, for the habitual carrying of burdens on the head forbids a stoop-

*They are also called Nyam-Nyam in onomatopoetic suggestion of strong relish for food and in intimation of cannibalism. Nyam-Nyam, too, is the name of the distinctive breed of dogs which, with chickens, comprise their only domesticated animals. These little short-haired yellow-and-white dogs may bite, but never bark.

†The restriction of commerce as a part of the sleeping-sickness control in this “closed area” lessens the Zande opportunities for getting money. In recognition of this the people are permitted to commute their poll taxes into labor on the roads.
ing shoulder or a bending neck; and the shuffling walk which the same practice induces is not hard to replace with a military stride under a drill sergeant’s tutelage. In civilian employment they prefer service as government carriers because that yields a wage of two and a half piastres per day, as compared with one piastre (five cents in American value) which is the prevailing scale for other sorts of work.

Again in contrast with Nilotics, the Azande are strikingly fond of making music. Any man traveling the highway is likely to have a lakembi hung upon his arm if it is not in active use as he walks. This is a small slab of wood, hollowed into a sounding-board and rigged with a bridge bearing eight strips of metal or cane in varying lengths. With the box held in both hands, a soft music is produced by thumbing the ends of these strips while a finger closes and opens a hole in the bottom of the box to vary the volume of sound. A somewhat less common instrument is the kundi, a lute which looks like a fiddle with an up-curving neck. It bears five strings, each of which when plucked can give but a single note. More elaborate, less easy of transport and not often to be seen is a xylophone with small gourds attached on the under side to increase the sound when the slats are struck. All of these instruments, the lakembi and the kundi especially, are so soft of tone that a player has an air of merely serenading himself, though he may set his hearers to shuffling their feet. All the music, except drum-accompanied song, proved surprisingly subdued. There is no crashing of cymbals, no blare of horns, no whine of pipes, no frenzy as of jazz, but a gentle thrumming of tribal lays.

Drums only are used in combination, somewhat as are the bass and kettle of civilized marching men; but the type of these instruments and the manner of their beating are unlike anything known in the white man’s world. The deeper drum, or gugu, is the trunk of a tree cut to a length of three or four feet, hollowed on its convex upper side by gouging through a longitudinal slot, and cut away on the under side so as to leave stubby legs. For handles part of the original log is left projecting from each squared end; and as a touch of ornamentation this may be carved into resemblance to a buffalo’s head. The drummer sits on one end of this drum and extends a leg along the slot, to muffle the sound, or raises his knee to give it free vent; and with short rubber-tipped sticks
he produces contrasting tones by striking now near the slot, now at some distance down the side. His partner in the performance grips his own gaza between his knees and beats it with a stick in one hand and the bare palm of the other to produce ruffles and flutters embroidering the gugu’s rhythm. The gaza is a tapering hollowed wooden cylinder about a foot in diameter and two or three feet long, with a cured skin laced over its larger end to give a sounding diaphragm. The gugu when used alone serves the non-musical purpose of broadcasting signals and messages by tapping in a sort of telegraphic code. When paired with a gaza it brings dancing and at the same time song. The music, by whatever means produced, is tunefully simple, but extremely hard for a Caucasian to memorize because the scale, the intervals and the themes are alike alien to all ears habituated in the European musical tradition.

On the remote Zande roads the passing of any vehicle is rare enough to be an event. In the general quiet of the country, where unless a dance is in progress or a telegraph drum throbbing a message, nothing breaks the stillness but the twitter of birds, the babble of human voices or the lilt of soft music. A motor’s exhaust may be heard for hundreds of yards ahead. With one accord each family drops its work or play to run to the roadside and see the show. Every woman and girl stretches forward both arms and calls a cheery greeting, “Ennennay”; every man and boy freezes into rigid attention until we come nearly opposite him, then strides forward with his left foot, brings up his right with a stamp, and simultaneously swings his right hand to his forehead in a sharp military salute. To see the veriest pickaninnies do this with an obvious pride of performance is an endless entertainment. The salute is an innovation derived from British officers through Zande men who have returned home after military service. Its wide spread is curious in face of the fact that so little else of the whites has been adopted.

As to garments, if such they may be called, Azande use forest materials. For men’s wear a certain sort of tree, which is often planted about the homesteads, yields a pliable bark which is felted by beating into the same texture as Hawaiian tapa. A swath of this is passed between the legs and its ends drawn through a girdle. When fresh this bugadi is pale brown, but it soon darkens with sweat and grime. It will not stand washing, but when too foul for further wear it may be kept on hand to
yield strips of tinder when a fresh fire needs to be lighted. The women, instead of using any sort of cloth, merely draw a bunch of green leaves, stems upward, through the girdle in front, and another behind. The pressure of the girdle against the body holds the leaves in place. When they wilt, any convenient bush will furnish milady a fresh costume. To a visitor the effect is not unlike that of the bare-breasted show-girls of the Folies-Bergère, but to the natives this nakedness is merely a matter of course. Old women, with wrinkled skin and shriveled breasts, have the same lack of covering as their buxom daughters. The children, like those in many another tropical region, are likely to wear nothing at all until well into their teens.

The Azande, nevertheless, are fond of decoration. Earrings, necklaces, armbands, wristlets, garters and anklets are common; and elaborate scar-patterns frequently cover the faces, arms and torsos whether of men or women. In addition, a man may have his face and body stained in fearsome geometrical designs with the blue-black juice of a native plant. Geometry is applied also to a man's head by the shaving of bands here and there within the area of kinky hair. The women do not expose their scalps, but uniformly dress their hair in small braids held in place by a fillet and forming a neat fringe to the brow.

The wearing of hats is confined to the men and more or less restricted to festive occasions. The Zande hat is of "sailor" shape, but with curious details resulting from its construction of square-woven straw. Thus the crown, having no whorl, is of square outline. When the weaver has completed this he bends the straws to the vertical on the four sides and interlaces new straws with them to build a cylinder. Of course the cylindrical side and the square top will not conform—the circle will not square. A solution is reached by merely leaving a hole in the weave at each corner of the crown's edge. The ventilation is not amiss. For the rest, when the cylinder is completed to the small height required, the original straws are bent to the horizontal again, but now in radial directions, and further weaving shapes a narrow brim. With a feather affixed and the hat perched upon his head, a man is ready to dance. If caught by the music without a hat he is likely to display a pair of ornamental hairpins made by lashing together strips of rattan.
Every Zande when smiling or voicing the nazalized long-drawn ee of affirmation exhibits a triangular gap which has been filed between his or her upper incisors. But this mark of the teeth is hardly needed to identify a member of this remarkably homogeneous tribal stock. Its complexion is not black but a uniform chocolate; its stature is medium and its build a bit heavy, with many a man showing an athlete's torso and many a woman unconsciously posing as a bronze Juno. The eyes are large and liquid, slightly prominent, and quite distinctively set in the round, good-humored face. The nose and lips are but moderately thick. All in all, if a Zande escapes a pot belly he or she is good to look upon, and obviously easy to have dealings with. The tribal type is pleasantly familiar to one who has dwelt among American Negroes; and this likeness to transatlantic cousins suggests that the maritime slave-trade drew heavily from the center of Africa, or that closely similar types are spread to the westward, or that the Azande themselves, as their own tradition tells, have migrated from the west not many generations ago. All three of these intimations may be concurrently true.

The Azande are good farmers in a casual savage way, with banana trees and cassava bushes about their huts and sweet potatoes, peanuts, beans, gourds and sesame more or less intermingled with short-stemmed millet in their patches of cultivation. They are also hunters of some talent, driving game into nets which they have previously set in the brush and spearing the animals when entangled. Rats and mice, caught in basketry traps, are also included in the dietary, as are sundry other things which white people consider not proper for the table.

Not many decades ago the Azande were conquered by invading Avungara who settled among them as a ruling caste. Numerous Vungara chiefs are still dwelling in their midst; and as a symbol of their previous régime I saw on my tour half a dozen Zande men whose voices betrayed emasculation and whose arms ended in stumps at the wrists. In earlier life each of these was tried by some primitive method, convicted of adultery with a chief's wife, and mutilated in barbarous punishment. The Vungara tyranny doubtless inclined the Azande toward a more willing acquiescence in the coming of British rule.
Of course a primitive people can have but vague notions of what a new régime will bring and can understand but slowly the purport of novel policies. Likewise it is hard for the rulers, and still more for a casual guest of theirs not possessing the gift of African tongues, to fathom the successive reactions of the collective savage mind in response to novel conditions and requirements. The present status of affairs in regard to public health gives the most vivid picture which a tourist may glimpse of a beneficient transition. The hospitals maintained here and there by the government or by church missions I found crowded with patients; at Amadi, where there is no medical officer, I saw the district commissioner diverted from his magisterial functions to serve as an amateurdresser of the tropical ulcers and other lesions which are brought by a throng to his doorstep each morning; and at a rest-house by the road we passed a similar crowd assembled for treatment by a Syrian doctor in government service who tours the district on schedule. Everywhere the natives now congest the facilities which they previously disregarded, because in the past few years they have discovered the superiority of European medicine over the herbs and incantations of their own witch-doctors. Even to the tourist it is obvious that all this is a voluntary response to an offer of service, and not a mere obedience to command.

The control of sleeping-sickness and leprosy, on the contrary, is handled with firm authority. It is a happy circumstance that the people involved are the good-natured Azande and their like, rather than such a tribe as the truculent Nuers. The general demeanor of the patients and their kin gives the impression of cheerful acquiescence to what the government may require.

The methods of this control are determined by the requirements of the campaign against sleeping-sickness; leprosy is handled by the same agencies merely for the sake of convenience and economy. The regulations dictate: (1) that, to drive the tse-tse flies from the haunts of men, every place where a road or path crosses a swamp and every spot whence the natives fetch their daily water shall be widely cleared and kept clear of brush; (2) that, to facilitate a periodic inspection of every person for the discovery of infection, all dwellings shall be clustered near the highways; (3) that every victim of either sleeping-sickness or
leprosy shall remove to a designated colony for isolation and medical care. To diminish the stress of dislocation, each patient is permitted to carry with him such members of his household as choose to dwell in his new house as a family unit. The sanction of spontaneous group life, of course, prevents a perfect isolation. This is a detriment in the control of leprosy but not so with sleeping-sickness, for the highland location of the colonies and their complete clearance of brush insures their freedom from the transmitting flies.

One of these colonies, near Yambio, I visited too fleetingly for notation; but another, at Source Yubu, was exhibited in detail by Major Warburton and his efficient, enthusiastic Syrian second in command.

Here, on the border of French Equatorial Africa, at an elevation of twenty-five hundred feet above the sea, some twenty square miles of plateau have been colonized, half of the tract by the families of about a thousand sleeping-sickness patients, the rest by a like number of lepers and their households. Special cases only, including incompetents whose families have forsaken them, are housed in barracks at the headquarters and fed by the commissary. The total population comprises about six thousand men, women and children.

Each morning upon summons from a great signal drum the patients dwelling in a designated tract are expected to attend inspection and receive such treatment as their cases may require; and as a reward each one attending is given a gill of much-esteemed salt. At the time when I watched this inspection a hundred or so leper women stood in ranks facing the hospital veranda where a physician stood at a chart-laden desk. As an orderly called each name a woman came forward, the condition of her body was compared with the record on the chart of her case, and an orderly poured a measure of salt into a gourd which she had brought to receive it. The cases varied from those in which an expert's eye is required to detect leprosy to those exhibiting gruesome white patches and an occasional absence of a finger or toe. Most of these women were of lusty physique, many had babies astride their hips; and on the whole the occasion had a merry tone. In the main the lepers neither wear nor evoke long faces.

The victims of sleeping-sickness, on the other hand, are consciously sick from the beginning, and quite incapacitated long before the end.
In the first phase, which alone responds to present-day medicine, the betraying symptom is the swelling of glands at the base of the neck. The second phase brings a puffiness of the whole body and a chicken-flesh texture of the skin; the third phase an emaciation; and the fourth a palsied, partly somnolent idiocy. About the huts near headquarters and in the crowd which dogged our steps there were plenty of specimens of every stage.

The one cheering item concerning this malady is yielded not by the sight or the story of its victims but by statistics from the countryside. In the whole district which is inspected by the Source Yubu staff only a dozen or two new cases have been found in each of the last two years as compared with as many hundred annually in the preceding period. This indicates a success in the control and gives promise that sleeping-sickness may be locally kept at a minimum. In other great African zones, however, the disease is on the increase. A quarantine station at Source Yubu endeavors to safeguard the district against fresh infection from the near-by French and Belgian areas where the control is not so well developed.

From the headquarters I was led through a wicker-chair factory, the products of which are sold at Khartoum and the proceeds paid to the workers; and then through a shop where baskets are built and embroidered with dyed grasses to depict elephants and lions, giraffes and rhinos. For these a more copious commercial outlet is desired than the Sudan can furnish. The management hopes that through the work in these shops under European guidance new crafts may be spread among the natives at large to diminish their isolation from the world of commerce.

After luncheon and a siesta which the heat of that Christmas day made welcome, we toured the colony. The landscape in the main was that already familiar through the last few days of travel. The huts were merely more thickly strewn along broad avenues, the cultivations more continuous, and the ravines more completely cleared of brush. In one tract, however, the normal scene gave place to ranks of mango trees and a large pineapple plantation whose delicious products on our table were a special pleasure in that land where on the whole fruits are strangely scarce.
As an exhibit of what the ravines had looked like before their clearing, I was led along a path across the French border and into a wild valley, draining into the Congo, where huge trees, great climbing, looping, writhing lianas and thick undergrowth conspire to block man’s ingress and to shut out the sun. Troops of monkeys chattered aloft; and tse-tse flies, though we did not see them, were doubtless present below. When one realizes that such a jungle spreads over the whole equatorial belt, the power of man to sanitize such a region becomes palpably doubtful. At the same time the reason becomes manifest why the main bulk of the Negroes tends always to dwell outside rather than in the midst of that unconquerable forest. It was a relief when our party withdrew from its cathedral gloom and regained the bright light of grass-grown open woods.

Ever since mid-afternoon our ears had been catching strains of drum-accompanied song, for, to celebrate the director’s return, a specially big dance was in progress in an open space near headquarters. When the sun had sunk low enough for its rays to be no longer severe, we went to see the black mass in its rhythmic agitation. It proved to be a dance of the standard Zande type, with merely more participants and onlookers than usual. A pair of drummers, the one seated on a gugu, the other crouching over a gaza, belabored their drums, with strength in every stroke and sweat glistening from every pore. In ranks all round were the dancers, men and women in separate lines, advancing and retreating or circling to the right or left, everyone postured loosely with knees bent a little to take the weight off the heels, forearms horizontally forward, palms up and fingers laxly curved. As usual the dance was of hours without intermission, and the dancers, like Marathon runners, were avoiding all tension which would hasten fatigue. On the other hand they, and the by-standers like them, spared their voices no more than do college boys on football bleachers. Stave after stave in endless repetition, the song began softly, swelled to a shout and sank again, while feet shuffled, arms jerked and fingers jiggled. The words, in Zande, were of course beyond my grasp; but equally so was the simple tune. My familiarity with Negro music in America was of no help at all, for if any captives ever carried such rhythms across the sea their children discarded them long ago to take the melodies of their
white masters and modify these into new forms. I can only say, as others have reported from various parts of Africa, that no syncopation was to be detected.

With eardrums hurt by the clamor, we went to dinner and bed. The dance was now half a mile distant and its rising and falling faint music almost a lullaby. But my continued endeavor to fix the tune in memory kept slumber away till fatigue ended the vain effort.

Next morning a diminished group of travelers mounted Captain Kidd's lorry for the northward road, the proprietor at the wheel, I at his side, and three servants and a wife of one of them clinging atop the cargo. For an hour the going was fine; but beyond Tambura we found a hundred miles of evidence that the commissioner of the district had been on leave since the last rains and the natives with one accord had embraced the holiday from road repair. As we wound among granite hills or followed straight courses over the laterite plateau the neglected surface merely gave a tedious jolting. But in the valleys lay threats of serious trouble, as the sinking of a wheel through a culvert soon gave notice. After extrication from this our approach to every bridge and culvert was cautious. The lorry would halt while I walked ahead and signaled the most expedient path; or in case of no thoroughfare all hands dismounted to patch the structure or cut a by-pass. Onward we lurched at five or ten miles an hour through the lands of a minor tribe or two, and after a rest-house night onward again until the Bo River was reached.

Here a bridge had been built of the pattern commonly used by the British in that region—tapering piers of loose masonry spanned by parallel heavy logs bearing first a layer of poles laid across the logs, then a stratum of boulders, and finally a thick layer of gravelly earth to provide a surface. But neglect had caused this double-span forty-foot bridge to lose its earth and stones and retain upon its logs nothing but a crazy layer of crooked poles. On first inspection it seemed that an attempt to drive across it would be foolhardy. But a detour would involve hundreds of miles; there was no gasoline with which to make it; and we were of no mind to retrace the wretched road of the preceding day. After a council of war we dragged more timber from near-by woods
to fill some yawning gaps, we unloaded the lorry, and Kidd made the passage, pitching as if in a heavy sea, the poles crackling as if in a forest fire. The reloading of cargo was a much more cheerful task. Luckily the Bo marked the limit of the neglected stretch, and the road ahead was in good repair.

We were now making exit from the tse-tse zone. The trees were somewhat smaller by reason of the shortened rains, the cultivations were more seldom and the crops less diverse. Here and there fires had been started to destroy the dead grass, whether to facilitate hunting or to give cattle access to fresh grazing which would sprout in due time. A curious but constant feature of the scene was the circling of hawks by the dozen just ahead of the tall flames and just above the top of the standing grass. They were seizing the special occasion and watching for any rodents or other small creatures which the fire would drive from their homes. Sometimes when the flames bordered the roadside we had to run their hot gauntlet.

That night again we spent in a lonely rest-house after our servants had cooked and served a dinner. I marveled, as I had done before, at the ease and sureness with which they made a campfire from unpromising materials. Some charred logs were at hand among small boulders. The cook put a wisp of dry grass between two stones and laid the ends of two poles upon it. He then lit the grass and went about other business. Surely, thought I, that fire will die without careful nursing. But no; when he returned with a pot the flames had firmly taken hold and he had merely to shove the logs into touch again. Of course the heat reflected by the stones holds the secret; but I should not like to depend upon my own talents without better kindling, or at least without far more grass than he saw fit to use.

Next morning we soon came to the Busserie River where, instead of a bridge, the government has placed a ferry. This consists of three steel pontoons bolted side to side and forming a rectangle just large enough to receive a lorry. On one bank of the stream lay a broad bed of dry sand, on the other a still broader mud-hole made more or less viable by deposits of sticks and grass but still of a troublesome appearance. Luckily a swarm of natives was at hand, glad to gain piastres by push-
ing the unloaded lorry first through the sand and then through the mud. At luncheon time we rolled into Wau, where the hospitality of the deputy governor and a garrison captain put us into touch again with comfort and good fare, and even with tennis and auction bridge.

Wau is the capital of Bahr-el-Ghazal province. Like most of the works of man in the tropics, it is not a thing of beauty. The principal houses are of crude brick set in mud from termite hills which is an adequate mortar but not ornamental. The roofs, where not thatched, are of tin or corrugated iron, which have the virtue of being inedible by termites. The dwellings of the many married soldiers are of native type modified to permit brick walls and a square pattern. These are set in a checkerboard arrangement on the red-brown earth, with no sprig of greenery within the view. Not only the drill-ground but the streets and the river-front show the same expanses of naked earth, for lawns atop the porous laterite would require much watering, and in the absence of a pumping plant all water must be brought from the river by the few donkeys and the many human carriers. A few shade trees and the struggling flower gardens of the officials rather emphasize than relieve the bald monotony.

Aside from tribesmen whose huts are clustered on its outskirts, Wau houses half a dozen British officials, a complement of “effendi”* Arab clerks, two companies of the Equatorial Defense Force, several Greek merchants and some dozens of Arabs competing with them for the trade of the small tribes thereabout. It has a post office and a telegraph office with a single wire outlet and a wireless equipment for use when a giraffe somewhere along the line has broken the wire.

At the height of the rains this town enjoys a fortnightly steamboat connection with Malakal and thence with Khartoum; but through the rest of the year the boat can approach no nearer than Meshra-er-Req, a hundred miles northeast, and through much of this off-season the road to Meshra permits no traffic which cannot wade. The reason is that the road in its farther half, beyond the limit of the laterite highland, lies across a flood-plain so poorly drained that it is not freed of surface

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*The Sudan Government has borrowed “effendi”, along with many another Arabic term, from Egyptian usage. It designates a man who wears European dress in contradiction from a sheik who dresses in a flowing robe.
water before the middle or end of December. The road westward from Wau to Raga, whither Captain Kidd was bound, is viable by motor traffic for an even briefer period by reason of its lack of bridges. At the turn of the year two or three streams which cross it were still too deep for a lorry to ford them; and he must walk the farther half of the two hundred miles to his lonely post, leaving his vehicle and most of its cargo to follow when the season would permit. I had no thought of trudging to Raga and back again, but wanted to reach Meshra and a scheduled boat. This itself was easier said than done; but luckily the waters had now subsided enough to let the first cars flounder through the mud, and a Greek merchant of Wau consented for ten Egyptian pounds to send me on his lorry.

The vehicle proved to be an ancient Ford, heavily laden, virtually springless, with an engine requiring replenishment of water every half-hour and alarmingly reluctant to start again after each halt. The road in its many lowland miles was of stiff mud just hardened after a thorough churning by droves of Dinka cattle. The Greek driver had no English, and I no Greek or Arabic to tell him even that for such accommodations the price of fifty cents (American) per mile was robbery. Native hamlets proved few; but the journey was enlivened by views of giraffes, elephants, gazelles and Guinea fowls and a glimpse of a lion loping across the road. We passed occasional parties of head-laden carriers, and several great gangs of Dinkas building long earthen causeways to raise the road above flood level and permit all-season traffic in future years. The road gave jolts without intermission, and I was already half-sick with an undefined illness. At the end of an endless day I found a bunk on the steamboat Kaibar, and kept it many hours.

Next day the roustabouts were employed in loading cargo. As usual, their work was awkward and leisurely to a degree which would have driven a mate in the Mississippi service to invent new expletives and then to burst a blood-vessel. There was in particular a small herd of bullocks to be embarked upon a barge. These creatures, gentled by Dinka care since birth, were the mildest-mannered cattle I have ever seen; but they were not eager to mount the ridiculously narrow, steep, unrailed gangway. One after another when roped around his horns and led to the foot of the planking would sidle to the right or the left and fetch up
against the blank wall of the barge. On a second, third or fourth persuasion he would perhaps yield to the pulling and pushing, and make the ascent. But one big fellow with prodigiously tall horns and a very firm will continually declined. Each time he was led forward to confront the slippery slope he whirled round and plunged back to the herd with a Negro splashing after unless the rope had been jerked from his hands. That bull is presumably still grazing in the Meshra marsh; at least he did not sail on our voyage.

Next morning the *Kaibar* began her serpentine course through the Sudd. Like her sisters on every Sudan sailing, she not only had a barge lashed on either side to prevent capsizing and incidentally to carry fuel and freight, but others in a rank ahead for cargo and second- and third-class passengers. So light is the passenger traffic on this branch of the service that even first-class patrons must make private arrangements for their meals. Third-class passengers, as usual, must furnish their own bedding, if any, as well as their food. They live on open decks liable to visits of great bloodthirsty horse-flies by day and clouds of mosquitoes by night. The death of a native boy from blackwater fever on this voyage illustrated the fact that not all the Negroes are immune to malaria, for blackwater is a phase of malarial infection.

Had the present voyage lain on the Bahr-el-Jebel with its bold current and its fairly firm banks, the boat and her barges when rounding a hairpin bend would have crashed into the papyrus of the outer shore, then have backed up and started again when pointed in the new direction. But the Bahr-el-Ghazal (Gazelle River) in its upper reaches hardly deserves the name of stream. Its waters, which have seeped through miles of marsh, are clear enough to show thick weeds which find root upon the bottom and stretch upward to within a few inches of the surface. Downstream the waters gradually cloud with silt from stronger tributaries, and the channel changes character from a mere series of stagnant leads to a fairly defined river. The banks, however, continue long to be mere walls of high grass rooted loosely in semi-liquid mud. When the pilot has a sharp corner to turn he blithely steers across the point, driving a barge or even the steamer herself through the swishing grass. If by chance he sticks in the mud it is commonly no great matter to back out. But at nightfall he casts anchor, because the flat marsh
affords no silhouettes to warn him against false channels. It is only at long intervals that the stream approaches firm ground to give glimpses of game in the thin scrub or to show patches of millet or cotton about the rare landings.

Most of the land in this latitude has too short a season of moisture for the culture of cotton without an irrigation which these Negroes do not practice. But in low spots here and there occur pockets of heavy black material known locally as "cotton soil", rich in plant food, semi-liquid when saturated, and strongly retentive of water. In drought it cracks deep and wide, but it drains so slowly that plants can hold their life long after it would seem that they must perish. These pockets are used considerably for cotton of the same "American upland" as that which we have noted nearer the equator. There are no ginneries here, but the crop is bought by government agents at the landings, packed into great unwieldy bags, and carried by river and rail for ginning somewhere on the way to Port Sudan. The chief commodity shipped from this Nilotic region, however, is the hides which may be seen in the hamlets here and there stretched on poles for drying.

On leisurely schedule we reached Lake No and passed a gaunt steel frame which rises from the soggy shore. This landmark is the relic of a factory which two decades ago tried without success to make a commercial product from the superabundant papyrus. Lake No marks the northern edge of the Sudd, and by the same token the present limit of papyrus, although this anciently useful plant formerly thrived in far-away Egypt. It also marks the confluence of the Bahr-el-Jebel and the Bahr-el-Ghazal to form the misnamed White Nile. On these scores its name is of frequent mention in Sudan discussions; but the lake itself is of no significance except to hippos, crocodiles and waterfowl. The Kaibar steamed on to her terminus at Malakal, where in default of a hotel she gave me lodging for three days of lay-over.

Malakal, capital of the Upper Nile province and the main center of traffic above Khartoum, has much the same bald appearance as Wau, though the soil is black alluvium and the shade-trees, thanks to the longer span of British residence, are more numerous and effective. In addition to the magisterial, medical and military personnel to be expected in such a place, there is a little colony of British engineers in the
Egyptian irrigation service maintaining a hydrographic register of the White Nile's tributaries and conducting a survey with a view to enlarging the down-stream volume of water. The project is mainly to dig a series of canals in the Sudd to speed the sluggish flow and lessen the great evaporation.

The natives at Malakai are Shilluk; but a striking exhibit was a crowd of naked Nuers in police custody handling freight along the foreshore. These were explained as hostages taken a few months before as pledges of peace from their tribe. In touch with them, to acquire their language, was a young English ethnologist, Mr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard. Having already made some notable studies of other Negro stocks, he was now on the point of departure for a sojourn in the Nuer hamlets to enlarge the knowledge of this people's customs and learn the grounds of its antipathy to civilized control. My own more slender purpose was by this time accomplished, and my increasing bodily disorder called for expert medical attention. Luckily the tourist season was at its height when special steamers ply weekly with soft and fairly swift accommodation for globe-trotters. I took the first of these to come along, hastening to Khartoum and its excellent hospital where my malady was diagnosed as malignant tertian malaria and where injections of quinine quickly drove the microbes from my blood. A season of debilitation which followed, however, intensified my repugnance to this disease and prompted some reflections on the régime of white men in the mosquito-ridden zone.

Sleeping sickness carries no menace to white residents or visitors who look out for themselves at all; but malaria, as the veterans truly say, will sooner or later infect everyone. The Sudan Government, in compensation for the risk adds a "climate allowance" to the salary of each official in the southern provinces. Forewarned, I had taken five grains of quinine as a daily preventive dose, only to learn after my prostration that a number of medical men share my present well-grounded conviction that a lustrous breed of malaria germs will thrive and multiply despite such dosage. In the whole region of the Sudd mosquitoes and their infection are ineradicable by any process now known; and every visitor had better to go to bed with the chickens unless his lodging is more effectively screened than any house is likely to be. After nightfall
the British wear "mosquito boots" which protect their knees and ankles very nicely; but their necks, faces and hands, not to speak of their bald spots, remain as vulnerable as the heel of Achilles, and they steadily dine at eight o'clock, slapping mosquitoes during the meal. Were I to go thither again I should resolve, whether fed or hungry, to crawl under my net at sundown and stay there until broad daylight when the anopheles adjourn their quest for blood. Perhaps a continued smearing with citronella would relieve the need of this craven recourse, but the test of this may be made by any one who will. In short, central Africa will not see me more, though I shall see it again and again with dimming memory's eye, striving to discern the significance of its phenomena.

A quarter-century prior to my journey Charles Francis Adams, the second to bear that distinguished name, made the White Nile and Bahr-el-Jebel voyage and recorded its reactions upon his vigorous mind.* He found himself disillusioned of his Massachusetts traditional view and convinced that Negroes in general are incapacitated by racial inertia to participate except passively in the life of any civilized community. In their homeland specifically he prophesied that coming decades and centuries would find them unchanged from a sluggish contentment in a most primitive scheme of living. A later and more intimate observer has remarked, somewhat to the same effect, that the natives of the Sudan have fewer unsatisfied wants than any other people in the world; and a third has made the sweeping generalization that so long as Negro tribesmen continue to believe as they now do that nature is ruled by magic they can have little thought of cause and effect, they are debarred from scientific impulse and thereby from the betterment of mechanical or social process. These various observations are doubtless in large measure true; and the years intervening since Adams made his forecast have certainly brought no palpable diminution of the primitiveness and the savage contentment.

But such things might equally have been said if a man from Mars had recorded his observations of Europe in the days of the Druids. By virtue of literacy Europe, since then, has cumulated knowledge and continually broadened the scope of man's understanding whether of nature

*"Reflex Light from Africa", in the Century Magazine, May, 1906.
or of himself. But the effect of letters was and continues to be hampered by the divergence of tongues, for alphabets and printing tend to fix every speech in its existing form rather than to assimilate languages to one another. Salient writings, of course, may be translated, and science is without linguistic limit; but the man in the street draws his daily information and suggestion from sheets which circulate only within the frontiers of his own language. Literacy, therefore, while it has compacted tribes into nations, has at the same time in large degree promoted particular loyalties as against the sense of continental or world-wide identity. Europe thus remains fragmented into national states each with a patriotism so long-established and so firmly rooted in popular feeling that the Pyrenees might sink into the plain, the Rhine might lose its waters, without lessening the separateness of France from Spain or Germany; Esperanto might be as common among the populace as Latin once was among the clergy and still the nations be not reduced in their number or authority. Mankind has become set in its frame like the varicolored bits of glass in a cathedral window. The tints in the human composition, however, are slowly changeable, and its harmony may be heightened by closer acquaintance among the nations, a consciousness that war brings common disaster, and a cult of broadened fellowship as against all demagogic chauvinism.

Africa meanwhile is in the world but, except for her northern and southern extremes, not of it. She has no nations, but mere tribes and artificial provinces, no civilization which the outer world will dignify by that name; and all this is largely due to her persisting illiteracy. A small number of Mohammedan converts, it is true, may read and write Arabic; and zealous missionaries have used a European alphabet to represent the phonetics of a Negro language here and there and have instructed some pupils in their devices. But these exceptions are negligible; to all intents and purposes the tribes must long remain dependent upon direct example and word-of-mouth communication for the whole body of their knowledge and their craftsmanship. Their governmental structures, likewise, must continue primitive and rudimentary whether with or without European oversight; for the million who speak Dinka, for example, could hardly maintain a unitary state without written laws and orders to embody and transmit explicitly the will of a central
authority. In fact the British arrival found the Dinkas in wretched confusion from Arab impacts, and the Sudan Government, following the line of least resistance, has encouraged their embodiment into thirty or forty tribes or clans coördinated more or less by means of a council of their chiefs. The number of distinct Negro languages is immense; the number of tribal units is far greater, for a linguistic stock which we may loosely speak of as a tribe is likely to comprise many tribes instead. The Negro world is thus almost infinitely fragmented; and the means of communication are so slight that we may as well say that no Negro world exists.

In many respects, nevertheless, the pattern of life is remarkably uniform. The most obvious identities are in houses, weapons and implements. The dwellings to be seen in the whole of my tour through Negro lands were of a single type—a conical roof of thatch above a thin circular wall of mud. In building such a hut a standard process is followed. To begin with posts are procured in considerable number, each with a crotch at one end, and these are set in a circle ten or twelve or fifteen feet in diameter with the crotches about three feet above ground-level. Then clay from a pit, or preferably from a termite hill, is mixed with grass, puddled to a proper texture and laid so as to embed the posts and fill the spaces between them, leaving a single aperture which is given an oval shape as a doorway. To prevent collapse during construction, the wall is built for but a few inches of height on the first day, an addition of similar height is made after this base has dried, and so on until the level of the crotches is attained and the wall is thereby completed. Meanwhile a circular trench, of a diameter larger than that of the wall, is dug nearby to hold the butts of numerous poles while their tips are assembled in a peak and the cone thus formed is bound with withes and ropes of twisted grass. Thereupon, with helping neighbours assembled, the skeleton roof is lifted from its temporary bed and placed upon the wall, and its poles are lashed into place within the waiting crotches. There now remain the thatching with long grass and the packing and smoothing of a mud floor. No chimney and usually no windows are provided.

The eaves of such a house are hardly more than two feet clear of the ground; but at the doorway the thatch may be either arched or cut
away to the height of three feet or so. A visitor having bent himself double and worked his awkward way through such a door may stand erect within and survey the interior. In the midst of some stones on the floor near the wall of an occupied house are always embers with which to make a more vigorous fire for cooking, or to produce a smudge by night and keep mosquitoes out. The smoke on its filtering way through the thatch has darkened alike the wall, the poles and the straw to produce a gloom as of twilight. When one's eyes have become adjusted to this he may see ranged against the wall or hanging from the roof a miscellany of domestic equipment along with various food supplies whether in baskets, pots or calabashes; and he may perhaps be proffered in a small gourd a draught of freshly brewed millet-beer, which the natives regard as both food and drink. He will not be tempted to spend the night in this lodging, for the bed is a hard structure of poles and palm-leaf ribs unless it is merely a thin mat or a stiff hide spread upon the floor. There may be some stools roughly cut from blocks of wood, but no table, no chest nor other furniture.

A homestead, particularly if its proprietor has plural wives, will comprise two or more such huts in a group; and in the Nilotic region it may include a large rectangular house for the cattle. The whole may be enclosed with millet stalks, logs or thorn bushes, though more commonly there is no fence. Close at hand there is always a granary, which has the form of a diminutive hut. This is built on posts with its floor several feet clear of the ground to diminish the liability of rodent and insect invasion. It has no door, but access to the interior is had by tilting the roof. The shady space under and about the granary is a favorite place for the family to sit. A scaffold of poles in the midst of the adjacent cultivation is a station for children charged with preventing birds from eating unharvested millet.

In all this construction straight posts and poles are preferred, but in default of them crooked ones are shrewdly used to much the same effect. Thanks to the plenitude of forked posts and of long grass and other fiber for binding, there is no call for nails and no use of a hammer. The saw, likewise, is an unknown tool. Indeed, outside the buildings used by Europeans and "effendi" there is virtually not a plank in the whole country except for some crazy shelving in Arab shops.
The single implement of carpentry is a hatchet of ingenious type. To forge a blade like that used in civilized lands, with a hole to receive the handle, is beyond the talent of the primitive smiths. The blade is accordingly a mere flat iron slab of elongated triangular outline, sharpened at the base; and this is thrust through a stick which preferably contains a tough knot in its thicker end. The taper of the blade prevents it from being driven through the knot by the blows of chopping. The tool, however, is not one for heavy service.

The hoe, likewise, is of peculiar pattern—an iron disc with a socket on the perimeter set upon an elbowed stick such as may readily be cut from any branching bush. The two prongs of this forked stick are unequal in length, the one a mere stub to fit into the socket, the other about two feet long to serve as the handle. The shortness of the tool implies a squatting posture of the person using it. As a spade the same type of disc will serve when set upon a straight stick, though some prefer a rectangular blade. The cultivator does not shove this down with his foot, for strong pressure upon a thin blade would bring pain to an unshod sole even though the sole has been calloused by a lifetime of bare-footed walking. The depth of the hoeing and spading is of course very slight except when the ground has been softened by rains.

Knives and spears are also witnesses of the intertribal spread of pattern. The typical knife observed is of dagger shape, double-edged, with a flattish wooden grip. It is worn, handle downward for quick seizure by the right hand, in a sheath bound by a thong to the inner side of the upper left arm. It is of course an implement of general utility; but if one is to be carried by a woman it is not permitted to have a stabbing point.

Every man and every youth admitted to man's estate, whether among the Nilotics, Azande, or the minor tribes of my view, is likely to carry at all times when outside his own premises two or more spears, which he drops or thrusts into the ground as a point of courtesy when meeting anyone on the road, or lays aside when any task or dance requires the free use of his hands. The spears of each man comprise two types, one with a round or four-sided head bearing numerous barbs and specially useful for spearing fish; the other with a leaf-shaped head, small if intended for hunting or warfare but large and ornamented with elabo-
rate barbs if designed for pretentious display. In former times these iron heads were let into their wooden hafts and held in place by jackets of rawhide which were put on while wet and shrunk in the drying. As an improvement the heads are now forged with sockets into which the hafts are stuck. A few horn-headed spears may still be found as relics of a pre-iron age; but horns, of the waterbuck for example, require so much labor to straighten, sharpen and affix, and iron heads are supplied so cheaply and abundantly by Greek and Arab merchants that these have driven the more primitive material from use. The bow and arrow finds little employment except among boys.

A man is also likely to carry a stick, whether in the handful of spears which slopes on his left shoulder or as a staff in his right hand. This may be a bludgeon with its heavy head smooth or spiked, or an ebony shaft ornamented with rounds and points of brass and fitted with a sharp ferrule, or a short stick designed for throwing, though not shaped like an Australian boomerang to curve its flight and bring it back to the thrower. The sticks are not nearly so standardized whether locally or generally as are implements of more complex construction.

Shields are of two widely divergent types. One of these, more properly designated as a guard-stick, is to be seen mainly among the Nilotics because ambatch trees from which they are made are confined to swamp places. This wood has the merit of being nearly as light as pith but at the same time reasonably tough; and a log of it six or eight inches thick and two or three feet long may be carried for hours without fatigue. Such a log is made ready for use in personal defence by merely hollowing a grip in the middle of its length, though it may be improved in appearance and durability by giving it a jacket of rawhide. The purpose of the guard-stick is not to receive the point of a coming spear but to strike the blade aside into a harmless direction. More easily recognized as a shield because of its likeness in shape to that of European antiquity is a large oval piece of thick buffalo, rhino or hippo hide threaded upon a stick which serves as a stretcher and a grip. This also is employed rather to divert spears than to stop their flight. It is rarely brought forth except in time of war; but for symbolism in dancing a smaller oval of hide threaded upon a long stick may be used on peaceful occasions.
A travelling native will always carry slung from his shoulder a gourd of water to quench his thirst. The type which the Azande prefer has a habit of growth producing a large bulb at the base, then a neck around which a cord may be tied, then a smaller bulb at the top which prevents the cord from slipping off. The Nilotics, not possessing this variety, suspend their spherical gourds in a netting of bast. These water-bottles and other calabashes may be decorated by scorching them in geometric lines, corresponding more or less to those which are grooved upon some of the earthen pots before firing.

These pots are made without the use of a wheel. They are nevertheless round enough in shape, though of little beauty in finish. Curiously they have little constriction at the top, and never any lids. A woman at a stream having filled a pot of several gallons' capacity and preparing to walk with it on her head will merely put into it a bunch of green leaves to check the sloshing.

In general the products of Negro craftsmanship in the Sudan, including stools, drums, pots, baskets, mats, masks and statuettes, seem to show much less artistry than those from the Belgian Congo which have been copiously gathered into the great museum at Tervueren, near Brussels. It is hardly fair, however, to compare what a tourist has happened to see with what has been assembled by systematic ethnologists. My own concern is not with degrees of beauty but with evidences of intertribal similarities and contrasts; and I repeat that in architecture, weapons, implements and utensils there is a strikingly widespread likeness of patterns in the face of complete and extremely numerous diversities of language.

To reconcile this apparent conflict of identity with heterogeneity there is the immense and immeasurable span of time, since human experience began, during which imitations and modifications of detail have occurred. Again and again some dweller on a vague tribal frontier must have seen in use among his alien and unintelligible neighbors one device or another superior to what his own tribe has been using; and his own adoption of it has initiated a territorial spread of its employment. Again and again also some raider has taken a captured woman as a wife and has been educated by her in due course. The seizure of
aliens of both sexes to be held in slavery operated to the same effect; and migrations accomplished wholesale what individual imitations brought about little by little. Through their untold centuries these peoples have at best had a struggle for existence; any improvement of process or equipment is likely to have been welcomed sooner or later if its advantage has become palpable and its adoption has not involved a sharp change from the practices previously current. Granted a great enough lapse of time in the face of even minimum facilities of communication, the continental spread of somewhat similar systems of magic and fetish, as well as intertribal identities in architecture and implements become somewhat a matter of course.

The wonder lies rather in the slightness of the general advance than in the fact that patterns have become widely spread. The Negroes have contributed no inventions to the world’s advantage; and in their tribal economy it is hardly too much to say they have not employed a wheel for any purpose, nor yoked an ox nor plowed a furrow. On the west coast for several centuries and virtually everywhere for several decades they have now been in touch with Europeans from whom they might have borrowed a thousand useful devices had they been so disposed. The coastal chieftains took the rum and the trinkets for their human merchandise and ignored the saws and hammers, the carts and barrows, the guns and ammunition which the maritime traders would have been glad to bring if these had been wanted. In the interior it is the same in essentials today. But so it was among the North American Indians, though the pressure of the demand for deerskins, along with exigencies of war, drove them to adopt firearms. This adoption was itself deplored by an Alabama chief in the eighteenth century because the lapse of skill in archery was making the redskins utterly dependent upon the palefaces for supplies of powder and shot.

Resistance to an innovation more commonly has no such considered basis. Peasant women have little impulse to buy Paris gowns; Japanese ladies cling to kimonoes and to the wooden sandals which are flat or stilted according to the state of the weather. Their husbands, compromising in modernization, go to business in coats, trousers and leather shoes; but upon returning home one will drop his footgear at the door-
way, don a kimono, sit on the floor, and use chopsticks when eating rice and fish. After a social evening on floor-mats behind his paper windows he will go to bed on a thin mattress which has been unrolled upon the floor. Any plaint which he may voice is likely to be not of the bareness of his Japanese phase but of the discomfort and costliness of his Occidental wardrobe. To a much greater degree the Negroes continue to live in a manner which seems to us impossibly bare. But a hide on the ground is a pleasant couch to one who since his birth has used nothing softer; customary taking of food with his fingers makes one indifferent to forks or chopsticks; ancestral usage of mud, sticks and grass produce disregard of sawmill and brickyard products. It is hardly necessary to inquire whether in Africa satisfaction with things as they are has been reinforced on some occasion by "fundamentalist" appeals in behalf of a hallowed order of life. The Negroes differ from the rest of us mainly, if not merely, in their greater esteem of leisure, for which their climate is in large part responsible, and their prolonged contentment with primitive conditions.

Americans, particularly the whites of the Southern states, are prone to say that Negroes are an imitative race. But on that side of the broad Atlantic the blacks have never had an alternative. In the beginning, bought for their brawn alone, they were taken with little regard for tribal origins, assembled more or less pellmell into plantation gangs, and inducted into routine labor with an iron hand whether clothed in a velvet glove or grimly bare. They had to learn something of their masters’ language if they were to grasp their daily tasks or even to talk with fellow slaves of other linguistic stocks. With fetish frowned upon, and eternal bliss after death offered in regard for a change of creed, they tended to embrace Christianity, though perhaps with reservations. Of course the transported captives taught their children something of their own traditions; but America, strange as it must always have remained to these involuntary immigrants, was the native land of all the later generations. However the grandchildren might murder the King's English, they had no other tongue; however voodoo might persist, it must give ground before the dominant Christian creeds. Africa faded in memory to the vanishing point. As a mere name it
must have been kept in usage among illiterate slaves mostly by force of reminders from the whites among whom they dwelt.

Whether imitative or not by nature, the Negroes in American slavery made the best of their situation. Acquiescing, they not only lived and multiplied, but in thousands of cases they became proficient in civilized husbandry, handicrafts, household arts and social amenities. Of course the generality remained uncouth, but even their crudity came to be more American than African. The abolition of slavery plunged the whole mass into a new condition very different in detail but unchanged in the one essential requirement that they live in an industrial and social framework shaped by white men. If any among them attain special prosperity and dignity they must as a rule do so by becoming whites in all but complexion. Mere underlings perhaps may shuffle along more comfortably mumbling “nigger” dialect; but even this has hardly a trace of any tribal vocabulary. In short, the American branch of the Negro race, broken sharply from the primal stem and rooted in a radically different soil, has taken a completely new habit of growth. This may prove a special capacity for survival by an adaptation which at every stage has been schooled directly or indirectly by the whites, but it hardly denotes imitativeness in any conspicuous degree.

Meanwhile the Sudan scene argues with great force that Negroes are even less disposed than most other peoples to take up novel ways. In that almost undisturbed region universal illiteracy and perhaps equally universal belief in magic reinforce the walls of the tribal mind against civilized penetration. The “witch doctor” is in effect the schoolmaster. What he says must not be done is inhibited by fear of disastrous consequences; and his positive instructions as well as his prohibitions are followed rather from fear than in hope. Lightning, storm, famine and pestilence may not be his to command; but he is believed to be capable of warding them off if his directions are obeyed. He himself need be no more of a conscious charlatan than many a Christian priest or minister has been when threatening hell fire as a penalty for disbelief or disobedience. The primitive placator of the spirits of evil has not invented his divinations and sacrifices; he has derived them from predecessors in a line to a distance hallowed by its dimness.
The church missions now functioning in the Sudan impinge upon the tribal régime in so far as pagan magic is incorporated in the support of tribal authority. These missions are few and mostly small. One is conducted by American Presbyterians, two by Austrian Catholics, several by Anglicans, and there are sundry others with which I did not come into touch. Each conducts a school, and several maintain hospitals. Except as to the medical phase, it is not easy to reckon their present or prospective effects. A certain blending of their teachings with the body of pagan beliefs in the minds of their proselytes is inescapable. On the bank of a stream I saw Negro converts to Catholicism make the sign of the cross before drinking the water. Whether this gesture meant to them a signification of creed or a conjuring against disease I doubt that even their confessor could assuredly say.

The spirit of the missions, in so far as I could gauge it, is moderate and amendatory, not fanatical. There is not much occasion for concert of policy among the representatives of the several churches, for as yet each of the stations is an isolated post in a pagan wilderness. The Sudan government is favorable to the Christian missionary work among the Negroes, though perhaps not so vigorously so as might be the case if Mohammedan Egypt were not a partner in the control.

The peculiar basis of the government which now prevails is the result of a chain of events in the nineteenth century. In the early 'twenties an Egyptian army conquered the Sudan steppe, and for sixty years a succession of proconsular pashas ruled it. Most of these were inconstant and rapacious Egyptians, though the misrule was mitigated in the later period by several substantial English and European soldiers of fortune, including Baker, Gordon and Slatin.

In 1882 a local Arab, styling himself the Mahdi which means Mohammedan messiah, roused the faithful about Omdurman, and next year his "dervishes" wrested the Sudan from Egypt's grip. Upon the Mahdi's death a successor styled the Khalifa continued the dervish reign of terror and spread rapine among the southward pagan tribes. At length a mixed force of British and Egyptians under Kitchener destroyed the Khalifa's army in the battle of Omdurman, whereupon, in 1899, a joint sovereignty of Great Britain and Egypt was proclaimed.
In the “condominium” thus established, Great Britain has to the present been a completely dominant partner: Egypt, despite her protests from time to time, is permitted only to say yes to the nominations and programmes issued from Downing Street. The resulting personnel and policies are in my opinion as admirable, sound and self-restrained as could reasonably be hoped for under the local circumstances and in the present-day world. Administrative posts are largely filled with carefully selected graduates of the British Universities, and among these the spirit of justice, peace and worthy service is very strong.

The most salient economic exploit in the Sudan has been the construction of a great dam at Makwar on the Blue Nile by a British corporation with the aid of a large loan from the British Government, and the diversion of its impounded flood-water to the cultivation of long-staple cotton and food supplies on three hundred thousand previously arid acres. This not only yields dividends to the stockholders, but good earnings to the local Arabs, who are now crop-sharing tenants, and seasonal wages to all and sundry who care to come and help in picking the cotton. The field management of this enterprise is likewise conducted by selected university graduates, whose tone and aptitude impressed me as meriting warm praise. Nevertheless it is perhaps a fortunate circumstance that this establishment lies among Arabs who are not primitive enough to suffer from such a change in their industrial order, and not among Negroes whose accustomed régime would probably be demoralised as that of their brethren far to the south has been by the massing of man-power in the mines of Kimberley, the Rand and Katanga. Thus far the Sudan Government’s repeatedly asserted policy of “decentralisation and the employment, wherever possible, of native agencies for the simple administrative needs of the country” has been steadily maintained with wholesome effect. The Negroes in particular have been protected against the Arabs and the Abyssinians, and now against the tse-tse flies. They have primitively prospered and greatly multiplied in a conscious or unconscious enjoyment of pax Brittanica.
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