

## NOTES ON THE BAHIMA OF ANKOLE. II

## MARRIAGES.

An ordinary Muhima has only one wife, but if she is barren he turns her out and marries another. At her marriage a woman brings three girls:—

1. called *omusariza*, a slave.
2. called *omuranga*, a servant.
3. called *omukeikuru*, an old woman who makes butter.

The king used to marry about twenty wives, and a big chief about four.

The ceremony of marriage consists of the man obtaining the consent of the girl's father. The man then kisses the hands of his prospective father-in-law, and presents him with three cows. After this he returns home, and at the new moon collects all his male friends; they put on their best skins, shave their heads, leaving circles of hair in different patterns, and proceed to the dwelling of the girl's father, staying outside while they smear butter all over their bodies. They are then admitted into the house, and a child sprinkles water over their toes. The bridegroom brings with him a branch of a small tree called *omuniasu* (used for beating cattle), which is placed over the knees of the girl's mother. Milk is then brought and passed round, and subsequently banana wine; they then dance and sing while the girl sits down and gives her hand to the bridegroom. After this all the men adjourn to the shade of some tree in the vicinity where a cow has been killed. Meat is then roasted, and is sent to the women in the house. In the afternoon the men return to the house, and the father-in-law lays out the presents given to his daughter; these consist of:—

- Wooden chatties for milking.
- Anklets and bracelets.

Calabashes for butter-making.

Wooden bowl for cattle to drink out of (*ichuba*).

Wooden box for needles (*akazengezo*).

Bark cloth (*embugu*).

Basket for carrying lady in when travelling (*ekitware*).

If the father is a small chief, some cows are generally exchanged.

The day before the ceremony the lady to be married has her ankle tied with cow-skin, as a sign that she is engaged; the rope is unfastened at the ceremony. The Bahima now intermarry with the Banyankole, but formerly did not do so.

#### CLOTHING.

Both men and women wear bark-cloth and skins; the bark-cloth is made in German territory and imported. Butter is used freely both over the clothes and on the body.

#### CHARMS AND ORNAMENTS.

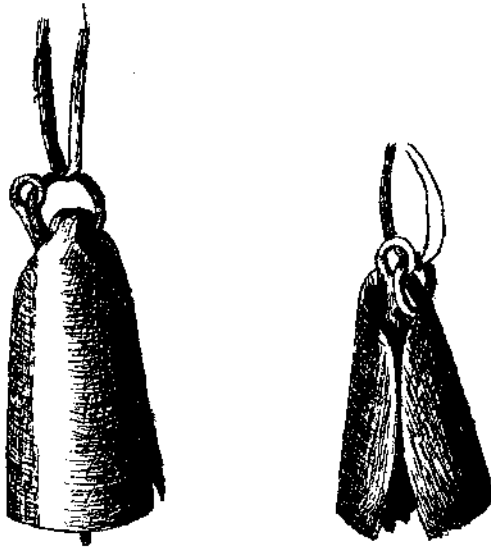
Charms (*engisa*) are made of medicines wrapped up in the dried testicles of bullocks, sheep, or goats. They are made by the *abafumo* (medicine men), and the medicine generally consists of pieces of different kinds of wood. These are given to children, and worn round the neck, tied with dried sinews of cattle; they are taken off at night, and are renewed when the child is about twelve years old. These charms are often worn on the wrist as well as the neck.

Bracelets and anklets (*mjerere*) are worn by men and women, but the latter wear enormous quantities, as many as 200 on each ankle. They are made of goats' hair wound round with thin copper and iron wire; cows' tails and the hair of the wart-hog are also used. Bracelets made from the hair on an elephant's tail have two beads looped on; no iron or copper is wound round the elephant's hair.

#### KING'S DRUMMER.

In the old days an important personage was the king's drummer, known as the *Bagendanwa*; he was a kind of factotum, and generally became wealthy. He used to tour round

the country with about 400 followers and collect presents of cattle. He had whitewash smeared on his forehead, blue clay on the back of his head, and cow's blood on the top. At each big chief's place he got 200 head of cattle; two of the best were sent to the king, half the remainder were killed for feasting, and the rest he used to keep. His abode was on the Masha hills. If a chief was refractory,



EZINGE (NATIVE BELL).

this man was sent to punish him; but the custom does not now exist.

#### INDUSTRIES.

Iron is wrought in quantities, the ore being found on the hills. The smiths, called *abahesi*, have a bellows made of earth, like a water-chattie; it is flat and round, and has a long cylinder covered with goat-skin and tied round the sides with native rope; in the centre a stick is fitted, and as the skin is loose on the top, the working of the stick up and down produces a current of air. Charcoal is used, which is got from the wood of a tree called *omusheshi*. These iron-

workers make excellent iron spikes and spears (*chuma*, pl. *amachuma*), arrow-heads, hoes (*mfuka*), &c. Other products of the smith's art are a weapon called *omutashara* (an iron rod with a leaf-shaped head), knives, and rings. The latter, both large (*omulinga*) and small (*akalinga*), are worn both by Bahima and Bairo. There are two sorts of larger knives (or, more properly, sickles), called, respectively, *omuhoro* and *omunana*, and a small sheath-knife called *durara*. Iron bells (*amazinge*) are put on the legs of children, and also worn round the waist by men when going to war.

*Pottery*.—The people make earthenware vases, and pots with long necks, which are very black, and have a smooth surface. The men who work thus are called *abanogosi* (singular *omunogosi*).<sup>1</sup> Cooking-pots are called *nyungu*—a kind used for smoking milk-jars, *ekichungu*. A three-legged pot (*ekishua*: see plate) is used for smoking bark-cloth instead of washing it.

*Wooden Implements*.—Among these we find quivers (*omutano*: see illustration in January JOURNAL), milk-jars (*ekiansi*), arrows (*omwambe*, pl. *emiambe*), wooden seats (*ekitebe*<sup>2</sup>), pipes (*enyungu ye tabe*, literally "a pot for tobacco") and a small case for needles (*akazengezo*) given to a girl on her marriage (see p. 235, *ante*).

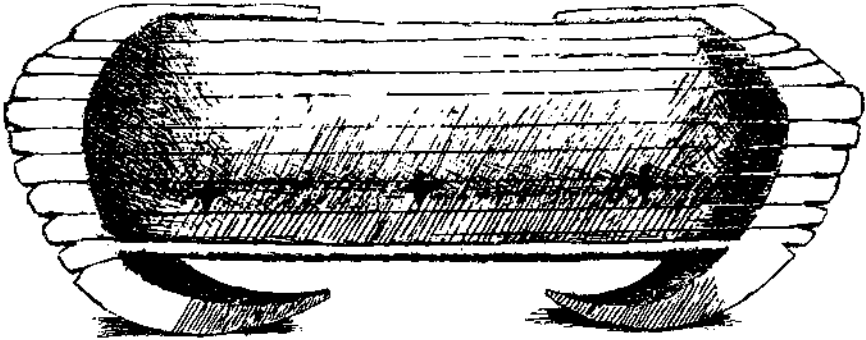
*Basket-work*.—Baskets (*ekibo*) of various kinds are made. All the principal chiefs are carried about in a special large kind called *ekitware*. These are made of creepers growing on trees found in the Egara forest. A hole is made in the ground, and a piece of wood put in crossways; the creepers are laced in and out, and the sides made like a basket. A man can sit inside with just the top of his head showing; the baskets are lashed on poles and carried at a good pace by *mwiros* (slaves).

Fishing-baskets are called *entukuru*. Under the same heading might also be mentioned the lids (*emihaihiha*) used for covering milk-jars, which are plaited of fine grass, nets

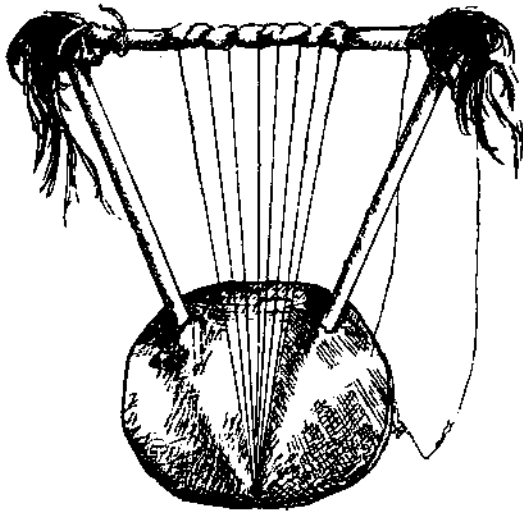
This is worth noting, because, among most Bantu tribes, all pottery (except, in some cases, the earthenware bowls of pipes) is made by the women.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> This is the same word as the Zulu *isi-tebe*, which means a particular kind of mat wove from the stems of a *Cyperus* grass or rush; it is not, however, used for sitting on, but for eating off.—ED.

(*ebitimbe*), mats (*ekirago*), and ropes (*omugwa*), and the curious wigs called *ekisingo* and *enkiyimba*. The former are worn ceremonially in the worship of the spirits, and are



ENANGA (NATIVE INSTRUMENT).



ENTONGOLI.

made of beads for women and shells for men (see illustration in the January JOURNAL, p. 143<sup>1</sup>), the latter by Bahima women when they grow old and grey. There are two kinds of

<sup>1</sup> By a clerical error these have been described as *ekisingo*. Read *enkiyimba* under the illustration referred to.—ED.

*enkiyimba*—one of plaited hair, the other of basket-work with hair worked in, and kauri-shells and beads arranged on it.

*Musical Instruments.*—Two kinds of stringed instruments



ENGALABI (NATIVE DRUM).

(*enanga* and *entongoli*) and a drum (*engalabi*) are shown in the illustrations.

#### GAME.

The following are to be found in the Ankole District :—

*Elephant.*—*Elephas Africanus*—native name Njojo—in the N.E. part of the country, on the Katonga River, and Buddu boundary; sometimes on the Toro frontier.

*Buffalo.*—*Bos Caffer*—native name Mbogo—in Bukanga on the German border, and in Bwezu; also in Nsari.

*Eland*.—*Taurotragus Oryx*—native name Etamu. There are several large herds in Bukanga, and also in Nabusosi.

*Topi*.—*Damaliscus Korrigum* and *D. Jimela*—native name Nyemera—is found all over Ankole in numbers.

*Mpala*.—*Aepyceros Melampus*—native name Mpara—is common in Bukanga.

*Kobus*.—*Cobus Thomasi*—native name Eshuno—is found near Lake Albert Edward and Lake Ruishamba.

*Roan*.—*Hippotragus Equinus*—native name Enkorongo—is found in Ruampara district, along the German boundary.

The lion (*Kichunchu*), leopard (*ngui*), zebra (*enturegi*), waterbuck (*eshama*), warthog (*engili*), reedbuck (*enzaza*), hippo (*njuvu*), and wild dog (*Lycaon Pictus*—native name *omusege*) are found in various parts of the country.

The rhinoceros is found south of the Kagera River; the natives call it *nkura*.

Colobus monkeys are said to be met with in most of the forests; puff adders and pythons are not uncommon.

The natives are not good hunters; they use nets, *ebitimba*, for smaller game, and spears for elephants, but their kills are not large.

#### LAND TENURE.

The uncultivated land in each district belongs to the Chief or Saza, with the exception that people may hunt over it or graze their cattle.

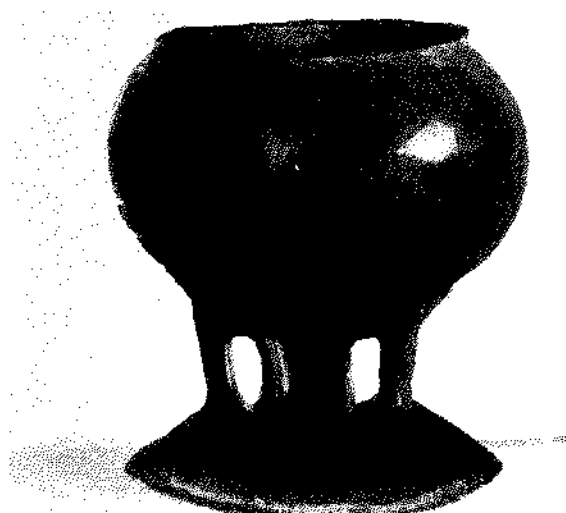
The cultivated ground near huts is handed down from father to son, or nearest male relative.

Women cannot inherit the land.

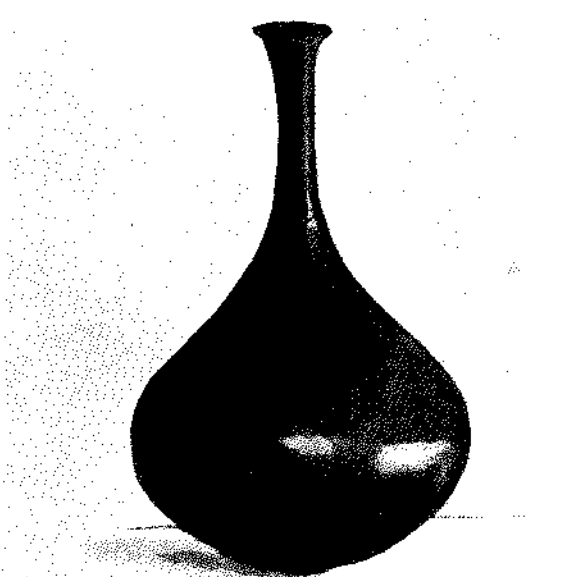
The plots of cultivated ground or *shambas* are marked off by planting strychnia shrubs at intervals along the boundary, sometimes by digging a small trench; more frequently they are not marked off at all.

If a man leaves no children or male relatives, his wife goes back to her nearest of kin, and the headman of the village (*mukungu*) puts some other man into the property. If, however, the deceased leaves a son, even though an infant, the wife can remain on the property with her son.

A man always names the one among his children who is to inherit his property, not necessarily the eldest.



EKISHUA.



ENGEMKO.

[To face p. 240.]



Boundaries (generally natural ones) are fixed between the different districts. Fences may be erected round huts, but not around *shambas*.

If a man wishes to cultivate on virgin ground, he obtains permission from the Saza of the district.

#### PREVIOUS HISTORY.

The history of the Bahima is lost in obscurity. These people are scattered all over Uganda and away to the south and south-west; they are the ruling race in the districts of German East Africa immediately south of Uganda and Ankole, and in part of the Congo Free State. They are shy of talking about the dead, and hence very little of their history has been handed down by word of mouth.

There is little doubt, I think, that they are interlopers in this part of Africa, though where they originated is still a mystery. Their legend is as follows:—

Long ago there dwelt in Bwera (Uganda) two races—the Bahima and a race of Prophets (*Abachwezi*), whose chief was Wemarra.<sup>1</sup> These latter invaded Ankole, which was divided into districts under independent chiefs; Katuku was chief of Sema, and commanded the united armies of the other districts.

|                  |     |       |    |           |
|------------------|-----|-------|----|-----------|
| Lwanzigami       | was | Chief | of | Kasari.   |
| Kalala           |     | „     |    | Nabusosi. |
| Mutenzi          |     | „     |    | Kabula.   |
| Semulinda        |     | „     |    | Nsongi.   |
| Nyawela          |     | „     |    | Bukanga.  |
| Lukukwe          |     | „     |    | Mitoma.   |
| Mareza or Maliza |     | „     |    | Buzimba.  |

The Prophets conquered the country, which then acknowledged Wemarra as chief, and the invaders returned to Bwera. Wemarra's wife, Nzunaki, was a Mhima woman.

These Prophets had but one cow; they bought salt for

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. A. B. Lloyd's *Uganda to Khartoum*, pp. 46—50, where we find a native account of the coming of the Bachwezi to Unyoro. *Abachwezi* seems also to be used in the sense of (1) “ancestral spirits,” and (2) “priests” or “witch-doctors.” See Sir H. H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*, ii., 588.

it, and it died. They then left the country *en masse*, but one of Wemarra's sons, Luinda, remained behind, and became the first King of Ankole. He lived at Kabulangire, near the lakes in Bukanga, but later moved to Kibare Hill on Massa plains in Isingiro. At this time the Bahima were settled in Bukanga and to the South, but Luinda extended their territory North over the whole of Ankole.

1. Luinda was succeeded by his son
2. Kasasira, and the following kings were:—
3. Lumonge.
4. Lugambwa.
5. Ntare (Kagazagirira Misango), who gave judgment lying down.
6. Nkubayarurama.
7. Mirindi.
8. Ntare Kitabanyoro.
9. Ntare.
10. Machuwa.
11. Kahaya.
12. Lwebusengi.
13. Gasonga.
14. Mutambuka.
15. Ntari.
16. Kahaya.

Little is known of these kings or their times; the earliest of whom anything is known is No. 8, Ntare Kitabanyoro. He lived at Kakunyo in Ruampara, about six miles from Mbarara, and during his reign the Banyoro invaded Ankole under Luwaga and Kobwowe. The King of Ankole fled and lived in hiding for some three years, but in the end he succeeded in poisoning many of the Banyoro, and got the two chiefs killed by men with arrows. The Banyoro then retired, and Ntare returned, and hence his nickname ("Slayer of the Banyoro").

No. 11, Kahaya, seems to have been the only king of Ankole who reigned for many years; he ruled over forty years, and during his reign the Banyampaka settled in Ankole. He was a wizard (*omurogo*), and much feared.

No. 13, Gasonga, lived at Lukoma, in Ruampara; during his reign the Baganda invaded Ankole four times. Suna was king of Uganda. Each time the Baganda were victorious; on the fourth occasion the Banyankole took refuge in the cave known as Nyakondogoro in Buzimba, on the side of the Kibari Hill. This cave has a spring of water inside.

Gasonga reigned about twelve years, and was very old when he died; he took poison, and three of his wives poisoned themselves the same day. The remaining seventeen became the wives of his son, Mutambuka.

No. 14, Mutambuka, was about twenty-eight years old when he became king; there was feasting at Lukoma for about two months. The king lived at Nyanga Hill in Nsari district, and the people say that during this reign the country was infested with lions. Mutambuka led an army into Koki against Sansa, father of Kamswaga, whom he defeated and killed; but Mutesa, king of Uganda, then sent a force to invade Ankole. A battle took place near Kibanga in Kasari; the Baganda were defeated, and Magunda, the chief of their army, killed. Ingesha, another leader, was captured and afterwards ransomed for 400 head of cattle, and on peace being declared Mutesa and Mutambuka became blood-brothers. Shortly after this, Mutambuka sickened, took poison, and died, appointing Ntari his successor out of eleven sons.

Mutambuka sent fifty men under a small chief named Bitature through Karagwe to a country south of Ruanda whose chief was named Rwezangara. None of these men returned, but a boy of Bitature's returned many years after to find Mutambuka dead and Ntari king. He brought presents of clothes from Rwezangara, and told the people of white men. These had been foretold by Mutambuka, who spoke of a race of white men who would conquer the country.

The country was visited by a plague of caterpillars (*museta*) during Mutambuka's reign.

On two other occasions Mutambuka opposed the Waganda—once they came under one Kabibi, and once under Nya muzurrua, who was Pokino of Buddu.

No. 15, Ntari, was eighteen years old when he became king. Civil war commenced; eight of his brothers sided with him, and two, Mkwenda and Muhikirra, took up arms against him. The latter prevailed, and Ntari fled to Unyoro, and remained at a place called Luchumu for about a year, after which he returned and defeated his brothers in Mitoma, on the River Mugoye, and killed them both.

Ntari sent an army under Lujabuka, chief of Bukanga, to fight Makaburi, chief of Ruzumburu, father of the present chief; but the Banyankole were defeated, and their leader killed, and his head planted in a tobacco-field.

On another occasion some 600 youths were sent, under a petty chief named Masiko, to plunder the cattle of a man named Yaye, in Kitabuza, across the Kalonga River, but most of them were killed or taken prisoners.

Ntari lived close to the present site of Mbarara Station, and became a blood-brother of Mutesa, of Uganda.

Small-pox (*omuzibwe*) scourged the country, and in 1893 rinderpest (*omubiamo*) broke out and carried off the majority of the cattle.

It was the custom for the king to reign until his children were grown up; then, the first time he was attacked by serious illness, he named his successor from among his sons, took poison, and died. This poison was a preparation handed down from father to son.

The king had twenty wives, and any of these who had borne him children took the poison at the same time.

While Ntari was away in Unyoro, his eight brothers invited the Baganda to come and kill Mkwenda, who called himself king. The Baganda came under Mukasa, Kati-kiro of Mutesa. They gave out that they were come to make blood-brotherhood, and the eight princes went to Kabula to meet them. Mukasa had them killed at once, and then he returned to Uganda.

Ntari died suddenly of plague, and is the only king not buried at Isanji. He was still young, and was very popular.

It is a sign of great respect for the dead when their name is erased from the vocabulary and heard no more; this happened in the case of Ntari, the word meaning "lion." The

present word for lion is "kuchunchu"; it is not a new word, but is the name of a tree which was supposed to keep lions away from men's houses if a branch were placed in the house. Hence the name was applied to the lion when it became necessary to rename that animal.

In another case Lwebisengi was so named (from *ekisengi*, a house or wall) because during his childhood he was kept indoors. When he died they changed the name of "wall" to "kinyagima."<sup>1</sup>

When Ntari died, two of his brothers, Gumirra and Kaishi, were alive, but Kahaya, the son of Ntari, was made king, though only a child.

Gumirra is still alive, and Kahaya is the reigning king.

During the reign of Ntari, a chief named Navyungo came with about a thousand Banyoro from Kabarega's country, and settled near Kasinga, in Banyaruguru. The present chief of the district (Kasegano) is a son of Navyungo. The southern part of Banyaruguru is inhabited by the Banyimpaka, who appear to have come from Uganda about 120 years ago, under one Bampata. They had been living in Chagwe—Junja being then king of Uganda—and were at that time known as the Bakunta.

Semakokiro, a brother of Junja, also lived in Chagwe, and his wife was murdered by Junja, the king. Semakokiro therefore sent the Bakunta to attack Junja; they did so, and in the fighting, Junja was killed. Then Semakokiro became king, and shortly afterwards was urged by his mother to have the Bakunta killed. Semakokiro was persuaded to order all the Bakunta to come to him with the intention of having them killed, but they heard of this, and fled to Ankole, and settled in this district.

#### LEGENDS AND STORIES.

In the time of Ntari, father of Kahaya, there came into the country a sheep with long legs and a long tail, and fire appeared in its wool; this sheep had no owner, but was caught by a slave in Sema, who put it with his other sheep. Some time after, Sema was in rebellion, and the present

<sup>1</sup> These examples of the *hlonipa* custom should be noted.—EN.

Katikiro was sent by Ntari with some Baganda to suppress the rebellion; they plundered the district, and the man who had the sheep lost all his property except this sheep, which he ate. The sheep is thought to have come from heaven.

At the same time and near the place where the sheep was first found, an iron mallet was seen sticking up out of the ground. Some men tried to pull it out, but were unable, and it was left standing, and so remains to this day.

In the Nabusosi district on top of a hill called "Chabagenyi" is a very deep hole called "Obuliza," supposed to have been dug by the prophets.

In the same district there are some stones called "Mugole." The story told of them is that a party of two women, a man, and a boy were passing the place on their way to a marriage feast, when they saw the spirit "Mugasha." They sat down, and the spirit said to them that they would be turned to stone, which immediately happened.

The race of prophets are said to have got copper from a place called Ruoma in Bwera (Uganda).

In the Bwezu district there is (or was) a sacred drum called Maseija, which was worshipped by Ndagara, father of the present chief. This drum was brought from Unyoro by Kayundamo, who gave his sister in marriage to king Kyebambe, and received it in exchange. As Kyebambe was the grandfather (or, according to another account, the great-grandfather) of Kabarega (deposed in 1899, after a reign of about thirty years), this must have taken place some time during the eighteenth century.

#### PUNISHMENTS.

Capital punishment was rarely enforced for murder, except in the case of Bairo, who had no goods; as a rule a fine of cattle was imposed. The same applied to theft; in case the party could not pay, he was put into the stocks (*enkomo*), and kept there till his relations paid the fine. The stocks were kept near the entrance to the king's residence.

In the case of murder among the *abasingo*, or princes, the sentence was exile to Karagwe. The prisoner took a gourd and his clothing, his feet were bound up in bark-

cloth, that he might not defile the earth, and he was escorted to the boundary.

In the case of a murder by a Mwiroti or Mhima who had no cattle, the king handed over the murderer to the relatives of the murdered man; this was tantamount to a death sentence, for the relatives put the man to death by tying his hands and feet, and then spearing him, or they put him in a hole in the ground up to his waist, and shot him with arrows.

The king kept a stock of poison, which was prepared by cutting open a fowl, inserting the poison, and then roasting the fowl till quite dry. A piece of the flesh was then used to poison anybody whom the king wished to remove.

#### BLOOD-BROTHERHOOD.

The custom of blood-brotherhood (*omukago*) has existed from the earliest times among the Bahima. The contracting parties made an incision in the abdomen, the blood is caught on a leaf, and a little milk spilt on the palm of the hand of each. The blood of each is then mixed with the milk on the other's palm, and drunk. As a rule, the making of blood-brotherhood is secret and often done by proxy, in which case only the man who carries the blood and milk is in the secret. The obligations entailed are that the country of each shall be free to the other in every way, even to sending cattle to graze, and if one of the parties makes war he can expect help from the other. Mutesa, of Uganda, became a blood-brother of Ntari, and when Mutesa's army invaded Karagwe, he sent to Ntari for assistance, and got it.

#### LANGUAGE.

The language is closely allied to Luganda and Lunyoro, a large number of the words being practically the same, but the construction differs, and the Bahima accentuate their words in a very marked manner. The usual salutation, on meeting, is *Oreirige*; goodbye, *Osibege*. On seeing a person for the second time in one day, the salutation is *Osiberege*.

In counting, sticks are not used. The Bahima consider cattle the only thing worth counting, and one bull is included

in every hundred head of cattle, and these counted as one. If a man says he has ten bulls, he means 1,000 head of cattle altogether.

The Bahima have many proverbs, but they are difficult to understand, so many words being left out. Miss Baker, of the C.M.S., has collected over 200. The following are a few specimens:—

1. *Akata-whei-re omuseza azinduka.*

If the work is not finished a man gets up early.

2. *Kwo-nu-yana ne nyanja tonaba rume.*

A friend of the lake does not wash in the grass (or dew).

3. *Otari wonyoko kwo-musia enama kwemuka kugenda akugendana.*

When you tell a secret to a man who is not your brother, he gives it away.

4. *Munywani wawe kwei-kar-rere isshe omukago gwatika.*

When your blood-brother beats your father, the tie is broken.

5. *Endwara enkoko emanywa orugo.*

If a fowl is sick, the cattle kraal knows.

Orugo means "the outside fence," according to Miss Baker.

6. *Emfusi etakuri eyoya a ebirumu omonyoo.*

Even if you give salted food to an orphan baby, it will not live.

#### MBARARA STATION.

The Government Station is situated on the left bank of the Ruwezi River on Emuti Hills, the Church Missionary Society and Kahaya's on Kamakusi Hill further West, and the French Mission on Nyamutanga Hill, on the right bank of the river; the Station is thus somewhat scattered.

Alidina Visram is the principal trader; there are about thirteen people who have houses.

There are two military officers' houses made of sun-dried bricks, with corrugated iron roofs; a new hospital has just been completed, and a prison is in course of construction.

The soil is rich, and will produce most vegetables, though perhaps not quite so well as at Fort Portal, where the



rainfall is greater. Strawberries and pineapples grow well here, and the lime trees give abundant fruit.

Commandant Bastien, who is engaged on the work of surveying along the meridian of  $30^{\circ}$  E., tells me that the Bahima extend as far south as Ujiji, and that in Ruanda they call themselves the Watusi or Batusi.<sup>1</sup>

Commandant Bastien has found the tsetse fly at Kisenyi, on Lake Albert Edward, longitude  $29^{\circ} 50'$  E., latitude  $0^{\circ} 18' 59''$  N., and states that the tick fever is very prevalent at Fort George, Katwe, and at Kasinga, on Lake Albert Edward.

#### PROSPECTS OF THE DISTRICT.

It has been said that both East Africa and Uganda are capable of being successfully colonised. How far this may prove true of Uganda I cannot say, but if there is any part of Uganda likely to develop in the future, it is certainly the Western Province, Toro, and Ankole.

A large portion of the country is well over 4,000 feet high; the rainfall is fairly regular and abundant, and the climate well suited to Europeans. The soil is rich, and will produce most cereals, as well as cotton, tobacco, and coffee.

The means of communication are still somewhat primitive, but there are numerous granite hills in the country which will no doubt be utilised in time to make roads capable of bearing heavy traffic.

The Cape to Cairo Railway should pass sufficiently near to tap this portion of the country, which could be joined up with East Africa by a branch line to Entebbe. This last route presents no serious engineering obstacle.

Whatever may be accomplished in the future, there is no doubt that the country (Ankole) may be made self-supporting when the development of the administration enables a larger staff of Europeans to be placed there.

<sup>1</sup> For the Watusi (Wahuma, Bahima) see Count Götzen, *Durch Afrika von Ost nach West* (Berlin, 1895), pp. 77, 78, 83, 109, 148, &c.