

EXPEDITION UP THE JUB RIVER THROUGH SOMALI-LAND, EAST AFRICA.

By Commander F. G. DUNDAS, R.N.*

THE River Jub, which I navigated in 1891 for 400 miles, discharges its waters into the Indian Ocean, on the East Coast of Africa, in lat. $0^{\circ} 14' S.$, long. $42^{\circ} 38' E.$, almost on the Equator. Its lower course is in a southerly direction; the upper part of the river has not been explored. It probably rises in the mountainous region of Abyssinia. As it is the actual boundary between the British and Italian spheres of influence in East Africa, it is of considerable interest, as also in connection with the ill-fated expedition of Baron von der Decken. In August, 1865, he ascended this river in his steamer the *Guelph* (having lost one steamer on the bar at entrance) to the rapids above Bardera, where the vessel was wrecked, and the Baron, with five of his European colleagues, was murdered by the Somalis, two only effecting their escape. No further details have ever transpired in connection with the fate of this expedition, I being the first European who has been to Bardera since the catastrophe. The narrative of Von der Decken's expedition is well known. I hope during my recent journey that I have added something to the present knowledge of this highway to the populous districts of the Gusha territory and the rich tracts of the Boran country.

Colonel Chaillé Long, on behalf of the Egyptian Government, is reported to have made the ascent of the river for some 100 miles; but although Von der Decken's expedition was remembered and spoken of by the natives on the river, nothing was known of any other European having ever been seen. I may here recall the fact that I commanded the expedition fitted out by the Imperial British East Africa Company for the exploration of the River Tana, and the unexplored region about Mount Kenia in 1891, an account of which was read before this Society in a Paper compiled from my Journal by Mr. Ernest Gedge in April last.

Whereas the course of the Tana is almost entirely confined to the countries of the Wapokomo and Wakamba tribes, who are quiet and peaceful, the River Jub flows through the territories of the powerful and hitherto dreaded Somalis.

The stern-wheel steamer *Kenia*, belonging to the Imperial British East Africa Company, in which I made the ascent of both rivers, is 86 feet in length, with 23 feet beam, drawing 2 feet 6 inches loaded, having six compartments, with an upper deck, and deck houses fitted with wire

* Read at the Evening Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society, December 19th, 1892. Map, p. 288.

gauze mosquito frames, and an awning deck over. The armament is two new pattern Maxim-Nordenfelt guns.

We arrived off the bar in tow of ss. *Juba* on April 25th, 1892. This was the second attempt, as the weather, through the unusual strength of the north-east monsoon, was very bad; and the vessel nearly foundered on the first occasion. We now succeeded in crossing the bar, which, owing to the necessity of a vessel being exposed broadside on to the heavy rollers, is most difficult and dangerous. There is a depth of only one fathom at high water, which varies but slightly with spring and neap tides. The numerous sharks and crocodiles about testified as to the fate which might have been expected had the vessel struck. Turning into the river from a north-east to south-west course in calm weather we found a broad majestic stream about 250 yards wide, with a current running $2\frac{1}{2}$ knots, though at the narrow entrance it was much accelerated. The right bank was all low sand-hills, with a few bushes; the left wooded, with high red sandstone hills in the rear, studded with thorn bushes. On the bank were piled up trees and snags brought down by the current and lying in masses extending some little distance from the river.

Passing up in the *Kenia* I arrived at Gobwen, a small village $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the mouth, having two very ancient Arab forts almost in ruins, one on either side. On the left bank parts of the old wall which encircled the village and fort still remain. The only inhabitants now are the Kirobotos, natives of Muskat, some of the Sultan of Zanzibar's soldiers who occupy these forts.

The mouth of the river, although inaccessible to ocean vessels, is distant only 10 miles from the safe harbour of Kismayu, with which it can easily be connected by an inexpensive tram-line. Kismayu Bay was surveyed by Captain Wharton, of H.M.S. *Fawn*, in 1874-75. It is especially important as being the northernmost and only harbour along the entire eastern Somali coast available for ocean steamers during the south-west monsoon, which blows from April to October. During this period the northern parts of Brava, Merka, and Magadishu are closed, and trade, consequently, with them entirely suspended.

The *personnel* of my expedition consisted of twelve Zanzibarris (the crew), one Goanese engineer, one Hindu, and one Chinaman (carpenter); twelve Askaris (native soldiers undrilled), and fifteen native porters for cutting and carrying fuel. I arranged to make a start up the river on May 2nd, but before that date received intelligence from the Arab Akida of the fort that the Somalis were massing all round, and that evidently something was about to happen. I had noticed for several days the hills in the distance covered with black moving masses of natives. On the morning of the 2nd, having ordered steam at eight o'clock, I saw both banks and neighbouring hills one black mass of Somalis, somewhat relieved by their white cloths, all

armed with spears and the short stabbing knife which every Somali carries. Large bodies were to be seen moving through the bush and thorn trees, coming abreast of the vessel, chanting a kind of dirge which I understood afterwards was their war-song. Still I had no communication with them. My Arab serang rushed up on to the awning-deck to me, saying all the crew had deserted. Then I descried two canoes arriving at the bank with my men, who were kneeling or grovelling on the ground kissing the Somalis' feet in abject terror. Of my caravan camped on the bank, all had bolted except the headman. Seeing several chiefs together seated under a thorn-tree I landed in a canoe, and going up to them asked what was the cause of all this trouble, and why all these people had assembled. They informed me that I was to take the ship out of the river, as no leave had been given for a vessel to come in. If I moved they said there would be war, and they would kill me.

I learnt afterwards that 400 Somalis were stationed, concealed in thick bush, at the bend of the river, where the water was shallow; and they expected the vessel to ground, when they would have attacked her. Eventually after much talk, I agreed to remain fourteen days, and they on their part consented to forward a letter from me to Murgan Usuf, the Sultan of the Ogaden Somalis, who was the head chief, and lived at Uffimadu, six days' journey from the coast. On the fourteenth day I received a reply from Murgan, saying that he was coming down to see me with a large following of 6000 men, and that I must feed them. I replied that I would be glad to see him, but that having no food he had better leave his retinue behind him. I then went down to Mombasa to see Mr. Ernest Berkeley, the Administrator of the Company, who returned with me. Aided by his admirable administrative capabilities, and untiring zeal and tact, I succeeded in concluding a peace with Murgan Usuf, who granted permission for the vessel to proceed. That gentleman, looking round the *Kenia*, espied my sword hanging in the cabin; he said he would have that as my present to him, and quietly appropriated it along with an arm-chair which he took a fancy to. He is a tall, powerful, handsome man, exceedingly sharp, and with a remarkable memory.

On July 23rd, having laid in a large supply of wood for fuel from the piled-up trees at the mouth of the river, we started at 8 A.M. on my voyage up the river. For the first eight miles there were large undulating plains interspersed with woods and numbers of Mkono palms, the fan palms growing close to water on the bank. The depth of water varies from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms. At noon I arrived at the first large Somali villages of Hajowen and Hajualla, situated nearly opposite each other, with populations of about 900 each. As we came alongside the right bank at Hajowen the natives crowded down to look at the vessel. The Somalis, as is well known, are a very fine handsome race,

of good physique, with excellent features; the hair is very thick and sticks out like a bush, but is parted in front. The younger girls and women are mostly pretty with splendid black eyes, but are jealously guarded by the men; a Mzungu or European is hardly permitted to look at them. The Somalis are very strict Mohammedans. I noticed numbers of Galla girls about who are slaves, the lighter colour and different features marking them out from the Somalis, who are very black. The missionary Krapf reported, in 1849, having heard in Shoa of a tribe of Christian Gallas living near the equator. It is a curious fact that many of the slaves of the Somalis, whose mothers or grandmothers were Boran women captured by the Somalis, wear, as an ornament, a white round shell or stone having a black leathern cross upon it. I am informed that when the Company's Administrator first visited Kismayu and opened negotiations with the colony of runaway slaves at Gosha, he then heard of a Christian tribe of Gallas who were anxious to get into communication with the Company and to have access to the coast.

Leaving these villages, the only large Somali villages on the river from the mouth to Munsur, 360 miles, and Bandera, 387 miles, I went on up the river. The country still showed large grass plains with occasional wood. Later in the afternoon, seeing large herds of game feeding, I made fast to the bank, and going after them was fortunate enough to secure two Topè, a very large species of reddish antelope with sloping horns. The meat was excellent.

The next day, Sunday, we pushed on, the river mostly running through wooded reaches and jungle. Seeing as I thought another river running nearly parallel about a quarter of a mile off, I landed and went over to it, and discovered that I had passed through it just three hours before. This will show how winding the course of the river is in this part. At nights, when the lamp was lit on the upper deck for dinner, the table and deck overhead near the light was simply a mass of insects of every description: large moths beautifully marked, numberless extraordinary animals with gigantic feelers, earwigs and gnats. As a rule, I am glad to say, there was an absence of mosquitoes.

Thick wood continued on both sides with occasional openings, at which we saw numbers of natives of the Waboni tribe, who live mostly by hunting. They are dressed with a piece of skin round the loins, and armed with bows and arrows. The trees were full of monkeys of every description, from the smallest to the largest-sized baboons; they seemed somewhat curious about the vessel, but did not appear in the least to be scared. Several white-headed eagles with numberless crocodiles made up the only game to be seen, the grass plains at the back not being visible. Several large snags in the river showing above the water with the sweeping current made the navigation somewhat

difficult, more especially as I had to take all the angles at the different bends for survey, occasionally anchoring to ascertain the strength of current with the patent log. Not one of the natives shipped as crew ever having been afloat before gave me sufficient work to keep me on the alert every moment when under weigh. As we ascended, the bends in the river became wider and more sweeping. I observed groups of the castor-oil plant, almost choked with the extraordinary luxuriance of creepers and undergrowth.

At 10 A.M. on the 25th we entered the Gusha district, the Shambas or cultivated lands commencing on the left bank. The inhabitants of Gusha some thirty or forty years back were solely composed of run-away slaves. Now the population has increased to an enormous extent. Where formerly there were a few villages now there are small towns with populations varying from 600 to 1000. They live entirely on the proceeds of cultivation. The clearings in the forest are first made by firing all the bush and lighting a fire at the foot of the trunk of each tree, which is left to smoulder. After a few days it comes down with a crash and a shower of sparks, and lies where it falls; but the land around is tilled and sown mostly with Mahindi (Indian corn), which is the staple food, mtama, sem-sem, a small brown grain which is crushed for oil; cotton and tobacco are also grown. These dead trees, which are to be found through the whole cultivated district for a distance of 100 miles, give remarkable facilities for obtaining fuel for steaming. The dead wood is quite dry and burns admirably, in many instances not even requiring to be cut into lengths. I may add that from the mouth of the river to Bardera I never had to cut a single tree down for firewood.

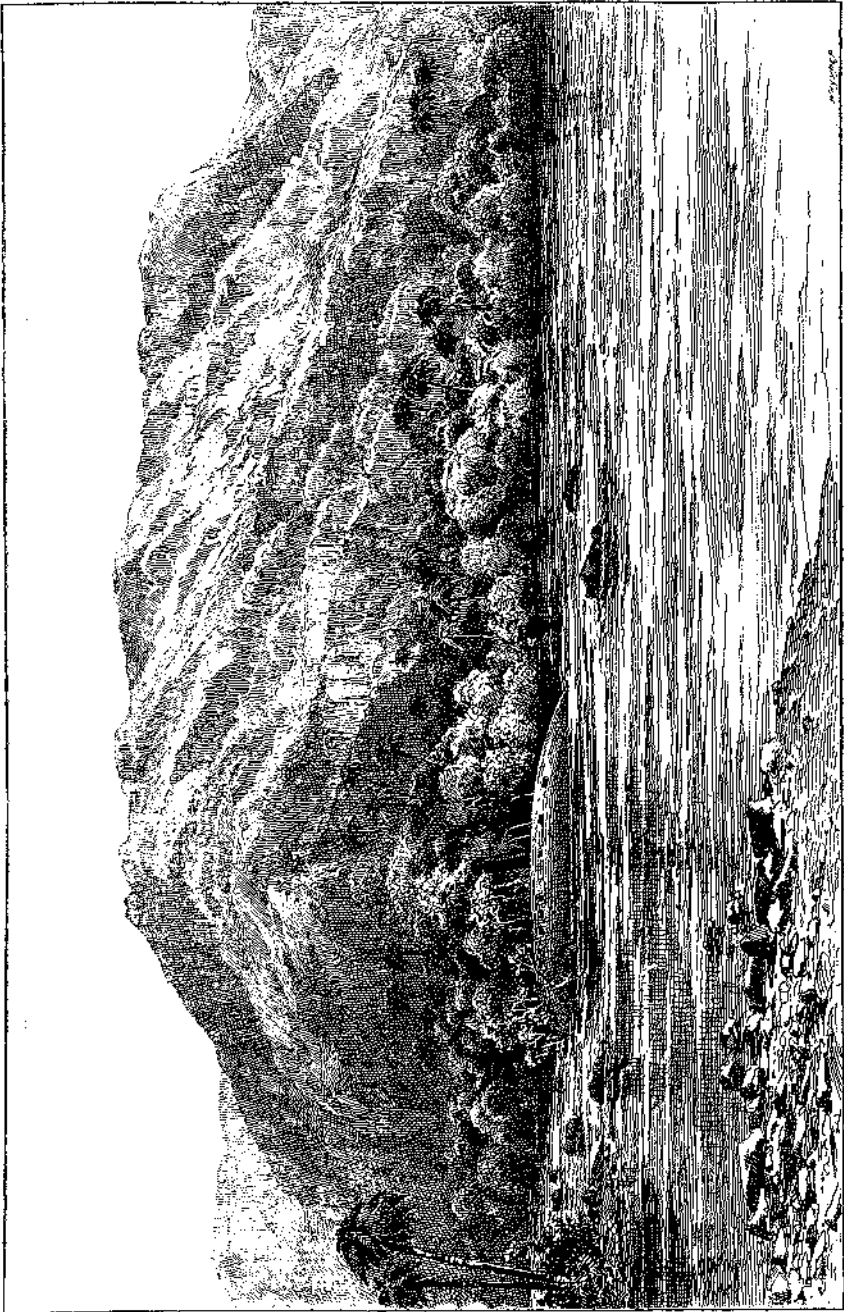
On arrival at a large island formed by the river forking I was perplexed as to which route to take, and which was the river proper. At length I took the north-east branch, which afterwards proved to be the right one, and arrived shortly at the village of Mataku. I was here told that the other arm or fork would join again some distance farther on, but that it was narrow and full of snags, with tortuous bends. The arm of river which I had taken was also most difficult to navigate. In many parts it was only 15 to 20 yards wide, with dense overhanging trees and branches standing out; thus for several hours we were constantly colliding with the trees, the swift current sweeping the vessel in amongst them risking the loss of the funnel and of the awning deck. I may here add that when it was requisite at any time to turn the vessel, she being 86 feet in length with 23 feet beam, the bow or stern had to be pushed into the jungle, leaving one end in the river which the current acted upon. It was an everyday incident for the vessel sometimes almost to disappear into dense masses of vegetation and creeper, which grow very thickly, and hanging from the lower branches makes

an almost impervious barrier. After four hours' steaming we again joined the other arm of the river, and it then opened out to a breadth of 120 yards. The first large village of Tula on the right bank was passed. The natives were out *en masse* to see the vessel pass, the women running along the banks uttering low peculiar cries, commencing on a very low note, and ascending to the highest each lady was capable of producing. Several more elderly females, having three and four small infants tied up in the mother's cloth and secured round their bodies, were careering along the banks, every now and then appearing at the openings in the high grass. How the young urchins escaped coming to grief I cannot conceive.

At length we arrived at Fuleile, the village where the Sultan of the Gusha district (Nasibu Mpondo, as he is called), resides. He is a tall, fine, powerful man, and at once came off to visit me, expressing his delight at seeing the steamer. He begged me not to go to Bardera, as he said the up-country Somalis were very bad, and would assuredly kill me. He said that he and all his people were the friends of the European. Throughout the whole Gusha district the Swahili language is spoken. From this village to Bilo there are numerous very large villages densely populated, and the banks on either side continuously are more or less cultivated, the cultivation extending in many instances several miles in from the banks. Very little wood is now seen, the country being a flat plain and excellently adapted for cultivation. Large groves of bananas and plantains were now frequent on either side, and as the *Kenia* moved along, hundreds of natives were to be seen at work in the Shambas. They nearly all dropped the jembe, a small flat iron hoe with handle with which they till the ground, and hastened to the banks to see the wonderful phenomenon in the shape of a steamer. Those villages which I passed on the way up (as I wished to get on as fast as possible for fear of the water falling) I called at on the way down, and made friends with all. At the village of Jelib I saw cotton growing, which was picked by girls, several twisting it on to improvised reels. A man was weaving with a wooden loom and shuttle, very primitive but ingenious, of native make. The man sat in a hole working a double treadle, and wove cloths of excellent texture, which were worn by the natives. On inquiry I learnt that not one from the village had ever even been to the coast or seen a white man.

It is estimated that the number of runaway slaves settled in this colony now numbers from 30,000 to 40,000 souls. They have expressed great delight at the advent of the Company, and have eagerly placed themselves under its protection. They hope now to find at Kismayu an outlet for the superabundance of grain they can raise in their very fertile district. There is a promising future for trade with these people, both in the export of grain and import of Manchester cottons.

Above Bilo, which is just 100 miles from the mouth, there was



RAPIDS ON THE UPPER JUB RIVER, WITH REMAINS OF VON DER DECKEN'S STEAMER.

dense impenetrable forest on either side. We arrived at the point where the Jub, in its downward course, forks. One branch runs off from the main river on the right bank to the south-west. I believe this may be the origin of the Sheri, which, as is well known, flows southward, and empties itself at Port Durnford, 80 miles down the coast midway between Lamu and Kismayu. Mooring the *Kenia* alongside the bank I explored this branch downwards in a small boat for 20 miles. It was from 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms deep, with a current of $3\frac{1}{2}$ knots. There was dense forest on either side. The stream was so narrow that branches of trees in some places projected nearly across; it was, in consequence, quite unnavigable for the *Kenia*. From the depth of water and large volume coming from the main river, I assume that it flows for some distance, and with this theory all the native accounts agree, as they said it went to the big water (the ocean). I shot two large crocodiles 14 and 16 feet in length; and from the depth of scale one must have been very old. I stopped at a small Waboni village where the people lived almost entirely by fishing. Fish of several kinds were plentiful in the river. One was as large as a salmon, but with an enormous head and teeth. Numbers of large turtles, from 30 to 40 lbs., were also caught in the Jub with a strong hook and line. I have often had turtle soup and wild duck for dinner when in the river.

On leaving the Sheri, the *Kenia* proceeded between wooded banks to the village of Mfudo. This is one of the last runaway slave stations. The clearings in the forest were still being carried out, and shambas were not yet formed. The forest on either side extends for about one mile, and then thick thorn woods for another three-quarters of a mile, when you emerge on the vast undulating grass plains so common to African scenery. I had some excellent shooting at Mfudo, the headman, Shongolo, being a capital hunter. I landed on the opposite bank several times, and, following a small track through the forest, came out on to the plain. I saw several magnificent ostriches, but never could get within 500 yards, there being no cover. Even after crawling in the hot sun I failed to get within reach, for their scent or sight was too keen; suddenly they would look round and dart away, just moving their wings and not stopping for several miles. Vast herds of buck, topè, kuguni, wildebeest, and smaller kinds of antelope enabled me to make several large bags, once including a rhinoceros.

On July 29th we came to the last settlement of the Gusha people called Shonde. There were only about thirty people in all, and they had lately arrived from one of the larger villages to establish a settlement and clear the forest for cultivation. On either side after this it was dense, primeval forest. The scenery was beautiful. There were thick green masses of foliage against the blue sky, with the brown, muddy river running silently on without a sound, except the stroke of the

stern wheel or the occasional splash of a crocodile disappearing off the bank into the water on the approach of the vessel.

The trees are mostly of the acacia kind, the African oak, with tamarinds and numbers of green thorn trees, etc. I was struck by the large masses of purple convolvulus intermixed with the thick network of creeper which cover most of the trees, forming one serried mass of foliage. Through a small opening, by a stream running off from the left bank, I made my way by canoe into a large lake having no outlet. In the black alluvial soil of the river I saw several sparkling grains of metal like gold-dust. I washed samples of it, and the grains of metal still appearing, I put some in a bottle for transmission to Mombasa, but have not yet heard what it might be. The probability is that it is not gold, but pyrites.

For several days now the dense forest continued without intermission. Numbers of hippopotami were about, and I secured several. Thick fogs in the mornings hung over the river until eight o'clock, when the heat of the sun dispelled them. The average heat in the river was 90° in the shade during the day, and 83° at nights. The monsoon at times blew very strongly, which made the nights much colder; but the temperature during the day never varied. The general depths of the river so far was from 1½ to 3 fathoms.

On August 2nd, after five days steaming through forest land without seeing any sign of human life, we suddenly emerged into the open, and arrived at the village of Kabobe. It is inhabited by a very mixed race, consisting of Somalis, Gallas, Swahilis, Wabonis, and Kabyles. The chief, Taiu, after a little time was very friendly, and the vessel created the greatest excitement, hundreds of natives standing on the bank alongside day and night. There were numerous shambas, and the people here lived partly on the produce of land and partly by hunting. Sweet potatoes, bananas, mahogo, cheroki, and koondi, a kind of bean, were to be obtained in profusion. I had two days' shooting on the left bank, and obtained several Kuru or water buck.

The river rose 18 inches in one night. From all the information on this point which I could gain it would appear that during the months of August and September the water rises suddenly, and in a week or ten days falls again with the same rapidity, this taking place several times during these months. Twice this sudden rise and fall came under my own observation. The natives told me it was caused by the rains far up country bringing the freshets down; but comparatively little rain fell over the expanse of country through which I passed. The chief here told me that the river is in flood part of July, August, September, and October; it falls rapidly in November, when it is possible to walk across the bed. In December and January the water is very low; in February it rises, and is partially in flood during March and April, when it falls again, rising in July.

On August 4th we left Kabobe. The features of the river altered somewhat, the reaches being wide and shallow. The vessel grounded on sand-flats, but came off again, the depth varying from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 fathoms. We passed a high slate rocky bluff, 30 feet high, sheer to the river. After some little distance the woods disappeared, and the country opened on to the plain studded with mkono palms and mimosa thorn. High flat ranges of hills rose on the north-east. From Anole, in latitude $1^{\circ} 59' 52''$ N., the banks entirely change, becoming hard and stony, with slate intermixed. A plateau 200 feet in height extended on either side for some distance with a peculiar sugar-loaf peak close to the right bank. The water was now very shoal, and the vessel grounded repeatedly. There were great numbers of hippopotami about, as many as fifteen and eighteen standing close together on a bank in the centre of the river. We passed three high rocky bluffs rising 150 feet high sheer from the river just before arriving at the large Somali village Mansur.

Here I was informed that the Sheik of Bardera had sent down to say that the European was to go back, and not to attempt to go up to Bardera, or he would be killed. He added that the only European, many years before, who had come to Bardera had been killed, and the same would happen to this one. I replied that I was going to Bardera, and wished to make friends with the sheik. The up-country Somalis have nothing to do with the coast tribes and Ogadens. From Mansur the same features prevailed.

Turning a bend we came in sight of Bardera on the evening of August 10th. The town is situated on a hill on the left bank adjoining the river. The whole of the bank was lined with Somalis, and evidently from their excited state, some trouble was brewing. The crew in terror begged me to turn back. I made the vessel fast to the right bank, opposite Bardera, the river here being 60 yards wide. I sent a Somali interpreter to speak with the sheik, but the men rushed down to the landing-place, brandishing their spears, and threatening to kill him if he landed; so I hailed him to return. Having camped the porters alongside the vessel on the right bank, I received news through some of the Barra Somalis (Somalis of the plain) that the sheik was sending a large force across some little distance up to attack the vessel that night. I withdrew the men on board, leaving the tents pitched and the fires burning, quietly pushing the vessel from the bank, anchoring in mid-stream. At 11 P.M. I saw large bodies of natives on the right bank moving about between the trees. Suddenly they dashed into the river, swimming off on both sides. Unfortunately, or let us say fortunately, my Maxim guns were useless, and could not be fired; but attributable entirely to circumstances beyond my control, and my crew were too frightened to make it safe to depend upon their rifles. When the Somalis were just clambering on board, I fired a sound signal which I had with

me, hoping that its novelty might intimidate their savage nature. These signals are fired from a socket fixed upright with a tube, and having used them a great deal on the coast in England, the thought occurred to me in Mombasa how well they might answer as a last resource with natives when used for the first time. I therefore carried several with me in my former expedition when in the Masai territory, but never had occasion to use one. On the present occasion the signal proved most effective. When it burst in mid-air with a loud explosion, lighting up the whole river with its shower of red stars, the water being black with heads, I had the satisfaction to see the natives all turn and make for the banks in terror. No further attack took place.

The next morning, knowing that some move was imperatively necessary, I landed suddenly amongst the Somalis, at Bardera, unarmed, with my interpreter. I pushed through the threatening crowd of natives to the sheik, expecting half a dozen cold spears through my back every moment, as they pressed round with their spears raised. I think the sheik was too astonished for words. I said *Aman* (peace), and told my interpreter to say I meant to do him no harm and wished to be friends. The chief at last asked me how I dared to come unarmed among them; that I was completely in his power, and that he could easily make an end of me. I said he might do so if he liked; that I cared nothing for him, but I knew I had done him no injury, and why should we not be friends. Had the Company wished to take his country I would have come with a large force, instead of which I came entirely alone. Was it to be *Aman* or not? After a few moments, apparently taken aback at what seemed my foolhardiness, he said there should be *Aman*, at least until he had consulted the chiefs. He bade me go on board and await the result. As you may guess I did wait with some anxiety, but at the end of five hours the sheik sent a present on board as a token that we were to be friends. He said he did not like white men, but he rather liked me personally. After some days we became great friends. I told him I wanted to go further up the river, to which he at first objected; but on my offering to take as many of his people on board as we could hold, or to leave some of my own, he eventually consented. He sent the second sheik with two other chiefs to accompany the *Kenia* up to the rapids, situated 25 miles above.

Bardera is an old town with remains of a wall running round it; the population is about 1200. The huts are large and clean, the inside being hung with skins and divided into two rooms. There is little or no cultivation around Bardera, and the people live principally on cattle and sheep, there being vast herds feeding on the banks. The great caravan route from the Boran country crosses the river at Bardera; by this are brought ivory and hides which find their way to Brava and the northern ports.

When navigation of the river is regularly established and this waterway is opened to commerce, the bulk of the trade now finding an outlet at the northern ports will be diverted to Kismayu. It must not be overlooked that the trade of the Somalis is not carried on by human portage, but by camels and other baggage animals, so that with the port of Kismayu permanently open the trade of the interior should be attracted to the terminal point of navigation on the river. The large annual shipment of hides from the Somali ports points to their country being an extensive pastoral one. Considerable quantities of the best grey cottons, known here as "Americani," are imported. The inferior kinds of Manchester cloths which are bartered in the Hinterland of Mombasa are unsaleable amongst the Somalis.

Logh, another large Somali town, is five days' journey from Bardera. The road passes into the Barra, and does not follow the river on account of the very hilly character of the district, with dense thorn woods. The only other route into the Boran country crosses the river at Logh. The Ganana district is several days march above Logh.

With the second sheik and two other chiefs on board I left for the rapids, the water in the river falling rapidly. Past the village of Marda the river ran between a range of steep, rocky hills, 300 to 400 feet high.

Arrived at the rapids, where the bed of the river was a mass of rocks, I made the *Kenia* fast on the right bank, near a small sand beach. Baron Von der Decken's ill-fated vessel, the *Guelph*, which was wrecked twenty-seven years before, almost to the day, was now lying close-to, on her starboard side, the funnel still standing straight up, with two trees growing up alongside. I visited the *Guelph* several times, and found one side all gone, with two rocks through the bottom, which was silted up with sand and mud. The shell of the port side, with beams and davits, remained; cylinders and boilers were still in position. A large and a smaller island in the centre of the river divide it into three channels. The one off the right bank, taking a very sharp turn, is a mass of rocks; the centre channel being dry, and the other off the left bank the only possible one. But I consider it utterly impracticable for navigation, the depth varying from 6 inches to 3 feet. The current sweeps among the numerous rocks at the rate of 6 knots. I attempted to haul a small boat through, but had to give it up, she being nearly dashed in pieces. One of the Somali chiefs, a very intelligent man, told me that four hours march above the rapids the river falls over a ledge of rock; therefore if a vessel could be got beyond the rapids, through a great rise in the river, she would be stopped by these falls. I wished to have gone by land to see these falls, but the chief informed me there was no road, and it would take some time to cut through the thick thorn bush on the bank. The latitude of the rapids is $2^{\circ} 34' 45''$ N. The distance

from the sea by the river to these rapids is 407 miles, and to Bardera 387 miles. In the whole of this distance the Jub receives no affluent.

Leaving the rapids to return to Bardera on August 16th, we grounded heavily several times on the shallow sand flats, the river having fallen several inches, and parts in the centre where the vessel had passed over on the way up being now dry. We took three days to get to Bardera, having several times to clear everything out of the vessel to get her off. Remaining only one day in Bardera for fear of being stopped by want of water, and leaving the sheik and his people on the most friendly terms, I started to make the descent of the river. For days the *Kenia* was on shore on different sand-banks, and the work of clearing her out of all stores, and transporting to the bank by one small boat in the strong current, was very heavy and hazardous. However I succeeded in getting her off, and, after running numerous risks from the strong current and very sharp bends at different points in the river, at length we arrived at Gobwen on September 20th, near the mouth of the river, after two months' absence. Here I was told that news had been received on the coast a month previous that the *Kenia* was broken up, and the European killed, the crew being made slaves of by the Somalis. The fact that part of the light casing of the *Kenia* had been broken off colliding with some of the trees and actually floated down the river 250 miles, when it was picked up and forwarded to the Superintendent at Kismayu as evidence of the destruction of the vessel, naturally caused some credence to be attached to the story prevalent on the coast.

The Somalis are a fine race, extremely proud, and would not on any account show the slightest astonishment at anything; no expression of wonder ever passed across the face even when I showed them the engines, the Maxim guns, and a revolver. Their dress is a white cloth, 7 yards in length, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in width, of broad Americani or drill, which is wound round the body and the end thrown over the shoulder. The women of Bardera, in addition to the white cloth, have a Kanaki cloth of dark blue or black over the head, and wear white leggings from the knee to the foot over sandals, which does not enhance their personal appearance. The men are all armed with the long spear, small round rhinoceros-hide shield, and short stabbing knife. Nearly the whole of the Somalis I met are strict Mohammedans, and are most particular, especially in Bardera, to pray at sunrise and sunset. My position, on account of the fanatical Mohammedanism, was a somewhat perilous one, as I was looked upon as an infidel, and the sheik said that for this reason it would be unsafe to go about, as it would take some time before his people could become habituated to seeing a European in Bardera. The grasping nature of the Somalis is very observable; no matter what was given in the shape of a present they invariably wanted more.

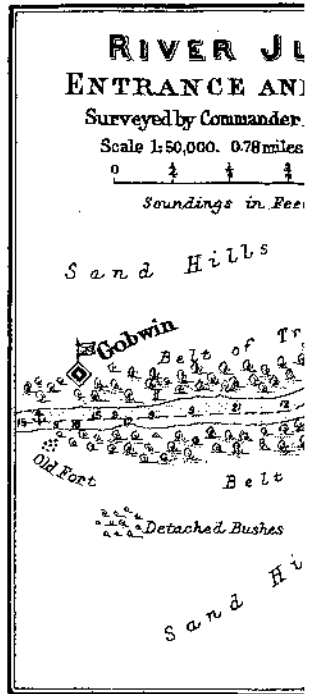
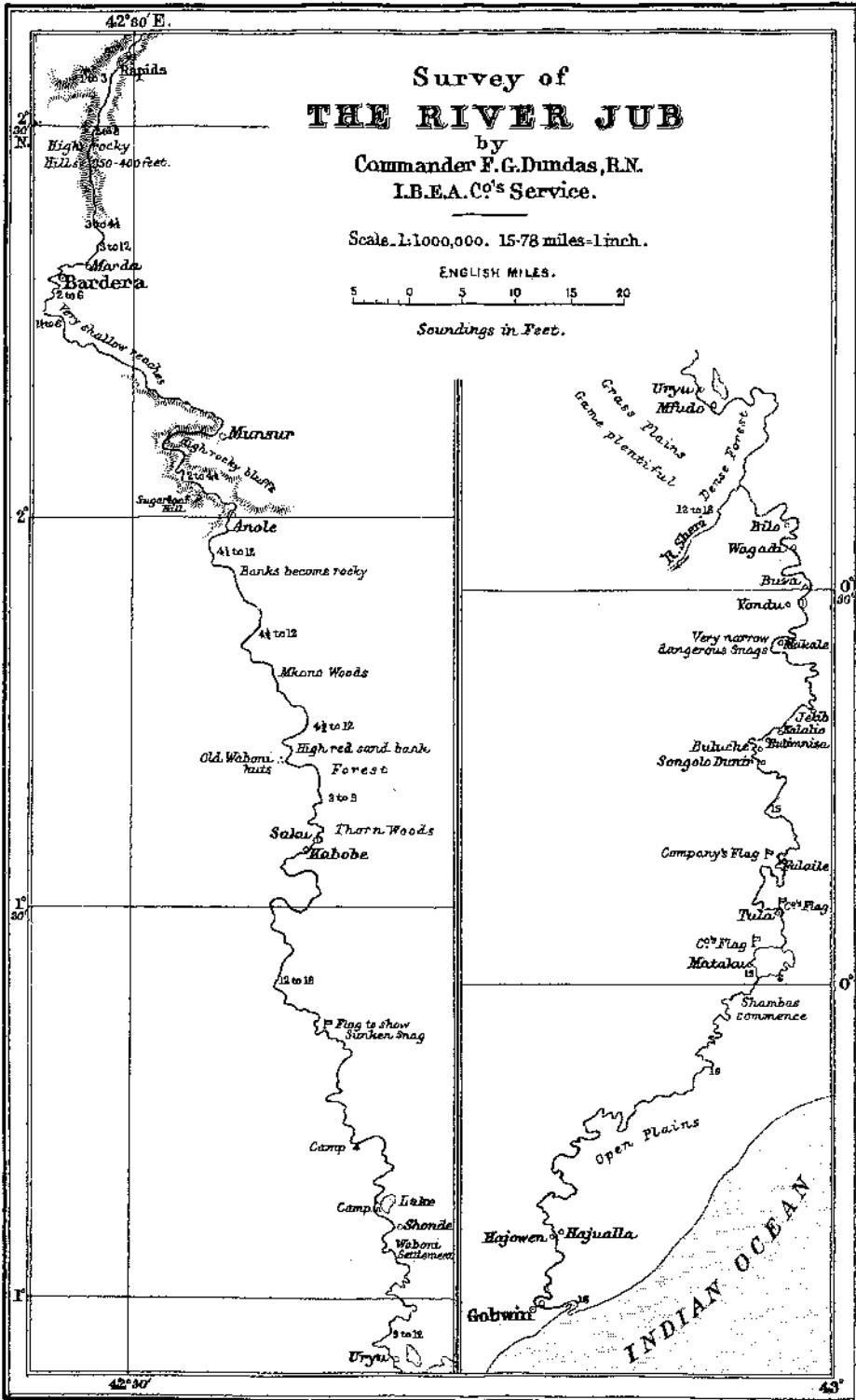
The second sheik and two other chiefs whom I had on board for several days were most observant and anxious to know about everything, asking numberless questions. They eat a great deal of meat, but the favourite dish throughout Somali-land is coffee-beans stewed in ghee—a kind of rancid fat.

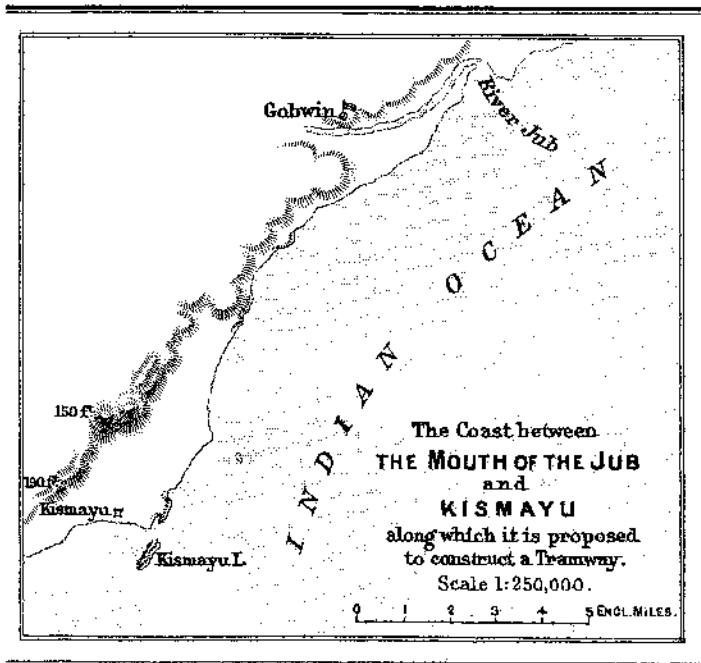
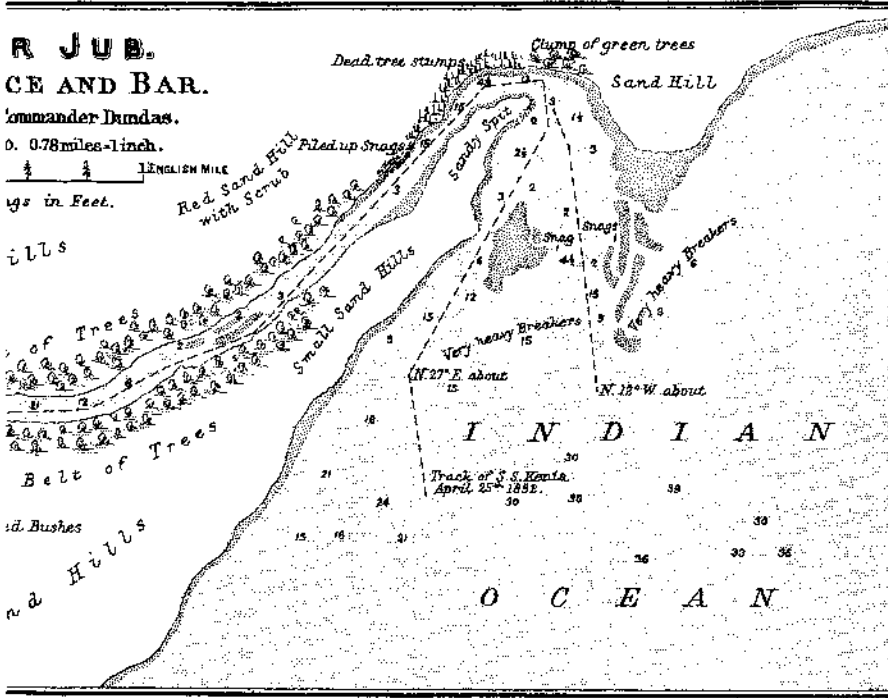
The climate is excellent; not a single case of fever occurred during my stay in the river. This I attribute to the dry heat and to the fact that the river does not overflow its banks, as the Tana does, creating vast malarial swamps. In that river the clouds of mosquitoes at night made life unbearable. In the Jub River it was an exception to find many mosquitoes, and most of the time a curtain could be dispensed with. The country is admirably adapted for cultivation and European enterprise, in the Gusha district, the ground being very fertile and the people glad and willing to receive Europeans and trade with them. I hope that as the river has now been ascended without bloodshed, the way will be open to further communication, and that peaceful trade—the great object of a chartered company—may soon follow. The *Kenia* remains in the river, and is ready for another ascent when the directors of the Imperial British East Africa Company consider it desirable.

After the reading of the paper the following discussion ensued :—

Captain WHARTON: When my old friend and shipmate Captain Dundas wrote to me from East Africa to say he was going up the Jub, I must say I thought there was a very great chance of never seeing him again. I had seen a little of the Somalis on the coast in 1877, and formed a very strong opinion that if the Somalis were determined he should not get up the river he would not do so, and as all previous experience had shown that that was their general line of action, one's mind could not help coming back to Von der Decken's ill-fated expedition. The preliminary difficulty at the bar I did know of, as I observed it when passing near the mouth of the river, but I did not try it, for it is about as nasty a bar as ever I saw, for getting over with a ship broadside on to a rolling sea is very difficult. Captain Dundas has opened up a new line into the country without bloodshed, and by a mixture of audacity and jolliness, which always goes down with the African, even though he be a Somali, not quite so amenable to laughter as other Africans, has added something to African exploration which I hope will be for the benefit of the British East Africa Company and England generally.

Mr. RAVENSTEIN said that Captain Dundas's survey of this important river agreed in the main with the survey made during Von der Decken's expedition. Captain Dundas was most certainly the second European who had reached Bardera, although several claims had been advanced to that honour. Mr. Henry C. Arcangelo, who read extracts from his diary before this Society in 1866 (*Proceedings*, x, 1866, p. 113), and published several papers in the *United Service Magazine*, claimed to have ascended the river in 1836, for a distance of 240 miles, but inquiries made by Captain Guillaïn at Gobwen clearly showed that that gentleman never got further than that place, and returned thence to Barawa. In 1853, a Captain J. H. Short told Mr. Macqueen that he had gone up the river for 210 miles, and that he saw snow-clad mountains far away to the westward. These mountains, however, had not been discovered since (*Journal*, R.G.S., 1860, p. 134). More recently, in 1875, an Egyptian expedition had been despatched to the east coast of Africa on the





F. S. Waller, lith.