

THE  
UNKNOWN HORN OF AFRICA.

*AN EXPLORATION FROM BERBERA  
TO THE LEOPARD RIVER.*

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OF THE FAUNA BY K. KEULEMAN, FROM SPECIMENS CHIEFLY  
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The afternoon we employed in photographing natives, endeavouring to pick out those with the most distinctive features. Some had no objection to being immortalised in this manner, but many were frightened and ran away. Towards dusk I had gone a short distance outside the zariba, when suddenly I became aware of a great commotion. Crowds of warriors in double file came running down the path near where I was, uttering loud cries and flourishing their spears. I got back inside as quickly as possible by a circuitous route through the bushes, so as to escape notice. On regaining the zariba, I found all was stir and excitement, and no one seemed to know what it all meant. Dualla soon arrived from the Sultan's village, and reported that while talking to the Sultan the war-horns had suddenly sounded, and every man, seizing his spear and shield, had rushed out. The usual commotion prevailed in camp, guns were fired, and every one shouted at once, and *dinner was delayed!*

A great crowd had massed round our zariba, and before long an explanation was forthcoming. Messengers had been sent to the hostile village and had not returned. A small boy raised the alarm in Barri that they had been captured, and the people turned out *en masse*. After elaborate manœuvres they passed our zariba in single file, and certainly presented a formidable appearance. Arrived at the village, a dance and song took place, with a recitation by the local poet, which was supposed to be complimentary to us; for "what did they care for the enemy, when we who slew crocodiles and lions with one shot from our weapons were there to help them?"

Dinner was ordered immediately after this, and Dualla

brought us a war-horn, whose note had now become our nightly lullaby. It consisted of a large sea-shell, the *cassis cornutum* of conchologists, with a hole pierced at the narrow end, into which the performer blew, and at the same time struck the mouth of the shell with the palm of the hand ; in this way an expert performer could produce sounds which were more peculiar than harmonious.

The constant feeling of uncertainty rendered shooting very difficult, and the people were always begging us not to venture far. We managed, however, to get some water-buck, gazella Walleri, koodoo, and ariel. The latter we were always anxious to shoot, as it was the only variety our men would eat.

The man that I had previously got most of my information from in regard to the country came with the Sultan, who wanted the hilt of his presentation-sword mended, and I again pumped what I could out of him. In answer to my query as to game, he replied there were at that time elephants at El Koran, an uninhabited tract two days' journey down the river on the opposite bank. They used to hunt them, but had not done so since ceasing to be friends with the Aouleehan, to whom the country belonged. Rhinoceros were to be found at Salsal, in Wak Mahali's country, three days off, and zebras were in the Gorasin country, on the other side of the river. There were also plenty of lions and leopards on both sides, but ostriches were only found on the Ogadayn plateau. But alas! where was the use to us of all this attractive information when we could not induce our men to go with us to any of these places? A short way down the river money was understood, and was commonly used by the Jidli

people, with whom dollars, rupees, and small coins were quite common. From fifteen to twenty days' travelling would take us to the sea. Dualla obtained the following additional information from "one who knew," which I give for what it is worth.

The majority of the Shebeyli people, that is, the negro portion of them, used to live in Faf when the Barri was entirely occupied by the Hawiyahs. After a time the Ogadayn, who never employed slave-labour, drove the present Shebeyli people out of Faf, and they in their turn drove the Hawiyahs farther inland, with the exception of a mere handful, who at the present time remain masters of the country. The present Sultan and some twenty or thirty other Hawiyahs are now their representatives at Barri. Some of the slaves have been freed, and have themselves become slave-owners.

How it happens that the negroes, being first driven away from Faf by the Ogadayn, should have been able to drive the Hawiyahs out of their own country, and yet allow a handful to remain as their rulers, is a puzzle to me. This statement was, however, corroborated by several of the older inhabitants.

On February 27th we were treated to the greatest military parade I had witnessed in Africa. In the afternoon a deputation arrived from the disaffected village, purporting to be desirous of making terms with the Sultan, and a great "fantasia" took place. The whole village turned out, and the proceedings were most picturesque and interesting. The spearmen formed in square, and advanced in four companies, waving their weapons and moving at a trot, and after this formed in line and advanced

## CHAPTER XVII.

HAHI—DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING SUPPLIES—THE RIFLE *v.* BOWS AND ARROWS—A RAPID JOURNEY IN SEARCH OF WATER—DUALLA CAUSES TROUBLE AND DELAY—TRIBAL CUSTOMS—NEWS OF OURSELVES FROM BERBERA.

WE reached Hahi the day after the appearance of the new moon, and were informed by the weather-wise that there would be no rain for fifteen days. As we had pitched our camp near some old Galla wells, and there were several small water-pans half full within sight, the prospect of fine weather was not depressing. The country afforded pasturage to numerous herds and flocks, but the natives who looked after them said the owners were in another part of the Ogadayn, and in consequence we were unable to effect any purchases. We were therefore left almost dependent upon our guns and rifles for food, and made daily excursions in search of antelope and guinea-fowl, and also shot a few geese and a couple of ducks, the first we had as yet come across. Leopards were said to be here numerous and destructive, but though we often heard their peculiar cry and grunt, and followed up fresh pugs, we never obtained a shot. We were equally unsuccessful in our efforts to come up to rhinoceros, though on several occasions we made the attempt. The part of the country they preferred was so densely wooded with strong mimosa, that one might

at any time be within a few yards of the beasts without getting a glimpse of them; and on one particular day, after tracking three for many weary miles, they charged out from the opposite side of the close bush within a few feet of our rifles, but without giving the chance of even a snap-shot.

We were told by the natives that during the heavy dews they were in the habit of driving the herds and flocks to new pasturage many miles away from the wells, and remaining with them for several days without carrying any water, but merely depending for subsistence upon the milk their animals provided, which became rich and plentiful.


One afternoon, while I was reading a book, a native wanted to know why I looked at "the thing in my lap for such a long time;" so I explained that "the thing in my lap" was able to tell me just such a story as he was in the habit of listening to when squatting with others over the camp-fire. He shook his head, as though he could believe a good deal that was strange, but drew the line at the idea of anything like what was lying in my lap being able to tell a story, though it might have suggested a lie.

Girghis had been down with fever for some days. He never had any constitution, and, like most natives, gave in at once, and Anselmier had been unable to do anything for a long time. This threw a great deal on Durling, but he did not grumble, and worked admirably. There were representatives of no less than four Ogadayn tribes in the immediate neighbourhood of Hahi, and all seemed to possess abundance of sheep, goats, and camels, and yet

would not sell them. As we killed the last bullock, we began to wonder how we should feed our people, but after great persuasion, induced some men to sell us two poor camels, for which they accepted dollars, the first time we had been able to purchase anything with coin since our arrival in Ogadayn.

On getting up one morning, we observed all hands engaged in strengthening the zariba, which was already fully as strong as we usually deemed necessary to make it, and on inquiring the reason, were told that the previous day a great many people had arrived, and Dualla had heard there was to be what he described as a "meeting;" and as he thought they might try to "rush" us for tobes, it was as well to be prepared, which accounted for the formidable zariba now in progress. The people were certainly very insolent in their demeanour, but as in no country in the world does the proverb "forewarned is forearmed" more surely apply, we were not disturbed.

We made great friends with some Midgans who were prowling about the camp engaged in snaring dik-dik. One day they made very good practice at Thrupp's hat, and Dualla was emboldened to challenge one of them to shoot a match against his rifle, a target being improvised on the trunk of a tree. At the first shot the Midgan hit the target, while Dualla scored a miss, amidst the jeers of the crowd. We did not at all approve of this exhibition, particularly when some of our camel-drivers came to beg that we would allow them to carry the bows and arrows we had purchased from our friends, which they said they would prefer to rifles. This we of course declined to permit, pointing out that in our country



be taken from El Adalaji. All the people in this part of the country are Hawiyahs.

11th day.—Burfurley, on the river, making the morning halt in the forest of Tobidey, where there is no water.

12th day.—Adaloo, a short distance from the river.

13th day.—Hundub (wrongly spelt Hondoo in map), a town a long way from the river, but whose inhabitants obtain their supply from the Webbe.

14th day.—Addadarey, also lying back from the river.

15th day.—Dildook, in the Mowbelayn country. This town is marked in Ravenstein's map.

16th day.—Todabah Tugar, also back from the river.

17th day.—Duni Deakhalee.

18th day.—Warambah Basah, passing Mora Medinah.

19th day.—Geledi.

20th day.—Madisha or Mogadaxo. This last march, which is, I believe, the only part of this long journey that has been traversed by Europeans, my informant called a short day. It is, however, put down at twenty miles in the maps. I elicited the following "information" from the same man. In answer to a question as to whether there was a *town* called Shebeyli as marked in some maps, he replied there was not; it was merely the name of a district which was also called Bodowe. We should have ten tribes to pass through from Barri to the coast.

I asked the same man if he could tell me anything of the country between the Webbe and the Jub, and he replied there were no towns between the two rivers, but there were wells, mostly brackish. The people dig pits to catch the rain, and these wells had not, at the time he gave me this information, much water. The Aouleehan, who inhabit this district, use these wells, but also drink from a branch of the Webbe, the whereabouts of which we could not hear enough about to fix in the map. He divided the Aouleehan country into three, called respectively Bun, Dull, and Bai. He could not give me an itinerary to the Jub; he said very few ever went, and that when they did, they travelled in a north-westerly direction. There was no town on the river called Gananah, as marked in some maps; it was a name given to the river itself. As to travelling to Mogadaxo, he said there was no difficulty about it; that the most troublesome people were those of the Galjal and Baddi Addi tribes, but that as they occupied different roads, it was only necessary to trouble oneself about one of them. As to game, he said there were plenty of elephants on the Web, a river beyond the Jub, and that they were to be found at El Korân, an uninhabited tract two days' journey



from Barri, down the river and on the opposite bank. People used to hunt them, but have given it up owing to fear of the Aouleehan and Gundubir tribes, the latter being a branch of the Hawiyah. Rhinoceros were plentiful at Salsāl in Wak Mahali's country, three days off; zebras were far off, at the other side of a small river called Gorasin; lions were plentiful on both banks of the Webbe, but ostriches were only found on the plateau, and I believe they are most common in Marehan. One day a Habr Awal trader arrived in camp; he had just been in the Aouleehan country, and two months previously had quitted Marka; he declared the country was quite safe and the people friendly, and that he had accomplished the journey in fourteen days. The people in our immediate neighbourhood were, he said, the most troublesome, and once past the Sultan of Barri's domains we should have no further trouble. All agreed that on reaching the Shidli country, dollars, rupees, and small change were understood by everybody.

A few particulars of Zeilah, which we visited in an Arab dhow in 1883, may be of interest, with the information I gathered when there as to routes into the interior. It is a wretched port, steamers being obliged to anchor about three miles from the town, and when we made it in our dhow, the Arab captain mistook the wreck of a steamer, that had been a picture for twenty-seven years, for a buoy; the result being that we took the ground, and could not land until the following day. The country about is very flat, and the glaring white town bathed in a perpetual mirage. We visited Aboo Bekr, who at that time was governor of the town. When the Egyptians took Zeilah, they found themselves obliged to keep him as governor on account of his popularity with the people, over whom his family had ruled for a very long time. Aboo Bekr died not long ago. When we saw him he was sixty-seven years of age, the father of thirty-five children, of whom the youngest was only three months old. He was a Dinakel, a branch of the great Afar tribe. We brought a letter to him from General Blair, and told him we were visiting various ports with a view to finding out which afforded the greatest facilities as a starting-point for an exploration we were desirous of undertaking the following winter. He had known personally Sir Richard Burton, Mons. Rochefort-Hericourt, Harris, and in fact all the recent travellers who had started from Zeilah. He told us we could of course go to Harrar, but could not travel from Harrar to Shoa; that the only man who had attempted it was a Frenchman, and he had been killed. We had not then decided whether to go to Ogadayn or Shoa, and were therefore anxious for information about both countries. We might go from Zeilah to Shoa direct without any difficulty, and he offered to make arrangements

for us. On the way we should cross the Hawash, where there were plenty of elephants as well as other game. After striking the river Hawash, we might branch off to the right in the Adal country, but could not go very far without meeting Muhamed Humphy and his people, with whom he was not friends. He is Sultan of Aussa, and he and Aboo Bekr were the two most powerful members of the Afar tribe, one of the largest and most important in Eastern Africa. In the afternoon we met some French Roman Catholic missionaries with their Bishop, who is well known to those who are interested in this corner of Africa. His name is Taurin Cahaigne, and he styles himself "Evêque d'Adramythe, Vicair et Apostolique des Galla." He had lived for twelve years at Harrar, and was on his way back. From him I gathered the following information:—"In a geographical point of view, it would be more interesting to go to Ogadayn from Berbera than anything we could do from Zeilah in a few months' travel, and the shooting would be better. In order to go to Shoa, it would be indispensable to see King Menelik, who might be far away, and consequently cause great delay. We could not go from Harrar to Shoa, many tribes living in between who were hostile to both places. We must go slowly, and not display impatience, for if we tried to travel fast, the natives would suspect our motives. From Harrar we could shoot elephants in the lowlands of the Galla country; Greeks belonging to Harrar had sometimes done so. The shooting on the Hawash he did not think was very good, and we could not go very far without making friends with either the King of Shoa or the Sultan of Aussa. Without, however, either ascending to the highlands of Shoa and seeing the King, shooting on the Hawash might be combined with shooting on the fertile plains of Kumi and Thulu; in the latter district there are ruins, and elephants in both. On the way to the Hawash, Mount Azalo should be ascended, nobody having ever been to the top, owing to native superstition, the people believing there were spirits there.\* There are supposed to be the remains of a very ancient Abyssinian monastery on the top. From Zeilah to Ankobar, the capital of Shoa, would be a month or six weeks' journey. After making friends with the King, we could go to the Garague country, where the shooting is very good, and we should find, by giving Ras Govarna, the chief of the district, a present, he would offer us every facility for sport. If we decided on Shoa, it would be well to send a letter to the King a month or two in advance, and this would minimise the delay in getting to a good shooting-ground. The headquarters of the Roman Catholic mission in Shoa is at Fine-Fina, lat. 9°, long.

\* For an account of our ascent of a similar mountain, see "Wild Tribes of the Soudan."