

CAPTAIN SPEKE'S ADVENTURES IN SOMALI LAND.—PART III.

A D E N.

THIS was the climax of my first proceedings with Africa.

Lieutenants Stroyan and Herne were now both employed at Berbera or in its vicinity. The former had been making slight excursions inland, shooting, and had killed three elephants; whilst the latter was purchasing baggage-cattle for the expedition transport. After enjoying a short repose in civilised life, I again felt restless, and proposed a move to proceed thither in order to assist Lieutenant Herne in completing the desired complement of animals. This at once met the views of our commandant, who, doubting whether Berbera could supply a sufficient number of beasts of burden of itself, asked me to cross over the Gulf and see what I could do at Kurrum, to keep in communication with Herne, and as soon as I had got enough, to march with them along the sea-shore to Berbera.

Nothing could have suited me better. I saw before me, by this measure, active employment until the breaking up of the Berbera fair.

A kind friend (Lieutenant Dansy of the Bombay army, late Assistant Political Agent of Aden, who knew the characters of all the Somalis well) offered to procure me a man as guide and interpreter who had formerly performed, during the time of his appointment, some political service in the Somali country, with great credit both to his mission and himself. In consequence of this he was nicknamed el Balyuz, or the Ambassador.

Balyuz was a clever Hindostani scholar, and, as I ultimately found, possessed such an honesty of purpose and straightforwardness of character, as rendered him a perfect *rara avis* amongst all Somali. He was of the Mijjarthayne tribe. Travelling in his

company, after my experiences with Samater and Ahmed, was verily a luxury. I parted with him at the termination of the expedition with pure feelings of affection.

Lieutenant Burton now conceived the idea of suppressing the system of Abbanship, thinking, as the Somalis had access to Aden without any impost, Englishmen ought to enjoy a corresponding freedom to travel in Somali Land. This perhaps was scarcely the right time to dictate a policy which at once would be distasteful as well as injurious (in a monetary sense) to the people with whom we were about to travel, and with whom it was highly essential to our interest to be on the most friendly terms.

I now applied to the Government for some Somali policemen, but unfortunately there were then too few hands present to carry on the duties of the office, and I could not have them. I therefore engaged, by the orders of Lieutenant Burton, a dozen men of various races (Egyptians, Nubians, Arabs, and Seedis), to form an escort, and armed them with my sabres and muskets. They were all raw recruits, and unaccustomed to warfare. Still, we could get no others. With a little practice they learnt to shoot at a mark with tolerable accuracy.

Seven of these men, together with the eight camels I brought across from Bunder Goree, were despatched direct to Berbera, whilst the remaining five, and some ponies I purchased in Aden, remained with me. I then took a bag of dollars for purchasing camels; some dates and rice for the consumption of the party; and with the Balyuz and the old servants, Imam the butler, and Farhan the gamekeeper, all was ready for my second adventure on the 20th February 1855.

LEAVE ADEN FOR KURRUM.

21st February 1855.—Having engaged a buggalow and stowed away all the traps, I embarked in the evening, weighed anchor, and set sail. Even before we could sail out of the harbour, the first row commenced. The Nakhuda (captain), as is often the case in these primitive countries, kept no regular sailors, but trusted to finding men, desirous of going to their country, who would work his vessel for him—all Somalis being by nature sailors.

The men he had now on board were of the Habr Gerhajis and Habr Teljala tribes, who occupy the coast-line near Kurrum, and had waited the opportunity of obtaining a passage over there in company with me. They were all dreadfully uproarious, and would not by any persuasion on my part keep quiet. On inquiring from the Balyuz the cause of their violent discussions, he informed me they were drawing lots to see who should be my Abban, and those of the seven foreigners I had with me. The bare idea of eight Abbans was too ridiculous, and their persistency made it beyond a joke. I instantly ordered the sails to be hauled down, and had my instructions about Abbans proclaimed to the whole crew: that the Balyuz was my Ras Cafila, and the other foreigners my protectors. If they determined on wrangling any more, I should 'bout ship and settle the difference with them in a less ceremonious manner in the harbour. This effectually stopped their tongues, and we again proceeded on the journey. After two entire days' sailing across the Gulf with variable and gentle breezes, we arrived at our destination, Kurrum, in safety, on the third evening, the 24th February, and at once sent some Government letters to the Agils, ordering their attendance, and to proclaim publicly the nature of my business, in order that camels might be brought for sale. I found all the people extremely obliging; they tried to make my residence as comfortable as they could; showed me great deference because I was an English-

man, and brought their camels readily, though, of course, as might be expected, they were canny in their mode of dealing, trying to dispose of their worst animals first, and asking prices much above the market tariff. For poor animals they asked from four to five and a half dollars, which, though not a third of the price I paid in the Warsingali country, was full price for the finest animals at Berbera. Berbera during the fair time is undoubtedly the cheapest place to purchase camels in of all the coast-line, and the farther you leave it the more expensive animals become, increasing in price at the same ratio as the extent of distance. Whilst halting here I heard for the first time of the existence of the Victoria Nyanza, my discovery of which I described in my former paper in the Magazine in October last. The people described its dimensions as equal in extent to the Gulf of Aden, and further alluded to its being navigated by white men. None of the men present had been there to see it, though it was currently known as a positive fact amongst them. I did not believe the story in the light they expressed it, supposing they confounded an inland sea for the Western or Atlantic Ocean. Colonel Rigby, H.B.M. Consul at Zanzibar, tells me he also heard of this lake when he was travelling in this country some years previously. It is strange this story was never published earlier. The white navigators alluded to are evidently the expeditionists who went up the White Nile about twelve or fourteen years ago, and the Nile and lake have been confounded for one water in the transmission of the intelligence, though both were seen.

The minds of the Kurrum people seemed greatly discomposed about various rumours which they heard. One was, that the English intended to suppress the slave-trade, and they wished me to tell them if such was not a fact—saying it would be unjust for us to do so, as slaving was an acknowledged right given them in the

Holy Scriptures, and handed down by their Russül Mahamed.

The other bugbear which alarmed them was a report that the English intended either to take possession of Berbera, or that they would give it to Sharmarky.

The village of Kurrum consisted of a single fort and a large collection of mat huts, all grouped together, and was situated close to the shore. The maritime plain consisted of sandy-brown soil, very uninteresting, with scarcely any vegetation growing on it, and was here only about half a mile broad. The hills in the background were very insignificant, not half so high as any I had seen, and were dull and brown, like those one sees when travelling down the Red Sea. The people say that in its recesses and ravines acacias and other gum-trees grow as they do elsewhere. Gum only exudes in the dry hot season; and the confined air in the ravines is described as being so hot that people can hardly stay there, and many of the gum-pickers who do become deaf in consequence of it.

The water which the villagers used was so brackish as to be hardly drinkable. I lived here five days, enjoying sour camel's milk, gossiping with the natives, and roaming about the place. The difference between the life I was now living, attributable principally to the sagacity and good-heartedness of the Baluz, was a charming contrast to my wretched existence when with the Warsingalis. I bought twenty-five camels, at an average rate of five and a half dollars a-head, and then stopped purchasing, as I heard by letter from Lieutenant Herne he had then got nearly sufficient for our requirements,—that camels were very plentiful at Berbera, and he was buying them at a cheaper rate than I could.

On the 29th February, at 4 P.M., I broke ground with all my camels and ponies, and commenced the march on Berbera. At sundown, after travelling three miles along the sea-shore, we encamped in a watercourse called Goldéra. The water we found here, in a little well in its bed, was deliciously sweet—so pleasant after the brackish Kurrum wells. No one, not having been deprived for a long time of the

pure element, can conceive the greed with which a man first plunges his head into clear sweet water. It is the natural fluid for man, and for no other beverage does abstinence produce so keen an appetite.

The following morning, a little after daybreak, the caravan was ready, and we soon got under weigh. Travelling with tedious slowness, aggravated by the dreary monotony of the road and the sandy plain, constantly crossing dry, shallow water-courses, lined on both sides by fringes of stunted acacias or other salsolacious plants, we at last arrived at a hot spring of sweet water, called Gola-miro, and rested here for several hours during the great heat of the mid-day sun. When the day became cooler we resumed the march, and travelled until after dark to a grazing-ground one mile short of Enterad, and there spent the night. The farther we travelled westwards, the broader became the maritime plain, and the richer its clothing of shrubs and grass. Besides the ordinary acacias, which were finer and more numerous, there were many patches of the bastard cypress and tall rank grasses growing on sandy hillocks, in the same way as they do in India. The Somalis exultingly pointed this out as a paradise, replete with every necessary for life's enjoyment, and begged to know if the English had any country pastures like it, where camels and sheep can roam about the whole year round without exhausting it.

31st.—To-day we made a short march, passing through Enterad, and encamping on a grazing-ground one mile to its westward. The village, as usual, was close to the shore, for the convenience of shipping. It is not half the size of Kurrum, but boasts of a fort of recent construction, with six rusty pieces of cannon lying on the sand in front of it. An Agil named Abdie, being chief of the place, is the lordly proprietor of these instruments of DEFENCE. On first entering the place he advanced to receive me, and politely said, "Had you not dropped so suddenly in upon me this morning, it was my intention to have welcomed you with a royal salute, for the honour you have done,

as the representative of the English, in paying me this visit." This speech, though showing what his feelings were towards me, was obviously a matter of simple palaver; for, in the first place, the guns could not have possibly been fired without occasioning their total destruction; and it was doubtful if he possessed any powder. Whilst sitting in his village, and drinking a bowl of sour curd—the first thing always offered to a visitor—I observed a group of old men sitting, in hot discussion on some knotty point, under the lee of the fort, and desired the Balyuz to ascertain the purport of the arguments under debate, as by their gesticulations I could plainly see it had some connection with my coming there. After joining them and listening some time, he returned to say they were discussing the possibility of our expedition ever reaching the Webbe (River);* to go as far as Ugahden, they thought, was out of the question. Hearing this, I went up to them, and asked what reasons they had for thinking so. They replied openly that the Somal would stop us before we got half-way. The Balyuz then interposed, saying, "But the British are strong, and can do anything they like." Hearing this, they laughingly replied, "If the Somal came down to fight, and then ran away back into the fastnesses of their hills, what would the English do then, who cannot live a day without drinking beer and eating meat? whereas the Somal can do very well without anything, seldom requiring even water, and not more than one morsel of meat, for a whole week together." I concluded the argument by saying—"Without any exertion on our parts, we could cripple you at once; we have the seaboard in our hands, and at any moment could stop your trade; so that neither grain nor clothing would ever be supplied you; besides, if we wished, we could take quiet occupation of your hills and watering-places; and then what would become of you?" The sages mildly shook their heads, and said the English were indeed Shaitans (devils), and that they had never looked at their position in that

light before. I then repaired to the camp, and found the cattle, as usual, gone out to graze, under charge of their drivers and two soldiers. In the evening, when the animals were brought home to be picketed, one pony and one camel were found wanting.

I sent men immediately to track the missing ones down, when it was discovered, by foot-prints, that some savages had singled them out from the herd, had driven them gently into a deep ravine, and when there out of sight had hurried them off in speed to the hills lying beyond the plain. This open plunder on the coast, where British authority seemed to prevail, was monstrous. I summoned Abdie, as chief of the place, told him the whole story, and demanded that he would produce the missing animals immediately, as it was impossible for him not to be cognisant of the transaction. He said he did not then know who had stolen them, but I might rest satisfied he would find out by the morning, and they should be returned intact. He assured me he was lord of all he surveyed, and his power was infinite within the limits of his clan. The same night he brought back the pony, and said he would produce the camel in the morning. I believed he had played this trick himself to show the effect of his power, and so did the Balyuz; but he said he had been obliged to pay ten dollars to the thief before he would give it up. I now demanded he would produce the thief for trial, suspecting that thief to be himself, but he said he could not. This reply made the Balyuz knowingly cock his eye. The next day, as the camel did not come by noon, I wrote a letter to Aden reporting the circumstance, and begging some retribution would be taken from the Agil, as it was obvious to any man who knows these savages, that Abdie could not have been ignorant of one single feature in the whole of these transactions. Though the loss was small, I did not think it of little importance, as it remained a precedent, if overlooked, for the committal of greater deeds. And the place being a port, was open

* What river they alluded to I could not understand.

to the exaction by blockade of any fines, which, without doubt, is the true way to make Somalis feel.

During that day and the succeeding one we travelled along the coast to Legareh, a small dilapidated fort, standing alone without any other habitation, as if only intended for a traveller's lodge. Near it was an old well, said to be of antique construction, sunk by the former occupants of the land. As we increased our distance westwards, the maritime plain also enlarged, and was bounded to the southwards by small irregularly-disposed hills, all brown and dreary-looking as before. To judge from the quantity of vegetation, it would appear that water is nearer the surface here than elsewhere, though there was none of any importance to be seen. These few marches, slight as they were, served to prove the stamina of the soldiers, and showed the Seedis to have twice the heart and bottom of the Egyptians, who succumbed at once to the influences of the sun and fatigue of marching.

3d April.—The caravan broke ground at 2 A.M., and after travelling over much the same ground as yesterday, nearly the whole day long without passing a single habitation, arrived in the evening at Berbera. Here I was warmly met by my future travelling companions, Lieutenants Herne and Stroyan, and began again a social life of great enjoyment. Berbera was in the plenitude of its prosperity. Its market was full of life and bustle, and the harbour was full of native oriental craft. Our camp was pitched on a little rise in the land, facing the east and overlooking the fair. Our tents, three in number, were formed in line, Lieutenant Stroyan's on the right, Lieutenant Herne's in the centre, and mine on the left flank, about a dozen yards apart. Lieutenant Herne had procured his fair share of animals, and we mustered from forty to fifty camels and six or seven ponies and mules, including those I brought. These at night-time were all tethered in front of our tents, and guarded by a sentry. During the day, they were always sent out to graze under an escort of

soldiers, with Somali archers to look after them. The boxes, pack-saddles, and grain were placed between the central tent and mine, whilst the dates and more precious cloths I kept underneath my tent. Including ourselves, servants, guards, and camel-tenders, we mustered in all about forty souls; amongst these were the two Abbans of Lieutenants Herne and Stroyan, who, now matters had gone so far, could not prudently be dispensed with, but my man, the Balyuz, was considered chief, or Ras Cafla.

During the four days succeeding my arrival, I inspected the fair and shipping. The marketplace was supposed to contain upwards of 60,000 people, Banyans from Cutch and Aden, Arab merchants and Somalis, who had been gradually flocking in from about the 15th November; and as they arrived, erected mat huts as booths for carrying on their bartering trade. According to Lieutenant Herne's investigations, the Somalis took coarse cloths, such as American and English sheeting, black and indigo-dyed stuffs, and cotton nets (worn by married women generally to encase their hair), small bars of iron and steel, as well as zinc and lead; beads of various sorts, and dates and rice. In exchange for these, they exported slaves, cattle, gums of all sorts, ghee, ivory, ostrich feathers, and rhinoceros' horns.

7th.—At sunrise this morning a very interesting scene took place in the arrival of the great annual Harar caravan,—a large body, composed of an aggregate of numerous small caravans, who all march together that their combined strength may give mutual support. Down the whole breadth of the plain, like a busy stream of ants, they came in single file, one camel's nose tied to his leader's tail. Immediately on their flanks were Somalis, armed with spear and bow, the men who tended them, and looked after the loading. Outside them again were occasional detachments of men riding ponies, all armed, and guarding the caravan from sudden surprise or attack. In this caravan alone there were about 3000 people, as many head of cattle, and 500 or more slaves, all driven

chained together for sale in the market. A little later the same morning a second excitement enlivened our little camp in the approach of a man-of-war, which came sailing up the coast in full sail, looking like a giant swan in contrast to the little ducks of native shipping. It was the Hon. East India Company's schooner *Mahi*, commanded by Lieutenant King, conveying our Captain, Lieutenant Burton, and the complement of the expedition. Arrived in the harbour, we saluted them with our small-arms, and went on board to pay respects and exchange congratulations. Lieutenant King then gave us a hospitable entertainment, and we all repaired on shore.

The same evening a thundering salute from the *Mahi* was fired, to assure the Somalis we were travelling under the auspices of the British Government, and Lieutenant King departed with his vessel.

Lieutenant Burton now took occupation of the centre tent with Lieutenant Herne, and the party was complete.

We were then severally appointed to our respective duties, Lieutenant Burton commanding; Lieutenant Stroyan, chief surveyor; Lieutenant Herne, photographer, geologist, and assistant-surveyor; whilst I was to be a Jack-of-all-trades, assisting everybody, looking after the interests of the men, portioning out their rations, setting the guards, and collecting specimens of natural history in all its branches. The central tent was fixed as a place of rendezvous for all to flock to in case of any sudden alarm. Here I appended my guns and sword, whilst my revolver-pistol and dirk were placed within my belt by day, or under my pillow by night. I made the whole guard sleep with their arms in rear of the camp, where it was most likely any attack might be expected. As so many men were necessarily brought on duty by watching the cattle grazing in the daytime, I only posted two sentries by night to watch the camp—one with the guard in the rear, the other over the cattle in front, whilst we Englishmen and the Balyuz occasionally patrolled the camp to see that the sentries were on the alert.

9th.—On this day the Gugi, or south-west Somal monsoon, in opposition to the Dairti, or north-east monsoon, commenced in the hills behind our camp, and warned us that we should soon have to start southwards. The fair had already begun to break. Caravan after caravan streamed out of the town, and, wending their way across the plain like strings of ants emerging from a hole, and, like the busy habits of those little insects, kept the whole maritime plain alive in motion. At this time we were daily expecting a vessel from Aden, which would bring us some letters and instruments that were on their way out from England, and saw the great Ugadhen caravan preparing to leave, but were undecided what to do—whether go with them, without our things from England, or wait and rely upon our strength in travelling alone. The latter alternative was unfortunately decided upon, and we saw our wonted protector depart upon its journey.

15th.—Saw the shore and harbour, alike both destitute of any living thing, save a few diseased and dying cattle, and one poor forlorn girl, in whom the smallpox had begun to show its symptoms, and who was now mercilessly left by her parents, with only two or three days' provisions, to die like a dog on the inhospitable plain. Having suffered from that disease myself, and not fearing contagion, I went to her and administered some medicine, which she took without any hesitation; and I hoped to cure her, for she was really, barring the blackness, a very pretty creature, but the disease was beyond my skill to relieve. I then took her to a room in the tomb of an Arab sheikh, gave her some rice-water, and bade her keep out of the sun, but it was no use. She took fright at the idea of living with the dead, and wandered into the desert no one knows whither, and was seen no more. Even the matting and sticks which formed the booths, with two or three exceptions, were packed on the camels, and carried away. We were now alone, and nobody came near us; our two Abbans had begged and obtained permission to go with their families to their homes

in the hills close by, in company with the retiring caravans, leaving their sons for the time being, as substitutes, until we marched past their abodes.

In this isolated position we felt no alarm for our safety, as long at least as we remained upon the sea-shore, deeming the Somal would never be so imprudent as to attack us in such a vital place to them as Berbera, where their whole interests of life were centred, and where, by the simple process of blockading, we could so easily take retribution in any way we liked.

So confident were we in this assumption, that we did not take the precaution of standing sentry ourselves, at night, thinking it more prudent to nurse our strength whilst here, to be better able to endure it when it would become necessary after our leaving the sea-shore.

Though Somalis are cunning as foxes, they are not wise.

On the 18th April, by a providential coincidence, a small Arab vessel came into the deserted harbour to see if anything still remained of the fair. In her there were several men and four women, Somalis, desirous of going to their homes. Finding we were the only people left, and not daring to travel in that country alone, they petitioned us to take them with us. It was hard to refuse these poor creatures; but fearing our supply of dates and rice would not hold out with so many additional mouths to eat it, we reluctantly refused the men. The four women, however, on their engaging to do the minor offices of the camp, to bring water, and lead the camels, were permitted to remain with us. That evening we invited the captain and his crew to dine in the camp; and fortunate it was so, as the sequel will show. Shortly after sundown, as we were all sitting in our usual way, on an extemporary divan in front of the tents, drinking coffee, telling stories, and enjoying the cool sea evening breezes, a challenge was heard by the near sentinel, followed by a sudden and rapid discharge of musketry, which took us by surprise. I had previously given strict orders that no ammunition was to be wasted

in firing to frighten, or giving false alarms; therefore, hearing this, I instantly ran to the spot to see what was the matter, and found three men walking quietly into camp, leading ponies by their reins, whilst the guard, to intimidate them, were firing bullets in the air immediately over their heads. My anger knew no bounds. All hopes of security seemed annihilated by such direct disobedience to all order, and persistence in such a false principle as trying to frighten, which all black men, by a sort of natural instinct, invariably endeavour to do. I then assembled the men, and in presence of the intruders, again proclaimed through the Balyuz my intention to punish with severity any person who might create a false alarm or fire a bullet vacantly in the air; directing, that in case of any opposition to a challenge, they should fire into, and not over, their object.

I then sent the Balyuz and the three newly-arrived men round to the front of the camp, where Lieut. Burton and the other two officers were sitting, to be interrogated as to the purpose of their visit. We all at first naturally suspected them of being spies sent to inspect our dispositions and resources, but after a long palaver with Lieutenant Burton, he concluded that their coming there was accidental, and not designed. True to their nature as Easterns, who from constant practice can forge lies with far greater facility to themselves than they can speak simple truths, bringing in with the readiest aptitude the application of immediate circumstances to harmonise appropriately in the development of their tale, these men at once made use of the circumstance of the arrival of the vessel that evening, saying they merely came down to ascertain if the ship was not full of building material, as it was currently reported amongst their clan, the Habr Owel, that their old enemy, Shramankey, the chief of Zeylah, was lying with other vessels in the port of Seyareh, waiting an opportunity to land at Berbera and take occupation of the place by building forts, as he had done on previous occasions. This story seemed the

more circumstantial from the fact that everybody knew Shramankey wished to have the place, and that he would at any time have taken it, had it lain within his power to do so.

The more to impose on our credulity, they further asked with an air of indignation, "How could you suspect us of any treacherous intentions towards you, when you know us to be men of the same tribe as your Abbans?" The palaver over, these wolves in sheep's clothing were allowed to sup on dates with our men, and depart at pleasure.

At the usual hour we all turned in to sleep, and silence reigned throughout the camp. A little after midnight, probably at one or two A.M., there suddenly arose a furious noise, as though the world was coming to an end: there was a terrible rush and hurry, then came sticks and stones, flying as thick as hail, followed by a rapid discharge of fire-arms, and my tent shook as if it would come down. I bounced out of bed, with pistol and dirk in hand, and ran across to the central tent to know what was the matter, and if we were to have any shooting. Lieutenant Burton, who was occupied in trying to load his revolver, replied there was: * "Be sharp, and arm to defend the camp." This I immediately did, stepping out in front of his tent; but though I saw many dusky forms before me, it was too dark to discern whether they were friend or foe. Whilst standing, in hesitation how to act, stones kept whizzing over and around me, and I received a blow with one in the inside of my knee, which nearly knocked my leg from under me; it came from the left, where I had not been looking. I then ran under lee of the fly of the tent to take a better survey, and, by stooping low, could perceive the heads of some men peeping like monkeys over the boxes. Lieut. Burton now said, "Don't step back, or they will think we are retiring." Chagrined by this rebuke at my

management in fighting, and imagining by the remark I was expected to defend the camp, I stepped boldly to the front, and fired at close quarters into the first man before me. He was stooping to get a sight of my figure in relief against the sky; he fell back at the discharge, and I saw no more of him. Proceeding on, I saw some more men also stooping; I fired into the foremost, and he likewise fell back, but I do not know that I hit him. I then fired into a third man at close quarters, who also receded, possibly uninjured, though I cannot say. I was now close to the brink of the rising-ground, entirely surrounded by men, when I placed the muzzle of the Dean & Adams against the breast of the largest man before me, and pulled the trigger, but pulled in vain; the cylinder would not rotate; I imagine a cap had got jammed by the trigger-guard. In a fit of desperation, I was raising the revolver to hit the man in the face with it, when I suddenly found my legs powerless to support me, and I was falling, grasping for support, and gasping for breath, I did not then know why. In another instant I was on the ground with a dozen Somalis on the top of me. The man I had endeavoured to shoot, wrenched the pistol out of my hand, and the way the scoundrel handled me sent a creeping shudder all over me. I felt as if my hair stood on end; and, not knowing who my opponents were, I feared that they belonged to a tribe called Eesa, who are notorious, not only for their ferocity in fighting, but for the unmanly mutilations they delight in. Indescribable was my relief when I found that my most dreadful fears were without foundation. The men were in reality feeling whether, after an Arab fashion, I was carrying a dagger between my legs, to rip up a foe after his victim was supposed to be powerless. Finding me naked, all but a few rags, they tied my hands behind my back, and be-

* I must here notice, although I have endeavoured to stick as closely as possible to the narration of my own story in these pages, that I saw Lieutenant Herne, who had been guarding the rear, opposed to the whole brunt of the attack, fighting gallantly with his sable antagonists, and from the resolution with which he fired at them, he must have done some damage.

gan speaking to me in Arabic. Not knowing a word of that language, I spoke in broken Somali, and heard them say they had not killed any of the English, and would not kill me. The man I had last endeavoured to kill was evidently the captain of the gang; he now made me rise, and, holding the other end of the rope to which my hands were attached, led me round to the rear of the camp, taking great precaution not to bring me in contact with many men at once, fearing lest they might take the law into their own hands, and despatch me against his will and authority. Arrived on the interior or rear side of the camp, men kept flocking round me, and showed a hasty anxiety to stab their spears into me; all, doubtless, were anxious for the honour of drawing the white man's blood, but none, in my captor's presence, dared do it. I was now becoming very weak and faint, and almost unable to breathe; for the fact was, when I was knocked down, it was done with such violence by a shillelah on the lung breast, my whole frame was stunned by it, so that I could not feel; but now a swelling had set in, which, with the tightness of the skin drawn over the chest, by my hands being tied behind, nearly prevented respiration. I begged my captor to untie my hands and fasten them in front. He obligingly did so. I then asked for a little water and something to lie down upon; they were both supplied. Feeling myself somewhat revived, I began a rambling conversation with my captor, who sat by my side still holding the string, when several other men came and joined in the talk. They began a mocking tirade in their own language, of which I understood but little and could answer less; when an Aden donkey-boy (judging from his appearance) came with a jeering, sarcastic sneer, and asked me, in Hindostani, what business I had in their country, and where I had intended going, adding, were I a good Mohammedan like themselves, they would not touch me, but being a Christian I should be killed. This ridiculous farce excited my risible faculties, and provoked a laugh,

when I replied, Our intentions were simply travelling; we wished to see the country of Ugadhen, and pass on to Zanzibar. I was a Christian, and invited them, if it must be so, to despatch their work at once. On the donkey-boy's communicating this to the bystanders, they all broke into a rude boisterous laugh, spun upon their heels, and went off to open out the property. Nothing as yet had been taken away. Several wounded men were now brought and placed in a line before me; they groaned, and rolled, and stretched their limbs, as though they were in agonies of pain, and incessantly called for water, which was readily supplied them. In the rear I heard the sound of murmuring voices, the breaking of boxes, and ripping of bales of cloth, as though a band of robbers were stealthily dividing their unlawfully-gotten spoils in silence and fear of detection.

Just then the day began to dawn, and the light increased sufficiently to disclose what had been done. The tents were down, the property was lying in order on the ground, the camels and ponies were still picketed in their places, and all the robbers were standing looking on. At this juncture my captor and protector gave his end of my string over to the care of another man of very mean aspect, ordering him to look after me, and see that nobody came to injure me, whilst he retired in the direction of the property, and, selecting two fine stalwart men of equal proportions with himself, came again in front of me; then linking arms, and sloping spears over their shoulders, they commenced a slow martial march, keeping time by singing a solemn well-regulated tune, in deep, full, stentorian voices, until they completed the full circuit of the camp, and arrived again in front of me. This, I imagine, was their "Conquering hero comes," the song of victory. It was well sung, and had a very imposing effect, greatly increased by the dead silence which reigned in every other quarter. I felt quite sorry when this act was over, and would willingly have had it encored. From the orderly manner and regularity with which every-

thing was done, I judge this to be a fair sample of the manner in which all plundering parties are conducted. The song and march were no sooner at an end than the whole ground became a scene of busy, active life. Every man, save the one who was holding my string, rushed in a regular scramble upon the property, and, like a legion of devils, began tearing and pulling at everything in promiscuous confusion. to see who could carry most away, Some darted at the camels and began pulling them along, others seized the ponies and began decamping; again, others caught up the cloths, or dates, or rice, or anything they could lay hands on, and endeavoured to carry them off. But this was not so easy; there were too many men to be all satisfied, and those who had least began wrangling with their more fortunate competitors, who, on their part, not wishing to relinquish anything they had obtained, forcibly contested for their rights. A more complete and ferocious *mêlée* I never witnessed. The whole ground was a scene of pull devil, pull baker, and victory to the stronger. As one man, hurrying along, was trailing his cloth behind, another rushed at it and pulled him back; clubs were unsparingly used, and destruction threatened with spears; what would not easily succumb to pulling, was separated with stabs of the spears or cuts of their knives. The camels and ponies were not more easily disposed of; by snatching from one hand and snatching from another, they were constantly in different people's hands. It was a scene very like that of an Indian poultry-yard, when some entrails are thrown amongst the chickens, and every fowl tries to rob the other. Whilst all were intent with deep earnestness in this scramble, an alarm was suddenly given that another party were coming down the hills to fight and rob them of their spoils. The disordered band were instantly panic-stricken; for a moment or two there was the deadest silence; and then everybodysave some forty or fifty men, who were probably more experienced hands, burst across the plain, flying in long jumps, and hurrying with

all their might towards the hills. I heard afterwards it was not an unusual practice in this land of robbers for one party to get up an attack upon a caravan, and then another one, getting wind of their design, to project a plan of despoiling them as soon as they shall be in such a disconcerted *mêlée* that they would not be able to act in concert to support one another.

Whilst they were away, three fine-looking men came, with some of our soldiers' sabres; and one, standing over me, threatened, with ferocious determination in his countenance, to cut me in two. Twice he lifted his sword above his head, and brought it down with violence to within an inch or two of my side, and each time withdrew it, as if suddenly repenting of his purpose. I stared him earnestly in the face, but neither flinched nor uttered any noise. They then left me, and went to join the other forty thieves. I conceive this demonstration was made with a view of testing my pluck, and had I cried or implored for mercy, I should inevitably have been killed upon the spot. The last and worst scene in this tragedy was now to be performed. My jailer, who was still holding the string, stepped up close to me, and coolly stabbed me with his spear. I then raised my body a little in defence, when he knocked me down by jibbing his spear violently on my shoulder, almost cutting the jugular arteries. I rose again as he poised his spear, and caught the next prod, which was intended for my heart, on the back of one of my shackled hands; this gouged the flesh up to the bone. The cruel villain now stepped back a pace or two, to get me off my guard, and dashed his spear down to the bone of my left thigh. I seized it violently with both my hands, and would not relinquish the gripe until he drew a shillelah from his girdle, and gave me such a violent blow on my left arm, I thought the bone was broken, and the spear fell helplessly from my hands. Finding his spear too blunt for running me through by a simple jib when standing still, he now dropped the rope-end, walked back a

dozen paces, and, rushing on me with savage fury, plunged his spear through the thick part of my right thigh into the ground, passing it between the thigh bone and large sinew below. With the action of lightning, seeing that death was inevitable if I remained lying there a moment longer, I sprung upon my legs, and gave the miscreant such a sharp back-hander in the face with my double-bound fists that he lost his presence of mind, and gave me a moment's opportunity to run away; which, by the Lord, I lost no time in doing, taking very good care, by holding my hands on one side, not to allow the dangling rope to trip me up. I was almost naked, and quite bare upon the feet, but I ran over the shingly beach towards the sea like wildfire. The man followed me a little way, but, finding I had the foot of him, threw his spear like a javelin, but did not strike me, for I bobbed, and allowed it to pass safely over my head; he then gave up the chase. Still I had at least forty more men to pass through, who were scattered all about the place, looking for what property they could pick up, before I could get safe away. These men, seeing the chase, all tried to cut off my retreat. However, I dodged them all by turns, running fast across them, and bobbing as they threw their spears after me, until I reached the shore, when I had the satisfaction of seeing the last man give up the pursuit and leave me to myself. I was fast fainting from loss of blood, and sat gently on a mound of sand, picked the knots which bound my hands open with my teeth, and exposed my breast to the genial influences of the refreshing sea-breeze, which at sunrise, as this was, is indescribably pleasant. But what a gloomy prospect was now before me!! I was growing weaker every minute; my limbs were beginning to stiffen and the muscles to contract, and I thought there was no help probably nearer than Enterad; what was to be done? I could not travel the distance, and I must perish miserably by slow degrees, from starvation and exhaustion, in the dreary desert; far better, thought I, had the spear done its worst, and

no lingering would have followed. Whilst reflecting in this strain, my eyes, wistfully gazing on the few remaining huts of Berbera, lit upon some female figures beckoning to me, but could not divine who they were, or what was their meaning. I rose as a last hope, and hobbled towards them, for my right leg was nearly crooked up double, and was so weak it could not support the weight of my body but for an instant at a time. Drawing nearer, I discovered them to be the four women whom we the evening before permitted to join our camp. Just then I saw some men hurrying from the eastward along the shore, endeavouring to meet me. These, I soon perceived, were the old Balyuz and several of our servants. As soon as they arrived, they told me all that had happened. Immediately on the outbreak, the soldiers fired their guns, and all but one or two at once departed. Lieutenant Stroyan, he supposed, was killed at the outset; Lieutenants Burton and Herne had run away with him immediately after I left the central tent to fight. The former had been speared in the face, the latter had been much bruised with war-clubs, and some of the men had received severe sword-cuts. After escaping from the fight, Lieutenant Herne took refuge in the empty huts of Berbera, and at daybreak sent a servant to detain the Enterad vessel, which had so providentially come in the previous evening. My companions were then on board of her, and had sent the Balyuz with the men to search for me, and pick up anything they could find. I was now carried to the vessel, and stretched upon the poop in safety, and felt more truly thankful for this miraculous escape than words can tell. It is only after a deliverance of this kind one fully values or can properly appreciate the gift of life. My companions seemed downcast and full of sorrow for the sad misfortune which had so disastrously terminated our long-cherished hopes, and had deprived us so prematurely of an old and valued friend, especially dear to me, as he was a thorough sportsman. For courage, daring, and enterprise, as well as good fel-

lowship, there never lived a man more worthy of esteem than poor Stroyan.

Lieutenant Burton had sent a boat's crew off to near the site of our camp, a distance of three miles, to fetch away anything that might remain there, and bring it to us. They found the place deserted, with only such things left as the Somali could make no use of, and were too cumbersome to carry away; such, for instance, as grain, boxes, books, and various scientific instruments, which, after being wantonly deserted, were left scattered on the ground. It appeared, by accounts brought back, that many of the men who ran off at the first false alarm never ventured again to help themselves from the spoils. They had now destroyed about £1500 worth of property, but had enriched themselves but very little, for, whilst fighting, they had destroyed in the scramble nearly everything of any worth to themselves. When the boat's crew returned with Lieutenant Stroyan's body, it was found to be too late to sail that evening. During the time of waiting, a poor man, with no covering on his body, crawled up to the vessel, and implored the captain, in the name of Allah—the fakir's mode of begging—to give him a passage to Aden. His prayer was answered, and he came on board. He was a Mussulman, born in Cashmere, and had been wandering about the world in the capacity of a fakir; but was now, through hunger and starvation, reduced to a mere skeleton of skin and bones. His stomach was so completely doubled inwards, it was surprising the vital spark remained within him. On being asked to recite his history, he said, "I was born in the 'happy valley' of Cashmere; but reduced circumstances led me to leave my native land. When wandering alone in some woods one day, I had a visitation, which induced me to turn devotee, and wander about the world to visit all places of pilgrimage, carrying only a bottle and a bag, and ask charity in the name of God, who supplies the world with everything, and takes compassion on the destitute. At first I travelled in India, visiting its

shrines and temples, and then determined on crossing the sea to see what other countries were like. Taking passage at Bombay, I first went to Muskat in Southern Arabia, and thence travelled overland to Aden, begging all the way, and receiving kind hospitality wherever I spent the night. In Aden I remained a while, and by constant begging accumulated sufficient property to purchase food for a considerable time, when I again set out, in the name of Allah, to see what the Somalis' land was like. At first I went across to Kurrum, and lived there as long as my little stock held out, but I could get no assistance from the people of the place. The stock exhausted, I was spurned from every door. At last, despairing of obtaining anything on the coast, I ventured to see what the interior would produce, but I found the Somalis everywhere the same; they were mere hywans (animals), with whom no human beings could live. A man might travel in Arabia or any other place in the world, but in the Somali Land no one could exist. Finding myself reduced to the last stages of life, for no one would give me food, I went to a pool of water in a ravine amongst the hills, and for the last fortnight have been living there on water and the gums of trees. Seeing I was about to die, as a forlorn hope I ventured in this direction, without knowing whither I was going, or where I should come to, but God, you see, has brought me safely out."

20th.—This morning we weighed anchor, and in two days more arrived in Aden.

Thus then ended my first expedition,—a signal failure from inexperience, and with a loss of £510 worth of private property. I had nothing to show but eleven artificial holes in my body. Had we gone with the Ugahden caravan, I feel convinced we should have succeeded; for that is the only way, without great force, or giving yourself up to the protection of a powerful chief, that any one could travel in Somali Land. Fire-arms are useful in the day, but the Somali despise them at night, and consequently always take advantage of darkness to attack. Small-shot and

smooth-bore guns, on this account, would be of far greater advantage as a means of defence, than rifles with balls; and nothing but shot well poured in would have saved us from this last attack. We have been often condemned for not putting on more sentries to watch; but had the whole camp been in a state of ordinary preparation, with such cowardly hearts as our men all had, we should have been as signally defeated. *Experientia docet*; and I now think small shot is the only force to employ against Somalis; whilst, to have marched with the Ugahden caravan, would have proved as easy and safe as travelling usually is with a cafila of merchants.

On arriving in Aden, I was a miserable looking cripple, dreadfully emaciated from loss of blood, and with my arms and legs contracted into indescribable positions, to say nothing of various angry-looking wounds all over my body. The doctors took compassion on me, formed into committee, and prescribed, as the only remedy likely to set me right again, a three years' leave to England, where, with the congenial effects of my native home, they hoped I should recover. Lieutenant Burton now sent in an estimate of all loss to the Government, and advised, as the best plan of taking an effectual revenge upon the Somalis, in whose territories we were attacked (the Habr Owel), that a ship should be sent to blockade their coast, with a demand that they should produce for trial in Aden the living bodies of the two men who so cruelly killed our lamented friend, and so wantonly endeavoured to despatch me. Further, that a sum of money equivalent to all our aggregate losses should be paid in full ere the blockade would be raised. This was considered the wisest method by which, in future times, any recurrence of such disasters would most probably be avoided. It is needless to observe, considering the importance of Berbera to the welfare of the Habr Owel, their subsistence and their existence as a nation depending on it, that anything

might have been exacted from them that we wished to extort, or they could afford to give. The Government, unfortunately for our pockets, were of a different opinion; they would have nothing to do with money exactions when human blood had to be avenged. Moreover, they had been wishing to suppress the slave-trade, and found in this occurrence a favourable opportunity to indulge their hobby. They therefore established a blockade of all the coast-line between Seyareh and Jibal Elmas, demanding, as the only alternative by which it would be raised, the surrender of the principal instigators of the outrage on us for trial in Aden, of whom the first in consequence was Ou Ali, the murderer of Lieutenant Stroyan. When the season for the fair arrived, the only vessel present in the Berbera harbour was a British man-of-war, and the Habr Owel then believed we were in earnest. Until then, it appeared, they would not believe it, thinking our trade in Aden would suffer by this proceeding as much as their own. They were, however, mistaken; trade found an outlet at other places; and they, by its suppression on their grounds, were fast sinking into insignificance. Seeing this, they showed by urgent prayers a disposition to treat on any conditions we might like to impose on them, and even sent in for trial to Aden a man who showed the scar of a gun-shot wound on his back, and at the same time declared their intention of forwarding all others to us as soon as they could catch them, and that they were ready (so I hear on good authority) to reimburse us for the property we had lost.

To make the matter short, I will give you intact the articles of a treaty which was signed at Berbera on the 7th November 1856, between the Hon. East India Company on the one hand, and the Habr Owel tribe of Somalis on the other, as it appears in an appendix (D), in a *History of Arabia Felix or Yemen*, by Captain H. L. Playfair, Assistant Political Resident, Aden.*

* Articles of peace and friendship concluded between the Habr Owel tribe of Somalis on the one part, and Brigadier William Marcus Coghlan, Political Resident at Aden, on behalf of the Honourable East India Company, on the other:—

During my residence in Aden, which lasted three weeks, or until the second mail after my arrival took its departure for Suez, my wounds healed up in such a marvellously rapid manner, I was able to walk at large before I left there. They literally

closed as wounds do in an Indian-rubber ball after prickings with a pen-knife. It would be difficult to account for this rapidity with which my wounds closed, knowing, as everybody who has lived in Aden must do, that that is the worst place in the world

“Whereas, on the 19th of April 1855 (corresponding with the 1st of Shaban 1271), a treacherous attack and murder were perpetrated at the port of Berbera by a party of Habr Owel tribe, upon a party of British officers, about to travel in that country with the consent and under the protection of the elders of the tribe, in consequence of which outrage certain demands were made by the Government of India, and enforced by a blockade of the Habr Owel coast; and whereas it has become apparent that the said tribe has fulfilled these conditions to the utmost of its ability, and has prayed to be relieved from the blockade; therefore it is agreed—

“1st, That the elders of the Habr Owel will use their best endeavours to deliver up Ou Ali, the murderer of Lieutenant Stroyan.

“2d, That, until this be accomplished, the sub-tribe Esa Moosa, which now shelters, and any other tribe which may hereafter shelter, harbour, or protect the said Ou Ali, shall be debarred from coming to Aden.

“3d, That all vessels sailing under the British flag shall have free permission to trade at the port of Berbera, or at any other place in the territories of the Habr Owel; and that all British subjects shall enjoy perfect safety in every part of the said territories, and shall be permitted to trade or travel there under the protection of the elders of the tribe. In like manner shall the members of the Habr Owel tribe enjoy similar privileges at Aden, or in any other part of the British possessions.

“4th, The traffic in slaves through the Habr Owel territories, including the port of Berbera, shall cease for ever; and any slave or slaves who, contrary to this engagement, shall be introduced into the said territories, shall be delivered up to the British; and the commander of any vessel of Her Majesty's or the Honourable East India Company's navy shall have the power of demanding the surrender of such slave or slaves, and of supporting the demand by force of arms, if necessary.

“5th, The Political Resident at Aden shall have the power to send an agent to reside at Berbera during the season of the fair, should he deem such a course necessary, to see that the provisions of this agreement are observed; and such agent will be treated with the respect and consideration due to the British Government.

“6th, That on a solemn promise being given by the elders of the Habr Owel, faithfully to abide by the articles of this agreement, and to cause the rest of the tribe to do so likewise, and to deliver up to the Political Resident at Aden any party who may violate it, the blockade of the Habr Owel coast shall be raised, and perpetual peace and friendship shall exist between the British and the Habr Owel.

“Done at Berbera this seventh day of November, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six of the Christian era (corresponding with the eighth day of Rabea-el-Owel, one thousand two hundred and seventy-two of the Hejira).

(Signed)	MAHOMED ARRA'LEH,	} Ayal Yoonus.
”	AHMED ALI BOOKERI,	
”	NOOR FA'RAH,	
”	AHMED GHA'LID,	} Ayal Ahmed.
”	MAHOMMED WA'IS,	
”	MUGGAN MAHOMMED,	
”	ROOBLIE HASSAN,	} Makáhl.
”	ATÉYAH HILDÉR,	
”	FARRAH BENI'N,	
”	AMADTH SHERMARKIE,	Ayal Hamood.

“Signed in my presence at Berbera, on the 7th November 1856,

(Signed) H. L. PLAYFAIR, Assistant Political Resident, Aden.
 W. M. COGLAN, Political Resident.

“ADEN, 9th November 1856.

“Ratified by the Right Honourable the Governor-General of India in Council, at Fort-William, this 23d day of January 1857.

(Signed) CANNING.
 And Five Members of Council of India.”

for effecting cures, had I not, in addition to a strong constitution which I fortunately possess, been living for many months previously in a very abstemious manner, principally, as appears in the body of the journal, on dates, rice, and sour curds.

I now left Aden on "sick certificate," and arrived in England in the early part of June 1855. The Crimean war was then at its height, and the military authorities were beating up for recruits in every corner of the land. This summons for war was irresistible. I was suffering a little from blindness, brought on probably by my late losses and impoverishment of blood. Still I lost no time in volunteering my services to take part in this great national object, thinking it was a duty, as a soldier, I owed my country, and delighting in the prospect of immediate and active employment, where, at any rate, I should be in Europe, and enjoying the temperature I had come home to seek. The Turkish Contingent was then being incorporated, and I was, being an Indian officer, competent to serve in it. With an introduction from friends, I wrote a letter to Major Graham, an officer appointed by the Horse Guards to engage officers for General Vivian's contingent, giving him an account of my past services, and asking for an appointment with the army. He at once closed with me, declaring "I was just the sort of man he wanted," and, granting two weeks' leave to prepare an outfit, told me to be off. In a fortnight more, I arrived in Constantinople, and was posted to a regiment of Turks, with the commission of captain. The Turkish Contingent was now at Buyukdere, but soon was ordered to embark in ves-

sels and proceed to Kertch in the Crimea. I went with them, and remained serving until the close of the Crimean war. My commandant being otherwise employed, I, as second in command and Kaimakan of the 16th regiment of infantry, took its headquarters back, and disbanded them at Constantinople. Whilst I was engaged in these parts, and thinking there would be no further chances of my being able to return to Africa, I had made up my mind, at the expiration of the war to try my hand in collecting the Fauna of the very interesting regions of the Caucasian Mountains, and had even gone so far as to purchase guns and equip myself for it. Captain Smyth, of the Bengal Army, an old and notorious Himalayan sportsman, had agreed to accompany me, and we wrote home to the Royal Geographical Society to exert their influence in obtaining passports, by which we could cross over the range into the Russian frontier; but this scheme was put a stop to by Dr Shaw, the Secretary of that Society, writing out to say there would be very little hope of our being able to obtain the passports we required, and that he thought the time ill-advised for working in those regions, adding, at the same time, that an expedition to explore Africa was again being organised under the command of Captain Burton, and advising me to join it. By the same mail I received a communication from Captain Burton himself, inviting me to join him once more in exploring Africa. This settled the matter. Without a second thought I took my passage to England by the first mail, and travelled night and day until I again reached home.