

ACROSS AFRICA.

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WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.



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CHAPTER VIII.

The Mgunda Mkali.—A Serious Misunderstanding.—Restoration of Peace.—Rejoicing in the Village.—The Mabunguru Nullah.—An Unexpected Chase.—Native Farming.—An Intelligent and Industrious People.—Jiwé la Singa.—Complimentary Beggars.—Moon-struck Askari.—Hatred of Snakes.—Pitfalls.—A Dry March.—Burned-up Country.—A Hunter's Paradise.—A Well-fortified Village and Well-dressed Chief.—Discovery of a Den of Thieves.—A Haunted Well.—An Attack by Ruga-ruga.

THE Mgunda Mkali, on which we were now entering, was only just beginning to be cleared when Burton and Speke were in the country. Few watering-places were then known, and provisions were obtainable in one locality alone between Mda-buru and Unyanyembe. Consequently, travelers were obliged to cross by forced marches, and no caravan succeeded in passing it without losing a considerable number of porters on the road.

July,
1873.

Now, however, things are much changed for the better, the Wakimbu, a tribe of Wanyamwezi driven by wars from their former homes, having attacked the jungle. Water has been found in many places, large spaces have been cleared and brought into cultivation, and, under the dominion of man, some of the most fertile and peaceful spots in Africa are now scattered in the midst of what was formerly virgin forest affording shelter only to wild beasts.

After passing one or two clearings and a few pools covered with yellow water-lilies, we camped near two villages situated amidst jungle at a height of 3938 feet above the sea—the country still rising rapidly.

The following day we arrived at Pururu, a village of Wakimbu, situated in a very picturesque valley, where we intended to halt for a few hours to purchase food, before making an afternoon march to the next camping-place. But we had scarcely settled down, when a great disturbance arose among our men, who seized and loaded their guns, exclaiming that there was a row with the natives.

July,
1873.

Marching again through similar country, we reached the Mabunguru nullah, the westernmost affluent of the Ruaha, about sunset. Even at this period of the dry season it was almost a river, stretches of its channel a mile or two in length being full of water, and separated from each other only by sand-banks and bars of rock from fifty to a hundred yards wide.

These creeks were now thirty yards across, and there were signs of the water in flood spreading two hundred yards on either side. I do not suppose it to be a permanent stream during the rainy season, but more probably it goes off in freshets, the whole country being very rocky, and therefore able to absorb but little water.

On the road we interchanged greetings with an Arab caravan, and ascertained that an account of Dr. Livingstone having returned to Unyanyembe was untrue; but doubtless the man who told us had been misinformed, and did not intentionally deceive us. Numberless tracks of large game were passed, as also bones of animals, one skull being that of a rhinoceros, frequently met with in these districts.

Our next day's march, also a double one, was through much cultivated land, and, according to report, the country had once been much more thickly populated; but two or three years previously a party of wild Wanyamwezi had looted it, and destroyed many villages.

The men seemed delighted at getting toward the end of the first portion of our journey, and during the latter part of this day the kirangosis kept up a sort of recitative, the whole caravan joining in chorus with pleasing effect. Dillon and I started ahead of the caravan in search of sport; but people from villages a short distance in front had been about, and every thing was scared, though fresh marks of antelope and buffalo were abundant.

We pitched our camp on the banks of a little ziwa imbosomed in grass, and covered with red, white, and yellow water-lilies. Cattle being cheap, we purchased a bullock for our men; but the brute broke away and galloped off at a furious rate when being driven into camp, and we had to give chase and shoot him down.

Jiwé la Singa (the rock of soft grass) was the point to be

CHAPTER XI.

Driven back to Hisinéné.—A Miserable Christmas.—Superstitions regarding Snakes.—Customs of the People.—Dancing.—Cooking Arrangements.—Storing Corn.—Their Huts.—Food.—Curing.—Provisions.—Cloth-making.—Grinding Corn.—Tribal Marks.—Hair-dressing.—Warned against Mirambo.—A Spy shot.—On the Road again.—A Hospitable Old Lady.—Missing the Way.—Sack-making.—An Elopement.—Disordered State of the Country.—The South Ngombé.—A Day's Shooting.—A Hunter's Story.

December,
1872.

HISINÉNÉ being again reached, I consulted Bombay and Asmani as to the best course to pursue in this unexpected difficulty. To attempt to avoid Ugara would have lengthened the journey by three weeks or a month, while the country through which we should have been obliged to pass was reported to afford no supplies of provisions.

The ambassadors had assured me that the moment an arrangement had been arrived at the road would be opened, and they would conduct me to Taka's village, knowing that he would welcome me warmly. I therefore decided to send Asmani with them to Unyanyembe, to urge upon the Arabs the desirability of settling the matter as quickly as possible.

The chief of Hisinéné was allied with the Arabs in the campaign against Mirambo, and a few days after our arrival the fighting-men were mustered and dispatched to the scene of action.

Hearing nothing from or of Asmani for ten days, I grew anxious, and sent Mohammed Malim, with half a dozen men and my two riding donkeys, to travel as fast as possible, and ascertain what the news really was.

Now followed much dreary waiting and anxiety, which, together with the unhealthiness of the place, knocked me up, and I was attacked by fever and a sharp touch of dysentery. My back, too, was so exceedingly painful that I had no rest, night or day, for more than a week.

every village could turn out at least half of its men armed with muskets.

January,
1874.

In consequence of the disturbances between Mirambo and the Arabs, trade had suffered much, and the whole country was very unsettled. The lawless inhabitants of villages took advantage of the disorder which existed, and formed parties, from forty to fifty strong, to loot and destroy their weaker neighbors. These they attacked indiscriminately, calling themselves friends of Mirambo or of the Arabs, according to which party they were at the time intent on plundering.

As water was reported to be scarce, and there was some danger of not finding any if steering by compass, we took the road pointed out by Asmani. Soon we were clear of jungle, and entered an apparently illimitable plain covered with long grass, and having numerous small mounds crowned with wood, as also solitary trees scattered over its surface. We halted near a pool of muddy water, and camped on one of the little wooded knolls.

Game was wonderfully plentiful. We saw quail and secretary birds, startled a large herd of antelope, and crossed a buffalo-track—about twenty yards wide, and trampled into the semblance of a plowed field—running in a dead straight line from north to south.

Soon after starting from here for the South Ngombé nullah, we passed some shallow, swampy pools, surrounded by trees and thick jungle.

I was in front, and happened, unfortunately, to be without my gun, when a huge white rhinoceros waddled past me, grunting. He failed to notice me as I quietly slipped behind a tree, but the shouts of the porters, who now sighted him, warned him off, and he turned into the jungle. I followed directly, my rifle having arrived, and tracked him for some way, but was brought to a standstill by a bed of swamp.

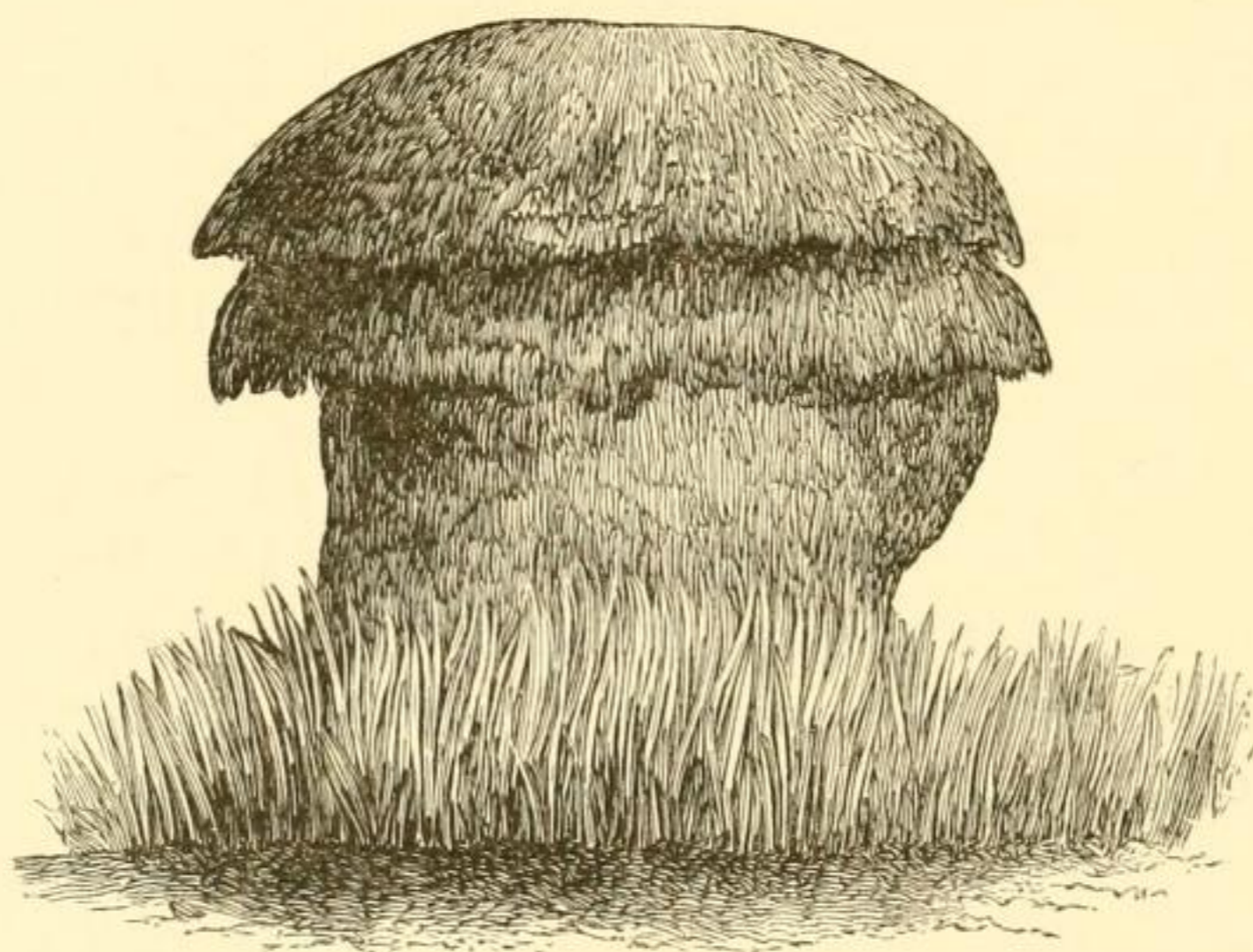
The remainder of our road to the South Ngombé was swamp, followed by a piece of the most beautiful plain that it is possible to imagine.

Clumps of magnificent trees were grouped with an effect which could not have been surpassed had they been arranged by the art of the landscape gardener; while wooded knolls and

January,
1874.

stretches of green grass, and a background of heavy timber along the banks of the nullah, completed the scene.

The South Ngombé—not to be confounded with the Northern Ngombé, which drains the country to the north of Taborah—is one of the southern affluents of the Malagarazi River, and is joined by the Walé nullah, which rises a few miles west of Itumvi. Near the point at which we crossed, it lay in long reaches of four or five miles in length, divided from each other only by sand-bars about fifty yards wide. Its waters afford a home to numerous hippopotami and crocodiles, and are covered with a profusion of immense water-lilies. In times of flood, it spreads about three miles on either side, and pours a vast



ANTS' NEST.

quantity of water into the Malagarazi. Our camp was pitched on its western bank, in a clear space of grassy turf surrounded by gigantic trees, festooned to their topmost branches by enormous creepers.

The men being tired, after our two long marches, I decided on a day's halt, and gave them leave to go out shooting. The surrounding country was full of game; but I found it very wild, and so frightened by the number of my own people, as well as hunting-parties of Wagara, who were about, that I only shot a boar, which, being an unclean animal, none of my men would bring in.

During my ramble I noticed the remains of a lion, buffalo, and crocodile, lying together in a heap, and was told a curious

story to account for this strange sight. It was said that when the buffalo came to drink, a lion sprung upon him, and both rolling into the water together, they were seized by a crocodile. He, in his turn, was dragged about twenty yards from the bank by the struggles of the two beasts, and there the trio perished in an inextricable entanglement.

January,
1874.

I also saw an enormous crane of a bluish-gray color, looking a king among birds, being by far the largest I had ever seen, with the exception of the ostrich.

CHAPTER XII.

Ugara.—A Ludicrous Sight.—Mirambo's Head-quarters.—Destruction and Desolation.—The Havoc of the Slave-trade.—A Field for England's Labors.—Leo surprises the Natives.—Leg Ornaments.—Liowa.—My Pets.—A Lawless Set of Ruffians.—Heavy Rains.—Bee-nesting.—A Stampede.—Lost in Jungle.—A Panic.—Rocky Residences.—An Attempt at Extortion.—I give a Lecture on Hospitality.—Its Good Effect.—Nothing to Eat.—"Jasmin" Dies.—Tamelessness of my Goat.—Unfriendly Villages.—A Buffalo-charge.

January,
1874.

UGARA, in which we were now, is not recognized as being part of Unyamwezi proper, although, owing to the people having the same manners and tribal marks, and their language being nearly identical, they are not to be easily distinguished from their neighbors.

On the 8th of January we moved from the banks of the South Ngombé toward Téwéré, but were shortly met by about twenty people sent by Taka—chief of the easternmost of the three portions into which Ugara is divided—to inquire our reasons for having entered his territory without sending to apprise him of our approach. Matters being soon explained, they returned with us, and showed us where to halt; but we were not allowed to camp in Téwéré.

This village was a perfect mass of vegetation, the trees within it growing so thickly and closely together that nothing could be seen of the huts; and even the palisades, constructed of poles of the bark-cloth tree, had taken root and sprouted, and had thus become like the fortifications of Robinson Crusoe. Taka's own village was some seven miles to the northward of us, and would have lain on our route had we been allowed to follow the road taken by us on making our first journey from Hisinéné.

We had scarcely camped, when emissaries arrived from Taka, and demanded twenty doti and two guns as mhongo. The guns I could not spare, and would not give; so compromised

the matter by paying twenty-two doti. A present was then asked for Taka's mother; but I refused to give any thing, expressing my opinion that he was fully able to take care of his own mother.

January,
1874.

The messengers informed me that if I visited Taka he would give me some provisions; but as this would have entailed a delay of two or three days, I declined the invitation. Guides were placed at our disposal, and we marched across a perfectly level country until just at the close of the day's journey, when we breasted a small hill close to a village named Kwatosi, and camped on its summit.

I was greatly amused by one of the guides, who displayed much pride at possessing an umbrella. He kept it open the whole day, continually spinning it round and round in a most ludicrous fashion; and when we came to some jungle he added to the absurdity of his appearance by taking off his only article of clothing—his loin-cloth—and placing it on his head after having carefully folded it. The sight of a perfectly naked negro walking under an umbrella was too much for my gravity, and I fairly exploded with laughter.

Nothing but boundless plain covered with jungle was to be seen from the camp, the only break on the horizon being two small hills far away to the north-north-west. These were said to be Mirambo's head-quarters, which the Arabs had never attacked, the strength of the position being so great that it was felt that to make the attempt would be to court defeat.

We passed the sites of many deserted villages which had been destroyed quite lately in the war, and, after camping one night in the jungle, arrived at the capital of Utendé, the central district of Ugara. The chief was moderate in his demands for mhongo, and would have been satisfied with six doti, had not a son of Taka, who unfortunately arrived at that moment, said to him, "Don't be a fool! my father got twenty-two. You ask the same." This caused much haggling and arguing, as I was greatly averse to complying with his increased claim. Still, he managed to get the twenty-two doti in the end, by prohibiting his people from selling food to us until he was paid.

In the village there were many of Mirambo's men, who graciously informed us that they would certainly have attacked

January,
1874.

us, had we been Arabs; but, being English, we were allowed to pass, because they knew we had not come for slaves. I have a strong suspicion that this was "buncombe," for Mirambo is as much a slave-dealer as any Arab in the country. But I suppose these men had heard something of the English from my people, and, not being strong enough to rob us, considered it advisable to appear friendly.

The chief proved a curious sort of fellow, frequently withdrawing permission for us to buy food, and then restoring it. By taking advantage of the permission when granted, we procured enough in two days, and went on our way.

The rains were now exceedingly heavy, and at times came down with a roar that made sleep almost impossible. The following note in my journal was evidently entered on one of these occasions: "Thunder and lightning; lying awake listening to the rain. If the blessed old Tanganyika gets all this, it *must* burst out somewhere."

Our next halt was at the village of Liowa, chief of Western Ugara. The country before this had been dead level, but now began to get rather broken, and the road was across undulating country. The valleys were swamps, with deep and stiff black mud, that, in every thing but extent, put the stories of the dreaded Makata altogether into the shade.

Passing through the ruins of so many deserted villages, once the homes of happy and contented people, was indescribably saddening. Where now were those who built them and cultivated the surrounding fields? Where? Driven off as slaves, massacred by villains engaged in a war in which these poor wretches had no interest, or dead of starvation and disease in the jungle.

Africa is bleeding out her life-blood at every pore. A rich country, requiring labor only to render it one of the greatest producers in the world, is having its population—already far too scanty for its needs—daily depleted by the slave-trade and internecine war.

Should the present state of affairs be allowed to continue, the country will gradually relapse into jungles and wilds, and will become more and more impenetrable to the merchant and traveler. That this should be a possibility is a blot on the boasted

January,
1874.

civilization of the nineteenth century. And should England, with her mills working half-time, and with distress in the manufacturing districts, neglect the opportunity of opening a market which would give employment to thousands of the working classes, it will ever remain an inexplicable enigma.

Let us hope that the Anglo-Saxon race will allow no other nation to outstrip it in the efforts to rescue thousands—nay, millions—of fellow-creatures from the misery and degradation which must otherwise infallibly fall to their lot.

At Liowa's village the whole population turned out to stare at us, and their astonishment at beholding a European was far less than that displayed at the sight of old Leo. This was in no way diminished by the wonderful stories related of him by my men, who declared that, single-handed, he was a match for any two lions in Africa.

These people were a fine, manly, warlike race, well armed with guns and spears, the blades of the latter being sometimes two feet in length, and more than four inches wide in their broadest part.

Two ornaments which I had hitherto rarely seen now became common. One, the sambo, consisting of a quantity of small circles of elephant's hair or hide, neatly bound round with very fine wire, was worn on the legs. Natives of high degree frequently wore such a mass of these as to give them the appearance of being afflicted with elephantiasis; and though I had no means of ascertaining the exact number on each leg, I may safely affirm that in some instances three hundred would be under rather than over the mark.

The other ornament to which I allude was composed of fringes of long goat's hair, also worn round the leg, commencing just above the swell of the calf and reaching well-nigh to the ground. To both these ornaments there were often appended small bells and pieces of tin and other metal, and the happy possessor of such extra decorations was never inclined to let them pass unnoticed, but would stamp and strut about like a lunatic, in order to make them jingle and herald his approach.

While we were at Liowa's, a party belonging to Mrima Ngombé arrived *en route* to Simba, a chief of the Warori, who, having lately been successful in looting a quantity of ivory

January,
1874.

from his neighbors, had sent out circulars stating that he had on hand a very large stock of a superior article, which must be sold at a ruinous sacrifice, to effect a clearance before removing from the premises.

Liowa's father, who bore the same name, was chief of all Ugara, and, having had a tiff with some Arabs, set out with the intention of destroying Bagamoyo; but his vaulting ambition o'erleaped itself, and he and most of his followers perished on the road.

The feudatory chiefs of the two other divisions of Ugara, taking advantage of the youth of the present Liowa on his succeeding his father, declared themselves independent, and thus robbed him of more than two-thirds of his patrimony.

Liowa presented me with a small goat, which became so greatly attached to me that I had not the heart to kill her, but decided on keeping her as a pet, and she soon knew me, and learned to answer to her name, "Dinah." She and Leo were inseparable, and both used to follow close upon my heels on the march.

News now reached me that the direct road to the Malagarazi ferry was blocked by large bodies of escaped Arab slaves, who were well armed, and had turned their hand against every body. They had been armed by their masters to fight against Mirambo, but had deserted, and joined a number of runaways, who infested the vicinity of Unyanyembe. And now they were doing their utmost to harm their former masters.

Many of the atrocities ascribed to Mirambo should properly be placed to the account of these ruffians, who, bound by no laws, human or divine, placed no limits upon the brutalities in which they indulged.

Liowa's was left on the 17th of January, and, soon after starting, we met Mrima Ngombé's men, who had gone on the day before, and had turned back to place themselves under our protection, being afraid to proceed alone.

Three miles down hill, and half a mile through swamp, was all we managed before being fairly stopped by the rain, which came down like a water-fall; and the difficulty in getting the men and donkeys to face it and cross the swamp to a dry place for camping, was very great. The rain approached us like a

moving wall of water, and some time before the storm reached us the sound resembled the roar of a cataract.

January,
1874.

Fortunately, the tents were quickly pitched, and the stores were kept fairly dry. I fully appreciated Murphy's waterproof coat; but the men were drenched, and most of them adopted the costume of Adam in the early days of the Garden of Eden.

When the rain ceased, some of the men took a bees'-nest, which had been discovered in a tree overhanging the camp. I watched their proceedings with interest, for it seemed marvelous that the naked fellows up in the tree should be able to hack away at the hole where the nest was, with infuriated bees swarming around them. Yet they only stopped occasionally to brush them away from their faces, or to pull out a sting. The fellows' skins must have been somewhat like that of the honey-guide, impervious to the sting of the bee; but, after all their labor, no honey was forthcoming, dead and rotten combs only being found.

On resuming our march, we passed through an open forest of fine trees, with little or no undergrowth, where I succeeded in rolling over a large antelope. We then came to a precipitous ravine, with numerous streams gushing down its rocky sides, sometimes hidden by bushes, and at others forming miniature water-falls.

We rounded the southern end of this dip, and reached the river Mtambo, flowing at the bottom of a rocky valley. It was two or three feet deep, with many cascades, the bed being so full of rocks that we found an easy path of stepping-stones across it, the only difficulty being the work of getting the donkeys over.

The next day's attempt at a journey was a failure. After a couple of hours on the move, some buffalo were seen, and down went every load immediately, some men running away, and others going in pursuit of the beasts. The runaways soon recovered their lost nerve, and returned; but as the hunters did not put in an appearance, there was no option but to camp. I was crippled by a painful wound in my leg, caused, I think, by the bite of a centipede, and was quite unable to do any shooting.

The sporting-men found their way back during the evening, excepting a few who remained in charge of a rhinoceros and an

January,
1874.

eland which Asmani had shot; and the next day they refused to move before the meat was brought in and divided, for which purpose a halt became necessary. To add to the annoyance of this delay, the road was lost on setting out, and my leg had meanwhile become so troublesome that I was unable to take the lead of the caravan and steer by compass.

For three days we wandered round and round, going along a track perhaps for half an hour, only to find it end abruptly, while the scouts sent forward to discover the right road declared that impassable swamps and "muds" lay in the direction I wanted to travel.

During all this time we were toiling through jungle, and passed several streams, two of which were so deep that it was necessary to use the india-rubber boat and to haul some of the donkeys over, until one, bolder than his fellows, jumped in and swam across, and was followed by the rest.

Soon after we camped on the evening of the third day, I was startled by the report of fire-arms in all directions. Hobbling out of my tent, I met a man with his hair standing as straight on end as its woolly nature would allow, and with fright depicted on every feature, crying out, "Master! master! Ruga-ruga! Shika bunduki" (Master, master! Robbers! Get your gun). Only about twenty of my men could I find, their first impulse having been, as usual, to look to their own safety by taking to their heels; and where the enemy was, none could tell me. At last I ascertained that one of my followers, on meeting an old native in the jungle, had fired his gun as a signal that we were near a village. The other men being thoroughly intimidated by the stories of Mirambo, Ruga-ruga, and escaped slaves, had immediately imagined that we were attacked. Hence the fright and general stampede.

Upon the native being brought to me, I learned from him that the village of Mân Komo, chief of part of Kawendi, could easily be reached the following day. He further volunteered to conduct some of my men there at once, in order that they might return the next morning and show us the road.

This old man had been engaged in cutting bark to make clothing for himself and his wife; and, judging from appearances, he had not undertaken the task before it was needed. I