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EQUATORIA

THE LADO ENCLAVE

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Alla stream, and there is but little wooded country, but a great part of both inhabited and uninhabited areas contains the large trees mentioned above, plentifully distributed, and in the uninhabited parts standing amongst low bush and grass. These trees are of such fine growth and of so many kinds that for this and other reasons, such as the occurrence of colobi near the Kuku escarpment and the chimpanzee on the frontier, not so far from Mount Wati, I am inclined to think that parts of the Enclave were forested at not so distant a date.

The natives divide the rains into two parts, each one yielding a harvest. During the first light rains, directly the soil, hard and sun-baked after the dry weather, has become at all soft, they hoe and plant a small crop of millet, generally of the red variety. To this, perhaps, are added some lesser crops—beans, sesame, or bulrush millet. These crops are harvested at the end of June or July, and the same ground, together with other land, now well sodden and easily hoed, is planted with eleusine or millet again, together with other food in lesser quantities, and this forms the main crop of the year. In some parts, noticeably the south, eleusine almost entirely takes the place of the millet, which latter is the usual crop by the Nile and in the north. Probably the natives have found by experience that the red laterite soil, unfavourable to the full growth of grass, is also unfavourable to a good yield of millet and that eleusine gives better results. The main crop is generally harvested about October, although in the south the seasons are somewhat earlier and the harvest would be about September.

Eleusine, or millet, flour, hand-ground by women, forms the staple diet of the people throughout the country. It is cooked with water in the usual pulse, or porridge, a sauce, made from ground nuts, sesame, beans or, occasionally, meat, being eaten with it as a flavouring. The greater part of the uplands is a good pastoral land, and some parts are fairly well stocked with cattle. However,

disease has in most places considerably reduced the herds. The low country is poorly stocked; cattle trypanosome and periodical epidemics of disease sweep off the cattle faster than they breed. Matters were very different some twenty years ago. It would seem that disease had not then reached this part<sup>1</sup> and, according to Baker, the riverine tribes were in those days large cattle-owners.

Nagana (*Trypanosoma Brucei*) must have been introduced since this time, and now appears to have infested a great part of the Nile bank, especially to the north of the Enclave and inland from Lado in the Nyangwara country, where cattle are practically non-existent and die off as quickly as introduced. Some of the uplands appear to be, at present, free from this disease. Sleeping sickness is probably a still more recent arrival. It appears first to have been introduced to Yei. Wadelai and Kajo Kaji are also infected, the infection probably being introduced independently to all three places by Baganda porters. The tsetse fly seems to be distributed over the whole Enclave, either the palpalis or a morsitans type being found on every stream and watercourse in which a careful search has been made, whilst in some spots both types exist. The conditions then are favourable to the spread of both nagana and sleeping sickness.

Of animal life the Enclave does not display any great wealth or startling variety, although it contains a few interesting species. It used to be *par excellence* the country for elephant, and not so long ago there were great numbers, inhabiting chiefly the Nile bank and the unfertile belt inland of it. Although their numbers have been largely reduced, especially with regard to big males in the south, there is still a large quantity. The interest for the big-game hunter chiefly centres round the so-called "white" rhinoceros, the square-lipped kind which formerly used to be found in numbers in South Africa, but is now

<sup>1</sup> Emin, however, says of Liria, near Gondokoro, that game was plentiful and inexhaustible, but mules and donkeys died rapidly there of swellings, loss of appetite and flesh.

practically extinct everywhere except in the Lado and the country immediately to its north and west.

This country is also amongst the few where the giant eland occurs, although no very good heads seem to have been obtained. Other of the larger game are fairly common—buffalo of two kinds, hippopotamus and, in the north, giraffe. Leopard are common and very bold. Apart from the above, the country might be regarded as a very poor game country. There are but few kinds of hollow-horned ruminants, and, of what there are, none seem very plentiful.

There seems also to be no great wealth of other forms of animal life; of lesser mammals there does not appear to be a great variety, whilst insect life seems poor in comparison with that of other tropical countries on the same latitude; but there is a great wealth of bird life, especially in the hilly regions.

Thunderstorms, as has been said, are very violent during the rains; cases of people being killed by lightning are of fairly frequent occurrence. In 1910, for instance, lightning struck houses in both Rejaf and Yei, and the latter place is struck almost every year.

In the neighbourhood of Rejaf earthquake rumbles are heard on an average perhaps twice a year. These rumbles seem to follow a line roughly from east to west. They generally occur in the dry weather; however, if there is no shock accompanying the rumble, they might be mistaken for thunder during the rains.<sup>1</sup> Earthquakes are also felt south of Rejaf and at Kibiro, on Lake Albert.

Rains seem to approach fairly constantly from the east, driven by an east wind, during the first part of the wet

<sup>1</sup> I have noticed earthquakes on the following dates: 1911: heavy rumble 7 a.m., light 8.30 a.m., 12th March, at Rejaf. 1913: rumble at 11 p.m., 23rd December, at Kajo Kaji. 1914: rumble at 11 p.m., 20th January, at Atappi. 1915: rumble and slight shock, 26th January, at Kajo Kaji (within a few days of the Avezzano earthquake). Repeated rumbles and several shocks during 1915, one of which destroyed several buildings in Rejaf.

weather, whilst later the direction appears variable, sometimes coming from the east and sometimes from the west, or occasionally the same storm will pass over from east to west and return again from west to east.

The climate on the Nile is trying and unhealthy to Europeans. Inland it appears agreeable enough, but Europeans do not keep really healthy, and seem to lose weight fairly consistently.

Although all the Kuku and Madi highlands are better watered than the lower country and that immediately north and south of them, this part, or a little to the south of it, seems to be the area of the greatest rainfall. The rain-clouds often sweep over Nyiri mountain across Katurungu's and on to Wati, whilst missing the rest of the highlands.

East of the rest-camp at Katurungu's there is a grove in which Katurungu's father is buried, and he himself hopes to be buried there. These highland Madi observe practically the same customs as the Kuku with regard to sacred groves, but the riverine Madi do not seem to possess such groves. West of Katurungu's lives Aliko, an important Madi chief. In his country there are two of these groves, in one of which chiefs are buried, and in the other, close by, their wives. When no rain comes at the proper planting season, the rain-chief goes into the grove and asks the spirits of the departed chiefs why there is no rain. If, after waiting a short while, there is still no rain, a sheep is sacrificed in the grove and the rain-chief is entitled to its meat. If anyone were to cut down any of the trees of the grove, it is thought that he would die.

Aliko's country is rolling and grassy, well stocked with cattle, and without the hills which characterise the rest of the Madi highlands. It is here that the unfortunate Italian Buccieri met with his death whilst trying to get through to Nimule with a baby white rhinoceros which he had caught. This occurred in the interregnum between the withdrawal of the Belgians from the whole southern Enclave in 1907 and the Sudan occupation in 1910.

The Madi are a genial and intelligent people, but somewhat treacherous, drunken and quarrelsome. In following the usual native track from village to village, I have often noticed, in the Madi country but not elsewhere, that suddenly in the midst of the bush, perhaps when one is furthest from the villages at either end, the path

turns into a hoed road for a few yards and then relapses again into the ordinary bush track. The Madi give hoeing parties, that is, a man will invite people to come and hoe his fields, and at the end of the day's work will reward them by killing an ox or sheep for them and giving them a beer drink. Parties of natives returning to their villages from such an entertainment, with their hoes in their hands and rather tipsy, will suddenly say, "Why should we walk on such a path? Let us make a proper road," and will thereupon hoe the few yards noticed and then get tired and leave it.

In various parts of Africa there are different superstitions about eggs. One of the most common is that a woman who eats an egg will never bear a child. With the Madi an egg is a symbol of peace. An egg offered to a person is a sign that peace is desired. If there has been a quarrel between two chiefs and they desire to make friends again and visit one another, the one chief will put an egg in the pathway at the spot at which it enters his country, and the other will tread on it as he passes. Other ways of making peace are by placing a spear across a pit, as if to bridge over the gap existing, and by licking a spear. The last is also the form of swearing to the truth.

South of Katurungu's the hoed road, on reaching the country of the small chief Nyungo, divides in two, the left part being the old Dufile road through Lukere's, and the right being the slightly longer but better route by Ibrahim's.

Lukere's country is somewhat higher than that of Katurungu, and gives birth to several perennial streams, with well-wooded banks, which flow northwards under the Nyiri mountain to join the Ayu. Nyiri is a long, flat-topped mountain, running north and south for a distance of some thirty miles, and bordering the eastern side of the Madi highlands. The ends of this range form gentler slopes, but both east and west sides are pre-

spears. Now that they have cattle, cows are generally given in addition to most of the above. A rich man will give three cows, the hoes as above, and perhaps some arrows and a spear as well. A poor man will give perhaps a cow or a bull, three old and three new hoes, or perhaps only a cow and the hoes. The hoes appear to have some special significance with these people, and are always included, whatever else may be given.

There is no fixed rate, and the matter is arranged by bargaining. Where goats and sheep are given, half at least should be females. A cow with a small calf is equal to about thirty sheep, and a large bull to about ten.

Amongst the Madi a man is allowed to pass the night with an unmarried girl if he makes her a present of five arrows. There is supposed to be no harm in this. If he does this often the mother expects to receive a present of a brass anklet.

Amongst the Gimara, if a man's wife is ill, he returns her to her relations, who feed and look after her. When she gets well again the husband takes her back and pays a female sheep to her father. If she is often ill the husband returns her altogether, but only gets the purchase-money returned to him if she marries again. When a wife is ill it is usually considered the husband's fault. All sickness and death being usually attributed to some malign and evil agency, or witchcraft at work, the native thinks that removal from the place at which the illness was contracted will probably take the invalid out of the reach of the evilly-disposed person who has caused the illness. A husband is not necessarily supposed to have himself caused the illness of his wife, but, rather, that some foolish or evil act of his has allowed his wife to come under the influence of some evilly-disposed person, or evoked the hostility of someone.

3. *Religion and Superstition.*—Some of the most important religious practices have already been described in previous chapters. The Alurr, like the Acholi, build

miniature huts dedicated to the spirits of ancestors of each household. The Lugware build similar little huts, but there is seldom more than one to a village, and it is generally built near a stream, or the source of the drinking supply, at some distance from the village. Offerings of broken earthenware pots and worn-out baskets are placed inside.

Other tribes in the Enclave do not seem to build these spirit houses, but the Krej, of the Bahr el Ghazal, are said to observe this practice and to put miniature water-jars and other vessels in them.

There appears to be comparatively little in the way of folk-lore. The Lugware say that the elephant was formerly a woman until someone hit her on the head with a gourd; her head became swollen and she became an elephant. The rhinoceros is the elephant's brother. It cannot bear to see its dung, and that is why it scratches it over with earth.

The hare (Njarago) is the Sultan of all the animals, he cannot be caught. His under-chiefs are ant-bears.

4. *Medicines and Charms.*—There is seldom a definite medicine, or charm, for use on a specific occasion. Most of native medicine-making is experimental. If one thing is ineffective something else is tried. So any special practice one may observe may not be distinctive of the tribe amongst whom it is seen, it may be only that it is being given a trial.

Various devices are resorted to for making rain. Junker says that the Makaraka rain-makers bury a vessel containing herbs such as the deadly nightshade and mandrake. Amongst the Kuku I have met an old man trailing a creeper along a path to make rain.

Amongst the Lugware a medicine for rain is made by putting beetles, generally scarabs, in a pot of water. With the Lugware, if a child suffers from diarrhoea, or dysentery, a small clay image of a cow is made, chickens' feathers are stuck into it, and it is placed in a place where