AFRICAN ADVENTURES

By
LORD BADEN-POWELL
OF GILWELL

Author of
"Adventuring to Manhood,"
"Lessons from the 'Varsity of Life"
"The Adventures of a Spy" etc., etc.

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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[*Frontispiece*

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PENTWALL

THE word “Pentwall” is not in the dictionary. Actually it has no meaning. But I thought it might tickle your curiosity.

If I headed this page as “Preface” probably you would not read it. Few people read Prefaces.

But I want to save you from having to wade through this book in order to find out what it is about. So I tell you, here and now, that it records incidents and impressions of my recent trip round Africa, and that one of its objects is to encourage people – especially Scouts and other young creatures – to travel. You see, life is short; yet much of it is wasted by people becoming vegetables, and not very satisfied or satisfactory vegetables at that. Whereas a little roaming about this wonderful globe while they are on it can give them that wider outlook and those greater sympathies which develop the soul in the individual and goodwill and peace in the world.

* * * * *

Knowing this of the book, you can now take it or leave it.

I

OFF TO AFRICA

WELL, here I am, off again overseas! I have only been home for about two months from Australia and Canada, and now I am starting off to visit Scouts in East Africa – that is, in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika.

Look at the map, see where they are, and come with me – in imagination. I will tell you, as we go along, what they are like, what sort of people I meet, and something about the wild animals there. When I was in those parts before, I used to go out shooting them, and I hope to do so again this time, but I shall be using a movie camera for the job instead of a rifle.

SMOKELESS EAST LONDON

When East Africa has had enough of me I shall go on to East London, not the smoke-begrimed, crowded East End of London in England, but the sunny, seaside city in South Africa. That is where the Boy Scouts of all the South African Provinces are going to assemble in a Jamboree camp, early in January.

Then I shall trot up to Rhodesia, where in old days I saw a good deal of fighting with Matabele warriors, and where my son Peter is in the Mounted Police to-day.

Africa is a big bit of the earth's surface, and it will take me a lot of time to get round it, so, though I am starting now, in October, I shall not be back in England before July next. Still, it will be great fun to see all those brother Scouts in so many different countries, and, you bet, I shall enjoy it

BACK TO "SUNLAND"

I only wish you could all come with me. Wouldn't you like to go and have a peep at some of those distant lands? Well, very likely you will do so later on, and, meantime, I

will tell you what I think of them, and you can thus make up your mind as to which you would like to visit when your chance comes to go overseas.

In the meantime, through Scouting, you can prepare yourself for life overseas.

Scouts must, as part of their training, be accustomed to living in the open; they have to know how to put up tents or huts for themselves; how to lay and light a fire; how to kill, cut up, and cook their food; how to tie logs together to make bridges and rafts; how to find their way by day and by night in a strange country – and so on.

In Scouting you learn all these things as part of your work and games; and so when you go overseas you know how to fend for yourself in a strange place. You will not be an utterly helpless tenderfoot.

II

TUGS

AT first starting on a voyage like this your ship is rather helpless without tugs.

I love tugs. Yes – I mean those stout, vulgar, little, broad-beamed, snub-nosed steamboats that buzz about very busily, each one puffing loudly and proudly that "I'm a-tug-a-tug, a-tug-a-tug, a-tug-a-tug."

You will often see tugs on the Thames, even above London Bridge, booming down the river, sticking out their chests and shoving a great crest of foam in front of them to show their strength and importance.

I have been watching them while our ship is getting under way for our voyage to Africa.

A TRAIN OF TEN

Here comes one towing three lighters abreast and three behind them and again three more – nine altogether. Then a solitary lighter floating aimlessly near them hooks on to the last one, and away goes the tug with a train of ten lighters trailing behind him.

At one point, where a lot of shipping bulges out into the fairway, it looks as though some of the lighters will certainly bump into and take the paint off one or two of the outside vessels. But not a bit of it; the tug gives a sudden turn and twist of his tail and then runs on his course again, while his retinue swings outward in a wide curve round the obstruction and curls back again on to its original direction.

Right ahead of us and lying straight across our path, there drifts a big, empty lighter with one man on board. He wears a bowler hat and a mackintosh coat, and looks most unlike a sailor and still less like a bargee. But it is the custom for the master of a river craft to wear a bowler hat and to be called Mister, so I suppose this gentleman is both master and crew of his unhandy craft. Indeed, he might be singing:

"Oh, I am the crew and the Captain bold,
And the mate of the Nancy brig,
And the bo'sun tight and the midshipmite,
And the crew of the Captain's gig."

He does not try to navigate her, but just lets her go as the tide and wind choose to take her. Anyway, he causes our ship to keep sounding her warning siren, and to stop in order to avoid running him down. But he is in no way disturbed, and when within speaking distance he plays up to his position as a wearer of a bowler, and instead of letting out a flow of the bargee language that one might expect, he quotes Kipling, hailing us with: “Oh, where are you going to, all you big steamers?”

Then there appears from nowhere a prompt little tug which, sliding across under our bows, butts gently into the lighter and sends it off floating out of our path.

Then we pass a whole mass of lighters jammed together at the entrance to a dock, like a flock of sheep huddled outside a sheep fold and shy of going in. But two tugs, just like good sheepdogs, hovering around near them, see the trouble, and, moving at slowest speed, nose gently in among them till they worm their way through them, and taking the foremost ones in tow soon have the whole mass moving forward safely through the entrance.

Meantime three other tugs are hovering round our ship again like sheepdogs, not doing much, but alert all the time, and ready to do the right thing at any moment. One of them seems to be lying asleep and is for a long time motionless, till, as we are passing into the lock gates of the dock, the wind threatens to drive us against the dockside.

I see the dock-master on shore give a slight signal with his hand, and in a moment the tug comes sliding towards us until she shoves her well-padded stern against us and, swirling up the water with her powerful screw in reverse, she pushes us forcibly back into position. Now she draws off, and promptly goes to sleep again.

OUR ESCORT

When we are safely ensconced inside the lock which is to let us out of the dock on to the river, two of these tugs dart in close under our stern, so that they are just able to squeeze themselves in with us, and to accompany us out when the water is lowered and the dock gates are opened. With just a pull or two on our bow and stern warps they set us straight on the river with our head to seaward, and off we go.

But when one looks over the side some time later, there they are, not far away, pretending that they have nothing to do with us, but all the time watching and ready to lend a hand if we should touch a mud-bank, or fail to twiddle in and out of the crowd of other vessels using the river.

So we are off. We pick up speed. Our tugs slew slowly round as if sorry to part, and chug their way back, ready to help other ships.

Dear old tugs, I love them!

THE ROCK

We left England, with an icy gale blowing, and in two days we sighted the coast of Spain and were in lovely hot sunshine.

We did not stop at Gibraltar this time, but as we entered the Mediterranean, passing between it and the mountains on the African coast (called by the ancients the Pillars of Hercules), one realized what a strong gateway is held there by Great Britain. The Rock, standing up out of the sea, with its enormous gun-power and its nest of war-vessels and submarines and seaplanes, could bar any ships from passing in or out of that

great sea if it so desired. As we steamed by, we could see the great grey forms of battleships lying quietly there like watchdogs.

III

MARSEILLES

THIS is going to be a delightful voyage, and we shall be more than four weeks in the *Mantola*, the British India ship which is taking us as far as Mombasa in Kenya.

As day after day we steam across these endless plains of sea, we shall think more highly than ever of the bravery of those old sea-dogs of the Middle Ages who, in their lumbering little sailing ships, and with their primitive maps and compasses, were not afraid to venture far across the seas to seek adventures greater than the home seas offered.

Gales for them had no terrors, their ships were tidy sea-boats, their rigging good, and they themselves had stout hearts and strong hands to work them. What they had to fear far more was the fine, calm weather, when never a breath of wind disturbed the shining surface of the oily sea. There they would be idly rolling on the long, smooth swell, without making a yard of progress from day to day.

SALT PORK!

And they did not carry tinned provisions, or stores of meat and milk in ice, nor engines for condensing and turning salt water into fresh, as we do to-day; they had only a few barrels of pork preserved in brine, and water stowed in casks.

The danger was ever before them that if a breeze should fail to come in time they had the risk of running out of food, with no wireless to call for help, and thus in danger of slowly drifting to death through thirst and starvation.

But the glorious dreams of adventure, of riches and loot, and of the green islands and blue seas of the Spanish Main, drew them on to face the risks.

We thought of all this as we entered the Mediterranean, where we enjoyed the sunny skies and blue seas for a short period as we came up the coast of Spain, with its rugged mountains looking like the coast of Queensland, till we got to the Gulf of Lyons.

GREAT LEADERS

There, as is inevitable in this sea, we met with a strong gale against us and ploughed our way with difficulty to Marseilles.

Many people have admired Lord Nelson for his magnificent bravery in war, but one could not help looking on him as a hero for the fact that for over a year he remained at sea, cruising in the wild waters of this stormy gulf, waiting for the French fleet to come out of Toulon. It must have been a dreary time for him, and a most unpleasant one owing to the fact that, though a great sailor, he was not a *good* sailor, for he suffered continually

from sea-sickness. He "stuck to it," as a good Scout will stick to it and keep the flag flying in spite of all difficulties.

In consequence of the gale we arrived several hours late at Marseilles, where we had been expected to take part in the funeral procession of Marshal Lyautey, the great French field-marshal and head of the Boy Scout movement in France. But the ceremony was over when we arrived.

We had, however, the great pleasure of being welcomed by a large number of Scout and Guide officers on our arrival, and were taken by them to see the International Foyer, or Club House, run by the Boy Scouts of Marseilles for the benefit of Scouts of all nations visiting that town. It is a charming house, beautifully fitted up by the Scouts themselves, and I strongly recommend all Scouts travelling in France to pay a visit there. They will find themselves cordially welcomed by the Scout Troop which runs the place.

A SMART RALLY

Then we attended a rally of French Scouts and Guides, and were delighted to find some 3,000 of them on parade, and very smart they were. Two very notable things about them which Scouts at home might well copy were these:

A very large percentage of the Wolf Cubs had won their two stars, as well as numerous badges of proficiency. The two stars showed that they were wide awake, with both eyes open, with a view to making themselves good Scouts.

Then among the Scouts a very large number had their staves most beautifully carved and ornamented.

Most of these Scouts had been on duty the day before to conduct the remains of Marshal Lyautey to the cathedral, where he lay all night, guarded by relays of eight Scouts at a time.

THE PROCESSION

In the morning the Scouts had again formed a procession, together with the troops and men-of-wars'-men, to conduct the cortège from the cathedral to the man-of-war in which his remains were to be transported to the scene of his victories in Morocco, and there to be finally buried.

The Scouts were a splendid lot, full of enthusiasm, smart, and cheerful, and in addressing them I urged them to follow in the steps of their great leader, Marshal Lyautey, who was the very example of what a good Scout should be, devoted to the service of his country, brave in war, and kind and helpful to others at all times.

IV

EGYPT

A GREAT big British man-of-war – the *Barham* – lay before us as we came to the mouth of the Suez Canal at Port Said.

The Canal, as you know, cuts through the narrow strip of land called the Isthmus of Suez which connects the whole of Africa with Asia. Before the Canal was made, ships going to India had to go all the way round Africa to get there. Now they slip through the Canal, and this short-cut saves them weeks of voyaging.

Close to our ship was a great Italian steamer crowded with soldiers on their way to fight against the Abyssinians. Great Britain, together with many other countries, had objected to Italy going to war against Abyssinia, as their quarrel should have been given to the League of Nations to settle, without ever going to war and getting men killed over it.

But Italy went to war all the same and was angry with us for trying to stop her.

Indeed, Italy almost went to war with Britain over it. Had she done so, we should have stopped her ships going through the Canal, and the *Barham* was there, like a traffic policeman, to stop them if necessary. Also the Mediterranean Fleet was close by, in Alexandria, like a lot more policemen in a police-station, ready to come out if wanted.

SCOUTS EVERYWHERE

Another thing that met our gaze as our ship drew into Port Said was a mass of Scouts and Guides awaiting us on the wharf. We had telegraphed beforehand to say that as we had had a big Rally here last year, we did not want them to bother to turn out again for us. We were coming in plain clothes, not in uniform, meaning to go to Cairo and see the sights there during the nine or ten hours that our ship would take going through the Canal.

But there they were. They said they could not allow us to go through Port Said without giving us a welcome, even if it was only for a few minutes. So we went ashore and passed along between two ranks of them. They were a jolly smart and cheery lot, and

had among them Scouts of several nations, since Port Said has a very mixed population. Besides British and Maltese, there were Greeks, French, Armenians, and Egyptians, but all looking very much alike, full of keenness as Scouts, and playing the game together.

I enjoyed seeing such a fine lot, and was only sorry that we could not stop long to look at them, because we had a good way to go to get to Cairo – about 112 miles. So we got into our car and off we drove.

JACK ASHORE

For the first few miles our road ran alongside the Canal, and we were able to see ships passing through. At one point we came across a party of sailors from the *Barham* who were out for a joyride in a motor-car. This had burst a tyre, and while the spare wheel was being put on they occupied their time by trying the experiment of riding a donkey. They were not experts at it, and got a good lot of fun and laughter out of their efforts. I think the donkey rather enjoyed the joke, too, for a time, but he must have felt rather relieved when these jolly sailor men suddenly recognised me and left the donkey in order to come and shake hands with me. I felt very pleased at being thought better than a donkey.

As we buzzed along on our journey we left the Canal side and ran, by a fairly good road, across sandy desert for several miles till we came to the town of Ismailia. Such a contrast, with its green trees and lawns and flower gardens, after the bare dry desert! Here we found a posse of Scouts and Guides waiting for us. These were all British, sons and daughters of the soldiers quartered here. They looked so bright and keen, we were quite sorry to have to hurry on and leave them after a short inspection and talk.

The same thing happened again a few miles farther on, where we passed through the township of Abbassiah. This is the station of the Royal Air Force, and again we saw British Scouts and Guides full of smiles and cheery greeting.

Our road took us through cultivated country, with native villages and farmsteads. We passed buffaloes pulling ploughs, strings of camels carrying huge loads, men in long night-shirts, women all dressed in black garments which covered their heads and faces, leaving only a slit for their eyes to look through.

In Egypt half the men are dressed in long nightgowns, and the other half seem to spend their time riding on donkeys.

Alongside the road ran a canal from which water could be run off into the fields to irrigate them; and also the canal served as a waterway for great barges moving along with lofty, triangular sails.

It was all most interesting and picturesque to see, until the sun set and darkness quickly came on. Before long, lights began to sparkle ahead of us, and we soon found ourselves in Cairo. Here we were in streets of fine houses, great shops, and crowded side-walks, motor-cars and omnibuses, traffic policemen, cinemas, and all the light and bustle of a huge city – but, oh, so clean and smart-looking as compared with our own dingy towns at home! Such a change from the quiet country life we had just been seeing.

We did not stop in Cairo, but, driving through miles of streets (Cairo has a million inhabitants!), we crossed the Nile by the great Kasr-el-Nil bridge, and then, after eight miles along a perfectly straight road, brilliantly lit with electric lights, we reached Mena House Hotel, where we put up for the night.

GETTING UP

Just before getting there, there loomed up high above us, against the starry sky, the form of a great Pyramid. Tired though we were after our bumpy five hours in the motor-car (during which my hat twice saved my skull from being fractured by jolts against the roof), we could not resist the temptation to go out and see what we could of that monster of ancient times.

Next morning we were up again at a quarter to six for another walk up the hill on which the Pyramid stands.

GETTING UPPER

Then, after an early breakfast, four camels were brought round for us. It is a tricky job mounting a camel. Of course, he is lying down when you get on him. He opens his vicious-looking mouth and snarls at you as you get astride of the saddle – the heavier you are the louder he snarls. When you are completely settled he is told to get up. He very suddenly stands on end from behind, and if you haven't got firm hold of the pommel, and if you are not leaning back, you tumble over his head, and probably break your neck and need a funeral.

UPPEST

If, however, you manage to remain during this movement, and your camel is clever enough to catch you before you fall, you next lean forward while the forequarters of your mount suddenly make an upward heave as if to throw you over backwards (and the back pommel of the saddle probably rams you a rasping punch in your backbone). However, just as you are performing this gymnastic feat the camel gives an extra chuck upward and catches you with the back of his neck and shoots you back into the saddle. He is quite clever at this trick.

At Gizeh there are three great Pyramids, each one of which is far bigger than St. Paul's Cathedral in London ; the biggest is 450 feet high and 764 feet in length and breadth, and was built by the king of Egypt, King Cheops, nearly 6,000 years ago, as a tomb for himself to be buried in when he came to die. It took 1,000,000 workmen twenty years to build it. It is made of great blocks of stone, each about 4½ feet square (as tall as you!), and weighing 2½ tons. These stones were quarried up the Nile and brought down in barges.

DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE!

Among the many wonderful things in Egypt are the tourists bobbing about on camels and trying to look dignified.

HOW IT WAS DONE

When one looks up at these massive blocks neatly built in rows and making a giant staircase up to the top, one wonders, with the poet:

"Not that they're big and heavy and square,
But how in the world they ever got there."

You see, these Pyramids were built 3,700 years before Christ, that is, nearly 6,000 years ago, and though the Egyptians were wonderfully clever and up-to-date in many things, they didn't have electric cranes to hoist up big loads. So for a long time it puzzled people to know how they managed it. Well – the Egyptians had a curious way of writing, and, instead of letters such as we use, they drew little pictures or signs. Among these signs was one like this:  and for a long time it was thought that this was meant for a boat carrying a load of hay, but after a time it was discovered that it represented a big block of stone carried on a rocking kind of sledge. So instead of a crane they used to build an inclined road or "ramp" leading up to the place where they wanted to put the stone. Then the stone was put on to its sledge, which was then rocked while dozens of slaves hauled it forward up the ramp.

MADE TO MEASURE

The Pyramids are full of mystery, and clever men at all times, even up to the present day, have been trying to discover what they mean. My uncle, Professor Piazzi Smyth, long ago, found that they were made to exact measurement, down to inches. The tunnel which goes down into the centre of the Cheops Pyramid, not only leads to the vault in which the king was buried, but also admits the light of a certain star to shine straight into the chamber once in a long period. Other men maintain that the measurements foretell all sorts of events in the history, not of Europe, but of Great Britain.

Anyway, though the meaning of the Pyramids is a bit difficult to see, you can get a splendid view of the country by climbing to the top of one of them. For a giant it would just be a simple matter of walking upstairs, but for the ordinary man it is a pretty stiff job to climb up those 4-foot 6-inch steps, and it is generally done by getting two Arabs to pull you and a third to push behind, and in this way you get there in the end.

THE SPHINX

Just in front of the three great Pyramids there sits, in a hollow, the huge statue of the Sphinx – a sort of lion with a human head.

The history of the Sphinx is not known, but it was supposed to be an oracle, that is, a sort of god who could give out warnings or advice to the people. Close under its body there is a small recess in which a priest used to hide. When people wanted to know anything of importance to the nation they came and asked the Sphinx. When they heard the priest's voice replying, they supposed it was the Sphinx speaking and behaved accordingly.

I noticed that part of the statue had been repaired lately, but when I asked when this had been done, our guide told me that it was done by the Romans before the time of Christ! But the repair was so neatly done that it looked as if it was quite recent.

Round the Sphinx a large amount of earth has been dug away, and a wonderful temple which had become buried under drifting earth has been revealed. It is wonderful because of the huge size of the blocks of granite used in its construction beautifully trimmed and squared and fitted together to form walls and doorways and arches, and looking as new as if just made instead of being over 5,000 years old.

TUTANKHAMEN'S TOMB

Certainly the most wonderful of all the wonderful things we saw in Egypt were the objects which Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Carter had discovered in the tomb of King Tutankhamen at Assuan.

The king's body (which has since been put back into its tomb) had been embalmed, and is in as good a state to-day as when it was first buried 3,000 years ago. It was packed round with reeds and sewn up in canvas, and was then put in a gold coffin shaped like a body, with a gold head beautifully modelled as a portrait of the dead king. This gold casket was then put into a wooden one, very fully decorated with painting and gold. This again was in another elaborate case. The whole mummy was then put into a small wooden chamber which was covered with gold plate richly engraved. This chamber was inside another larger one, and so on, with four gold chambers, the last being quite a room. Tutankhamen was buried in a fine great vault cut out of the rock.

AN ANCIENT SPEEDOMETER

In these chambers, and in the stone vault in which they were finally placed, were hundreds of priceless articles of all sorts and sizes. There were life-sized statues of men – beautifully modeled and decorated with gold clothing, there were chariots, several bedsteads supported on life-size models of lions; there were alabaster jars full of oil and scent; there were embalmed chickens and food for the dead man to eat in the next world.

Among things that would interest a Scout were a folding camp-chair and a camp-bed. Another up-to-date article was a kind of speedometer such as we have on motor-cars to-day. It was used on the chariots, and was a small wheel with sharp cogs on it. This little wheel was fixed on the axle of the chariot, and as it went round it pricked holes in a roll of linen. This could afterwards be taken off, and the number of holes in it gave the distance travelled.

There were heaps more things to see, but it would take too long to tell you about them here. You must make up your mind somehow to get to Egypt and see them for yourself.

Apart from the Pyramids and the Sphinx, the citadel, the Dead City, and the Tombs of the Kings, the Zoo is certainly one of the interesting things in Cairo.

As well as the many curious birds and beasts which have been caught and brought, there are a number of birds which have come to live there of their own accord. I suppose the captive ones have told them how comfortable they are and how well they are looked after.

Among the wild birds which came to the place were the ruff-necked herons, or egrets. These birds used to be largely hunted down by trappers and “gunmen” because their feathers were valuable for ornamenting ladies’ hats.

There was a great danger of them being killed off altogether. Some egret hunters in South America used to catch the birds, pluck out their feathers, and then let them go again to grow more. It was a cruel game, and it seemed an awful shame to hunt these harmless birds just for the sake of a silly fashion.

My cousin, Major Stanley Flower, who was the head of the Zoo in Cairo, made the discovery that these particular birds are not only harmless but are even most helpful to men. Their favourite food is a little worm that infests the cotton plant, and the cotton trade was suffering from the ravages of this terrible little pest.

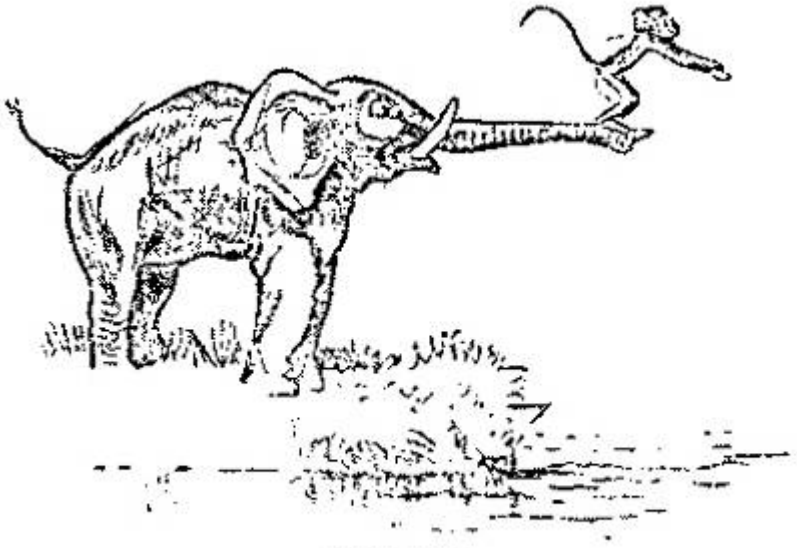
Major Flower set to work to save the egrets from the feather hunters so that the birds could be used to destroy the cotton worm, just as rooks destroy the wireworm in England. A few years before the war he had in the Zoo a little colony of fifteen egrets. Under his care they increased and multiplied into a large number, and he went about among the cotton growers and advised them to preserve the birds in their districts because they could be so helpful.

The consequence is that egrets are now common all over Egypt, and you see them stalking across the fields in long lines, killing off the worms. In one year it is calculated that these birds saved two million pounds’ worth of cotton. What do you think of that for a good turn to human beings by birds? But birds, as well as animals, also do good turns to each other.

BIG ENOUGH!

I heard of a Wolf Cub who, when asked what good turn he had done that day, confessed he had not been able to do one, largely because he thought he was too small. Well, he was talking nonsense, because nobody is too small to do a small good turn, even if it is only to smile at other people and so make them feel happier.

But a Cub is not so small as a bird, and I have just heard of more than one bird doing a good turn to another. Birds, of course, are rather like Scouts because they are always busy doing good turns to us either by singing or by destroying bad insects, but here is a case of their doing good turns to one another.



GOOD TURN!

Kindness of animals—with apologies to Carmi of *L'Illustration*.

The other day a man threw out some crumbs for the birds to eat, and a thrush flew down, carrying a lump on its back, and when it landed the lump hopped off and proved to be a sparrow that had somehow got injured in its leg and wing and could neither hop nor fly, so the thrush carried him about. When both of them had had enough of the crumbs, the sparrow clambered on to the thrush's back, and away flew the thrush to the bushes.

In another case, two men in a farmyard saw a swift which had been drinking in a pool of water fluttering violently, flapping its wings and squawking, evidently in great distress, but unable to get up off the ground to fly. They noticed then the cause of its alarm, which was a cat creeping up to stalk it.

One of the men was about to drive the cat off, when down from the sky there shot another swift who darted down to his friend in distress, caught him with his claws, and lifted him off the ground so that he was able to flap his wings in the air and so fly away.

V

THE RED SEA – PORT SUDAN – ADEN

THE Red Sea is a long narrow sea – between Asia and Africa – shaped like a long sausage tied up at one end by the Suez Canal, and at the other by the Straits of Babel Mandeb, where it joins the Indian Ocean. These straits are a narrow waterway about eight miles across, with the island of Perim in the middle.

If that island were armed with any big guns or warships it could prevent enemy's ships passing in or out of the Red Sea, just as Gibraltar with its guns and warships can stop ships using the Mediterranean. But Perim *has* got guns, and they are British guns! Also, as our ship rounded the corner of the island, there we saw, above the roofs of the village and barracks, the towering upper works of two British men-of-war anchored in the inner harbour behind them. But you must not think that Britain holds these important posts from any wish to go to war; quite the opposite: Britain has become a sort of policeman of the world and aims to prevent other nations fighting.

Perim must be a pretty solemn place to live in. It is only a small island; it hasn't got a tree or even a blade of grass; and it is terrifically hot!

"Is this Perim?"

Yet the story goes of a young officer who, when on garrison duty there, liked it so much that he volunteered to stay there even when his company was relieved by another. (It was considered such a dreary place that the soldiers who formed the garrison were only kept there for a short period at a time.) Their regiment was quartered at Aden, and as nobody else cared about the job, his brother officers felt very grateful to this young officer for taking on that unpleasant duty for them.

One day the colonel of the regiment, who had gone home on leave, was walking down Piccadilly in London, when whom should he meet but this young officer who was supposed to be on duty in Perim. Knowing that nobody was likely to visit him in that unattractive spot he had quietly taken passage in a ship and was having a good time at home while he ought to have been sweltering on Perim. So there was trouble!

About eight hours' steaming along the coast of Asia from Perim brought us to Aden. This is a bare, rocky mountain – an old volcano – sticking up in the sea and connected with the mainland by a long spit of sand. In many ways it is like Gibraltar. For one thing it flies the Union Jack, and, like Gibraltar, we found it not only defended by big guns, but also it had a large garrison of the Royal Air Force. In addition to this there were in the harbour other vessels of the Royal Navy. The British "Police Force" was strong there.

PORT SUDAN

South of Egypt and between Egypt and Abyssinia lies the Sudan, a vast country of hot, sandy deserts and rocky mountains, with the two branches of the River Nile running through it – the White Nile coming from Lake Victoria Nyanza in Uganda, and the Blue Nile rising in Lake Tana in Abyssinia. Alongside the river, for the many hundreds of miles of its length, the ground is fully cultivated. The two Niles meet at Khartoum, the capital of the Sudan. This is where Gordon was killed by the Sudanese fifty years ago, and this brought British troops on the scene.

The Sudanese are a fine type of native and exceedingly brave as fighting men, consequently we had a tough job in overcoming them. Now they are the best of friends with us.

From Khartoum a railway runs to the coast on the Red Sea, to Port Sudan. The journey from Khartoum to Port Sudan takes about twenty-four hours. From Khartoum to the southern border of the Sudan takes about a week on board the Nile steamer. So, you see, the Sudan is a pretty big country, and – oh, you don't want a geography lesson, you would like to know what we did and saw at Port Sudan.

Well – when our ship came alongside the wharf there we saw the usual crowd of white men in white clothes, shorts, and sun-helmets, and natives, smart policemen, white-robed Arabs, and then a new kind of native to us, the Fuzzy-wuzzies.

Fuzzy-wuzzy was the name given by the British soldiers to the wild Arabs of the Hadendowa tribe in the Sudan.

FUZZY-WUZZIES

It was given because these men wear their long, shaggy hair in a big mop on their heads. When they want to appear specially swell, they comb it up into a knob on top of the head, with a big blob on each side. When their faces are painted up and they are out on the war-path they look particularly ferocious.

And they *are* ferocious!

These fellows were, a few years ago, the toughest and bravest of our enemies. But those days are long forgotten, and these warriors are the best of friends with us now. Instead of fighting and raiding other tribes, as they used to do, they now peacefully load or unload ships in the port, singing cheerily all the time.

After their day's work is done some of these cheery workers go off to their homes, but not all: many of them merely wrap their sheets around them and lie down to sleep just where they happen to be. Some in the roadway, others alongside a wall. There was a big tarpaulin folded into a long roll which formed a sort of tunnel; into this two or three crept one after another and made it their dormitory. Another man had found a sort of trough where the main wheel of the electric crane ran; this just fitted his length and breadth, so he made it his bed for the night.

Looking at all this crowd, I felt a little disappointed at seeing only one Scout. But directly I landed there was a sudden roar, and out from their ambush behind the trucks on the railway there rushed a horde of wildly yelling Sudanese Scouts. They ran into horseshoe formation, and were suddenly silent, at the alert. A fine, cheery-looking lot, smartly dressed (with turbans instead of hats), and evidently well disciplined. They had one white Commissioner and several fine-looking native Scoutmasters.

One of the Scouts was wearing our bronze medal for gallantry in saving life. He had seen a boy being carried away by the Nile when it was in flood, but he plunged in at great risk to his life and managed to get to the drowning lad, and, with great difficulty, to save him.

These Sudanese are very plucky fellows, and though in the old days they proved pretty tough enemies against us, they have since showed themselves very brave and faithful as soldiers in our service.

I found that in addition to the Scouts belonging to Port Sudan there was also one Scout from every Troop in the country. Some of these boys had come a thousand miles to meet me. Most of them had never seen the sea or big ships, and many had never seen other Scouts before. So it was a great day for them, and greater still when they learned that it was the wedding-day of his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester.

THE RALLY

We had a further Rally in the evening, round the camp-fire. It was a ripping good show. The Scouts sang songs and did weird dances. One in particular fetched the crowd, where a Patrol of eight danced in single file round the fire, the Patrol Leader being dressed in a robe and playing a drum, and each boy dancing most ridiculous steps of his own.

Then they formed up in two lines facing each other and kept up the singing while each one in turn stepped out into the middle and danced a few fantastic steps; after which they danced off again in single file. It would be quite an easy and effective show for any Patrol to perform, provided that every fellow played the ass thoroughly well all the time.

Then they did some awfully good tumbling, one boy playing the clown and imitating each stunt grotesquely.

You may remember that I told you in my book "Scouting round the World," how the Scouts of the Pacific Islands in the Torres Straits acted so well in taking off and caricaturing the aborigines in Australia.

Well, a rather similar thing took place at this Rally in Port Sudan. The Sudanese rather look down on the Fuzzy-wuzzies as uncouth rustics. So, among other amusing sketches which they gave at the camp fire, one boy acted as proprietor of a barber's shop, and invited passers-by to come in and be shaved.

Presently a Fuzzy-wuzzy just in from the country came along, and as he was asked, he stepped into the shop. He had never seen a chair before and examined it carefully all over. When he was told to sit on it, he ran and jumped on to it as if it were a vicious camel, and twisting his feet round the legs he hung on tightly to it, expecting it to get up like a camel. After much business with the shaving, the barber asked him for payment. The rustic said he had nothing but an ox with which to pay, and furthermore, he didn't see why he should pay anything, as the barber had asked him to come and be shaved and he did so to oblige him!

A few miles inland from Aden is an Arab village called Sheikh Othman, after a saint whose shrine is there.

With the Mohammedans, if one of their priests rises to be so great that he can work miracles of healing sick people or bringing them good luck, he is honoured as a saint when he dies, and is buried with great ceremony in the mosque, just as with us most specially great men are buried in Westminster Abbey.

Well, Othman had done nothing particular to make himself worthy of such honour, but he was always imploring the authorities to grant him burial in the mosque when he died, just as you or I might ask the Dean of Westminster to have us buried in the Abbey. Of course they said, "No! You can't be buried there."

A MIRACLE!

But what do you think? When he died, somehow the authorities relented and told his friends that he might be buried in the mosque. So they said, "But this is marvellous! That Othman should have succeeded in getting the authorities to grant this burial is nothing less than a miracle; and a man who performs a miracle is a saint! "So after the funeral they promoted Othman a saint, and put up a shrine or chapel to his memory, where they can go and pray to him when they want his help.

Socotra is a small island off the entrance to the Red Sea, and is ruled by a native chief under the Governor of Aden.

A short time ago a British warship paid a visit to Socotra. When she came to anchor in the bay, a single native paddled out to her in a canoe. He spoke a little English, and said he had important business for the Captain, so he was allowed to come on board. When he was presented to the Captain he introduced himself as the "Port Officer of Socotra," and said he was very sorry, but he could not allow his ship to anchor there. Only British ships were permitted.

"But this is a British ship," the Captain replied.

"No," the Port Officer answered. "British ships fly the Union Jack, and you are flying a white flag with a red cross on it. That is not the Union Jack."

So the Captain sent for a white ensign and spread it on the deck.

The Port Officer said: "There you are! That's not the Union Jack."

The Captain said: "No, but look in that corner of it, and there you see the Union Jack protected by the Red Cross and White Flag of St. George of England. That is the

flag of the British Navy. And then look there, at the bow of our ship. There you see the Union Jack itself flying. So you see we are really a British vessel of His Majesty's fleet."

And the Port Officer replied: "M'yes. That is evidently so. In that case you may stay where you are." And he paddled off in his little canoe to tell the Sultan of the island that he had as a special case allowed the man-of-war to remain.

ADEN

Aden is a bare, rocky mountain – an old volcano – sticking up in the sea, and connected with the mainland by a long spit of sand. In many ways it is like Gibraltar. For one thing it flies the Union Jack, and, like Gibraltar, we found it not only defended by big guns, but also it had a large garrison of the Royal Air Force. In addition to this there were in the harbour no fewer than twenty vessels of the Royal Navy. The British "Police Force" was strong here.

Here, too, were three great liners on their respective ways to India, Australia, and East Africa, besides several tramp steamers, including one Italian. Her crew must have been interested to see all the excitement that their country had created by attacking the Abyssinians.

But, you see, the native tribes of several parts of Africa and Asia looked on this war as one of a white nation attacking a coloured one, and they feared that it might spread to white people everywhere attacking darkies. Thus there was danger of native tribes getting nervous and starting to attack the whites. So our ships and Air Forces had to be ready to go to the protection of the whites if needed at any time.

Fortunately, we British objected to the Italians making this war on the Abyssinians, so the natives in other places look on Britain as their friend, and the danger of their breaking out against us is not now very great. Still, it was good to know that Britain, like the Scouts, was determined to "Be Prepared."

We did not have a rally of the Scouts at Aden because we had had one here exactly a year ago, at our last visit. But there was a Posse of Welcome (as we call a Guard of Honour) of four boys from each Troop, and a very fine, smart-looking lot they were.

Also, there met me a party of Deep-Sea Scouts from the warships. There were about twenty of them in this squadron. Big, hefty fellows they were, dressed in their Rover Scouts' uniform, which the Naval authorities allow them to carry with them on board their ships. They had visited most parts of the world in the course of their service – India, Ceylon, China, Japan, Malay States. They evidently enjoyed their life at sea, almost as much as I do when voyaging over these warm summer seas and looking in at strange foreign ports.

Ashore, at Aden, one sees every kind of Eastern native, and crowds of them, Arabs, Somalis, Indians, Greeks, Jews. With these are camels everywhere. Camels carrying loads, camels pulling carts, camels carrying riders, and others dragging water-tanks and every camel walking as slowly as he possibly can and looking most contemptuous and superior. Long strings of them come in from hundreds of miles inland, bringing goods and firewood for sale, and going back again with other goods bought from the merchants in Aden.

THE TOWN

The town of Aden is right inside the crater of the old volcano, and thus is surrounded on all sides by high cliffs. It is a blazing-hot place anyhow, and with these high black walls all round it, which keep out any sea-breezes that may blow, it is all the more mightily hot.

The Europeans and the garrison do not live in the town, but on the hills overlooking the sea, where they do get a little cool air – sometimes!

When I first went there, years ago, they had no fresh-water supply, so had no gardens. There was a public square laid out with paths, and in the afternoon, after the heat of the day was over, the gardeners used to wheel out a lot of shrubs and bushes growing in tubs. These they dotted about to form a garden for the people to stroll about in in the cool of the evening or the early morning. Then the "Gardens" went back into their sheds to avoid the shrivelling heat of the day.

VI

BRITISH EAST AFRICA

IN the play called "Cavalcade" an ignorant kitchen-maid kept asking the other servants, "Where is Africa?" And they merely answered, "Oh, don't ask silly questions." – A good answer, because they didn't know themselves. So when the butler returned from being a soldier in South Africa, she asked him the same question, and he replied, "I don't know where it is, but it's jolly hot when you get there."

A friend of mine who is farming in Kenya was in London lately and was trying to explain to a lady whereabouts his farm was. He said, "You know where Lake Victoria Nyanza is?"

"Oh, yes."

"And you know where Nairobi is?"

"Yes."

"Well, my farm is about half-way between the two."

"Oh, I see. Well, then, do tell me where is Kenya?"

This quite flummoxed my friend. "Kenya! Why, that is the whole country in which are Nairobi and Lake Victoria and a hundred other places!"

It is wonderful how many people don't know of the great Dominions and Colonies that are under the British flag.

I hope that every Boy Scout knows where to find his Brother Scouts on the map, whether they are in Ceylon or Malaya, Singapore or Queensland, British Columbia or New South Wales, Kenya or Uganda, Tanganyika or Rhodesia. I love studying maps, don't you? And then I like to visit the countries whose place in the map I know.

Every Scout should learn about some part of the British Dominions, and then tell his friends all about it. Patrol leaders could do a lot of interesting work in this way with their patrols. I shall be telling you about Kenya and Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. If you don't know where they are, look them up in the atlas.

You will see that Kenya is on the East Coast of Africa just where the Equator comes. It runs inland for 800 miles, just south of Abyssinia, and ends at the great Lake Victoria. Uganda lies west of Kenya on the other side of the lake. The seaport of Kenya is Mombasa.

Our ship arrived off Mombasa at six in the morning, on a still, glassy sea, stifling hot without a breath of wind. The shore is a low-lying country, with hazy hills in the distance.

As we steamed into the narrow inlet which forms the Kilindini Harbour we found the shores densely clothed with bush, palm trees, and fat trunks of the baobab trees. Along the ridge facing the sea were white houses with red-tiled roofs and deep verandas, on Mombasa Island. As we passed the signal station and lighthouses, we could see Sea Scouts signalling to us a message of welcome, and a posse of them was on the wharf to receive us as we landed. A good-looking lot they were, of black boys and white boys, working together in the one Troop.

From Mombasa we went by train up to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, where we saw an excellent Rally of Scouts and Guides, Cubs and Brownies, numbering 800, and a jolly fine keen lot they were. Amongst other interesting side-shows at the Rally, one Troop had made excellent models of the various game-traps used in Africa.

KENYA AND UGANDA

To-day we have passed through one of the real "Outposts of the Empire," for having run north some 200 miles from Nairobi in our car, and passed through mile after mile of fine downlands and bush country very little inhabited, we came to a small collection of native shops and a smart little police post, with the Union Jack flying above a black-and-white gate – the gateway from Kenya out into the north.

All beyond this for 400 miles is a wilderness of thorn-bush and mountains, which forms the "No-man's-land" between Kenya and Abyssinia.

Having written down our names and business and the whereabouts of our camp, and having shown our licences for carrying arms, the police officer allowed us to go through the gate out into the wild.

SOS

There was only a very rough track, in horribly soft ground, ahead of us, and the officer warned us that we might find the first mile pretty difficult, but that if we wanted help he would supply some police and prisoners to pull us through. And, sure enough, before we had gone the greater part of a mile we were up to our axles in black mud of cotton soil, and we were sounding SOS on our horn.

This was quickly responded to by the police officer and the magistrate, both in shorts and shirts, together with native policemen and half a dozen native prisoners, who, enjoying this form of hard labour, very soon dug and heaved our car through the difficult half-mile, and sent us on our way rejoicing.

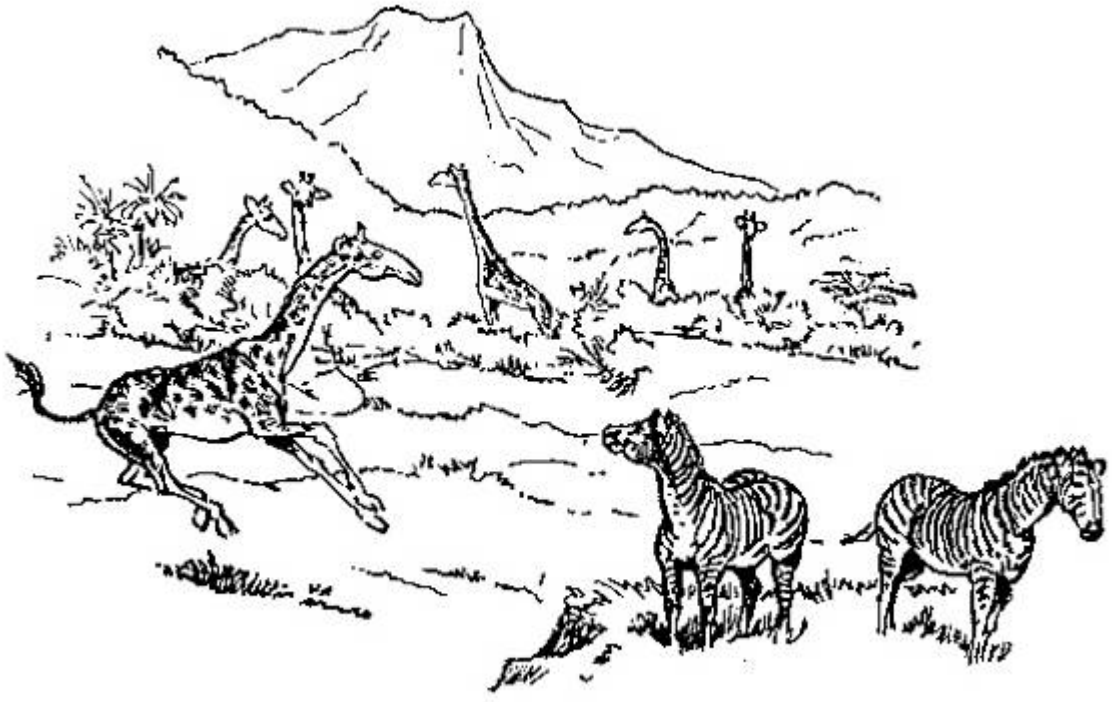
At this outpost we had met with natives of a kind new to us. They were largely of the Turkana and Somali tribes, quite different from those of Kenya – fine, hardy-looking fellows, carrying beautifully made spears for their protection against the lions that infest this wild country.

Somali spears are interesting weapons, beautifully made and balanced; they are somewhat on the lines of the Masai weapon, about six feet long, having a short wooden shaft with spearhead at one end, and a long, tapering spike at the other. Whereas the Masai spear is a very heavy one, that of the Somali is extremely light, and the wooden shaft is pliant. The object of the spike is that the spear can be stood up so that the blade is never blunted, and the blade itself is further protected by a neat little cover made of hide.

These natives travel with large droves of donkeys, goats, and cattle to sell in Kenya. We took two of the men with us as trackers, hoping to be able to stalk some of the wild game that roams through this vast range of bush

We pitched our camp some 25 miles north of the border, and have wandered some twenty miles still farther north in search of game.

Two hippos were in the stream alongside our camp last night. Everywhere is the spoor of rhinoceros and buffalo, and the grunting of lions was heard at night. We came upon two herds of giraffe, and spent some time watching these most ridiculous and lovable animals. They seem so awkward with their long, stiff necks and their huge limbs and very small heads. When they start off to canter, they slide and bounce gently along with very slow action, exactly like a slow-motion picture on the cinema screen. They formed a curious contrast to their neighbours, the sturdy, fat little zebras.



We have heard, and still hope to see, lions and hyenas, and in our first day have come across some fourteen different species of antelope, apes, and great birds.

The birds include flocks of storks, such as one sees in Germany, marabout storks looking like pensive old gentlemen with their hands behind their backs; ostriches trying to look majestic while they only look ridiculous; secretary birds stepping rather indignantly at being disturbed; great bustard, known as a pau in South Africa, a fine bird for the pot, weighing some thirty pounds. Though one of the biggest birds, he is said to be related to the smallest of game birds, the button quail.

We saw vultures wheeling in great spirals overhead, swooping down directly there is something dead to guzzle, though how they find out the presence of a dead animal in this vast wilderness has long puzzled naturalists. Have they a phenomenal sense of smell, or is their eyesight so marvellous as to spot a dead thing at a distance?

Personally, I think it is their eyesight that serves them well, and that, watching from high up in the sky, they see animals devouring a kill, or other carrion-eating birds flocking to the spot, and so get led to investigate the matter for themselves. Guinea-fowl are to be seen everywhere. Their familiar call, "Come back, come back," reminds us of the farmyard at home, and almost makes us homesick! But not quite.

BABOONS AND GAZELLES

Now and again we come across families of the half-human baboons – mothers carrying their funny little infants on their backs as they stroll along on all-fours, followed by papa and elder brothers as a rear-guard for their protection. These are nasty-tempered, great fellows with powerful limbs and big teeth, their tails cocked stiffly and defiantly.

Antelope of the Grant and Thompsons' gazelle species are everywhere. Pretty, graceful things they are, and very active. With them are troops of zebra, looking fat and well-fed, and very smart in their turn-out of clean black and white stripes.

Then there are the curious little gazelle with extraordinary long necks – evidently playing at being giraffes. Their name locally is "Gerunuk." Here in the Northern Territory they are fairly common, though rare elsewhere. Here also are to be found kudu, which are not seen elsewhere in Kenya. Also the great buffalo – the most savage, bold, and dangerous animal in the jungle.

The fellow I like best for his handsome looks is the oryx, a big grey, black, and white buck with long, straight horns. A quaint little animal among the many we saw was the kitate, which is like a small weasel, and lives in the ant-heaps which in this country are a pile of hardened earth some three to six feet high. These little fellows are easily caught and readily tamed as pets.

A mountain with a flat top and precipitous sides stands up boldly among the many peaks in this district. The natives had a tradition that a special breed of giant elephants has occupied this plateau since the beginning of the world, but have been unable to come down into the jungle with the rest of the world.

OUR CAMP

Some adventurous sportsman, hearing of this wonderful herd, made an expedition to shoot or capture specimens of this phenomenal monster. In our wanderings, however, we could see the back of the mountain, and we realised that it slopes gradually down to the plain and in no way confines a special specimen of mammoth to its top.

Our camping arrangements are very like those you employ at home, only that we have native servants to do the work, and this makes us very fat and lazy. At the same time we have some excuse because the weather is hotter than anything you ever get at home. We have to do our walking and stalking partly by moonlight and in the very early morning or late afternoon.

Mosquitoes, as you know, are dangerous beasts in Africa, because when they bite you they can put into you a germ or two of fever, and so bowl you over. We have all to dose ourselves every evening with quinine as a preventive against fever.

We leave the cooking to our native servants. They are excellent fellows, very quiet, and clever at camping and making gadgets. Water is difficult to find in this country, and though we are camped alongside a stream it is so muddy and dirty from the wallowing of hippos and rhinos that we can only use it as a kind of mud bath for washing. To get drinking-water we have to dig a deep hole near the stream and the water soaking through the soil gets filtered and comes out quite clear and sweet.

At night we build a great camp-fire before we turn in. It is not for a sing-song, but is kept alight all night in order to keep lions away. For the same reason we hang a lighted lantern outside each tent, which you don't have to do at home! Nor at home are you kept awake as I was last night, listening to an old lion grunting his surly "*ee-ugh*" as he strolled along in the moonlight, to the yowl of the hyena, and to the barking shout of the baboon close round our camp. To us it was all a delightful concert.

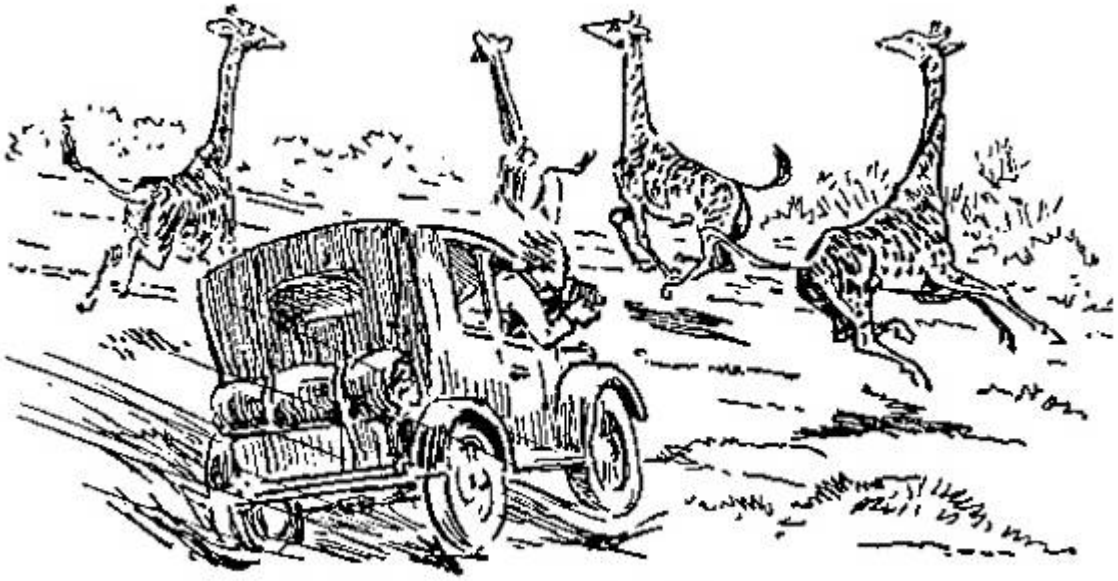
Many years ago, when I was on Lake Victoria Nyanza in Uganda, I heard from the natives that a monster lived in the lake, called the Iquata. He must have been very like the Loch Ness Monster – many professed to have seen him, but few could say what he looked like. Well, to while away the time on board the steamer, I drew a fanciful sketch of how I thought he must appear. At the foot of it I wrote, "Sketched on board s.s. *Florence*, Lake Victoria, at 9 a.m. on 23rd January, 1907." When people read this they said, "How wonderful! So you actually saw this creature." No – I never said I saw him; I merely said I made the sketch at that time and date.

Another time I made a spoof picture of a man doing an impossible thing – namely, pig-sticking off a camel's back. Of course, we do pig-sticking in India on horseback, but off the top of a jigging old camel it would indeed be a puzzle. Still, because I drew a picture of it, everybody who saw it thought it must be true.

Now I have drawn you another curious sketch which you might imagine was another spoof picture, but it isn't. It is what I really saw in Kenya. We were driving through some wild country in a motor-car when we espied what looked to be a number of bare tree-stems leaning at different angles above the bushes. They had little tufts at their tops. Then one or two moved, and we realised that they were giraffes (locally called Twiga) staring at us over the bushes, with their long necks stretched high and their big ears pricked.

THE PIG-STICKING SPOOF PICTURE

So we turned our car into the bush and moved gently towards them in order to get a nearer view. They allowed us to come fairly close before they began to move off. Then, leaving the bush, they walked with arched and nodding necks across an open, flat plain. As we moved more quickly towards them they started to canter. You never saw such a ridiculous sight in your life. These great, ungainly creatures, with their bodies rising higher and higher towards the withers and then running up into those extraordinarily long necks with sweet little heads at the top (seventeen feet above the ground), and their great long legs straddling about in a most uncouth way, looked like giant mechanical toys.



TRYING TO GET A CLOSE-UP

They cantered along, bouncing off the ground in long, slow strides, just as if in a slow-motion picture. So, the ground being fairly flat, we put on speed in order to come up with them; but do what we could, they kept easily ahead, still keeping that slow pace, but covering the ground very rapidly with the great length of their stride. However, we managed to overtake them at last, going at thirty miles an hour, and had a splendid close-up view of them. It was an exciting chase!

In the course of it, I tried to take pictures of them with a movie camera, but I don't suppose these could have been successful, since the car was bounding and leaping about as it flew over the ground, and I could not get an accurate aim at the beasts. This sketch, however, will give you some sort of idea as to what they looked like – and it is *not a spoof* picture!

TWIGA DRINKING

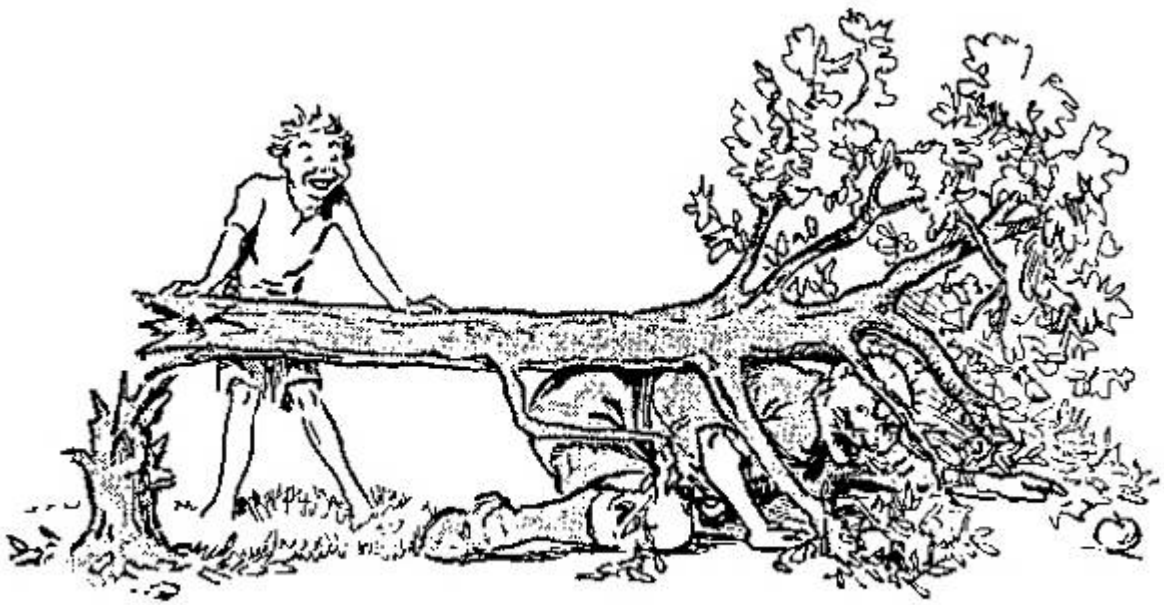
Of course, to hustle wild game about, even if you don't shoot, is not "cricket"; one wants to get on friendly terms with the animals and persuade them that they have nothing to fear from man ; and so to observe them more closely. But we wanted to see if they could go any faster. And we found that they could go!

UP A TREE!

Once a boy was up a tree where he had no business to be. The owner of the tree ordered him to come down, but the boy knew he was in an apple-tree – and apples can supply you with food and drink for a long time, so he elected to remain up the tree and declined the old gentleman's invitation to come down.

THE—

BITER—



BIT !

Well, I have been up a tree. I don't mean that I've been in trouble. No, I mean I have been up in a tree for sixteen hours, with wild animals playing about below me. But I didn't mind, there was food and drink better than apples up in that tree. There was actually a little house, with two rooms in it which an old Boy Scout had built there, right in the jungle, in Kenya.

He had selected a tree which overlooked an open glade in the forest where there was a waterhole at which the animals came to drink at night. So he had rigged up this quaint little house where people could come and spend the night watching the animals.

We had to go there in the afternoon, because by evening the animals would be coming to drink. Once he went there a bit late, about sundown, and found so many rhinoceroses had congregated round his tree that he had to come away.

So we went pretty early, our guide carrying a rifle ready loaded in case of an attack, as we filed silently through the bush to get to our tree. There we had to climb a thirty-foot ladder, to find ourselves on a balcony running right round the bungalow, and giving an excellent view of the open space below us. There were comfortable beds if we wanted them, and cooking stoves, food, and rugs, and – an electric searchlight. But there was no going to bed for us. It was too exciting watching for beasts to appear.

Of course, we could not talk, because the lowest murmur of the human voice carries a long way in the bush to ears not accustomed to hearing it. So we soon got into the habit of talking only in whispers. We wore rubber-soled shoes or crept about in stockinged feet so that we should not make a sound.

Our care was rewarded, for before long we saw a buck come quietly out of the forest with his big ears pricked and his head turning suspiciously from side to side before he would come fully into the open. He was a small buck called a duiker (pronounced "dyker").

He was a useful buck to us because he acted as sentry. He would stand perfectly still for half an hour, always listening, always suspicious, and directly he smelled or

heard or saw anything on the move, he would jump away to safety. In this way he told us before we heard or smelled or saw anything that some other animal was coming.

Then there swaggered into the open a fine great buck, a waterbuck, upstanding, with his head thrown back and gazing about him very haughtily, as if to say, "Come on, anybody – if you dare!" But really he is not so dangerous as he looks, and suddenly he jumps round and gallops off into the bush because he has sniffed something suspicious in the air.

There appears a monstrous-looking animal. I couldn't make out at first what it was, with its dark, hairy back moving through the long grass, till it came out into the open and showed itself to be a Forest Pig with great white tusks. It was followed by three half-grown sows, and then a tiny baby pig. The whole family sploshed eagerly into the muddy pool below us, and after stirring it up till it was as thick as pea-soup they drank and sucked it down with evident relish.

After about five minutes the old boar retreated out of the mud, followed by the little squeaker, and stood waiting for the other three. You could almost see him saying, "Oh, come on, you girls. You've had enough." And them saying in reply, "What's the hurry? Just one more sip. I'm so thirsty." At last they had had enough, and solemnly filed back into the jungle.

Soon we heard a heavy wheezing, as if a fat, old gentleman were walking up a hill and puffing and blowing very loudly, and then there waddled slowly into the open – not an old gentleman, but a fat old lady rhinoceros, with a still fatter calf-rhino following close behind her.

They looked rather like gigantic pigs, but with very heavy heads which they seemed scarcely able to lift – the older one's head being specially heavy with a big, thick horn on the end of her nose.

These two splashed into the muddy pool which had already been well muddied up by the wild-pig family. They plugged about in it, their feet as they drew them out of the mud making a strong sucking noise. When they had got the mud almost thick enough to make bricks with, they proceeded to drink it. The little one let himself lie in it while he drank, lazy little beggar!

Then we turned the searchlight on to them to get a better view. In a moment the mother rhino sprang round with wonderful quickness, and gave a tremendous snort which sounded exactly like a locomotive blowing off steam in a single short but startling blast. The next moment she and the youngster had gone!

Another rhino appeared later on in the night – in fact many did. We saw eleven altogether that night, but this particular one made its entrance in a comic way. Four waterbuck were parading, each swanking about to show that he was handsomer than the others; the others looking at him disdainfully, trying to look one better and saying: "D'you think I'm afraid of you! I'm the bloke that's afraid of nothing. Show me a lion, and I'd show you what I'd do with him." At that moment there was a sudden crashing and snorting in the bush. The buck did not wait to show their bravery, they dived off in every direction into the jungle, as into the open came a big branch of a tree, carried entangled on the horn of a fat rhino. He was in quite a bad temper about this beastly plant getting in his way, snorting and cursing till at last he managed to shake it off.

Yes, we saw lots of strange and interesting animals that night in the moonlight, and next morning at early dawn. Besides the big ones we saw tiny gazelles no bigger than

a hare, we saw jackals and porcupines and ‘possums, but best of all was the moment when there suddenly and noiselessly appeared the huge, black form of an elephant, with long, white tusks gleaming in the moonlight.

He came slowly swinging towards us, feeling about with his trunk out in front of him, and after wandering all round the muddy pool he decided he wouldn’t really stop for a drink, thank you. Instead he came squelching slowly along towards us, nearer and nearer, and finally walked straight under our tree, and crashed his way through the bushes into the forest behind us.

The last animal we saw that morning just as we were about to have breakfast was one more fat old rhino, a regular old gentleman who had been having a night out and was solemnly waddling along on his way home. He thought he would just look in and have a final drink at this particular bar. He had a long suck at it, and then quietly waddled off, homeward bound, in the broad daylight.

And then we came down from our crow’s nest after a delightful experience of seeing wild animals in their natural state and carrying on their natural lives in the jungle.

Why do I like Africa? Well, because you can get away from cinemas and jazz, motor-buses and crowds, noisy streets, stuffy with petrol-exhaust fumes, and all the artificial life which we call civilisation.

No, give me the open veldt and its glorious sunshine, where you live face to face with Nature, the mountains and the jungles, and the wild folk that live in them. That’s where I’ve just been in Kenya and Tanganyika, and that’s where I want to be again.

Of course, I like fishing, and you get the best of trout fishing here, but it has a bit of relish with it which you don’t get in England. I mean to say, at home you see such notices as this:

“Trespassers will be prosecuted.”

Out here the notice reads:

“Trout fishers beware of rhinos in this valley.”

A man was fishing in the stream that runs through the garden of the Outspan Hotel at Nyeri. His wife got tired of watching him and went for a stroll up the hill above him. She came back faster than she went! She had gone up a path into the wood and there met a herd of elephants coming down.

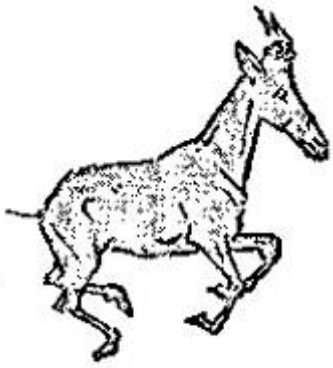
I passed a wire fence on my way to fish. On it were strung numbers of old tin cans, petrol tins, and so on. "What are you playing at here?" I asked.

"Oh, that ? That is to keep out the rhinos and zebras. They bump against the fence, and the clatter frightens them off; otherwise they'd go straight through it."

They are jolly folk, those zebras. They go about in herds like a lot of playful, fat ponies, very proud of their black and white stripes, but always kicking and biting at each other. I am fond of them because once they helped me to get a hartebeeste, or kongoni as he is called here.

AMONG THE ZEBRAS

The kongoni is a very wary old beast, always on the look-out for enemies – and this one that I was after was a specially fine one, and particularly on the alert, standing on a mound in the middle of an open flat plain. How was I to get near him? I was riding a pony. So, seeing a herd of zebras strolling about near me, I rode round them and drove them towards the kongoni. Off they started at a gallop, and I followed, completely hidden in the dust they kicked up, and so got within close distance of the buck. He haughtily declined to be disturbed by the antics of a few hare-brained zebras – and so met his fate.



KONGONI, THE STIFF-NECKED BOUNCER

They are comic fellows, these kongoni. They're a stiff-necked lot they seem to have their heads and necks fixed at an angle which they never alter, and when they canter they bounce stiffly off and on to the ground. We buzzed after one in a motor-car the other day, and though we trod on the gas and sent her along at good speed, we never came up to him. He never seemed to stretch himself to a gallop; he just bounded along stiffly but at a great pace.

Of course, the comedian of the jungle is the rhinoceros. He is a most uncouth beast, and I don't think he is quite all there in the head. I am sure all the other animals laugh at him as a great joke.

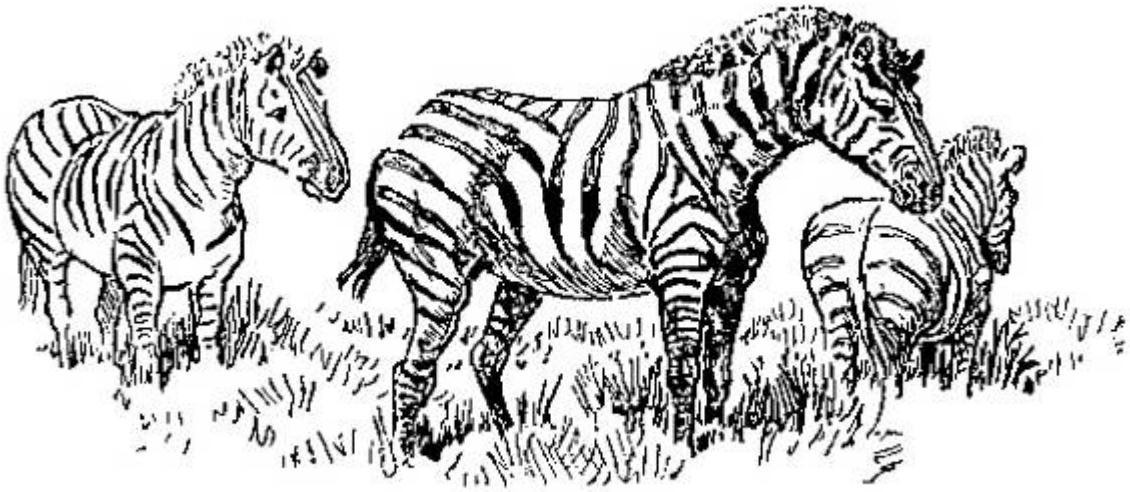
"LIKE A STARTLED FAWN!"

For one thing, he is very short-sighted, and does not see you if you are more than fifty yards away, or if you stand absolutely still – freezing. But where he fails in eyesight he makes up in hearing well with his ragged old ears, and he has got a powerful nose – he can sniff you ever so far away.

I was told an amazing yarn recently of two rhinoceroses who heard each other moving, and each thought the other must be an enemy, so they both started to attack, and finally charged towards each other. But just before they collided, their eyesight began to work and told each that his opponent was a rhino. So they both stopped suddenly, and feeling very foolish they started to graze, pretending that they hadn't been attacking at all!

We saw one rhino wallowing in a muddy pool. He didn't see us, but when we clicked a camera he stopped his bath, listened for a moment, and then sprang away like a

startled fawn, giving at the same time a loud snort from his nostrils like a blast from a steam-engine.



ZEBRAS—LIKE FINGER PRINTS, NO TWO ARE MARKED EXACTLY ALIKE

UGANDA

From Kenya you pass north-westward, by train, to Uganda, going round the north end of Lake Victoria Nyanza to do so.

Uganda lies about 1,000 miles from the coast, near the centre of Africa. Being hot and damp, it is a great country for cotton-growing.

A 24-HOURS-OLD VILLAGE

Last year in Australia we saw some wonderful houses known as “Boro” houses. They were nothing wonderful to look at. They were just nice, pretty bungalows. The wonderful thing about them was that they could be built in twenty-four hours. You might buy a bit of land, and within a day you would have your house there ready to live in.

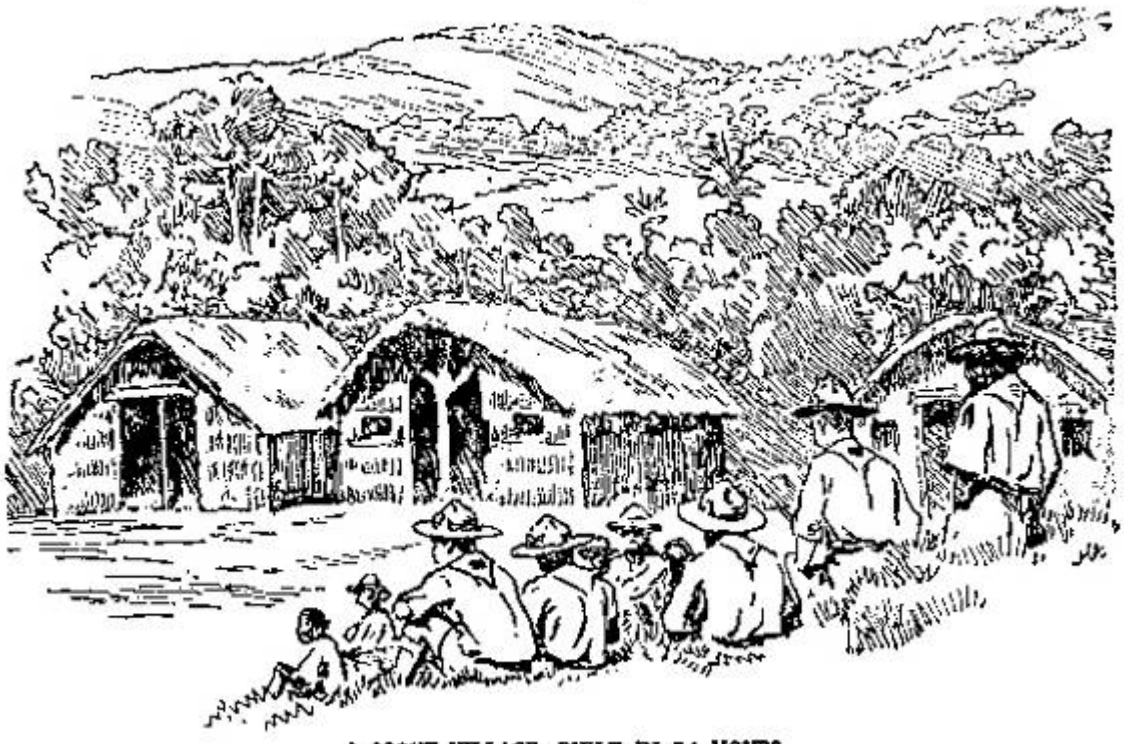
Here in Uganda I have just seen a whole village of twenty-four hours’ standing, where yesterday there was nothing but bare ground. They were even more wonderful than “Boro” houses for this reason: the “Boro” houses are all made up in pieces ready to put together where wanted, but with the houses I have just seen it is different, as the materials for making them have to be found, cut, and put together all within the twenty-four hours.

POLE AND REED HUTS

These houses or huts are made of poles and reeds and long grass by the Scouts. They don’t buy tents and then have to carry them to where they want to camp; they just go to the place and there build themselves these little houses. And most comfortable houses they were, with wicker walls and thickly thatched roofs and floors covered with matting woven on a camp loom.

Each hut held half a Troop, with a bunk partitioned off for the Scoutmaster. In rear of each hut was its thatched kitchen, with camp oven and fireplace made of clay.

Also there were the usual – and some unusual – camp gadgets, including racks for staves and bicycles.



A SCOUT VILLAGE, BUILT IN 24 HOURS

The Scout "village" was built on a wide semicircle, enclosing half the parade and camp-fire ground. It was beautifully smart and clean.

And so were the Scouts!

There were 500 of them living in camp, and 600 more attended the Rally, as well as 500 Girl Guides. They were all natives, except for two troops of Indians, and were all cheery, hefty fellows and keen Scouts.

By night, in the light of a blazing fire, the Emperor chose which of his warriors should be chief.

We were there, and saw the Emperor standing stern and dignified, while before him, to the roar of drums, there paraded the best fighting men of his army. Almost naked they were, but decorated with plumes and heads and armed with shields and spears, they danced and howled themselves hoarse in their enthusiasm.

One by one they came forward, and each in turn hurled himself about and showed how he had killed his man in battle. Each had some different way in which he did it, and shouted his account of it as he went through the performance of his heroic act. At its close he rushed up to the Emperor to hear his verdict, but in every case he was waved aside as the next was called on to show his mettle.

It was marvellous to see the violent antics these warriors went through – one especially had a way of rushing along, leaping into the air, and then hurling himself flat on his face, and then bounding up again to rush forward and repeat the performance.

The Emperor wasn't a real Emperor, nor were the warriors real warriors ; their spears were harmless reeds, and their plumes were grass and leaves. They were just

native Boy Scouts giving a turn at the camp-fire at Budo. But it was a splendid performance.

There were many other good shows in the programme that night, and though it was far away in Central Africa, the camp-fire was very like any such entertainment at home, and the boys, though black, were just as full of fun and enthusiasm as their white brothers in Britain.

VII

AFRICA FROM THE AIR

OFF AGAIN!

HAVE you ever been up in an aeroplane? If so, you will know what a jolly feeling it gives you once you are settled into your seat behind the pilot and the engine roars out and you taxi across the ground at a tremendous pace, and presently the ground is going lower and farther from you and you are afloat in the air.

I wanted to get from Nyeri, in Kenya, to Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanganyika Territory, to attend a Rally there. To do so I had to go

From Nyeri to Nairobi . . . 1 day
Nairobi to Mombasa . . . 1 day
Steamer to Dar-es-Salaam . . 2 days
(if there was a steamer going on that day).

But there was not a steamer available for several days. So I took a short cut and went by aeroplane direct from Nyeri, and the journey that would have taken four days took a little over four *hours*!

In a few moments after starting we were getting a bird's-eye view of the little township which we had left, and were sailing quietly over a vast expanse of green country. It consisted mainly of grassy hills and woods and deep valleys with tiny rivers wandering through them. Here and there were farms and little groups of native kraals little circular straw huts, surrounded by a thorn fence to keep out lions and hyenas. But generally the country was wild, waiting for more settlers to come and occupy it.

Astern of us was the snow-capped peak of Mount Kenya, and in a short time we sighted large coffee plantations and neat farms and, finally, the widespread township of Nairobi. Here we circled round and finally found ourselves taxi-ing up to the very door of the aerodrome sheds.

UNICORNS!

Here we took in a big supply of petrol for the Long "hop" of 500 miles that lay before us. In a few minutes we were off again, and saw below us what looked like a herd of cattle. They were gnus, or wildebeeste!

The gnu is supposed to be the unicorn, which you see in the Royal Coat of Arms, because it has a body rather like that of a horse, and its horns curl downwards and then point to the front so that when you see them sideways-on the horn seems to stick out of the forehead of the animal.

The country to the south of Nairobi is quite different from the green country which we had left to the north; it is a vast open, rather dry-looking plain, and this is kept as a reserve for wild animals. So, from the moment of starting, we were on the look-out for them.

Looking down we saw from time to time, straight below us, small groups of different kinds of buck ; at one time it was oryx, at another eland, then hartebeeste. Then there was a shout of "twiga!" – that is, "giraffe"; and there they were, with their ridiculous long, straight necks. Zebra, too, we saw – any amount of them.

Generally the animals did not seem alarmed at our aeroplane flying over them, though in one or two cases they dashed off for a few yards startled, and then stood looking about.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS

As we got higher, the animals grew smaller and smaller, till they were tiny dots, and then the country began to look like a map laid out below us.

By and by a huge bank of cloud loomed up in front of us, and presently, out of the top of it, a particularly bright, white patch shone in the sunshine. It was the snow on top of Mount Kilimanjaro, and, looking down, we saw that we were over crags and peaks of mountains.

What seemed strange was that a few minutes previously we had been quietly moving over the ground below, now we seemed to be standing still, and the clouds were rushing towards us. But we were not standing still; it was we who were rushing towards the clouds. The truth was that we had risen higher, to a height of over 10,000 feet, and the ground was now so far below us that it did not show us how fast we were moving.

Over these mountains we got a few "bumps," that is, our aeroplane would suddenly give a drop down of a foot or two, and then get a heavy jar from below as if it had bumped on a rock. At other times it would suddenly lean over to one side or the other. This sometimes makes travelers air-sick, but it did not affect any of us, and we thoroughly enjoyed the change, when, after climbing through the clouds over the mountains, we sailed down again into sunshine, over level country, and finally over the sea.

Yes, we had reached the coast. In the distance was the great island of Zanzibar.

Our way lay south along the coast, over marshes, swamps, and muddy rivers, on one side, and the white beach and blue and green sea on the other. In passing over one of the rivers – although it was muddy – we were lucky enough to see some hippopotamuses having their morning dip – great, fat, cheery lumps they looked, like well-stuffed sausages.

Then, by and by, among all the greenery of the bush we began to see little, red-roofed farm houses with trim fields and plantations around them, till finally we sighted the houses and villas, the gardens and harbour of Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanganyika.

In a few minutes we made a quiet circle over the place ; the little green dots and red squares that meant trees and roofs below us gradually came up nearer to us and showed themselves to be tall palms and houses, and once more we quietly touched ground and ran up to the aerodrome, which meant the end of our flight.

ZANZIBAR

Here in Zanzibar my bedroom has a tiled floor and a lovely carpet over the centre part of it. It is six o'clock in the morning, and although the carpet is beautifully soft to tread upon, I prefer to walk, with my feet bare, on the tiles. Why? Because it is so jolly hot, and the tiles are cool. I had to get up once or twice in the night to let my mattress get cool before I lay down again.

My wig! It can be warm here! And the wireless tells us that in England they are having fog, bitter cold, and not an hour of sunshine. Poor things!

A silent-footed black servant has just brought me some tea and some ripe mangoes lovely fruit, but very messy to eat, so that I shall have to go and wash after eating them, before I can go on with this story.

A SPLENDID RECORD

Yesterday we had a jolly Scout Rally of Arab and Indian Scouts, not a white boy among them, because there are no white boys in this hot place. They gave some good displays, and they are specially good at swimming. Forty-nine of them held the bronze medal of the Royal Life Saving Society, and twenty-five of them held the silver medal for good swimming and knowledge of life saving – seventy-four out of 360 boys ! Can you Scouts in Britain beat that?

The Scouts gave excellent displays of camping, cooking, hut-building, etc. One rather novel display was to show me how they climb palm trees to get the coco-nuts. The boy makes a pair of loops in a short bit of rope about a foot long. He puts his feet into the loops, and thus gets a foothold on the tree as he swarms up it.

SIAFU DANCE

A new thing which we saw in Zanzibar was the Siafu dance, by Cubs. Siafu means big black ants, and the dancers were supposed to be hopping first on one foot, then on the other, to get out of the ants' way, and then they slapped themselves to knock the ants off whichever part of them the ants were supposed to be on. They did it this way: Two boys faced one another, dancing in time to the chorus sung by the rest of the pack sitting round them. Two of the pack held a staff near the ground, which they banged in

time to the music, and the dancers had to dance with their feet on each side of the staff. The song went something like this:

Dancers: “Oh, the ants!”
Chorus: “They’re on your arm.”
Dancers: “Oh, the ants!”
Chorus: “They’re on your head.”
Dancers: “Oh, the ants!”
Chorus: “They’re on your tummy!”

And so on – the dancers slapping the ants wherever they were told by the chorus. I wonder which pack will be the first to dance the Siafu in England?

Zanzibar, as you know – or if you don’t know, you ought to know – is an island close to the coast of East Africa, and close to the Equator. It is very thickly wooded with palm and clove trees. It is ruled by a Sultan under the protection and direction of Great Britain, and used to be the chief slave-trading place in the East. As many as 50,000 people were collected there from Africa by the Arabs and then sold as slaves. Then Great Britain came along and put a stop to slavery, and had officers stationed in Zanzibar to see that the trade was not carried on again.

When I was there, years ago, the Sultan had died and an Arab adventurer, with a number of followers, seized the palace and said he was now the Sultan and meant to have slaves again. He had only one ship as his navy, and she opened fire on the British warship that was stationed there, but missed her. The British ship said “Hullo! What’s this?” and answered back with her guns, and in less than three minutes the Sultan’s navy was at the bottom of the sea! I saw her masts sticking up out of the water long afterwards. The next day there were three British battleships in the bay, and turning their guns on the palace, they blew it to bits in very quick time.

HOW IT HAPPENED

Everybody was greatly surprised at the British Fleet appearing so promptly on the scene, for within forty-eight hours there were ships present from all parts of the Indian Ocean ; and this before the days of wireless. How on earth did the admiral manage to call them all together? Well – the admiral let me into the secret. A year previous to this, the ships had been together for manoeuvre practice, and before separating to their different stations they had agreed to meet at Zanzibar on a certain date to have a cricket tournament, and that date happened to be the date which this adventurer had chosen for his rebellion. So the two things clashed, unfortunately for the rebel!

To-day the Sultan is an exceedingly nice, loyal subject of the King, and his son, the Crown Prince, had been a Scout, and now that he is grown up he is president of the Boy Scouts of Zanzibar.

The town of Zanzibar is an interesting old place, with very narrow streets and houses, shut in between high walls with massive great doors both to serve as prisons for the slaves and for defence against raiders coming to steal the slaves. The old slave-market has been pulled down, and the English Cathedral has been built where it stood.

CLOVES

When your ship arrives at Zanzibar and before you land you get a weird smell – or rather two smells. One will remind you of a dog that has been dead for about two weeks, and the other is the scent of carnations.

The dead-dog aroma really comes from bits of shark which the natives dry in the sun and use as a great delicacy for food. The other scent really comes from cloves. Cloves, you know, are those little black pips that you find in apple puddings. I adore apple puddings, don't you? But I don't think that with all the apple puddings we eat we could use enough cloves to make a great industry; and yet the chief trade in Zanzibar is cloves. It is the only place in the world where cloves grow. They grow on trees, in the shape of small blossoms which are picked and dried.

The badge of the Boy Scouts in Zanzibar is the threefold flower of the clove. I saw in Zanzibar three huge warehouses with thousands of tons of cloves stacked ready to be exported. So I said to the manager: "You surely don't expect us to eat such a number of apple puddings as to use all that lot of cloves?"

"Oh, no," he said. "They don't all go into apple puddings. Most of them go to Java and Sumatra, where they are mixed with other spices which are largely used by the people of China and India in preparing their food."

PORTUGUESE SCOUTS

Here I am in Lourenço Marques, otherwise known as Delagoa Bay, the principal port in Portuguese East Africa. I was here thirty-nine year ago. That time, the moment I landed I went down with a go of fever. This time, the evening before we arrived here – down I went again with a go of fever!

History is said to repeat itself, and so it did in my case!

The worst of it was that on this occasion the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides had paraded on the quay to welcome us, and both the Chief Guide and I were in bed with fever when we arrived, and were unable to land. However, during the night I swallowed every kind of drug, pill, and medicine that the ship's doctor could think of, and when the Scouts and Guides again paraded this morning I got up and got into my Scout uniform and went ashore to inspect them.

I was very tottery and dizzy – for fever knocks you out very quickly, but I went round all the ranks of Rovers and Scouts and Cubs and Girl Guides and Brownies. I must say they were a surprisingly fine lot – the Rovers, especially, big upstanding fellows – and all were very smartly and correctly turned out in uniform.

Also they wore a great number of badges of proficiency, showing that they were not merely parade Scouts, but were good at their work.

I was not altogether taken aback by this, because we had called two days previously at another Portuguese port – Beira – and had there seen an equally fine lot of Scouts. We visited their very nice headquarters, and then, as it was late evening, we attended their jolly camp-fire.

A very cheery camp-fire it was, and though we did not understand a word of their lingo we roared with laughter at some of their patter songs and choruses. Then they sang some excellent solos to the accompaniment of guitars. Also they did a lot of awfully clever tumbling stunts.

Altogether we came away highly pleased with our brother Scouts of Portugal, who are quite up to the standard of those whom we had seen in Lisbon and Madeira.

Another good point about them is that they are great friends with the neighbouring British Scouts in Rhodesia and the South African Union. They go camping together and exchanging visits, and a good contingent of them is coming to take part in the Jamboree in South Africa at East London.

Well, that's all for the present – my head's buzzing, my wits have gone astray, I am going to have a sip of lemonade, and then make an attempt to go to sleep and to get rid of this silly fever.

I expect I caught it when we were travelling in the wild country, which is a fever country, to the north of Kenya.

However, I hope in a few days to get over it and be all right for a Jamboree at East London. I am spending my time in bed on board the *Incomati*, lazily and comfortably, but with a dismal headache and tremendous thirst and no appetite.

WHALING

It doesn't tend to raise one's spirit, but looking out of my port I see something which depresses me still more – and that is a great whaling station, with big ships and little ships lying off it.

They are all Norwegian, and it makes me feel once more that there are British men not showing the spirit of adventure they used to.

Australia is hungering for men and would accommodate quite 250,000 of them, and so could South Africa, but they are content to sit at home and not make the effort:

They don't want to cross the seas
But sit at home and sneeze
And freeze.

But I hope that Boy Scouts – especially Sea Scouts – will see if they can't do something to remedy this want of adventure.

You have the spirit in you if you only like to put your ideas into practice, just as those men from Norway have done. They have come here to a foreign country, they have established a fishery for whales, and this year alone they have killed 1,700 whales, and every whale means tons of oil for which they can get the highest prices ever known. So they are making their fortunes while we stay at home and sneeze.

Long before daylight their ships slip out of harbour, and as soon as it is light enough to see any distance from the ship, the look-out man goes aloft and sits in the crow's-nest scanning the sea for the tell-tale "blow" of the whale.

When a whale is seen he calls down to those on deck, and putting on steam the boat surges forward and gives chase. A smother of foam and bubbles marks the ship's wake, as, guided by the directions given by the look-out, she follows in the course of the whale.

Sometimes the prey has been seen many miles away, but when the ship gets nearer, the spume is visible to those on deck, and they can see a black shape in the water. Making a great snort, the whale breaks water ahead of the ship. Then as he dives he leaves a great calm patch on the water, and it is these tell-tale patches which give the

gunner a clue as to where the whale will next break water. The Captain, who is usually also the gunner, has a runway straight down from the bridge to the harpoon gun mounted in the bows of the ship.

The ship slows down so as not to frighten the whale, and the gunner swings the gun expectantly, watching for the whale to break water. As he sees him come to the surface near the vessel he fires the gun, and with a bang the harpoon snakes through the air, with yards of rope running out after it. Immediately the shot is fired the gunner and his assistant reload in case they have to put in a second shot. The tension slackens as more rope runs out, and they are able to pass it quickly along the ship's side and make it fast to the stern, so that the whale has the whole weight and power of the boat to fight against.

Struck by the harpoon the whale rears up out of the water, and as he does so the gunner fires a lance into his side; but in spite of all the twisting and turning and thrashing the animal is capable of, he cannot get away from the sharp barbs clinging into him.

When the harpoon enters the whale's side the barbs are flat against the shaft, but as soon as the harpoon strikes something firm, an explosion in the centre goes off, and forces the barbs outwards into his flesh. The force of the internal explosion deals the monster his final blow, and the poor old whale sighs and dies.

He rolls over on his back, and, with great, white belly uppermost, the carcass is drawn alongside the boat with his tail towards the bows so as to lessen the resistance to the water ; a wire hawser is slung round his tail and drawn inboard, and the great tail fins are lopped off so as not to interfere with the steering of the ship. Then a nozzle attached to a long bamboo pole is forced into the carcass, which is then filled with compressed air so as to make it more buoyant.

Once more the look-out man goes aloft to look for further prey. Sometimes a whaler will go on hunting for whales all day, but has to take them back pretty quickly, as their smell a very few hours after they are dead is not the sweetest thing about them.

One whaler may get as many as four whales in a day, and when it returns to harbour in the evening, the load of whale it is towing amounts to a tonnage greater than that of the ship itself.

The ships take their whales round to the factory, where they are hauled up from the landing-place, and soon they are not whales any longer, but have become tons of oil, whalebone, and fertiliser instead.

VIII

THE JAMBOREE AT EAST LONDON

THE *INCOMATI* ARRIVES

BETWEEN two long breakwaters that run out from East London seaward a great, grey ship comes sliding in. Her decks and canvas "dodgers" are wet with the spray of the stormy seas she has just passed through. (A "dodger," as every Sea Scout knows, is a canvas screen rigged on the ship's bridge behind which the men on duty can "dodge" the spray, etc.) Even now, on the outside of the other breakwater, great rollers that form the heavy surf along the coast keep rushing along, following her, and throwing their angry crests at her over the wall as if enraged at her having got safely out of their clutches.

As her great bow comes slowly sliding round into view of other ships in the inner harbour one feels that they must be calling to her. "Hullo, *Incomati*, how are you?" And you can see her answering, "What, *Scylla*, are you here? You're looking very smart, old pal, with your new paint!"

"Cheerio, *Tommy*" – this to the squat little harbour tug that lies gently idling about, but watchful to help the big ship at any moment if required. "What cheer, *Spartan*? You here too? Haven't seen you for ages." Then to a great rusty-looking ship standing high out of the water, "Oh, who is that? *Vulcan*? I don't think we've met before. Where are you from? Oh, from Norway, with timber which you have just off-loaded here! What, don't they raise their own timber in South Africa yet?"

A RESCUE AT SEA

The *Clan MacCrorie* sings out, "You've had a rough time, haven't you, *Incomati*? What is this we hear about your picking up a boatload of ship-wrecked folk at night in the middle of the gale?"

"Oh, yes, we did pick up a lifeboat full of a ship's crew. But that's nothing – it's all part of our job. But the Captain of the wrecked boat gave this account of it.

"He said that they left Beira for Chinde in the tug called the *Dar-es-Salaam* – you may know him by sight – and they had been at sea for two hours when a very high south-easterly gale sprang up and within a very short time a heavy sea was running. It was so bad that they had to heave to and steam slowly into the wind and sea. For forty-eight hours they battled in blinding rain and terrific seas to keep the vessel afloat, and they were continually swept by the seas, and the decks were constantly awash. There was hardly a chance for the decks to get cleared before the next wave broke over them. Finally, one huge wave burst over them, completely overwhelming the ship, and before it had cleared the next wave came and heeled her almost on to her beam ends. They had a list of over fifty degrees, so it was only a matter of time before she turned turtle.

"The men from the engine-room came up and left the ship. The Captain said that as he was about to get off – he was standing on the port rails – the ship started to slide down, and the act of her going down sucked him under for a considerable distance, but he

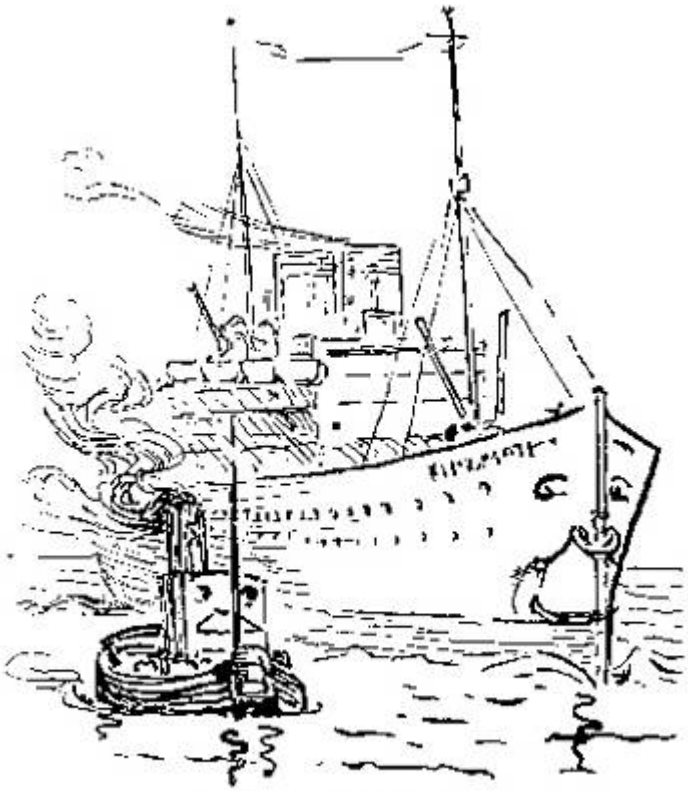
managed to get to the surface. The other men were all struggling round in the water, and a few moments after the vessel had disappeared one lifeboat rose to the surface.

"This lifeboat had been partially cut adrift before the ship finally sank, and thanks to the air in the buoyancy tanks was able to come to the surface, where nineteen natives and four Europeans clambered into it. They then spent fourteen hours in this small boat, which was crammed to capacity and continually being swept by heavy seas.

"They battled on, and finally in the early hours of the next day they saw the lights of a ship. With him in the little boat the Captain had six partially dry distress signals, which he let off. Fortunately those aboard the *Incomati* had kept a sharp look-out, and saw the signals at once and were able to pick them up.

"And so, you see," said the *Incomati*, "we were able to save their lives, and we took them back with us to Beira.

"Hullo, I'm getting alongside. Here, *Tommy*, just give me a shove with your ugly old nose, will you?"



TOMMY TUG AND A FRIEND

The tug slides gently up to her, so that his well-padded bow presses up against the *Incomati's* quarter. Then, with both propellers thrashing the water astern of him, he gradually pushes the great ship into position alongside the quay.

And so here we are in East London, at the end of our long voyage from England, and in good time for the great South African Jamboree.

But we shall never forget the thrill of that night rescue when our ship turned her searchlights on to that poor little overcrowded boat, rowing, very feebly, among great angry seas, towards us. Then just as she got to the end of her struggle alongside us, to our horror an extra big sea rolled her over. All in a moment there was the bulk of the boat

bottom upward and the heads of men dotted about battling for their lives in the black sea. On board there was a cry of "Oh, poor fellows," and a rush to fling ropes' ends and lifebuoys down to them. But there was little need for these, for in a few moments the boat righted itself, and water-logged and lying low in the water it served to support the crew as they gradually clustered round, holding on to the lifeline round it. One man alone got into the boat and stood there, the Captain, calmly giving orders. One by one the crew clambered in and climbed up the ship's rope-ladder, or if too exhausted, were hauled up by rope. The Captain himself came on board last. We then learned that the capsizing of the boat was no new experience for them: this was her third upset, and the crew knew what to do.

A RAIN-MAKER

As I dare say you know, I have a nasty habit of bringing the rain with me when I go to a Jamboree. Well, I did it again here in East London yesterday, the day before the Jamboree opened. To-day it is all brilliant sunshine so – all is well.

But, you know, in this country among the natives there are still "witch-doctors," in spite of all that the missionaries and civilisation have taught them. These witch-doctors profess to be able to bring rain when it is wanted for the crops.

I should make a fortune if I went and became a witch-doctor, but probably the rain would not come when I wanted and I should be burnt as a rotten kind of witch.

Here is a wonderful story about rain-making witch-doctors which was published in the *East London Daily Dispatch* to-day:

"A story of witchcraft and rainmaking, which resulted in the death of the 'rain-maker,' has just come to notice, and presents a scientific problem which might well be investigated," writes the Harrismith correspondent of the *Sunday Times*.

RAIN-MAKER

"It appears that a well-known old witch-doctor resides on the farm 'Excelsior,' the property of that well-known sheep farmer, Mr. M. J. M. Bronn. A few weeks ago the

natives on the farm of Mr. Bronn combined with the natives on the farm of his neighbour, Mr. W. D. Mylrea, and collected money to pay the witch-doctor to make rain for them.

"Arrived at his hut, they found that he had gone away, but that his son, who had for some years received tuition from his father into rainmaking rites, was prepared to make rain 'for a consideration.'

"The money was paid over, the son took up a position in front of his hut with his bones and other 'muti,' and within half an hour a steady shower of rain had fallen.

"It was, however, not enough, in the opinion of the sponsors of the scheme, and they again approached the son. After an interview they were told that for £1 he would bring them rain that would satisfy even the most greedy of them.

"The money was collected, and the son, with his two wives, again took up his position outside his hut, with a cloudless sky upon which to 'operate.' Within an hour black clouds came up, and within another half-hour it was raining so heavily that all the dams were filled and fences were washed away.

"So good was the rain that natives and both European farmers were able to plough the next day. Incidentally, these two farmers are the only ones in that neighbourhood who have any maize at all, both stating that the rain was confined solely to their farms and that their neighbours did not get a drop.

"The matter, however, does not end here. The storm appeared to have passed over, when a solitary black cloud was seen to be approaching in the direction of the hut in front of which the witchdoctor and his two wives were sitting. There was a flash of lightning and he was killed outright, both the women escaping without so much as a shock.

"On his father's return the matter was investigated, and the old man explained that his son, not wholly conversant with the technicalities of rain-making, had mixed up some bad 'muti' which was used for destroying the crops, person, and property of the enemy.

"In the meantime the old man, legal heir to his son in accordance with Native Law, is taking action for the payment of £1 promised his son.

"The story is absolutely vouched for in every detail by both Messrs. Mylrea and Bronn, who state that the part they can find no explanation for is the fact that the witch-doctor stated that the rain would fall only on their farms, and that their neighbours would not get any of it."

THE JAMBOREE

East London is a bright, clean, seaside town with a lovely sea-front on which the great rollers from the Indian Ocean are constantly driving in and breaking in a huge belt of surf. Even when the sea is apparently quite calm, still these huge waves come solemnly on, one after another, mounting higher and higher till they curl over and fall in a shining cascade into a jumble of foam and spray. I am never tired of watching them.

Up on a high down beyond the town and overlooking the sea is the camp of the Jamboree.

In this delightfully sunny and breezy spot are assembled some 3,000 Scouts from all the different provinces that form the Union of South Africa, viz.: Cape Province, Natal, Transvaal, and the Orange Free State.

THE JAMBOREE AT EAST LONDON

In addition to these there is a fine contingent from Southern Rhodesia, and another all the way from Northern Rhodesia, a thousand miles away. Then from Portuguese East Africa there is a fine troop of Portuguese boys.

Of course, distances here are very great. The boys from Capetown, for instance, have come 700 miles. One of them started to walk the distance, and by getting lifts in motor-cars, and so on, he managed to get here in seventeen days. Rhodesian boys came by motor-lorry in five days, camping out each night. Others came by sea. A few came by air. One lot came by ox wagon! And there were numbers of special trains running.

So you see they came by many different ways, but they all meant to be there. And I must say they were a jolly fine lot of boys – all well turned out in uniform, with staves and all complete (many of the staves well decorated and carved), and they made a very fine and impressive appearance at the opening Rally. This was attended by a large crowd of the public. It was the biggest Rally that South Africa has seen, and the people were loud in their praise of it.

The whole force paraded next day through the town and marched past the town hall, where the mayor, in his red robe and chain of office, took the salute.

The whole of the inhabitants turned out to cheer the Scouts, and I must say they well deserved the applause they got. In spite of being on the sick list with malaria I was well enough to attend both these shows – though I had to return to bed directly afterwards rather the worse for the outing, but rejoicing at what I had seen.

For the rest of the week the Scouts gave their shows and displays in the camp – and these were many and varied. One day's programme included an archery display by Scouts from Southern Rhodesia – all the equipment having been made by the Scouts themselves; a rope-spinning exhibition – also by Rhodesia; and a very fine display of physical training by the Portuguese Scouts from Lourenço Marques, under their Scout-master, Captain Jorge.

Then there was a play depicting the life of a Scout as he passes through the various stages of training, and this included such practical matters as bridge-building, signalling, ambulance work, and so on.

In their spare time the Scouts flocked down to the beach to revel in surf-bathing.

Altogether they have had a wonderful time, and are only sorry it is so nearly time to return home.

But the Jamboree for them is not over – it will live in their memories for many a long year to come.

While in camp they made new friends among their Brother Scouts from other parts of South Africa, and they go away to their different centres with a new feeling of comradeship and goodwill towards each other.

MUSICAL COWS

"I've heard them lilting at the ewe milking,
Lasses a'lilting before the break of day."

Lament for Flodden.

Last time I was in Scotland I stayed with Major Crum near Stirling. (Every Scout in Scotland knows Major Crum, who as a Scout is one of the very best.)

He had some Rover Scouts camping in his garden, and these blokes had a gramophone which they turned on to make its noises. They were camped close to a fence, on the other side of which was the meadow in which the cows grazed.

Soon they noticed that whenever the gramophone started to play, the cows drifted towards it and stood close by, listening. One cow in particular refused to go away so long as the music went on.

I didn't believe this yarn any more than you do, till I actually saw the thing happening.

Well, here in South Africa, I read in to-day's East London *Daily Dispatch* of a similar experience in Natal.

It says:

"Cows love music, and it seems that this can be turned to good profit. If you have a cow that gives a gallon of milk, put her in tuneful surroundings and she will increase the output by several pints.

"Some months ago a Ladysmith man bought an accordion. His wife refused to permit him to practise in the house, so reluctantly he took his accordion to the cowshed. It was milking-time, but when he started to play, to his great surprise, the cow enjoyed the music. She switched her tail, chewed her cud, and generally put more 'pep' into things. He also noted that the milk seemed to be flowing more freely.

"This started a line of thought, and he has now devised a method of exploiting this musical appreciation of his herd.

"According to the *Natal Advertiser's* correspondent, his cowsheds present a strange sight at milking-time. In one corner is an old gramophone which wheezes out crooning-songs. This ancient machine is operated by a small 'umfaan' (native boy), and the milk boys croon the melody. The cows contentedly chew their cud and beat time with their tails. A graph chart on the wall indicates the gradual but steady rise in output since the inauguration of the music scheme."

Doesn't this suggest a way by which Scouts when in camp could do a good turn to the farmer on whose ground they are camping, by going and making music for his cows by singing or whistling, or playing mouth-organs, etc.?

I dunno. I rather think that instead of inducing the cows to give more milk, they would probably make their milk turn sour.

That is, if cows really have an ear for music.

IX

DURBAN

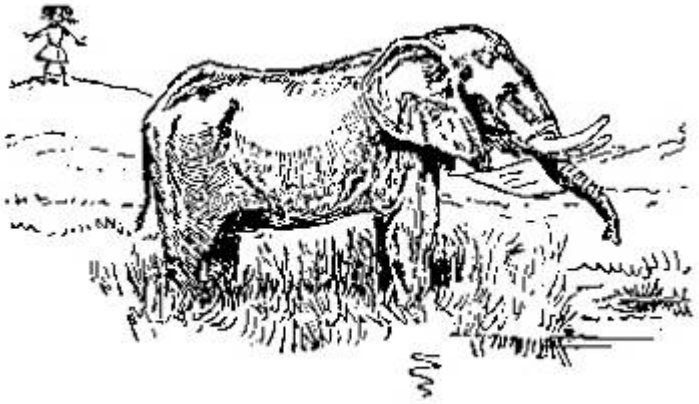
I HAVE just got back to Durban. When I say got back, I mean that having been here so many times in my life it seems almost like getting home.

As my ship came into the harbour, through its narrow entrance, there we found the great liner *Empress of Britain*, 42,000 tons, lying alongside the wharf. Also the *Arundel Castle*, 19,000 tons, and the *Duilio*, 23,000 tons. My goodness!

When I first came here (a good long time ago, mind you) my ship, the *Serapis*, 5,000 tons, was much too big to get into the harbour ! We had to anchor off the shore, and a nice old time we had being lowered over the ship's side into lighters which were then towed through the surf into the harbour, which was quite shallow.

In those days Durban was a small town with sandy streets, and was backed by a thickly wooded ridge called the Berea. Now Durban is a fine city of 220,000 inhabitants, and the Berea is covered with houses and some of the loveliest gardens in the world.

It was in Durban that I first flew in an aeroplane, in the early days of flying; and on landing now I found an old friend there in Mrs. Jamieson, one of the oldest inhabitants. She was in the grandstand at the race-course which formed the aerodrome, and she told me that as a girl she had sat on this same mound to watch the elephants coming out of the jungle on the Berea to drink in the neighbouring stream!



WHAT MRS. JAMIESON SAW ON THE RACE-COURSE AT DURBAN!

When first I came here there were people who remembered the early days of Durban, when the Boers made an effort to capture it and besieged the British settlers in a little fort, which still stands to-day. The British sent their women and children away in a ship – a sailing ship. As they could not spare any men to go as crew, the women had to act as sailors under the direction of the ship's Captain.

She was only a small vessel, and so was able to lie in the harbour, but when they started to sail her out through the narrow entrance, the Boers lined the shore and fired into her. So the various ropes, halliards, braces, and sheets were passed down the hatches and skylights to the women below, while the Captain on deck told his lady crew which ropes to pull.

Just before this the Boers had fought the Zulus. When the Boers first came into Natal to settle there, the Zulus, who were, I suppose, the best native warriors that the

world has ever seen, massacred some of them. Then Pretorius, the leader of the Boers, went with 460 men and boldly attacked the whole Zulu army of some 12,000 men. The Boers were armed with rifles and were all dead-shots, and after a desperate engagement they totally defeated the Zulus. That was on December 15, 1838, and that day is still kept as a holiday, called Dingaan's Day – Dingaan being the Zulu chief who was defeated.

But Dingaan again became dangerous, and a force of British and Boers, acting together, helped by some friendly Zulus, attacked and defeated him.

The small British settlement at Durban had a very tough job before them, in holding out against such brave fighters as those Boers. Indeed, they could not have succeeded had it not been for one good man named Dick King. He got away during the night through the Boer outposts, and rode six hundred miles to Grahamstown to get help. He managed to do it in nine days, in spite of incredible hardships and dangers from hostile natives and wild animals. But though the job seemed impossible he stuck to it, and got there in the end.

So it was thanks to him that reinforcements were sent up to help the settlers. The Boers were driven off, and the country of Natal became a British colony. A statue of him stands in Durban to-day as a memorial of his great service done for his fellows at risk of his own life.

Later on, we had to fight the Zulus again, for they were constantly raiding and murdering the white farmers. They were finally defeated at the Battle of Ulundi in 1879, after they had given our army some very heavy knocks. Even after this they broke out again on two occasions: their fighting blood would not let them be peaceful. But now they have quite settled down. I loved the Zulus, even though I had to fight against them.

"Twenty thousand people went to the wharf at The Point yesterday to see the great liner, the *Empress of Britain*, 42,000 tons – by far the biggest ship that has ever entered our harbour," said the Durban newspaper to-day. "But," it continued, 'they will get their compensation to-day when the great ship leaves, for she will have a difficult job to turn round to go to sea – especially if there is a south-east wind blowing."

And there *was* a south-east wind blowing. So, thinks I, England expects us to do our duty, and see the fun. Well, it wasn't much good going to the wharf if twenty thousand other people were going there.

We bundled into the car on the Esplanade and drove through the city, past the statue of Dick King on his tired horse (who rode six hundred miles in nine days to get reinforcements), past the docks, round the end of the harbour, and then along the opposite side of it for six miles, along to the Bluff, and up to the lighthouse. From that point we had a bird's-eye view of the big ship and her doings. She was lying head towards the town and stern towards the sea, and so had to turn round to get out between the two breakwaters which form the entrance to the harbour.

Of course, the tugs meant to be in this.

And they came nosing along and gently sidled up to her, just as if they were afraid that if they did it suddenly she was like a vicious horse who would lash out and kick them. They gently took her steel cables, two at the stern and one at the bow, and then they started to pull her stern out from the wharf, very gingerly, in case she shouldn't want to come.

She wanted to come all right, but the old southeast wind pushed against her towering white side, and said: "No, you don't!" The tugs put on full speed ahead, and

answered: “Yes, we do!” and churned up a whole lot of foaming water astern of them. They puffed and snorted, but without getting any forrarder for a long time.

But a tug, like a Scout, doesn’t give in – they “stuck to it,” and in the end, inch by inch, the stern came out from the wharf and slowly the great ship swung outward.

But as she did so, her nose kept against the wharf and the south-east wind pushed and held it there, determined that she should not get round.

This just made the tough little tugs grit their screws, or whatever they have for teeth. The two at the stern of the ship heaved and strained, while the one at the bow shoved its nose hard against her stem, and by good team work between them they forced the great vessel round, though with her great length – 732 feet, that is, 244 yards – (try pacing it out, and see how far it is), she nearly reached across the narrow neck of the harbour.

At length she faced seawards, and amid the cheers of the thousands of onlookers she quietly slid away down the channel between the breakwaters. Then you never heard such a din!

The *Empress* gave three prolonged raucous hoots as “Good-bye,” and was answered by motor horns from the mass of cars at The Point, and by steam whistles, sirens, and hooters from all the ships and factories in the place, as she sped away for Bombay.

As we came back again round the harbour and into Durban we had a look at the whaling vessels moored to the Western quay. There were sixteen of them. Stout, strong little sea-going vessels, each with a barrel “crow’s-nest” on its mast where the look-out man would watch for whales.

Each ship had also a formidable-looking gun pivoted on its bows, from which the harpoon would be fired at the whale. They must have a very adventurous time when they are out whale-hunting, but just now was the close season, and they were all laid up in port while their crews were having a holiday.

The crews are all Norwegians, and have been most successful in their whaling ; and they deserve their success, for they are tough, hard-working fellows, who can stand a bit of hardship and danger in getting their job done. They are true “sea scouts.”

But why should Norwegians be doing the whaling in South Africa ? Why not the British? I don’t know. Buck up, Sea Scouts!

Then we saw another kind of Sea Scouts. Farther along the quay lay a French man-o’-war. A great grey cruiser called the *Jeanne d’Arc*. She had on board a hundred young cadet officers making a voyage round the world as their education for becoming officers of the French Navy. I was very glad to find that in Durban, Rovers and Scouts had visited the ship and had found fourteen brother-Scouts among these cadets, and had made them their guests.

These French Scouts, hearing that I was here and still in the doctor’s hands, sent me a charming letter, which they all signed, wishing me speedy recovery of health, and telling me that in their cruise down the coast of South America they had been welcomed by the Scouts everywhere from South America to the Falkland Islands.

Isn’t it grand to see this comradeship of our brotherhood growing all over the world ?

In part of the town as we passed through it, we saw Indians everywhere. The shops had Indian names. The men, though dressed in European clothes, were evidently

Indians, and the women and small girls were dressed in the graceful and bright-coloured dresses that they wear in India. There are some 69,000 Indians living in Durban, so, you see, they are an important lot.

They are largely shopkeepers, laundry-men, and market gardeners ; and all the hotels have Indians as waiters and lift-men – and very good they are. Of course, among so big an Indian population there are Indian Boy Scouts.

Then there are 64,000 African natives in Durban. These are largely of the Zulu tribe, fine, hefty fellows. They are employed chiefly as house “boys,” gardeners, dock labourers, and rickshaw men.

The rickshas are, you know, sort of grown-up prams, or light carts, in which two people can sit. They are pulled by one native between the shafts, and are used for short trips about the town instead of hiring taxis.

The Zulus who pull the rickshas get themselves up in wonderful finery with huge feather headdresses and fancy clothes, and as they run along they prance and enjoy

themselves playing at being spirited horses, much to the alarm, sometimes, of nervous passengers unaccustomed to their ways.

DOWN ON THE FARM

An island on Lake Chilwa in Nyasaland is called Chidiapiri – "the place of eating puff-adders" – because it used to swarm with puff-adders, but they were destroyed by an invasion of pythons. Now the island swarms with pythons. What a jolly place that would be to live in!

I am on a little island in Africa as I write this, but, thank goodness, there are no snakes hereabouts. I am in Natal, among the hills that run up into the Drakensberg Mountains. It is a lovely country of green, grassy downs, with wooded valleys and rushing trout-streams. That's what I'm here for on this particular spot – the trout. I have had good sport with them during the morning, and am now lying on my back on the grassy bank of the river under the grateful shade of a weeping-willow tree, for the sun is strong and hot here in March. A thickly wooded hill, with a rocky top, rises in front of me, with the river tossing and foaming along its base, singing its everlasting song of rushing waters.

It is a peaceful scene. Close to us is a farm bridge over the river, and presently there dawdles down to it a team of sixteen fine, great, chestnut oxen, yoked in pairs to a long trek-chain which pulls a heavy sledge that in this rough country takes the place of wheeled wagons. The oxen are led by a small Zulu boy whose main clothing consists of a very ragged pair of large man's-sized shorts, and gaiters made out of tubes of old motor tyres.

The driver of the team is a tall Zulu armed with a huge whip, with the long lash of which he can reach any one of his team. When you know that the team is eight oxen lengths long, with four feet distance between them from head to tail, you can imagine what a long whip the driver has to use. He is quite an artist with it when he chooses to make use of it, and from his position in rear of the team he can touch up any particular animal without a mistake. But this driver evidently preferred to use his tongue rather than his whip, and he kept up a continual jabber to his beasts which they seemed to understand and obey.

Then by comes the young English farmer. He runs this farm of some two thousand acres, with its snug bungalow, where his wife has made a beautiful flower garden, just now gorgeous with its masses of bright flowers and green grass lawns shaded by palms and gum and wattle trees. One small but pleasing point I noticed in the garden was that the owner had set up two bird-baths for the birds. That little fact told me that he must be a kindly sort of man. When I spoke in admiration of his team of oxen he was greatly pleased, and was evidently proud and fond of his animals.

This farm was just one among hundreds of others like it in this beautiful land of Natal. Most of them belong to English or Scottish settlers, many of whom employ younger men to act as managers or overseers.

Some of these are quite young – of Rover age – and I could not help thinking what a good opening it would be for Scouts to come and take up this healthy, happy life in the open instead of being cooped up in dingy towns at home.

I am glad to see that the Government of Australia is going to let young fellows immigrate as they used to do a few years ago. From Scout Headquarters we used to help

about seventy Scouts every month to find places in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and other British Dominions, till migration was stopped by Government. Now that it is likely to be opened again, I hope we shall see as many lads as ever going overseas to become stock-riders or farmers.

STICK TO IT!

But I always warn fellows who think of going, that they should prepare themselves as far as possible by first learning something of farm work at home, and when they get out there they must be prepared to take the rough with the smooth, to work really hard, and to *stick to their job* and not go drifting back to town life. There are too many slackers who have done this because they can't do without cinemas and drink shops. Consequently the towns are full of unemployed men, while the country is wanting men to open it up and farm it.

I came across a Rover to-day who is farming about eighty miles from where I am fishing in the Drakensberg Mountains. He arrived on something that had once been a motor-bike. I'm not well up in the machinery of a motor-bike, but the condition of the saddle, patched and mended, showed me that this one must be pretty old; and parts being held together with neat little strips of raw-hide spoke of a clever owner who managed to make the old crock do its work in spite of its age and decrepitude. This young fellow had come here for two days' holiday to fish for trout.

There were two expert fishermen also fishing here. They had cases filled with the best flies likely to attract the fish. But somehow on this day the trout were stupid and were not amused by those flies.

My friends came home in the evening with a very small lot of fish to show. Then along came my young farmer – but his bag was heavy with good fish. "Hullo! Well done! What flies did you use? Oh, those! What funny little fellows! What are they called?" He explained that they had no particular name, as he had made them himself. Instead of buying a selection of flies in a shop, he noticed what kind of fly was on the water being eaten by the fish, and he quickly tied tiny shreds of feathers on to his hook, and made them look as like the real fly as possible, and the fish, silly beggars, swallowed the bait!

That was *resourcefulness*. When you don't possess the thing you want, make it yourself.

FIGHTING THE LEOPARD

Another man fishing with me here is, like me, getting back his health after an illness through malaria. When he was in hospital with it in Rhodesia, a native boy was brought in badly torn by a leopard.

The surgeon in the hospital, after doing what he could for the boy, determined to go and shoot the leopard. In this he was joined by two friends. None of them had ever hunted big game before, and here was an opportunity for them to do so. So they got a rifle and a couple of shot-guns, and motored out to the kraal from which the wounded boy had come. They then started out in single file into the bush to find the leopard. They were walking along, one behind the other, hoping to have some sport with the beast. Quite suddenly they got it! Their marching along, treading on dry sticks and casually kicking against stones, gave warning to the leopard, and he suddenly sprang upon the surgeon.

The whole thing was so sudden. The two men behind were horrified; afraid to use their guns for fear of hitting their friend. Once the leopard gave them a chance as he reared up to make a further pounce on to his victim – just like a cat toying with a mouse. One of the men fired his shot-gun at him – but *missed!* However, the noise of the gun at such close quarters startled the leopard, and he drew off a few yards, and stood looking very savage, as if ready to make another attack. The man with the rifle saw his opportunity and fired – but he also *missed*!

BE PREPARED

Luckily the leopard moved off – and giving what first aid they could, the two men carried their wounded comrade back to the car and so to hospital.

The day after this tragedy, another man who knew how to deal with dangerous game went out to the jungle with his dogs and rifle, found the leopard, and killed it.

So you see what comes of going overseas without having learned to shoot. That is why I encourage Scouts to practise with rifle or shot-gun. Of course, there are people who will say, "Oh, you're trying to make the boys into soldiers."

Nonsense. "Out-back" a man must be able to defend himself and others against wild beasts or fierce natives, and if he can't shoot game he may die of starvation.

Our motto is "Be Prepared."

A TENDERFOOT IN TOGOLAND

X

THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

PRETORIA

I HAVE just had a run by motor-car over a lot of ground in the Transvaal which was of interest to me. Pretoria, the capital of South Africa, was only started about the time I was born, by Pretorius, who was the first President of the Transvaal Republic. My uncle, Cotton Oswell, went up into that part of the country to shoot elephants, particularly at a place called "Olifant's Nek," or the Elephant's Pass. When he shot an elephant he had to pay tribute to Pretorius by handing over to him the tusk which was nearer the ground when the animal lay dead.

Pretoria, when I first knew it about fifty years ago, was a small country town of four streets of thatched cottages round a market-square. Now it is a huge city with fine public buildings and suburbs and charming houses and gardens.

From Pretoria our route ran along a valley between two ranges of stony ridges and mountains. During the Boer War I had had to hold three of the passes through these hills against the Boer forces which wanted to get through them. Their Commandant, de Wet, sent me a note written in Dutch, in which he said that I must surrender to him, and if I did not do so before the next morning he would come through with his force and take my men prisoners.

I wanted to see whether de Wet was really there or had only sent a note to pretend that he was present at that spot, when probably he was preparing a surprise for us in some other unexpected place. So I replied to his note and sent him a letter by his messenger (who had come to us under a white flag of truce), and in it I said I was not good at reading Dutch, and so could not make out from his letter whether he wanted us to surrender or whether he wanted to surrender to us. I soon got his reply, signed by himself, explaining that we must surrender, which assured me that he was actually there.

However, we did *not* surrender, and finding that he could not get through, de Wet went away himself next morning, while his force retired in another direction. We followed it up in pursuit and caught it and surprised it two days later at Waronboth and captured a number of prisoners.

So to-day we had a picnic luncheon at the pass. Then we travelled on, past rocky hills that had been the stronghold of some Boers in those days, and a great trouble to us.

Finally we came to the wooded mountains, with the pass in them which was called Olifant's Nek. Here we put up at the delightful fruit farm of an old friend, a former officer of the South African Constabulary. But it was a bit of a job to get there. We had to cross two apparently harmless little streams by fording them in our car. But our host knew the streams and their treacherous nature better than we did, so at one he had a team of four oxen ready for us, and they were hooked on to the front of the car and pulled us steadily through the stream and up the slippery bank on the far side.

At the second stream we found a party of half a dozen natives standing in the water, and as we drove through it they seized the car and rushed it over the bad part,

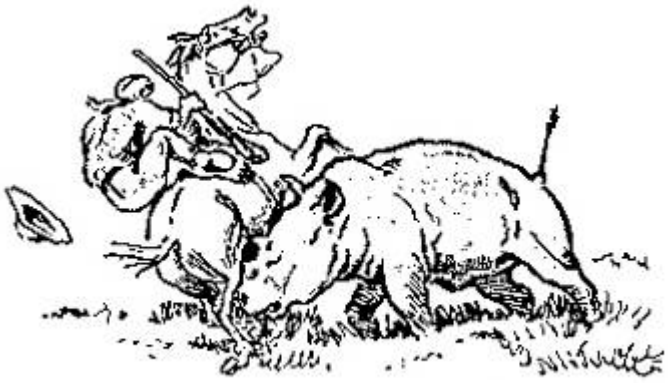
where otherwise it would have stuck, and landed us safely on firm ground beyond. Then they set to and cheered and clapped their hands in praise of their own effort.

The farm where we stayed had a deep veranda all round, and looked out across orange groves to the wooded rocky mountains beyond. It was most comfortably furnished, and hung with heads and horns of all the different kinds of buck in South Africa. The place had formerly belonged to President Kruger.

Cotton Oswell had many adventures in this neighbourhood. On one occasion he was galloping on his horse after a rhino when the beast suddenly whipped round and charged him. He was of course thrown violently to the ground, and cut his forehead on one of his stirrups in the fall. The horse, his favourite mount, was killed on the spot.

Olifant's Nek means the "Pass which Elephants Frequent." The next pass to it through these hills was called Rhenosterpoort, which means "The Pass of Rhinoceros," and near by was Elandsfontein, or the "Spring where the Elands Drink," and Babyanpoort, "The Pass of the Baboons."

These and similar names in the neighbourhood show what a wonderful district it used to be for game in the old days. Now there is little left there, except the baboons, who still bark and gambol.



THE RHINO SUDDENLY CHARGED!

It was in Rhenosterpoort that Cotton Oswell, the hunter, had another narrow shave with a rhinoceros. He was hunting on foot in the bush country when he found himself among a herd of

rhinoceros, and where he tried to avoid one he found himself faced with another. At first he thought best to stay quite still, as the rhinoceros is a very short-sighted animal, but what he misses in the way of eyesight he makes up for by his wonderful sense of smell.

A RHENOSTER

Very soon, Oswell found that the different animals around him were scenting danger, and snorting like so many steam engines. He thought, however, the best thing would be to make a dash for it, past the nearest rhino, before he noticed him. He made his dash, but old Mr. Rhino was more wide awake than he had reckoned for, and he remembered nothing more till he found himself sitting on a pony with his native boy leading him and partly holding him up. Oswell, feeling a tickling in his leg, was astonished to find a gaping wound in his thigh. Eventually he found that some of

his ribs were broken, too, by the old rhino who had given him a prod with his horn and then, luckily had turned off and forgotten about him.

They are unaccountable beasts, rhinos.

As we travelled along the road we met numerous Boers with their donkey teams. These are big farm wagons to which a team of about sixteen donkeys is usually harnessed, and though they travel very slowly, they go very surely, and are not expensive animals to buy or keep. Moreover, in the districts where the tsetse flies abound, the donkeys do not suffer to the same extent as do horses, mules, and oxen. The old Boer farmers with these wagons seem exactly the same type as their fathers before the Boer War – weather-beaten and bearded, with slouch hats, and invariably a black band round them, smoking their pipes and taking things very slowly, they are a fine type of man, stern, silent, and suspicious, until you get to know them, when they make firm, reliable friends.

Rustenberg was the principal township of the district, and it was interesting to revisit it now for the first time since I was there in the Boer War, when we were practically besieged by the forces of Boers round about us, and we had to defend the town with earthworks and trenches.

From Rustenberg our road took us on westward for some three hundred miles towards Mafeking. In the war days we had fought our way along this road, and at one particular spot I came across the signs of a fight where a small cemetery contained the graves of a number of soldiers who fell in the fight.

Farther on we came to Zeerust, another market town, where lived an old Boer I did not like. During the war my old schoolfellows at Charterhouse had made a fund by which they were able to send out a number of cases of food and medical comforts for the women and children and men in hospital at Mafeking, and among these was a little present for me in the shape of a pair of field-glasses with an inscription on a silver plate.

But, unfortunately for us, the train in which these cases were coming up for us from Capetown was wrecked and looted by the enemy, and one Zeerust Boer, after eating some of the good things intended for us, helped himself to my field-glasses. When I passed through Zeerust he was kind enough to offer to return the glasses to me if I paid him £25. As he had practically worn them out in the meantime, they were not worth twenty-five pence, so I said “No thank you,” and I do not like that Boer!

MAFEKING

At length our road brought us across the open veldt – a very slimy mud road it was for our motor-car – to a point where we saw before us low-lying bush and the roofs of the town of Mafeking.

Mafeking was a small town at the time of our war with the Boers thirty-five years ago, and stood in the British territory, close alongside the border of the Boers’ country, the Transvaal. It is about nine hundred miles from Capetown, far away up in the north-west of Cape Colony, on the railway which goes on northward to Rhodesia.

There were about six hundred white women and children in the place, and seven thousand natives in the native part of the town, when I took it over and garrisoned it with a thousand men. Our objective was to hold the town and to attract as many Boers as possible up that way to keep them occupied far away from the coasts until reinforcements could arrive from England and land without opposition at Capetown and Durban.

A force of some twelve thousand Boers came up and surrounded the place and shelled us and made various attacks, but we were able to hold them off for seven long months till other forces came to our relief.

MAFEKING REVISITED

The thing which surprised me most on revisiting Mafeking this time was the enormous growth of the trees and bush where before all had been bare and open. Also the town itself had grown very largely with the new buildings in every direction.

When we reached the market-square it was almost exactly as it was in the time of the war. There are several new streets, houses that had been rebuilt after the shelling, or new houses had been added to the township by the increasing population. One place which remained much the same was the convent, occupied by a number of nuns who had done splendid service during the siege as nurses for the sick and wounded.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught had visited Mafeking shortly after the Boer War, and the convent had been repaired, but wherever a shell had come through its walls they had written the word "Shell," and when the Mother Superior took his Royal Highness into her parlour and he saw "Shell" written up in about half a dozen parts of the room he said to her: "You must have had a hot time in here." And she replied: "Yes, your Royal Highness, we did have a bad time. Indeed you might spell those words without the 'S.'"

With our weak numbers against so many Boers we had to use a great many tricks and stratagems in order to deceive them as to our strength and what we were doing. This I have recounted in my book called *Lessons from the 'Varsity of Life*, so I will not go into them here.

But one striking new thing about Mafeking was the presence of Boy Scouts, Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies, and native Scouts and Guides called Pathfinders and Wayfarers. Unfortunately, we had arrived in the rainy season, and when it came to holding a Rally, of course, as usual with me, the rain came down in torrents and we had to have the meeting indoors.

The Pathfinders and Wayfarers assembled in their church in the native town, and I announced to them the news that by an agreement between their leaders and those of the Boy Scouts, we have now joined up as the native branch of the Boy Scout movement. Therefore they are now called Pathfinder *Scouts* and Wayfarer *Guides*.

They are a very jolly lot, and some of them had come in a distance of twenty miles, on foot, in spite of the rain and the mud, to be present at the Rally. They sang delightful songs to us, though they had no opportunity of giving any demonstrations to the crowd in the Church.

So you see, Scouting and Guiding are going ahead in these remote parts of South Africa just as well as everywhere else in the world.

XI

RHODESIA

THE word “Bulawayo” means the “Place of Slaughter.” The place was so called by the natives because it was the headquarters of the king of Matabeleland, Lobengula, and his great army of warriors.

It was the custom for the king every year to hold a big rally of his army. They formed a big circle round the platform on which he sat under a shady bush. They sang war songs and danced war dances till they were fully excited and ready for any adventure. Then the king would take his assegai and hurl it in whichever direction he chose. This was a sign to the regiments on that side of the ring to go off on the warpath in that direction, and to harry any tribes they came across.

I am writing this sitting on Lobengula’s mound under the shade of his tree. Where his great kraal was now stands Government House in its lovely garden. It was built by Cecil Rhodes on this spot to show that the old reign of blood and murder was over, and that he, the peaceful white chief of the country, had taken the place of Lobengula, the tyrant.

There in the distance stands the mountain of Thabas Induna, with its flat top and precipitous sides, the “Mountain of the Chiefs,” so called because when any chief offended the king he was taken to the mountain and thrown down it.

LOBENGULA’S TREE

Then, looking back two miles in another direction, one sees among the trees what Lobengula did not see – namely, the roofs and pinnacles of the city of Bulawayo – no longer a “place of slaughter,” but a fine, well-laid-out modern town, with its public buildings and charming suburbs looking so peaceful and prosperous – very different from when I first saw it in 1896. Then it very nearly was a “place of slaughter,” for the Matabele had surrounded the township and had murdered in outlying farms nearly two hundred and fifty white settlers – men, women, and little children – and this brought

about an expedition of volunteer and regular troops, in which I served, to re-establish peace.

Three years before this the Matabele had raided the neighbouring country of Mashonaland, which was under the rule of the Chartered Company of British South Africa. The Governor, Dr. Jameson, organised an armed expedition to drive back the Matabele, and captured the king's kraal at Bulawayo.

Two of Lobengula's regiments were away in the north on one of his raids, and he fled to join them. A party of thirty men under Major Wilson pursued him across the Shangani River. While endeavouring to capture him, the river rose behind them. They found themselves in the presence of his undefeated regiments. Owing to the flood they were not able to get back to the main body of troops, nor were these able to come to their help. Surrounded they did not surrender, but fought till their ammunition ran out, and were all killed to a man.

Two years later, the Matabele regiments, finding their country now occupied by the white people, resolved to drive them out again. Their plan was to attack the township at Bulawayo by surprise one night. But in making towards Bulawayo some of the warriors could not resist the temptation to kill such farmers as they passed on the way. Several of these escaped in time, and galloping to Bulawayo gave the alarm, so that when the Matabele got to the town they found the inhabitants prepared.

The settlers quickly organised themselves as a fighting force and, assisted by troops sent up from Natal, overcame the rebellion, and, restored peace in Rhodesia. I had the luck to be in this campaign.

THE MATOPOS

To-day I have been in a land which a lot of giants' children must have used as their playground some millions of years ago. The whole district, for some eighty miles by thirty, is a jumble of huge piles of rocks largely overgrown with bush. At every turn we came across rocks oddly placed as if put there for fun by youngsters. At more than one spot a tall, straight pillar of rock stood on end ; in other places you would see two or three, or even four, great boulders balanced on top of each other. A great, bald-headed mountain of granite, like the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, would have a big, rounded rock poised on its side, looking as if it might roll down at any moment and crash into the valley below. One such smooth dome was crowned at the top with a complete circle of great round boulders, twice the height of a man. We climbed up to it, and there in the centre of the circle was a flat slab of granite with a bronze plate stating "Here lies Cecil John Rhodes." It was the grave of the great man who founded the Colony. He was fond of sitting on this mountain top when he was alive, and called it "The World's View."

I was with him some forty years ago, when we had to fight the Matabele tribe who inhabited this country and had attacked and murdered a large number of the white settlers.

This particular bit of country is called the Matopo Hills. These hills, or "kopjes" as they are called, made a good stronghold for the Matabele to hide in and defend. I know it was a very nasty one for us to attack!

Each kopje had caves inside it and bushes half hiding it, and so long as the enemy kept hidden inside it you did not know that anyone was there. But they had spy-holes between the rocks, and could watch you unseen, and when you unsuspectingly came near

enough they would “Bang!” and let you have it from the old elephant gun, which fired a bullet as big as a plum.

The Matopos have, by Rhodes’s direction, been made into a National Park, where people can come and camp and enjoy the wild scenery. There are a few wild animals there, such as sable antelope, baboons, and leopards.

A KOPJE IN THE MATOPOS

A case happened here the other day in the Matopos when a leopard saw his chance of a dinner off a succulent little baby baboon. He stalked and pounced upon it, killing it with a blow of his sharp claws. But he did not get far with his meal, for mother baboon saw him and shrieked out the baboons’ alarm-call. In a few moments the whole tribe came tumbling from the rocks and trees, all yelling with rage as they ringed round the great cat. The leopard turned and tried to get away from them, first in one direction and then in another, but whichever way he turned he was faced with a madly enraged mob baring their teeth and screaming their anger. As he turned, those behind him sprang on to his back, and in a few moments he was overwhelmed with a flood of baboons tearing and biting at him so that before long he, too, was killed.

In the midst of this wild country, with its baboons and leopards, and its vision of past battles fought among those kopjes, I was suddenly faced with a signboard pointing to “Gordon Park, the Training Ground of the Boy Scouts’ Association.” Here, the wildest among the many jungle Gilwells that I have seen in different parts of the world, was a truly lovely backwood camping-ground.

It is named after the popular Commissioner of the Boy Scouts of Bulawayo, Major “Boomerang” Gordon. He has a nasty habit – at least snakes think it nasty – of catching a snake by the tail and “cracking” it as you would crack a whip, thereby breaking its neck.

THE VICTORIA FALLS

It is over eighty years since two African explorers lay sick with fever in camp far away north of the Transvaal. There was a sound like the rumble of distant thunder in the air, and in the distance there rose above the thick bush of the country what one of them described as “clouds of vapour rising exactly as when large tracts of grass are burned.” They were white below, and higher up became dark, so as to look exactly like smoke. No one can imagine the beauty of the view. “Scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight!” The man who wrote that was David Livingstone, and his companion was my relative, Cotton Oswell.

VICTORIA FALLS

They asked their native guides what it all meant, and the “boys” replied that it was “Moosi-watunya” – that is, “The smoke that sounds.” And that it came from an immense waterfall some ten miles distant from where they were. But they were too ill to go on and see the fall, and had to be carried back southward by their boys. It was not till two years

later that Livingstone got to the river again – the Zambesi – and at last saw this wonderful fall. In honour of Queen Victoria, he named it Victoria Falls.

The Zambesi at this point is a mile and a half across, and it suddenly falls over a cliff into a great chasm 370 feet deep and only 150 yards wide, where an equally high cliff forms the opposite side of the "ditch." The river then runs out at one end of the canyon through a narrow gully between further high cliffs for the next forty miles. These Falls are not unlike Niagara, but are just twice as wide and twice as high. (The height of the Victoria Falls is the same as the height of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.)

Livingstone reached the Falls by canoe, travelling down the river till he landed on an island in the middle. This island is on the edge of the Fall, and divides it into two. Here he looked down into the chasm, and wrote of it that:

"Looking down one sees nothing but a dense white cloud, which at the time had two rainbows in it. The cloud rushes up high into the sky, and there condensing, it came back in a constant shower which soon wetted us to the skin."

When I arrived here by train yesterday, we had seen this cloud when we were still some ten miles away. It was early dawn, and the lower part of the cloud was still in darkness, while the upper part caught the rays of the rising sun and was brilliant red; a beautiful sight.

It was owing to the wonderful colours of this immense cloud, and the roar that accompanies it, that the natives used to worship it as their god. Well, one can quite understand this when you stand on the brink of a dizzy height, with a strong squall blowing the spray round you in drenching showers, with the roar of the cataract half stunning you. It certainly "gives you an emotion," as the French would say.

But the whole scene gives you something more than this; it makes you feel what a small atom you are in the presence of the majesty and power of it all – and you feel a greater reverence and trust in God the Creator.

Once in old days the Matabele warriors were raiding the Batoka Tribe near the Zambesi. The Batokas fled before them, and rather than be captured, they threw themselves over the cliff into the river below. The Matabele looked over the edge at the stream "like a white cord below," so far down that they became giddy, and were obliged to go away holding on to the ground.

The Christmas card which I sent out to my friends last Christmas was a sketch which I made of the east window of a little church away in the back blocks of New Zealand. This window was not a work of art with highly coloured saints in a jigsaw of leaded bits of stained glass, designed by an artist; it was a plain sheet of plate-glass looking out upon a magnificent work of Nature, a great mass of snow, mountain, and glacier framed among the green fronds of treeferns and forest.

In that little church, gazing across the altar to the snows beyond, I felt nearer to God the Creator than I could do in a church where the blue sky and God's handiwork were shut out by man-made coloured saints.

Since then I have had the same experience in seeing the Victoria Falls. As one comes within ten miles of them in the early dawn on a cloudless day – as I did – one sees a massive pillar of cloud rising a thousand feet into the sky, still dark in the shades of night at its base, but glowing red above, where rays touch it of the sun about to rise.

There amid wild rock and bush, with the ever-changing rainbows in the mist as this sways and surges in the wind, one senses a Presence, not inanimate but full of life and colour. Little wonder that the neighbouring tribes worshipped it as divine.

MATABELE WARRIORS LOOKING OVER VICTORIA FALLS

Thirty years ago I saw the Falls in their natural surroundings, untouched by man; to-day, with railway and hotel, trolley lines and signposts, well-laid paths and gardens, it is not the same. Man's puny effort to improve Nature is pathetic, but I suppose necessary to meet the demands of the times. Still, the grandeur of the whole stands far above these tinkerings.

But now I know that only those who have communed with the Falls by night have really grasped their inward message. As through the window of the little church in New Zealand, here was God manifest in Nature. In the soft light of the South African moon at the full, I stood and gazed at the stupendous scene.

I doubt if any written words could truly describe the awesome majesty of that immense, dimly-seen procession of water thundering into the depths of the chasm, where it is lost to view, hidden in a dense fog of spray.

Before one, rising high into the sky, is a wide semicircular arch of silvery lunar rainbow. Above it the dark sky is spangled with bright stars; within and framed by it stands, in contrast, a vast luminous film of mist having the light of the moon reflected through it with magic effect from the face of the falling foam.

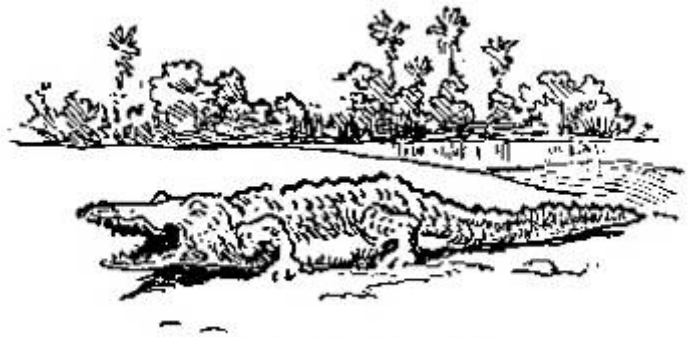
This fairy scene, while it appeals to the eye in its beauty, has as its accompaniment the impressive sound of the thudding roar of the tons of falling waters – a rhythmic diapason which is not of to-day, nor of yesterday, but has maintained its continuous cadence without a stop for tens of thousands of years.

One could only gaze spellbound at the majesty, might, and power of it all, as a wondrous manifestation of the work of the Creator, and with a sense of awe such as no ceremonial service, however impressive, in a man-made cathedral could ever evoke.

CROCS AND HIPPOS

The first town you get to in Northern Rhodesia is Livingstone. To get into Northern Rhodesia you cross the Zambesi by a bridge just below the Victoria Falls. Above the Falls the river is a mile and a half wide.

As I have told you, the river comes suddenly to a precipice and falls over it into a gorge four hundred feet deep, and faced by another cliff. The gorge is about one hundred and fifty yards wide. At the eastern end of it, the gorge turns sharply for half a mile and then turns sharply again for another half-mile, and it keeps on doing this zigzag business for forty-five miles, all the time between high cliffs.



" NASTY FELLOWS, CROCS "

At the first turn below the Falls the bridge spans the gorge, and gives you a splendid view of the Falls as you stand on it. It is wonderful to look over the parapet and see far, far below you, four hundred feet down, the great whirlpool known as the Boiling Pot, and the river rushing along beneath you between its high walls. The water is at that point only one hundred yards wide, when just before its fall it was over a mile across. So all that water crammed into the narrow gorge naturally must be very deep – eighty-five feet deep they told me it was. The spray from the Falls rushes up a thousand feet into the sky and falls on the bridge like rain. With the sun shining upon it you see the most wonderful and beautiful rainbow, making a complete circle.

Looking down into the gorge one saw a little smear on the rocky shore – it wasn't a rock, it was a croc.

Yes, the river is full of crocodiles and hippos.

Nasty fellows, crocs. Thanks to one of them I heard a good report of one of our lately organized native Scouts. A native boy was washing his hands in the river when a crocodile made a sudden rush out of the water and grabbed him by the arm, and with his powerful jaws bit it clean off. A native "Pathfinder Scout" as they are called, rushed to his rescue and promptly tied a strip of linen round above the limb and wound it tight with a stick so that it stopped the flow of blood which was gushing from the artery, and thus he saved the boy's life. He had remembered his lessons in first aid by practising them occasionally, as every Scout should do, lest he forget some of the details.

Think, now, where is the artery, and how would you stop the bleeding if you had been this Rover?

Besides the crocs, there are, as I have said, lots of hippos in the Zambesi, even close to the town of Livingstone, but they don't come out much in the day-time, they prefer night, especially when they go on marauding expeditions in the crops. But the other day one old hippo was very bold. It got into a paddock where there was a valuable bull, and the two animals went for each other, and, strange to say, the hippo got the best

of the fight, and left the bull badly wounded (for a hippo has nasty little tusks sticking straight out from his ugly mouth).

Not content with his victory, the hippo thought it over, and next day came back, and, finding his antagonist far from well after his battle, went at him again and killed him.

The owner of the bull considered that this was going a bit too far on the part of the hippo, and he pursued him with a rifle, and that night all the natives around had a hippo-meal supper.

A hunter shot a big hippopotamus in the St. John's River, in South Africa. That was not a very difficult thing to do – but when it came to getting him out of the water and up the bank on to dry land it was another matter.

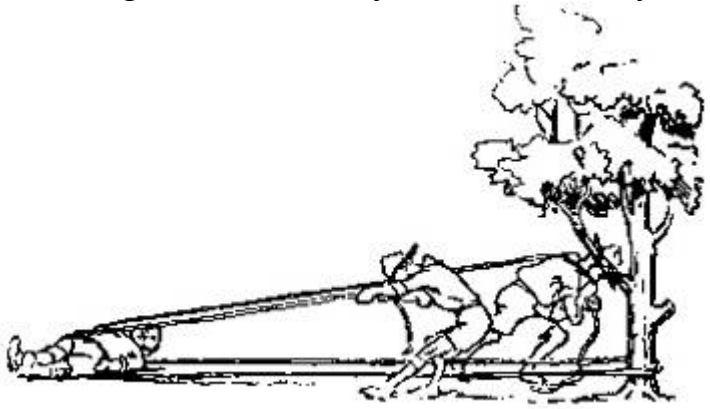
He got a whole crowd of natives to pull and tug and lever the beast up. But it was no go. They could not move him.

So he borrowed a team of oxen, and finally a second team, and passed the chains, which they pulled their wagon by, round the carcass, and the oxen heaved with such force that they broke the chains, and the old hippo still lay there, smiling.

Everybody was at a loss to know what to do when along came an old sailor, who remarked, "Why don't you parbuckle the beggar? You would have him out in two jiffies."

"Parbuckle? – What do you mean?"

"Why – this way. Take a long rope. Pass it round a tree or strong post where you want to bring the hippo. Then take both ends of the rope, pass them under his body, and then back over his top-side. Then lay your men or your oxen to haul the two ends, and the old hippo will come rolling over and over till you land him where you want."



And that was how they got him out quite easily.

In the same way you can move any round and heavy thing like a big log or a barrel of beer.

If you have got a good big fat boy in your Troop (and there are few Troops that haven't got their "Fatty") try parbuckling him. Pass the two ends of your rope round a post or tree, then under and back over him, and haul on the two ends and you will roll him up to the post and he will enjoy the ride. He must, of course, lie quite stiff like a log.

LIONS

"Send those lions away out of the garden," was what Lady Young said to a servant last week, when, on looking out of her bedroom window in the morning, she saw two lions strolling about among her flowers.

This was at Lusaka, the capital of Northern Rhodesia, of which Sir Hubert Young is the Governor. You know, of course, so I need not tell you, that Northern Rhodesia is a British Colony, north of the Zambesi. This river divides it from Southern Rhodesia.

Northern Rhodesia is just about three times the size of Great Britain and Ireland. Rather bigger than you expected, eh? There are several up-todate English towns and big mining centres in it. They are far apart from one another, and therefore it is difficult for the Scouts in them to get together for Rallies, but they work away at Scouting although far from each other, and very far away from you in the "Old Country."

As you may guess from the above remark of Lady Young's, their hiking and camping in the vast wild bush country is not without excitement, owing to the presence of lions and other little oddities of the jungle, like hippos and giraffes and crocodiles and snakes. But the Scouts don't mind. Some of the natives themselves were wild and hostile people only a few years ago. They were called "Mashukulumbwe" though they don't like the name, because it was what another tribe called them after defeating them in battle. It means "under-dogs." They prefer to be called "Baila." They used to wear their hair done up with mud and string into a tapering horn like a rhino's horn. When out in hunting parties they used to fix a little tassel on the tip of this horn, so that when hiding and stalking their game in long grass, their tassel would be seen by their comrades, and so they did not get shot by accident.

They were great lion-hunters, and lions are still plentiful in the country.

A missionary in this country once came across an old and very decrepit chief. He was an ugly sight, and the missionary thought to himself that he didn't want to have much to do with him. But then he heard this chief's story, and he soon altered his opinion of him.

Two lions had got into a kraal where the cattle were put for the night. So the chief went out, armed with an assegai, and entered the kraal, and managed to kill one lion and to drive the other out after a great struggle.

But this second lion turned on him, knocked him down, and mauled him most dreadfully before he was rescued. As a result of these wounds the chief has been paralysed in his limbs ever since. But he was a brave man to go in and tackle two lions single-handed and armed only with an assegai.

Well, only the other day, near Lusaka, a native, with his wife and two girls, was camping at the roadside, and in the middle of the night a lion came along and killed the man. His wife seized one of the girls and pushed her up into a tree for safety, but before she could get the other there the lion jumped on to her, and though she fought him bravely he killed her and then killed the remaining child. That poor girl up in the tree had a horrible time watching the lion eating her family. For the next two days the lion hung about there, and it was not till after three days that the girl was able to come down and make her way to the nearest village.

My old Zulu hunter said that when lions attacked him he used to fling himself down under his shield and let them jump over him, and he then stuck them with his assegai as they went over! Quite simple!

A lion actually attacked a motor-car on the road. He jumped on to the bonnet, and seemed to think that the lamps had something to do with the life of the car, for he got his powerful claws round one of the headlights and twisted it round and broke its neck, as it were. Then he slipped off the bonnet on to the road, and the driver thought he was rid of the beast, but not a bit of it. When he looked round he saw that the lion was coming along after him as fast as he could go. So the driver did the best thing possible under the circumstances, and "trod on the gas" and drove the car like billy-o till he got well out of range of the old lion.

SNAKES

Talking of motor-cars in Rhodesia, a driver was trying to get his car to start the other day, and the self-starter would not work. So he got down and opened up the bonnet to see what was wrong, and got the surprise of his life when he found a snake twiddled up in the engine.

Talking of snakes (I'm sure you like hearing about snakes), two cases were in the paper to-day. An elderly lady was in her garden in Bulawayo when she saw a big snake creep in under a water-butt, so she nipped into the house and got a gun and a couple of cartridges and ran out and fired twice at him. But somehow she failed to hit him, and out he came and slid away into the garage. "All right, my friend, I've got you now," she said to herself, as she shut him in there while she went and got some more cartridges. Then she came back, opened the door and went in. She shot him dead this time!

It was plucky of her, wasn't it? Most women would have called for somebody else to come and kill the snake, but Rhodesian women are accustomed to doing things for themselves – like good Scouts!

The second snaky case was that of a small native boy who saw a snake sliding into his father's hut. He knew that when his father came home and went into the hut, which was very dark inside, he would not see the snake and the snake would get him. So that little imp determined to get that snake himself, and, arming himself with a spear with which the natives catch fish, he boldly went into the hut to tackle the intruder.

Mind you, this was no harmless grass snake that he was dealing with, but the most dangerous of the South African serpents, a black mamba, poisonous and fierce. But the little chap went at him all the same, and managed to jab the spear into him before the reptile could bite him. He killed the beast and hung it up in triumph. A friend of mine went and stood alongside it. It was longer than he was, and he stood six feet! I don't suppose its slayer was much more than half that height. Plucky lad!

XII

TWO- AND FOUR-LEGGED ANIMALS

THE ORYX

SOME people think a rhino is the most dangerous animal in the jungle, but I think the buffalo is far worse. A rhino runs about blindly, sniffing for you, but a buffalo is cunning and wise, savage and very quick. You have to keep your eyes skinned and your rifle ready when dealing with him.

There is great rivalry between the oryx and the waterbuck as to which is the handsomer. I give the prize not to the sable antelope in *South* Africa, but to the oryx, with his black-and-white markings and his long straight horns, in *East* Africa.

Then, of course, there are those pets of the jungle – well, you can't call them pets because they're about the biggest of all the wild animals, certainly the tallest : I mean the giraffes. They are dear things. I don't think anybody could have the heart to shoot them. They are quite harmless and very helpless, with their great ungainly legs and their absurdly long necks with sweet little heads and large, gentle eyes. One can't help loving the "twiga," as they are called. They are beautiful.

But all the animals are not beautiful. You could hardly call a rhino beautiful, and a hippo is positively and definitely ugly. Crocodiles are fairly repulsive.

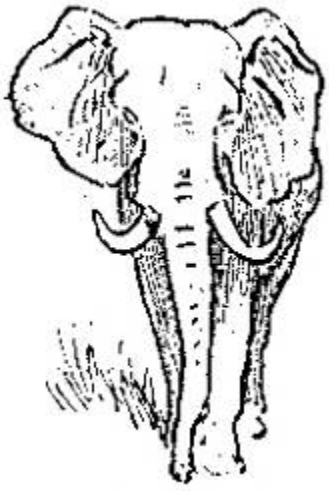
THE WART-HOG

But if a prize is to be given for the most hideous of the jungle folk I should award it to the wart-hog. Oh, he is the limit! He is almost like a miniature rhino, but with huge tusks and big warts on his surly face. But, after all, even the ugliest Scout has some good in him somewhere, and I think the old wart-hog, too, has his good points. At any rate, he is first cousin to the wild boar, and I look on him as the King of the Jungle.

Yes, the wild boar lords it over all the others. There is not one animal that I know of, not even a lion, who will dare to come and drink at the waterhole while Mr. Boar is quenching his thirst. He has a proper pride in himself, and a nasty temper backed with a thick hide and sharp tusks.

Lions are curious folk. You will hear them grunting or roaring round your camp at night, and you may search for them all day, and never find them, while at odd times and in unexpected places, there they will be! Generally, they will quietly clear off if you let them alone.

The elephant is a stately lord of the jungle, but he, too, is afraid of a wild boar. An elephant is a curious beast. If you wound him at all badly in one of his legs he will stand still, unable to move on the other three. Whether he only thinks he can't, or really can't, I don't know – but there it is. He certainly funks the idea of a boar cutting a gash in one of his legs, and so leaving him stranded.



A LORD OF THE JUNGLE

I heard of a man lately who was out shooting birds in the bush, when an elephant came for him. In desperation he let fly with his shot-gun, hoping to frighten him off. But, of course, small shot would have no more effect on an elephant than a pea from a peashooter. So the elephant charged, and knocked the man down between his forelegs, and then tried to kneel on him.

Fortunately, the man was between his legs, and so did not get squashed. The elephant dug at him with his tusk but missed his body, though he pierced his camera. The man then slid back under the elephant while the animal was on its knees and crept out sideways and escaped into the bush, and lay there while the elephant searched around for him and finally went away. After that the man remembered nothing more till he found himself in bed in camp.

I have stalked elephants and been close up to them, but I would never shoot one ; they are one of the great wonders of Nature. In spite of their having been hunted and shot for their ivory for years past, there are still many thousands of them in East Africa, and they are increasing in numbers. But, unlike the Indian elephant, they refuse to be tamed to do useful work for man. Haughty beasts!

"THE HIPPO IS NO BEAUTY!"

I could go on and tell you about baboons and leopards and the many kinds of buck and gazelle, not to mention the enormous variety of birds, from ostriches, eagles, great bustards, secretary birds, vultures, hawks, flamingoes (in their millions), wildfowl, and game birds, down to warblers and weaver birds, with their nests hanging in clusters from the trees.

But all this would make a whole bookful of yarns. All I can suggest is – go to Africa and see them for yourself some day!

One of the most interesting animals in the jungle country is the human animal – the native.

Until they are taken in hand to be "civilized" they are, in most cases, very likeable and interesting folk when you get to know them. But there are so many different tribes and races among them, and these vary greatly in their characteristics – some are lazy and dirty, others are proud and quarrelsome, others, again, are cheery and hard-working; in any case, all are backwoodsmen, can fend for themselves, have their own ways of doing things, such as tracking and trapping game, and so on. They can teach one a lot in the way of bush lore if they like and if they like *you*. In the words of the poet, "They're all right when you know 'em, but you've got to know 'em first."

They are wonderfully quick to read the white man's character, and unless they like you you won't get much out of them. It doesn't do to spoil them any more than to bully them.

I have had a good deal to do with African natives, both in South Africa and Rhodesia, on the West Coast, in the Sudan, and in East Africa. I could almost write you a book about all their different peculiarities, but I won't. In Kenya we come across the different tribes of Masai, Kikuyu, Kavirondo, Nandis, Wandirobo, Somalis, and Turkanas.

These last are fine wild fellows, generally without a stitch of clothing, and carrying at least one spear for protection against enemies or wild beasts. They are brave, cheery, and clever hunters. They are generally tall, and, like other tribes living near the

Nile, they like to stand on one leg with the other foot resting against its knee, or, when they have both feet on the ground, they stand cross-legged (as I do myself !) They have long, shaggy hair, which they do up with grease and clay into different shapes, and many of them wear a big flat "bun" of hair down their back, made not only of their own hair but also that of their father and grandfather plastered on to it! A nasty idea, but they are rather proud of it.

But one could go on for a life-time studying the ways and characters of the hundred different kind of animals that inhabit this country – and I don't think one would ever get tired of it. A very delightful hobby, but then comes that awkward question, which one must ask oneself when tempted to take up a new idea – What good will it do other people ? If it is only for your own selfish amusement, don't touch it. A life that does no good to other people is a life misspent and wasted. Moreover, it cannot give the full happiness – the happiness that comes of helping others.

Yes – these natives in Africa are funny chaps. I like them and find them very interesting.

I have just heard of a tribe that has been least touched by civilisation. It is one that lives high up in cliffs and caves in the desert north of Ashanti.

But its people are totally different from my friends the Ashantis, and though they are uncivilised, they build themselves solid houses with solid furniture inside them, unlike the wild tribes that live in straw huts and sit on the floor.

They are known as the Habbe tribe. Moreover, the boys in each village have their club or "den." A den is made of straw, and here the priest takes the boys in hand, and when they are about fourteen he teaches them what they must do when they are grown-up men. This goes on for several days. They sleep at night in their own homes, but are called by a drummer in the early morning and they fall in and march behind him to the den; spend the day there, and are drummed back home in the evening.

When this course of training is finished they are allowed to break out and to run wild in the town for three days, making as much noise as they like, and getting presents from the people. But on the fourth day they are expected to become quiet and serious, and show that they are no longer wild boys, but disciplined men.

Then the drams beat and they all go and prepare food for their god, and take it to the shrine and offer it up to him. Each boy has to prepare the food himself to show that he knows how to do it. He has also to go out and gather flowers to decorate the shrine.

Then his final test is to go out into the jungle (almost like doing his first-class hike) and kill some wild animal. It doesn't matter what sort of animal, even a small animal will do. But it means that he has got to stalk it and kill it with his assegai. And this takes a bit of doing. Try it yourself with a stick for an assegai, and see whether you could get near enough to a rabbit or even a rat to stick him. When the Habbe boy has succeeded in killing his prey he comes home and is welcomed as a man. He can choose a wife, and no longer remains a member of the boys' club.

The Habbe people never steal. You can leave your things, however valuable, lying about, and nobody will touch them. One reason, and a pretty good one, is that if a man or woman were to steal anything, no matter how small – even a handkerchief – he or she would be killed.

Mr. Seabrooke, who tells all about these people in his book, *Jungle Ways*, asked the chief if death is the penalty for a small theft, what would they do in the case of a man murdering another?

The Chief explained.

"Oh!" Mr. Seabrooke was told. "Everybody condoles with the murderer, who is generally miserable at what he has done. Lately we had a case where Yaro quarrelled with his friend Koyu and killed him. Yaro at once ran to Koyu's house and told his mother that he had unfortunately killed Koyu. Both families got together and mourned over the tragedy. Then they gave a farewell feast to Yaro, and the priest told him to go away and be as if dead to the village. At the third anniversary of the murder, both families prepared a reception and went out on the road to meet the returning murderer. He came back and was given a high old banquet of welcome. In order to bring the families closer, his brother had meantime married the niece of Koyu, and when they had a child it was supposed to have the soul of Koyu, and so he lived again."

That seems a nice friendly way of settling a case of murder.

Natives in every part of Africa, as in Australia, Thibet, and the South Sea Islands, are fond of dressing up and dancing weird dances. They make themselves very fearsome masks.

I think Scouts and Cubs could get up some very funny shows if they made themselves masks and dresses and practised some wild dance to weird music.

It would be something new and out of the common at a Rally, and would, I've no doubt, be tremendously enjoyed by the onlookers.

IN KRUGER PARK

Although we had been in a country of lions and other game in Kenya, we had seen all the "other game" but never saw a lion. We began to fear we should leave Africa without seeing its noblest beast.

We were to embark for home at Lourenço Marques, but on leaving Pretoria to get there we had to pass near Kruger Park. This is not really a park but a tract of bush country as large as Wales. It is kept as a reserve for wild animals. No one is allowed to shoot them – at least not with a gun; you can "shoot" them as much as you like with a camera.

There are roads through the bush in all directions, so we were able to wander about in a motorcar looking for game, but among the rules for people visiting the park, one said "On no account leave your car." This rule was made because lions do not object to cars, but if they see a man away from a car it is another matter!

NOT CAR-CONSCIOUS

So we drove for miles through bushy, park-like country. It was a case of "Oh, oh! What are those animals?" Or "Look, there is a wildebeeste!" Yes, we saw wildebeeste, otherwise known as "brindled gnu" – hundreds of them, sometimes in small herds and at other times old bulls alone. In all cases they paid no more attention to a motor-car than so many cows would in a meadow at home.

And so it was with other animals – great, handsome waterbuck, those odd-looking giraffe, tiny steinbuck, baboons, kudu with their big spiral horns, and zebra looking smart in their black-and-white-striped suits.

After miles of motoring we saw at some distance away a herd of zebra galloping fast. Then one of our party shouted: “Look, look. LIONS!” And there, trotting along behind the zebra, were two lanky yellow forms with long tails. Lions! Lions at last!

Presently the lions stopped and began to move in our direction. The zebras came to a halt and stood with ears pricked, watching the lions from some way off. These made for a brown rock in the grass some one-hundred-and-thirty yards away from us. As they got near to it the rock moved.

It wasn’t a rock at all; it was more lions lying together, crouched in the grass, and every now and then a head was lifted for a moment or two, and before long we could count that there were no fewer than seven lions there. They were devouring a carcass. We did not exactly know what meal they were having till one of them stood up and moved a few yards away, carrying in his mouth the head and striped neck of a zebra. They had evidently killed one of the herd that we had seen just before we arrived, and were now having their breakfast off it.

A TUG-OF-WAR

We could hear the lions mumbling and occasionally snarling when a neighbour tried to get a particularly tempting morsel.

One lion, having had enough, cleaned his mouth and face as a cat would, and having licked his claws he calmly started to walk in our direction! Down into a thickly bushed ravine, where he disappeared in the long grass and reeds, probably to lie up for the day. No. Suddenly it gave us a thrill to see he was coming out of it on our side, and slowly he stalked out into the open not twenty yards away from us. He merely glanced at us and walked on in a majestic way.

Five minutes later another lion did the same thing, only in this case he strolled up behind the car, had a look at it, said to himself: “What’s this thing?” and came up close, and still closer, till he was only six feet from us, looking straight into our eyes through the back window. Evidently satisfied that we were a perfectly harmless old motorcar, the lion paid no more attention to us, but stood there alongside us, watching his brother lions, and gently panting in the heat of the morning, his dear, good-natured face and attitude making him look exactly like a tame mastiff dog.

Eventually he, too, moved off into the bush, while another of his comrades came strolling past us in his turn to be photographed. As the others then made their way into the ravine and lay down in the shade of the bushes, evidently going to rest for the day, we pushed on and drove home to breakfast.

After watching the lions in their natural life in the jungle of the Game Reserve of Kruger National Park, in the Transvaal, I became “lion-crazed.”

I used to think of them as nasty, cruel beasts, slinking about in the bush seeking whom they could devour. Well, to a certain extent this is At the same time they are brave and wise beasts, and very handsome and dignified.

So apart from what I have seen of them in former expeditions, and now in the National Park, I have enjoyed hearing yarns about them from many old hands in North-East Africa and in South Africa.

Personally, I have met with lions on a good many occasions, but in almost every case the meeting was quite unexpected by either party. At other times I have hunted and tracked and searched for them, and was never able to find them. So I learned for myself the lesson, "Always Be Prepared."

A TRUE LION STORY

A man was riding his horse through the bush jungle near Nelspruit, in the East Transvaal, when a lion sprang at him, throwing horse and man to the ground. The horse was quickly on its legs again and galloped away. The lion turned its attention to the man, and, seizing his shoulder in its powerful jaws, it proceeded to drag him along the ground.

The poor man had an agonizing time of it, especially since he was wearing spurs, and these kept catching against tufts of grass and rocks, and when this happened, the lion gave him an extra tug and jerk till he got him free.

After going some distance, the lion let go its hold and stood over him while it got its breath. The man took the opportunity of feeling for his knife, which he wore on his belt, and found that luckily it had not fallen out of its sheath. He drew the knife, and feeling gently along the lion's body till he came to its heart, he drove the knife home with all his strength, and in a few moments the lion was dead.

With the assistance of some natives, the man managed to make his way back to camp. There he collapsed from loss of blood and from shock. His boys made a stretcher and proceeded to carry him some forty miles to the nearest hospital.

This took a couple of days, of terrible pain, by which time his arm had swollen up and become discoloured, and the wounds all festered, so that the doctors said that the arm must be cut off, otherwise it would mortify, and so kill the man.

However, he pluckily said he would not have it off, and gradually it got better, and to-day, although that arm is a bit stiff, it is as healthy as the other.

This is a true story. It was told me by the man himself, Mr. Wolhuter, who is a Game Warden in the Kruger Animal Reserve. He also showed me the skin of the lion, and the knife with which he killed it.

I have told you how necessary it is to know how to shoot, even if you go overseas on such a peaceful adventure as that of being a missionary.

Dr. Livingstone himself had a narrow escape from a lion. One such missionary I met also, who told me that he was walking through the bush in Tanganyika. He always carried a rifle in case of being attacked by a rhino or other wild animal, and he had learned to shoot when he was a boy. Lucky for him!

For on this occasion, without any warning, a lion suddenly charged him, and as it sprang into the air, he loosed off a hurried shot, which fortunately killed the lion as it leaped, and the beast fell writhing in death at his feet.

Another friend of mine told me how one day hehad stalked and wounded a buffalo. Now the buffalo is, as I have said, the most dangerous animal in Africa – and doubly so when he has been wounded. So when this one dived into a thick patch of reeds, my friend did not follow him, or the buffalo would probably have got him. He went back to camp for the night, knowing that badly wounded as he was, the buffalo would

probably lie down when he found he was not being followed, and would then bleed to death, or grow so stiff and weak from his wound that he would not be able to attack him if he went and hunted him up the following day.

So early next morning the hunter returned to the reed-bed and pushed his way very carefully and silently through the thick cover. Suddenly as he parted the reeds he found close in front of him the buffalo lying dead, but violently agitated because at one end of it was a hungry lion trying to drag the carcass away from a crocodile which had got a tight hold on the other end. Thus there was a raging and exciting tug-of-war going on between two tyrants of the jungle. My friend did not lose a moment in watching the competition, but he upped with his rifle and shot the croc. dead; but before he could turn the other barrel on the the lion this warrior had not "stayed upon the order of his going," but had dived at once into the thick reeds and was gone.

Had my friend not shown himself to be ready with his gun, no doubt the lion, annoyed at being disturbed at his feast, would otherwise have sprung, not into the jungle, but on to the uneasy sportsman. Again the value of "Being Prepared."

Talking of other animals sharing a lion's meal with him, I have just read a good yarn by another old hunter, Roger Courtney, in his interesting book, *Africa Calling*. He describes how he came upon a lion and lioness which had killed two calves. The lioness moved away just as he arrived on the scene.

"A flock of vultures immediately flapped down heavily from the trees on to the lioness's calf, and began tearing into it with their great hooked beaks. I turned my attention to the lion. I found that he had stopped eating, and was looking angrily at the vultures tearing at the lioness's calf.

"He left his own kill and bounded over to them, to chase them off. The vultures scattered awkwardly, and flapped up into the safety of the trees. But a number of the other vultures had now descended on the lion's own kill, and were tearing into it for all they were worth. The lion bounded back and scared them away, as he had scared away the first lot.

"At once the first lot descended again, and tore into the lioness's kill. The thing developed into a first-class comedy of the bush. At whichever kill the lion was not, there the vultures were. The lion was kept busy running from one kill to the other to scare the birds away.

"It was hard not to laugh out loud. In the few moments which the vultures had time at the kills, they managed to tear out at least some bits of meat and get away with them : but the lion had no time to eat at all. He was too busy running from one kill to the other. As the thing went on he became a very angry and worried-looking lion.

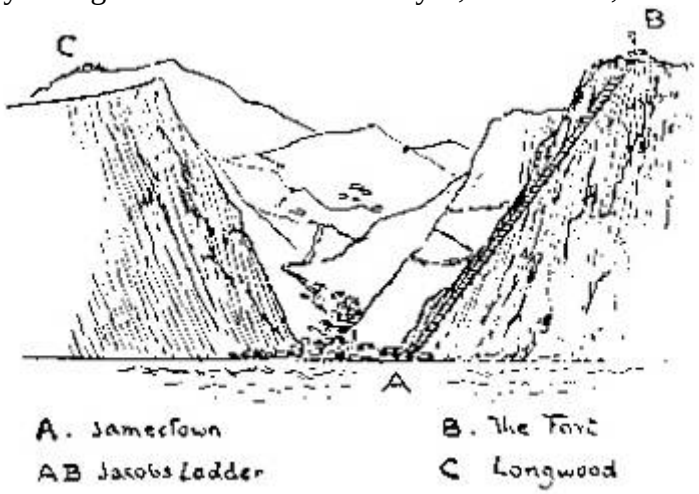
"Then, in a most intelligent way, he suddenly ended the whole affair. He simply dragged the one kill right up close to the other! With the outwitted vultures staring down from the trees, he then began eating comfortably. Almost there was an air about him of wondering why he had not thought of this before."

XIII

ST. HELENA, ASCENSION, AND HOME

THIS is written at St. Helena. Far out in the South Atlantic lies this solitary little British island, over a thousand miles from any land. It is rather smaller than the Isle of Wight. It is a jumble of high mountains with rocky cliffs overhanging the sea, except in one spot where a deep ravine runs down to the shore. This gives the only landing place. Along the bottom of the ravine lies the long, narrow township of Jamestown. There are about four thousand people in St. Helena.

Look at this sketch of St. Helena. At the bottom of the ravine between the mountains stands the town of Jamestown – a single street about a mile long. High above on the right stand the fort and barracks where the garrison live. But to get there meant a long way round by road zigzagging up the mountain-side; so a short cut was made in the shape of a staircase from the town up to the fort. I should think it is the longest staircase in the world; it has 699 steps! It is called "Jacob's Ladder." It has a concrete side wall, and, of course, boys prefer to slide down this instead of walking. I can tell you it is some slide! "Don't they ever get killed?" I asked. "Oh yes, sometimes," was the reply.



Once you are on the island it is not easy to get away from it again, for very few ships come there now, though in olden days they used to.

Originally it was discovered by the old Portuguese seamen in 1501. They let loose a lot of pigs upon it, so that ships needing food could go there and get their pork, and so it became a regular port of call for their ships sailing from Europe to their colonies away in Java. These got their supplies of fresh water and fresh pork.

Later the Dutch used the island, but eventually gave up using St. Helena and called at the Cape of Good Hope instead, where a number of them settled and became Boers (farmers).

St. Helena became famous in later times as a prison – mainly because it is a difficult place to get away from, and several friends of mine have been imprisoned there ! During the war in South Africa some hundreds of Boers captured in the fighting were

sent to St. Helena, and among them were General Cronje and Sarel Eloff, who fought against me at Mafeking.

And before their time Dinizulu, the rebellious Zulu chief, was kept there as a prisoner. I served in the expedition against him, and had been sent forward on a scouting expedition into his stronghold, the Ceza Bush, a nasty jumble of rocks and caves and thick bush on a steep mountain-side. He nipped out of it as we got in. In his haste he left his necklace behind – a very long chain of little wooden beads. Those beads now form the Wood Badge which Scouters win who go through the Training Course at Gilwell.

It seemed odd that I should be wearing Dinizulu's beads in the very place where he had been a prisoner, two thousand miles away from where he lost and I got them.

NAPOLEON

Another and greater warrior than Dinizulu and his father, Cetewayo (who had also been a prisoner here), was the great Napoleon Bonaparte.

After the battle of Waterloo in 1815 he was sent to St. Helena at the wish of the different countries of Europe, because he kept continually making war with one or another of them. Here he remained for five years till he died.

I have just been to see Longwood, the house in which he lived. It is a long, single-storied house, right up on the top of the highest down in the island. He was allowed to have his staff officers with him to keep him company, and the descendants of those officers have made themselves into a little society, which has taken over charge of the house and garden and keep it in repair as a museum and memorial of Napoleon's stay there.

Poor Napoleon! He tried to keep up his state as an Emperor, and was greatly annoyed with the British Governor of the Island, who kept him strictly as a prisoner within the grounds of his house. In the house is some of the furniture which he had used. Among other things is his folding camp-bed and a huge tin bath. There are curious little peep-holes in the shutters of his window, so made that he could look out though the shutters were closed, and nobody could look in or know that he was watching them.

THE SCOUTS OF ST. HELENA

But I haven't told you the important thing about St. Helena. There are Boy Scouts there! And Girl Guides, too!

The guide book says of the island: "There is an Anglican Bishop in the island, but no poisonous insects, nor snakes." It omits to mention the Boy Scouts. But there they are – and very much there!

When our ship anchored off the place a very smart boat rowed out to us, manned by four very hefty Scouts, and steered by the Scoutmaster, the Rev. Canon Walcott. In this we were taken ashore, and found a huge crowd assembled on the wharf to greet us. There was a fine triumphal arch made by the Scouts and decorated with the Scout and Guide badges. Then there was a long lane made by a big Scout Group and three Guide Companies and three Packs.

Although they were all very poor, they were all very smartly dressed in uniform, and the Wolf Cubs and Scouts had lots of badges of proficiency. There were five King's Scouts and a lot of 1st Class and All-round Cords. The Scouts had a jolly good band of ocarinas and drums.

We had a Scout's Own in the Guide Headquarters, and had morning tea with the Guides. Afterwards we inspected the Scouts' Headquarters a former Army storehouse, in which they have rigged up a stage, and painted their own scenery for concerts, etc.

They are a jolly lot of fellows, but quite out of touch with any other Scouts. I wish some of you who read this would write to them. They don't get much news of the outer world there, and mails only reach them once a month. But they would be delighted to hear from any brother Scouts at home or elsewhere. For any of you who are stamp collectors it would be worth while writing and getting an answer from them, because the St. Helena stamps are very beautiful and very rare.

Write care of The Boy Scouts Association, Jamestown, St. Helena.

ASCENSION

Those old Portuguese sea adventurers of four hundred years ago must have been fine, plucky fellows. In their little sailing ships, largely at the mercy of the wind and weather, and without tinned provisions, they sailed across unknown seas to find new countries, often in unexpected places.

A thousand miles from any land, and about four thousand miles from Portugal, they came across the solitary little island of Ascension. They gave it that name because they sighted it on Ascension Day in 1501. They found it a fairly useless island because, other than sea-birds, nothing grew upon it; nor had it any fresh water. It is about half the size of the Isle of Wight, and consists of a jumble of bare, stony hills and peaks running up into a mountain about 2,000 feet high.

Hundreds of years after the Portuguese had discovered it the British took possession of it because nobody else wanted it, but it made a useful coaling-station for the Navy. Coal was brought out and dumped there by collier ships from Wales, and the cruisers of the Royal Navy employed on the coasts of Africa were able to come there and get their supplies of coal instead of having to go all the way home for them. So the Navy established a depot there. They found that rain clouds always hung about the top of the mountain, so they built a dam in one of the valleys up there and collected a supply of fresh water.

When I visited the island many years ago it was treated by the Admiralty as if it were a ship. It was called H.M.S. Ascension, and had its captain and crew and its supplies – just as if it were a ship. Among its supplies it got a lot of paint, but it asked for *green* paint. With this the crew painted bits of the island so that the bare rock looked at a little distance like nice green lawns.

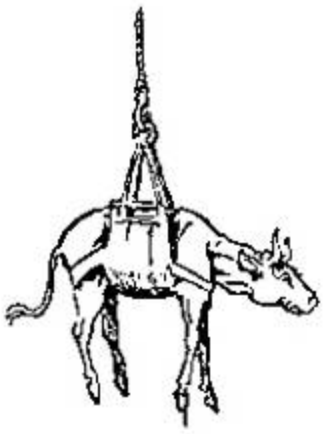
I have said that there were some seabirds on the island. Some? There are thousands of them, especially on one part of the island where they nest. They only come there three times in two years to lay their eggs. They are called "Wideawakes," because they never stop making a noise; so their nesting-place is called the Wideawake Fair.

An Ascension man told me the eggs are good to eat. "Yes, but how do you know whether the egg you select is fresh or bad?" "Oh, we clear a space on the flat rock and when the birds see it they come and lay their eggs on it. Our boys take out old kerosine tins and gather these fresh eggs."

Our ship called at Ascension recently to land some cattle. They have few cattle there, and little grass to feed them on, so they have to get cows and oxen from St. Helena for their milk and meat. We had the animals in small box-stalls on our deck, and on

arrival at the island, canvas slings were fastened round their bodies and they were hoisted, one at a time, by the steam derrick and lowered over the side into the lighter alongside.

Ascension is no longer a ship, as it used to be, but is now used as a station by the Eastern Telegraph Company for repairing and working its cables under the sea. There are about 140 people living on this island – employed by the Telegraph Company.



NO JOY RIDE FOR THE CATTLE

A TURTLE PRESENT

Of course I did not expect to find any Scouts on this little spot at the "back of beyond." Indeed there are not any boys on the island. But, sure enough, three Rover Scouts were there, and came on board to see me. One of them had carved a handsome Scout badge on a flat shield, on which were two stuffed baby turtles ! You may be sure I shall treasure this quaint and original gift as a valued souvenir of my visit to Ascension.

LAS PALMAS

One of the things on our tour which pleased me almost as much as the lions in South Africa – but only *almost* – was the sight we had of a full-rigged ship at Las Palmas. You very seldom see a sailing vessel of any size nowadays, since all big ships go by steam or oil. But a sailing ship is a wonderful and beautiful sight, with her three tall masts and yards and spiders'-web of rigging.

The ship we saw had been built in England and was now used by the Argentine Navy for training cadets to become officers later on. They learn to be as active as monkeys in climbing about the rigging. I saw one standing up on the end of a yard-arm balancing himself there, high above the sea, with nothing to hang on to, calmly doing up his belt.

I wish we had some sailing ships to teach our lads to be plucky and active. How the Sea Scouts would enjoy it!

Las Palmas is the chief town on the island of Grand Canary. In stories of buccaneers and pirates of old, the heroes always drank "canary" – that is, the wine made on the Canary Island; but though they make a little wine there still, their chief industry is growing bananas and tomatoes for the English market. The bird called a canary does *not* come from the Canary Island.

Another curious thing they cultivate there is cochineal. Do you know what that is? Well, it is a bright red stuff which is used for dyeing cloth, and also – in some mysterious way – for cooking. I have only once seen it used in this way. It was when I went to stay with some friends in South Africa, and they had a Chinese cook. At dinner that night all the food that came on to the table was bright red. Even the rice and potatoes, etc., all were scarlet. The cook was sent for to explain matters. He asked whether it was not true that a General was among the guests (meaning me!). And when they said, "Yes, that was true," he replied, "Well, in my country, whenever a General comes to dinner we dye all the food red in his honour!" So that was that.

But when we saw cochineal growing, it did not look much like making things red. It is a tiny little white insect that lives on the prickly pear leaves. The leaf is about as big as your two hands put together, and nearly as thick, and it is covered with sharp little thorns. When a few of these little white insects come to live on it, the owner covers each leaf with a muslin bag, so that the insects can't get away again, but lay their eggs there and breed up more of their kind. In due season these are all swept off and dried until they come out in brown grains, which, when boiled down, turn bright red.

The island is about forty-five miles long, and consists of high hills and deep ravines. The hills are generally very bare, but the valleys are fully cultivated with banana groves and tomatoes. The rocky hills run up to a height of nearly six thousand feet and are full of holes and crannies and little caves. In ancient days the natives used to live in these, and even to-day they are still occupied by people. They find them cool in summer and warm in winter, and are just as comfortable as houses, but don't need repairing.

SCOUTS EVERYWHERE

In every port that we have stopped at on our voyage round Africa we have found Scouts there. Let's see: how many have we called at? One, two, three – sixteen. And here at this, our last one before we get to England, again we found Scouts. Spanish Scouts this time, for Grand Canary and the neighbouring island of Teneriffe belong to Spain. And they were fine, cheery lads, smartly turned out in proper Scout kit. They could not speak any English, but they had with them an English Rover Scout who acted as interpreter. He came from the Westminster Scouts, but is employed (like some two hundred other British men) in business in Las Palmas, and has learnt to speak Spanish fluently. Spanish is a most useful language to know, and easy to learn. Why not learn it?

FAREWELL

Well, I am sorry to say that this brings us to the end of our tour. I write this on board our ship, only two days from home.

The awful thing is that though I like to get home once more and to see my friends and my dogs, and to have a look at you Scouts – yet somehow I am sorry to leave those jolly, sunny British Overseas lands. I can only look forward with the hope of going to them again some day.

Some people seem to think that to go and live in those countries is "banishment" from England. Not a bit of it! They are other parts of Britain. But with more openings for young men than we have in our crowded little country at home; and every day they are getting nearer to England. To reach South Africa it used to take twenty-one days a short time ago. Now it takes only seventeen days of delightful sea-voyaging, and, if you're in a hurry, only four-and-a-half days by air!

The frontispiece map shows you where the Chief Guide and I have visited Scouts on this trip, beginning with Marseilles, and going via Cairo and Aden to Africa. I hope that many of you who read it will in your turn visit those places and have as good a time as we have had.