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ABYSSINIA.

A

STATEMENT OF FACTS

RELATIVE TO THE

TRANSACTIONS BETWEEN THE WRITER AND THE LATE BRITISH
POLITICAL MISSION TO THE COURT OF SHOA.



BY CHARLES T. BEKE.

LONDON:
JAMES MADDEN, 8, LEADENHALL STREET.

1845.

Vf, 13.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

I HAVE hitherto been prevented from giving publicity to the following particulars by the circumstance, that an application made by me in November, 1843, to the Government of Bombay, and thence referred to the Supreme Government of India in England, was still under consideration; and until judgment upon it had been pronounced, I felt it would be indecorous to appear at the bar of any other tribunal. That judgment having at length been given, I lose no time in laying before the public this plain "Statement of Facts."

I make this appeal under the sense of its being not less just to my reputation, both present and future, than due to the friends who so kindly assisted me in the prosecution of my journey, to make known the circumstances of my relations with the late Mission to Shoa, and their consequences as affecting my career as a traveller in Africa.

CHARLES T. BEKE.

9, *Austin Friars*, 1st January, 1845.



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A

STATEMENT OF FACTS;

§c.

It is now upwards of six years since I first called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the importance of establishing political and commercial relations with Abyssinia, and especially with the independent kingdom of Shoa, which forms the south-eastern portion of that extensive and once powerful empire. Having been brought into communication with the late Lord Sydenham, (then the Right Honourable T. Poulett Thomson and President of the Board of Trade,) in consequence of my having, during the greater part of the years 1837 and 1838, performed *ad interim* the functions of British Consul at Leipzig, I, at an interview with which I was honoured on the 2nd August, 1838, took occasion to explain to him my views; and subsequently, during the two years that elapsed prior to my departure for Abyssinia, I made various representations on the subject to Her Majesty's Government. These representations not being attended with the success desired, I at length determined on proceeding to Abyssinia on my own responsibility. Independently of the objects to which the attention of Government had thus been directed and which were comprehended in the immediate scope of my undertaking, it was my intention to penetrate westward as far as practicable into the interior of Africa; and I further anticipated that my journey would afford me an opportunity of testing the accuracy of some of the views with respect to the origin and affinity of nations and languages, and the progress of civilization, which had been propounded in my *Origines Biblicæ* several years before.

My departure from England took place on the 1st of September, 1840. Before commencing my journey I tendered my services to the Councils of the Royal Geographical and African Civilization Societies, neither of whom, however, considered it advisable at that time to avail themselves of my offer. But a few influential members of the two Societies kindly came forward and joined in affording me pecuniary assistance.* This they did both at the outset and subsequently; but I unfortunately derived no benefit from the latter advances, through the failure of my agents, Messrs. Kerr and Co., in whose hands they were lodged on my account. On my leaving England it was arranged that I should make reports on various subjects, especially on the geography of the countries I was about to visit and on the slave trade and slavery existing within them, to

* I feel persuaded that, under the circumstances, my kind friends will pardon me for giving publicity to their names. They are Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart., M.P., Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, Bart., Arthur Kett Barclay, Esq., Edward North Buxton, Esq., James Cook, Esq., William Evans, Esq., M.P., William Storrs Fry, Esq. (since deceased), Joseph John Gurney, Esq., Samuel Gurney, Esq., John Gurney, Esq., Miss Gurney, John Gurney Hoare, Esq., William Henry Leatham, Esq., Thomas Sturge, Esq., and Captain Washington, R.N.

the Rev. J. M. Trew, then Secretary to the African Civilization Society, and now Archdeacon of Bermuda; which reports were to be made to him, not in his official capacity, but as the representative of the friends who had assisted me; and he was to be at liberty to make such use of the information given him as might be deemed expedient.* Accordingly, the essential parts of the numerous reports, which, during my absence, I did so make, were, from time to time, either published in the "Friend of Africa," and the "Friend of the African," or communicated to the Royal Geographical Society, and published in that Society's journal.† This preliminary detail is necessary, in order to explain the precise character in which I travelled in Abyssinia, namely, that of a private individual; and that, although the information sent home by me was communicated by my friends to the two Societies in question, and I was persuaded of the kindly feelings of those Societies towards me, I was not employed by, or connected directly with, either of them. At a later period, namely, in the beginning of 1842, the Council of the Royal Geographical Society voted me 100*l.*;‡ but the intelligence of this did not reach me in Abyssinia until quite at the end of that year, when, from events which have to be related, my labours were summarily put an end to, and I was under the painful necessity of returning home. To Her Majesty's Government I stood in no relation whatever, although I believe that my friends in London considered some of my communications worthy of being brought to the notice of some of its members. And, to conclude this portion of my subject, I voluntarily made, both from Tadjúrrah and from Shoa, various communications to Captain Haines, I. N., the Political Agent at Aden, for the information of the Government of India.

I arrived at Ferri, the frontier town of Shoa, on the 5th February, 1841, and thence proceeded to Angolálla, one of the capitals, where the king was residing. Here, my first task was to prepare a map, on a scale of six miles to an inch, of my route from Tadjúrrah to Shoa, across the deserts occupied by the wild Dankáli or Affar tribes, which map was completed and despatched to Mr. Trew on the 3rd of March following.§ And, as Captain Haines was anxious to obtain a map of this country for the use of the Political Mission, under Captain, now Major Sir William Cornwallis Harris, then on the point of being sent by the Government of Bombay to the court of Shoa,

* The few instructions given me on the subjects to which my attention was more especially wished to be directed, were drawn up,—as to Slavery and the Slave Trade, and the religion of the natives, by the Rev. Mr. Trew; as to commerce and the productions of the soil, such as cotton, coffee, &c., by Mr. Cook; and as to physical geography, by Captain Washington.

† Mr. McQueen, the author of "A Geographical Survey of Africa," was likewise, as a matter of favour, allowed the inspection of my maps and journals, and made use of them in several instances. See his Introduction to Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf's "Journals," *passim*, and the "Friend of the African," for July, 1843, vol. i. p. 27.

‡ This grant is recorded in the "Report of the Council," for 1842, in the following flattering terms:—"The Council, having taken into consideration the services already performed and still likely to be rendered to geographical science by the zealous explorations of Dr. Beke in Africa, have voted him the sum of 100*l.*, to enable him to prosecute his useful labours."—*Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xii., p. 6.

§ The rest of my routes through the various provinces of Abyssinia are laid down on a scale of four miles to the inch. They are all in the possession of the Royal Geographical Society, and from them the map published in the fourteenth volume of the Society's "Journal," (Part 1) has been constructed.

I enclosed my map to him, requesting him to forward it to Captain Washington for Mr. Trew after he had had a copy of it made for the use of the Mission, which was done accordingly.* After this I took up my temporary residence in Ankóber, the other capital, where I employed myself in investigating the state of slavery and the slave trade in that country, and in collecting information on various subjects. Among other things, I, jointly with the Rev. Mr. Krapf, of the Church Missionary Society of London, who had been long in the country, obtained from a slave of the king, named Dilbo, a native of Enárea, various particulars respecting the existence of the large river Gódjob, or (as in Godjam I heard it called, and I believe more correctly) Gódjeb, said to flow beyond Enárea, and to empty its waters into the Indian Ocean. These particulars I sent home in a letter dated Angolálla, May 29th, 1841, in which I remark, that "I deem it of the utmost importance that attention should be directed to this magnificent river, the Gódjob, which may, and perhaps ere long, be found to afford another high road into the interior of Africa." This letter arrived in London on the 6th of September, 1841, and a summary of its contents appeared in the "Friend of Africa" of the 1st,† the "Literary Gazette" of the 2nd,‡ and the "Athenæum" of the 9th§ of the following month of October. The letter itself was communicated to the Royal Geographical Society, and read at their meeting on the 22nd November,|| on which occasion, the Secretary, Colonel Jackson, suggested "that it is probably the same river with that which comes into the sea at the equator, and known by the name of Juba; *Go* appearing to be a common prefix to many names in those regions. Hence Gódjob, Gojob, Gojub or Gojuba; and, finally, by dropping the prefix, we have Juba. The given direction of the Gódjob and the Juba strengthens this supposition."¶ However this may be, the first intelligence of the existence of the Gódjeb was, unless I am much mistaken, communicated to the civilized world by me.** This reclamation is made not out of vanity, but as a matter of simple right; because the merit of the "discovery" of this river, under the name of "Gochob,"†† whatever that merit may be, has been claimed by Major Harris and awarded to him by his eulogists. A comparison of dates will at once decide this point.

My letter was dated at Angolálla *in Shoa* on the 29th May, 1841, whilst Major Harris did not start from Tadjurrah *on the coast* until the day following, *i. e.* the 30th May.‡‡ On his way up, he met at Killelu, on the 25th June, the messenger who was carrying my letter down to the coast;§§ and as I, considering this intelligence respecting the Gódjeb of great importance just at that particular period, had sent this letter *open under cover to Captain Haines* for the information of Government,—and as Captain Haines, expecting a communication from Mr.

* See "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xii., p. 84; vol. xiii. p. 182; and the "erratum" in the latter volume, p. vi.

† Vol. i. p. 187. ‡ P. 641. § P. 780.

|| See "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xii., p. 86—88.

¶ See "Athenæum" of December 5, 1841, p. 936.

** The real course of the Gódjeb is a point still open to question. See "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xiii., pp. 266—268.

†† See page 24, *infra*, as to the correct name.

‡‡ See "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xii., p. 221.

§§ See "Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society," (1841—44) p. 337.

Krapf on the subject of the Mission, had authorized Major Harris to open all letters addressed to him that he might meet on the road, my letter to Captain Haines, covering the one containing this account of the Gódjeb, was opened by Major Harris accordingly. I have no intention to infer that he made, at that time, any use of the information thus obtained. I only think it right to place the *facts* on record just as they occurred.

On the 15th July, 1841, upwards of five months after my arrival in Shoa, the British Mission reached that country. Soon after his arrival, Major Harris informed me, first through Captain Graham, his "principal assistant," and subsequently in person, that *he had instructions from the Government of Bombay to attach me to the Mission*. As, however, he made it a *sine quâ non* that I should send no more reports to England, but that all the information I might collect should be exclusively for *his* use, as the representative of Government, I declined the offer. But I willingly agreed to furnish Government with information, and to render Major Harris and the Mission every assistance in my power. No precise terms of remuneration for my services were agreed on: in fact, upon so general a contract, it was scarcely practicable to fix any. But I was dealing with a public officer, and had no misgivings on such a subject; and, besides, Major Harris reminded me that the Indian Government paid *liberally*. In addition to information on various subjects furnished by me from time to time under this agreement, I drew up for Major Harris four Memoirs on the following subjects:—

1. On the Slave Trade and Slavery in Shoa. Dated 27th August, 1841. (Being a *résumé* of my Reports on these subjects to the Rev. J. M. Trew; see Appendix, p. 27.)
2. On the Europeans who have visited the Kingdom of Shoa during the present Century. Dated 7th September, 1841.
3. On the principal Political Changes in Abyssinia, from the date of Mr. Salt's Mission in 1809–10, down to the present period. Dated 14th September, 1841.
4. Respecting the two Messrs. d'Abbadie, in connexion with Abyssinia. Dated 21st September, 1841.

Besides these, on the 13th August, I assisted Mr. Krapf with the draft, in English, of the letter addressed by the King of Shoa to the Queen of England on the 2nd October following, (see "Extracts of Correspondence," ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 22nd February, 1844,) which letter I, on the same day, took in person to Major Harris for his approval, previously to its being translated into Amháric by Mr. Krapf. And on the 5th October, only five days before my departure from Ankóber, I prepared a draft of the "Treaty of Amity and Commerce," which was executed on the 16th November following between the King of Shoa and Major Harris, in the name and on the behalf of Her Britannic Majesty (see "Extracts of Correspondence"); which draft of the Treaty, I, in like manner, took in person to Major Harris on the same day, and read over and explained to him its "sixteen articles."

I had never any intention to allude to these and many other particulars; but, seeing the systematic endeavours of Major Harris to disparage and injure me, it is but *self-defence* on my part to state what I really did.

Whilst thus employed, I made arrangements for quitting Shoa and pro-

ceeding westward, further into the interior. And before leaving, being desirous, as I had always been, that all the information I might collect should be available to the Mission and to Government, I agreed with Major Harris, *as the representative of Government*, that the reports to be made by me to Mr. Trew should be sent through him *open*, and further that I should make him additional reports upon subjects not touched on in those to Mr. Trew.

My occupation in the preparation of documents of importance until the very eve of my departure,—in fact, in contemplation of it,—shows that I was on terms of intimacy and confidence with Major Harris; and, on my taking leave of him on the 10th October, 1841, I had no reason to imagine that his feelings towards me could be otherwise than friendly.

From Ankóber I went to Angolálla, where the King of Shoa then was, in order to obtain his formal sanction (his consent had already been given) to my leaving the kingdom, and to take final leave of him. Previously to my quitting Ankóber, I had applied to Major Harris for money, and he had given me the sum of fifty dollars, which was all I required from him for my immediate journey, and which was, as I conceived, to be *on account* of what was due to me for past services. However, on Major Harris's arrival at Angolálla a few days afterwards, for the purpose of accompanying the king on a foray into the neighbouring Galla country, he gave me to understand that this money was to be considered as *in full* for all such services.* Indignant at this insignificant sum being offered me for my labours, I said I should prefer remaining unpaid. Upon which he replied, that in that case he must return me the four Memoirs which I had drawn up for him; and on my stating that, as these documents had been prepared by his desire for the information of Government, I should wish them to be forwarded to their destination, he not only objected to this, but informed me that *I must find some other channel of communication with England, as he should for the future decline taking charge of my letters*. I know not whether, in a country in which there is no regular post, a public servant is warranted in refusing to allow the letters of a British subject to accompany his despatches. At all events Major Harris thought proper to do so, not only on this, but likewise on a subsequent occasion;† such being, undoubtedly, a summary and most effectual method of compelling submission to any terms he might think proper to dictate. But before I could quite bring myself to submit to what I considered great injustice, and whilst I was even balancing in my mind whether, for the purpose of making other arrangements, I should not postpone my departure from Shoa, Major Harris, on the morning of the march of the army, refused me permission to accompany him to the palace, as I had previously been in the habit of doing, telling me that my visit must be paid either before or after his. Of course I felt myself bound to yield precedence to his official rank, which he availed himself of to stop with the king until just as the signal for march-

* Major Harris objected to *any value* being placed on Memoir No. 1, "On the Slave Trade and Slavery in Shoa," because the particulars had already been sent by me to England (and yet he made use of these very particulars nearly a twelvemonth later! see Appendix). Memoir No. 4, was, in like manner, declared valueless, for some equally valid reason. Thus, only *two* memoirs remained to be paid for: *other* services were to go for nothing. Such was the promised "liberality" of the representative of the Indian Government!

† See page 11.

ing was given. The consequence was that my visit could not take place at all, and I remained without his majesty's *formal* sanction of my journey. This would, when given, have been coupled with the appointment of an *affero*, (equivalent to the janissary of the Levant,) who had already been promised me by his majesty on the 26th September, to accompany me to the frontier, without which escort no traveller in Shoa ever left the country, and the want of which subjected me to serious difficulty. I now perceived enough to satisfy me that I was not to expect assistance from Her Majesty's Envoy, even if I was not destined to encounter obstacles; and that to postpone my departure till after his return from the foray was likely to be the destruction of all my hopes. Unless, therefore, I meant to abandon my further journey, I must at once get away on any terms; in fact, must submit *unconditionally*. I did so, therefore, through Captain Graham, at the moment they were mounting their horses. In a few hurried words it was arranged that the fifty dollars should be in full for my past services; that my papers should remain with Major Harris; that I was to correspond with him as agreed on at Ankóber; *and that he would take charge of my letters for England*, those addressed to Mr. Trew being sent *open* for the information of himself *and of Government*. And on these terms, and outwardly in a friendly manner, we parted; but so satisfied was he that I should not be able to proceed on my journey, that he would not take final leave of me, expressing distinctly his "expectation" of meeting me again on his return to Angolálla.

My want of an escort can only be appreciated by a traveller in such countries. My servants, too, left me—those I had had in Ankóber being taken into the service of the Mission, and those whom I at the last moment managed to pick up to supply their places, robbing me and abandoning me on the road. Still, in spite of these obstacles, I succeeded in traversing a wild and savage country, for the greater part unknown, and in crossing the river Abai into Gódjam, my immediate point of destination.

Before reaching that country, and whilst still in the territories of Abba Moálle, a Galla chief tributary to Sáhela Selássie, King of Shoa, I met a servant of Dedjatch Bíru, the independent ruler of Gódjam, going on a message to that monarch. To him I entrusted a letter for the Rev. Mr. Krapf, enclosing one addressed to my father in London. This latter letter I requested might accompany some other letters for my family, which I had, with Major Harris's cognizance, left with Dr. Roth, a member of the Mission, to be sent down to Aden with the next official despatches. A couple of days afterwards, when I had got a little further on my road, a guide whom I had engaged leaving me to return home, I gave him a few hurried lines for Mr. Krapf, with another brief communication for my father. I had neither time nor opportunity to write to Mr. Trew or any other friends. To Major Harris himself I did not write for the following reason:—I was still within the dominions of Sáhela Selássie, with whose suspicious disposition I was well acquainted,* and with whom I knew Major Harris to be on anything but friendly terms.† From the strict *surveillance* to which foreigners

* Before the arrival of the Mission in Shoa, I had written to Captain Haines, expressing my opinion of that monarch's true character and disposition.

† On the 8th October, 1841, Major Harris, in a letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay, admits, respecting the king's conduct to him, "Hitherto he has done little to prove that at heart he seeks for an alliance with Great Britain." See "Extracts of Correspondence."

are subjected in Shoa, and the blind awe with which the will of the monarch is obeyed by all, I felt persuaded that my letters, like the despatches of the British Envoy himself, would be first taken to the king; and I was afraid that if I corresponded with Major Harris, I might run the risk of being suspected to be a spy of the Mission, sent into Gódjam with some sinister motive; and I dreaded, therefore, lest orders should be sent to Abba Moálle to stop my further progress. In corresponding with Mr. Krapf, who enjoyed the friendship and confidence of the king, and in whose company I had been residing for several months previously to the arrival of the Mission, I did not lay myself open to any such mischievous suspicion. The result justified my caution. My letters, although most expressly desired to be delivered into the hands of Mr. Krapf, found their way into those of the king, who gave them to Mr. Krapf and commanded him to communicate to him their contents; and as they contained merely the customary friendly greetings to my countrymen in Shoa, and letters for my father, with whom his majesty knew I was in the habit of corresponding, the whole passed over without raising distrust or ill-feelings in the breast of the Shoan monarch.

Not so, however, with the British Envoy. My sending letters to Mr. Krapf *for my family* was asserted by him to be a violation of my contract with him as the representative of the Indian Government, *and he directed Mr. Krapf to return me my letters*, the ostensible reason given for his doing so being that the cover was injured in the carriage.

In the beginning of December, 1841, shortly after my arrival in Gódjam, I sent my messenger back to Shoa, with letters to Major Harris, to Mr. Trew, (open, of course,) and to my family, and I at the same time wrote to Mr. Krapf to the effect of what is above stated respecting my reasons for addressing him instead of Major Harris, adding—

“As to the return of my private letters to my family, because the cover was a little rubbed, it may have been intended to show me how completely I am at the mercy of the Embassy, unless I wish to be debarred from all communication with home and the civilized world. This, however, was given me so plainly to understand at Angolálla, that there was no necessity to repeat the lesson.”

This letter, as Mr. Krapf had stated he acted at the instigation of Major Harris, I sent open to the latter for his perusal. After the explanation given, I certainly did expect to be told that it was perfectly satisfactory. Instead of which, Major Harris thought proper to repeat his charge, saying, in a letter dated the 21st February, 1842 :—

“You entered into an engagement with me, as the head of a public body, and on the part of the Indian Government, to forward your letters, open, to myself, under a certain understanding. *This engagement you repeatedly broke by transmitting packets to Dr. Roth and the Rev. Mr. Krapf*, and had, therefore, no right to be surprised at anything that was done or written in consequence. The letters, regarding the return of which you appear so sensitive, were placed in Mr. Krapf's hands by your messenger in a condition, as you yourself well know, which precluded the possibility of any person, more especially myself, taking charge of them; and I declined accordingly, as everybody else would have declined.”

Had I been circumstanced otherwise than I was, I should, after this repeated and wanton accusation of breach of contract, have declined holding any further communication with Major Harris, who seemed, in fact, to be only striving to drive me to that point, since he well knew that my not cor-

responding with him comprehended my not corresponding with England. But this would have been too great heroism under the circumstances; so I again made a virtue of necessity, and wrote him the following letter, dated D mbecha, 31st March, 1842:—

“Your letter of the 21st February, reached me two days back.

“When Captain Graham first broached the subject of my being connected with the Embassy, he said you would communicate with me *in writing*. It is only a pity that this did not take place, as it would have avoided a deal of misunderstanding. Without going over old ground, I will merely refer to our last conversation when you were on the point of quitting Angol lla. It was then agreed that I should forward to you my *official* letters—certainly not my *private* correspondence with my family and friends—open for your information; and, further, that I should address you upon subjects to which my official communications to England did not extend.

“*From this engagement I have never for a moment swerved.* The letters left with Dr. Roth at Angol lla you were cognizant of; and with respect to those forwarded to Mr. Krapf, I apprehend I have offered a sufficient explanation for my sending them to him rather than to you. *All of those letters, without exception, were to my family alone,* containing my journal of trivial occurrences, which, being in duplicate, is unavoidably voluminous; for it has so happened, that, from want of time, *I have not, since I left Ank ber, hitherto written a line to a single friend in England or elsewhere,* except the note to Captain Haines accompanying my last packet of December.

“I think, therefore, you will do me the justice to admit, that I have not, either in letter or in spirit, violated the engagement entered into with you; and I trust that this will be the termination of all misunderstanding between us.”

It would have been inconsistent with the conciliatory tone of this letter, to advert again to the return of my letters for my family, especially as the evil was then past remedy, and I therefore let the matter pass *sub silentio*.

What answer, if any, Major Harris gave to this last letter of mine, I am unable to say, as none ever reached me. But it is clear, that, notwithstanding my repeated declarations, he persisted in his accusation, and reverted to it upwards of two years afterwards, as will be shown in the sequel.*

Whilst this correspondence was going on, and subsequently until the end of 1842, I pursued my explorations in the countries beyond the Ab i, into which I penetrated further than any preceding traveller; the extreme distance reached by me being nearly seven degrees westward of the meridian of Tadj rrah. Here I had passed the limits occupied by the “red” races, and had come to the brink of the valley of the Bahr el Azrek, inhabited by naked negroes, to whom a “white” face was unknown. During my wanderings, I twice visited the source of the river Ab i, the Nile of Bruce, and had the enviable lot to establish *as a fact*, that the illustrious Scot, so long the victim of calumny, did actually accomplish the grand aim of his life—a fact, which however generally admitted at the present day, could only be placed beyond doubt when another traveller, standing on the spot where, seventy years before, Bruce himself had stood, should verify his description of the locality. At the great slave-market of Baso, I was brought into communication with representatives of the numerous tribes and nations spread over this division of the continent of Africa; and in Sh nasha (the Chinchon of the Portuguese) I lighted on the only existing trace of the once powerful

* See page 25.

kingdom of Gonga—its language.* As objects of minor importance, though scarcely of less interest, I visited the “broken bridge” over the Abái, which gives a companion to the one already described by Bruce and Rüppell; and in Enábsie I discovered the beautiful remains of the convent built there by the Portuguese.

During all this time, I kept up my correspondence with Shoa and England whenever opportunities occurred of sending messengers. My communications to Mr. Trew were, according to agreement, sent open to Major Harris, to whom I also addressed several letters direct; the whole number of documents sent being twenty-five letters and maps for the former, and twelve for the latter, or thirty-seven in all; besides those drawn up previously to my departure from Ankóber. On the other hand, Major Harris, at my request, remitted me or paid my servants several sums of money, amounting, from first to last, to sixty-nine dollars, in addition to the first fifty; being one hundred and nineteen dollars in all. And he likewise supplied me (I believe from the stores of the Mission) with a few articles for presents, &c.

In the beginning of December, 1842, a messenger, whom I had sent to Shoa, returned, bringing a letter from Major Harris, informing me of the approaching departure of the Mission for India *by the way of Gondar*, and proposing that I should quit the country with it; or, if I decided on remaining, *promising me a further supply of funds*. I immediately replied by letter, dated the 5th December, declining the offer of accompanying the Mission, as I stated that I was in hopes of being able to push on to Enárea; but that should I return home instead, I had no idea of travelling the oft-trodden road from Gondar to the coast. And I concluded thus—

“By Walda Georgis [my messenger] *I shall be glad to have as large a supply of*

* This language was formerly spoken, in various dialects, over the whole country between the Abái, as far southward as 6° N. latitude. The irruption of the Gallas, and their occupation of the table land between the Abái and the Gótdjeb, has left the primitive languages only in the valleys of those two rivers; the lowlands being the fastnesses of the aborigines, in the same way as, under similar circumstances, the *highlands* are in Europe. Hence, the Gonga language is (as far as I could learn) now to be found only in Shínasha on the one hand, and in Kaffa, Woráta and Woláitza, on the other. In Enárea, where it was formerly spoken, it appears to have been altogether driven out by the Galla tongue. In this division into two parts by the irruption of hostile invaders, the Gonga race have experienced a like fate to that of the Agau nation, who at an earlier period were *displaced* by the Amharas breaking through them from the south. The *Hhámera* of Waag, the northern portion of Lasta, and the *Aghughá* of Agaumider (for such are the native names of the Agaus of those two divisions of modern Abyssinia,) have maintained their nationality in their not easily accessible countries; whilst the Falashas, and apparently some other *low castes*, scattered over the provinces lying between the other two, are the remains of the former inhabitants of Agau race, the physical character of whose country has not afforded them the same means of resistance. Between the Gonga and Agau languages, in their respective dialects, I have not been able to detect any affinity. The country of the eastern Agaus, through which I passed on my way home, is composed in many parts of a loose sandstone, in caves hollowed in which the inhabitants frequently form their dwellings. These are, apparently, the Troglodytes of Agatharchides, and their language—the *Hhámera*, and not the *Amháric*—is doubtless the *Καμαρα λέξις* of that writer. *Periplus Rubri Maris*, p. 46; in Geogr. Vet. Scriptor. Græc. Minor., vol. I, Oxon, 1698. It is they, too, and not the Hamyarites of Arabia, who are the “Hamara” named in the Ethiopic Inscription of Axum. See Rüppell’s *Reise in Abyssinien*, vol. ii. p. 280; and see the Greek Inscription in Lord Valentia’s *Travels*, vol. iii., p. 181, and Salt’s *Voyage to Abyssinia*, p. 411.

cash as you can spare; and as my communication with the Embassy is now broken off, I shall be obliged by your letting me know how my account stands with your treasury. There is no danger in trusting Walda Georgis with money. For himself, please let him have three dollars, as before."

Major Harris's answer, dated the 3rd January, 1843, says :—

"We are off in ten days, viâ the Adel country, *the northern frontier being closed by the plague, which is there raging*. No communication can be held with Gondar,* and we have received no money from Aden, and are therefore constrained to start at once or run the prospect of starving. *Under these circumstances, you will perceive that we are in no condition to answer your unlimited draft, having just barely sufficient to purchase food on the road*. I have, however, sent you another *ten dollars*, and paid your man three, as you desire. *It will pinch us a little more; but that cannot be helped*.

"Your account with the Embassy is enclosed as you wish. If you will have the goodness to make my account with yourself, and strike a balance, *I shall leave a request with Captain Haines to honour your draft to any amount that may be against me*."

I cannot pretend to say what money was in the treasury of the Mission at the date of this communication; but I assume the fact to be as stated: there was "just barely sufficient to purchase food on the road." But, after this letter was written, and before my servant had taken leave of Major Harris, the latter received a considerable sum (several hundred dollars) from the King of Shoa; and a messenger likewise came up from Tadjúrrah, bringing accounts of the arrival there of Messrs. Isenberg, Krapf, and Mühleisen, in charge of the "treasure," which had been so long expected from Aden. The former fact—the receipt of the money from the king—I know from the evidence of my servant, Walda Georgis, who saw the bag of dollars brought to Major Harris's residence, and the contents poured out in his presence. The latter fact—the arrival of the three missionaries at Tadjúrrah, *in charge of the "treasure"* from Aden,—I learned from Messrs. Isenberg and Mühleisen themselves, whom I met in Tigre on the 1st of May following, and who informed me that they arrived at Tadjúrrah in November, 1842,† and immediately despatched a messenger to Major Harris, informing him of it. They added, that they crossed from Aden to Tadjúrrah in company with an express sent by Captain Haines to Major Harris, with a portion of the money; and further, that Major Harris received, in Shoa, 1500 dollars from M. Rochet, who had

* My servant Walda Georgis, when he took my letter of the 5th December, 1842, approached Shoa at about that part of the *northern frontier*, bordering on the territory of Adara Bihle, by which Mr. Krapf had left the kingdom in the March preceding (Comp. Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, vol. xiv., p. 74, with Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf's "Journals," p. 321); and he returned from Shoa by the high caravan road to Gondar and the north of Abyssinia, bringing with him this letter of the 3rd January, 1843, which says that "no communication could be held with Gondar." I questioned him minutely as to the "plague there raging," and he assured me he had not seen or heard of anything of the sort. M.M. Lefebvre and Petit, two French travellers, arrived in Shoa very shortly afterwards, by this same road from the north. They say, in their account of their journey, "nous fîmes notre entrée en Choa lorsque la commission Anglaise venait d'être congédiée;" but they make no mention of the "plague." See "Bulletin de la Soc. de Géogr. for January 1844, p. 45;" and see the "Westminster Review," No. 81, for June 1844, p. 621.

† In Messrs. Isenberg and Krapf's "Journals," p. xi., the date is given as the 20th December, 1842: it should be the 20th November.

just returned thither, bringing presents to King Sáhela Selássie from the King of the French.* That the messenger from Tadjúrrah arrived in Shoa before Walda Georgis's departure, is proved by a letter to me from Major Harris himself, written in pencil, *without date*, but delivered to my servant on the 7th January, 1843, mentioning the arrival of Mr. Isenberg and his companions at Tadjúrrah, and enclosing some letters for me, which he had just received from them. But he says not a word of their having brought with them the "money from Aden," the non-arrival of which had in his former letter been so pathetically described as placing him "in no condition to answer my unlimited draft." Neither are the dollars received from the king at all alluded to;† and when my faithful and confidential servant, Walda Georgis, who had witnessed their receipt, asked for an addition out of them to the former scanty supply which he had received, he was told that there was nothing more for him to take.

It was under these circumstances that Her Britannic Majesty's Envoy abandoned a countryman in an almost savage country, and at a distance of upwards of five hundred miles from the coast, he acknowledging at the same time that he was a debtor to that countryman for services rendered to him in his official capacity! It is true I had his assurance that "a request would be left" at Aden "with Captain Haines," the Political Agent, "to honour my draft to any amount that might be against him;" but how was I to communicate with Aden? A native messenger, if I could have got one to undertake the journey, would have taken at least a twelvemonth to perform it; and even I myself, with all the haste I could make, was just two months and a half in reaching Massówah, where I was still five hundred miles from the place where my draft was to be so freely "honoured."

Whilst awaiting the return of Walda Georgis from Shoa, I had, after several unsuccessful attempts, at length gained the means of communicating with Ibsa, surnamed Abba Bógibo, King of Enárea; and had I possessed sufficient funds, I had good reason to expect that I might have reached that most interesting and important country. But, with only *ten dollars*, and without the possibility of obtaining more, I had no alternative but to abandon my enterprize altogether. Making, therefore, hasty preparations for my journey, I, on the 20th February, 1843, only ten days after my messenger's return from Shoa, set out on my way home.

I had then five hundred miles, at the least, to travel before I could expect to see an European face; and I was in the interior of Africa, and alone—with a sum just equal to *two guineas* in my pocket.

My journey from Baso, in the extreme south of Abyssinia, through Gódjam, Biégemider, Lasta, and Tigre, to Massówah in the north, and from thence by the way of the Red Sea, through Egypt and Germany, to England, was full of incident and romance. Left apparently without resources at that immense distance from home, I had the unspeakable gratification of meeting with friends at every step, and under really remarkable circumstances. In Abyssinia itself, instead of encountering obstacles and

* M. Rochet, whose intrigues on his former visit to Shoa gave rise to the British Political Mission, was left behind in that country on its departure shortly afterwards. Major Harris had, *before quitting Shoa*, received from India instructions to remain.

† I cannot say whether these dollars were the first part of the "treasure" sent up by express, which, like my letters to Mr. Krapf (see p. 11), had first been taken to the king, or whether they were a payment made by the king to Major Harris on account of some transactions between them.

dangers, as I had too much reason to anticipate, especially at that particular crisis when an extensive civil war was breaking out,* I found every prince and chieftain eager to afford me protection, and to forward me to my native land; and the war, which I had rather had cause to dread, was the very means of facilitating my progress. The unexpected approach to the Abáí of the Prince of Gódjam with his army enabled me to cross the river without impediment, which I should otherwise have had great difficulty in doing; and subsequently, on two occasions, I passed over the most difficult portions of my route under the escort of the brothers of two of the native princes, whom the war had set in motion at the very moment of my entering their territories. When once within the limits visited by other Europeans, all, without regard to nationality, vied in befriending and assisting me on my road. At A'dowa, the German naturalist, Dr. Schimper, and the Italian priests of the Roman Catholic mission, the Abbate de Jacobis and his colleagues, received me more like a brother than a stranger; and at Massówah, the French Vice-Consul, M. De Goutin, whom I found on the point of leaving for Egypt, readily agreed to take a boat for us on joint account, I paying him my moiety of the expenses on our arrival at Djidda. At this place I was once more under the protection of our national flag, and I now felt assured of receiving that assistance which every representative of our nation considers (or ought to consider) it a duty not less than a pleasure to afford to a fellow-countryman. Nor was I disappointed. Her Majesty's Consuls, Mr. Ogilvie at Djidda, Mr. Levick at Suez, and Mr. Walne at Cairo, unhesitatingly furnished me with funds to help me homewards. At Alexandria I had even greater reason to be proud of my countrymen. I had been there only a few days when two English gentlemen, whom I accidentally met at the *table d'hôte*, hearing that I was without letters of credit and should probably have to await remittances from England, kindly came forward and offered me the means of crossing the Mediterranean. It is with sincere pleasure that I record the names of these good friends, George Thomas Clark and Christopher Monarti, of whom I even now know nothing but their names, (both being, I believe, still travelling in the East,) and to whom the repayment of their loan through their bankers has in no wise lessened my feelings of gratitude. With this money I had intended taking my passage in the next French steamer for Marseilles, when a steamer of the Egyptian Government was unexpectedly ordered to start for Trieste, and through the kind interference of Mr. Stoddart, Her Majesty's Consul, I obtained a free passage in it for myself and my Abyssinian servant. By this means I so husbanded my funds as to be able to cross the whole of Germany as far as Mayence. Here, at all events, my stopping for a remittance from England seemed inevitable; but in the steam-boat on the Rhine I happened to make the acquaintance of Mr. Alfred Novello, who, in the same kind manner as my friends at Alexandria, volunteered to save me from inconvenience and delay by making his purse mine until our

* My last letters from Abyssinia, dated June 30th, 1844, state that this war is still raging. My good friend, Dédjatch Góshu of Gódjam, is the prisoner of Ras Ali, against whom Dédjatch Bírú, the son of the former, is constantly up in arms. Dédjatch Ú'bie, who was known to Her Britannic Majesty's Envoy, after an eighteen months' residence in Abyssinia, as "the late Nero-like Dedjasmach of Tigre," (see "Westminster Review," No. 81, p. 619) is still alive and ruler of that country. He appears to be only watching to take advantage of the weakness of either of the combatants— or of both.

arrival in London. In his company, therefore, I had the pleasure of reaching my native shores. I mention these particulars in order to show how, by a remarkable chain of events, and through the kindness of numerous individuals to whom I was personally unknown, I was enabled to perform a journey which lasted no less than seven months and a half, without being delayed a single day or even a single hour for want of funds, although I had no letters of credit on the road, and the only *certain* means I possessed were the two guineas sent to me, in Gódjam, by Her Majesty's Envoy at the Court of Shoa.

I arrived in London on the 7th October, 1843, and on the 27th of that month I wrote Major Harris the following letter:—

“ SIR,—Your last two letters, the one dated Ankóber, the 3rd January, and the other of a few days later, but without date, duly reached me in Gódjam, which country I left immediately on their receipt. I should have replied to them sooner, but I did not reach England till the 7th of this month; and since then I have had to wait for my papers, which have only just come to hand with my baggage.

“ In compliance with your desire, that I should furnish you with my account for services rendered whilst in Abyssinia to the British Embassy, on behalf of the Bombay Government, I beg leave to say that my demand is two hundred pounds, from which deducting 119 dollars—equal to 24*l.* 15*s.*—advanced me by the Embassy,* there remains a balance due to me of 175*l.* 5*s.*

“ I am, &c,

“ C. T. BEKE.”

After remaining *ten days* without any notice being taken of this letter, I on the 7th November again wrote to Major Harris as follows:—

“ SIR,—Not having received an answer to the letter addressed you in date of the 27th October, and sent under cover to your publishers, Messrs. Longman and Co., I applied to those gentlemen this morning, and found that it had been duly forwarded to you.

“ As so much time has elapsed, I have to request that I may be favoured with a reply to my communication without further delay.

“ I am, &c.

“ C. T. BEKE.”

This brought the following answer, dated 9th November:—

“ SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 27th ultimo I have the honour to acquaint you, that as *I am not aware of any services rendered to the Embassy to the Court of Shoa that have not already been more than tenfold returned by the funds supplied during your pecuniary difficulties, and by the free transmission of your voluminous correspondence between Gódjam and Aden, I shall be unable to back your application.*

“ *No use whatever has been, or ever will be made, whether privately or publicly, of any of the maps, documents, or letters received from you; any information of a useful or interesting character having, I conclude, been very properly reserved for the Society by whom you were employed.*

“ I have, &c.

“ W. C. HARRIS.”

* See p. 13.

My answer, dated the 20th of the same month, was this:—

"SIR,—I should have refrained from replying to your letter of the 9th instant as unnecessary, were it not that, on reconsideration, I apprehended my silence might, by some means, be construed into an admission of the truth of its unwarranted allegations.

"Your present assertion that the services rendered to the Embassy to the Court of Shoa have been more than *tenfold* returned by the funds supplied me, is, independently of its ridiculous exaggeration, simply inconsistent with your last letter from Ankóber of the 3rd January, 1843, in which you say, 'If you will have the goodness to make my account with yourself and strike a balance, I shall leave a request with Captain Haines to honour your draft to any amount that may be against me.'

"Nor are you in any way justified in speaking of the funds advanced me as having been supplied during my pecuniary difficulties. You well know that I never applied to you for a dollar without having previously rendered you more than equivalent services; and your letter of the 3rd January impliedly admits that I am still a creditor for such services;—and the fact really is, that nearly one half of the entire amount, namely, fifty dollars on the 10th September, 1841,* was tendered by yourself as payment for four, or rather *two* out of four† Memoirs written for you by your request previously to my departure from Shoa, I objecting at the time to the remuneration as insufficient.

"You say that no use whatever has been made, or ever will be made, whether privately or publicly, of any of the maps, documents, or letters received from me; any information of a useful or interesting character having, you conclude, been very properly reserved for the Society by whom I was employed. To this I will merely reply, that the Society, whether you allude to the African Civilization or Royal Geographical,—by neither of which Societies, however, was I *employed*,—entertains a very different opinion of the documents in question, which are considered both 'useful' and 'interesting.'

"Your insinuation as to *reserved* information I am willing to treat as unintelligible, seeing that these documents, which have been so well received in London, were all, *without a single exception*, sent open to you for the previous information of the Embassy and the Government; independently of those for your special use, no copies of which were transmitted to England.

"As to no use being made of these documents, this is a matter with which I can have no concern. You will, of course, have acted with respect to them in conformity with the instructions of the Government, in whose name you contracted with me for them, and for whose information you received them from me.

"I am, &c.

"C. T. BEKE."

This letter gave rise to a visit, on the 24th November, from Major Franklin Lushington, C. B., who called, as the friend of Major Harris, "with a view to dispel the misunderstanding which appeared to exist between us;"—in other words, to require that I should withdraw certain expressions in my last letter, namely, the words "unwarranted" and "ridiculous exaggeration." I confess that I am so little conversant with the "laws" of honour that I would, for my part, quite as soon be told that my "allegations" were "unwarranted," as that "their truth was not

* This date is erroneous: it should be the 21st September.

† See page 9.

admitted," and that an "assertion" of mine was a "ridiculous exaggeration," as that it was "inconsistent with my previous admission;" and I told Major Lushington as much; pointing out to him, at the same time, the extreme provocation I had received, which I conceived fully justified the language I had used. But, although he did not attempt to deny the provocation, he said that the *expressions* in question were in themselves objectionable. As I had no idea of making my difference with Major Harris a mere question of words, I at once stated my willingness to withdraw the expressions objected to; and this the more readily as they in no wise affected the *sense* of my letter. Upon being met by me in this manner, Major Lushington said he had no hesitation in admitting that Major Harris's letter ought not to have been written; and he would undertake that it should be withdrawn. But this I declined, as I told him it was my intention to submit this letter, together with all the previous correspondence, to the Government of Bombay.

Immediately after Major Lushington's departure I wrote him the following letter:—

"SIR,—In furtherance of the understanding between us when you did me the honour to call on me this morning, I have to repeat what I then stated, that in my letter of the 20th instant to Major Harris, in answer to his letter to me of the 9th instant, I had no wish to overstep the line of courtesy due from one gentleman to another. The words in that letter, 'unwarranted,' and 'independently of its ridiculous exaggeration' being considered by you improper, I have therefore no hesitation in withdrawing them.

"The question between Major Harris and myself is thus left to stand upon its simple merits.

"I have, &c.

"C. T. BEKE."

To which Major Lushington replied that he was "perfectly satisfied with the explanation I had given."

With reference to the preceding correspondence, I must call attention, first to the assertion in Major Harris's letter to me of the 9th November, 1843, that *no use whatever had been made*, or ever would be made, whether privately or *publicly*, of any of the maps, *documents*, or letters received from me; and then to the Appendix to this "Statement of Facts," containing parallel extracts from my Memoir of the 27th August, 1841, alluded to in page 8, and from Major Harris's official letter to Government of the 20th July, 1842. I leave the reader to draw his own conclusion.

On the 30th November I transmitted to the Government of Bombay a statement of my case, with copies of all the correspondence, making a claim of remuneration for the services rendered to the Mission to Shoa under the agreement entered into with Major Harris as the representative of the Indian Government. To this I received, on the 13th March, 1844, an answer from Mr. Willoughby, the Secretary of Government, dated the 30th January preceding, saying:—

"I am directed to inform you that *no authority was ever applied for by Major Harris, or granted by Government, for obtaining your assistance in furthering the objects of the Mission to Shoa*, and that therefore the Honourable the Governor in Council does not consider that you possess any valid claim upon the Indian Government for remuneration in the instances mentioned in your letter."

So, after having entered into a solemn contract with Her Majesty's Envoy "as the head of a public body, and on the part of the Indian Government," I am told that "no authority was applied for by him or granted by Government for obtaining my assistance;"—that, in fact, whilst I was given to understand I had been working for Government during the eighteen months that the Mission had resided in Shoa, and the information furnished by me to the head of that Mission had been incorporated by him in his official despatches, the Government knew nothing of me or my engagement, or of the services I had been rendering!

Mr. Willoughby having in his letter suggested, that, if not satisfied with this decision of the Bombay Government, I could, if I saw fit, represent the circumstances of my case to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company, I did so on the 19th March, 1844,—before whom, and the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors themselves, my papers remained until very recently.

The decision of the Court of Directors, given with the approval of the Board of Control, was communicated to me, by a letter from Mr. Melvill, the Secretary to the East India Company, dated October 24th, 1844, in which he says:—

"The Honourable Court of Directors of the Honourable East India Company having taken into consideration the subject of your claim to remuneration for services rendered to the late Mission at the Court of Shoa, are of opinion that you had grounds for expecting a larger pecuniary remuneration than the sum of one hundred and nineteen dollars which you received from Major Harris; and they are prepared to grant you such an additional sum as may make the aggregate amount equal to 100*l*."

Upon this decision I am compelled to make the following remarks. My appeal was made and decided on under very disadvantageous circumstances. As a servant of the East India Company, Major Harris was entitled to receive, and did receive, a copy of my statement of facts, for him to answer as he might think proper. But, although I applied for it, no copy of his answer was conceded to me; so that *he was acquainted with my case whilst I remained in ignorance of his*. Further, the documents of mine submitted by Major Harris to the Court, by their order, for the purpose of a value being placed on them, were only the twelve which I had addressed to him direct from Gódjám; those which I had transmitted to Mr. Trew through his hands having, *of course*, been deemed too worthless to be copied, whilst those I had prepared in Shoa previously to my departure had, it seems, been *destroyed* or left behind in Bombay.* Consequently, an insufficient estimate of value could not but be made by the referee, who had to decide on such imperfect data. I do not say this complainingly. On the contrary, I am obliged to the Court of Directors for the great attention they were pleased to afford to a difficult and disagreeable subject, and for the decision they have come to upon it, which, *under all the circumstances of the case*, is as satisfactory as could reasonably have been expected.†

* As to the *official* use made of these documents, see the Appendix.

† In justice to the Court of Directors, I am bound to say that *all* the facts of the present "Statement," were not brought to their knowledge. At that time I did not know them all myself. For example, I was not aware of the use made by Major Harris of my Memoir on Slavery, until some time after the decision of the Court; in fact, only just as these pages were about to be placed in the printer's hands.

But, beyond all thought of remuneration, this decision is important as proving more fully that it was not through any fault of mine, but from my great and ir retrievable misfortune, that I abandoned the further prosecution of my travels. It establishes the fact that a balance was due to me for services faithfully rendered to the British Mission at the time of its departure from Shoa; and had only a reasonable portion of the moderate amount now awarded to me been at my disposal two years ago, when I was at the further extremity of Abyssinia, I should have had it in my power to continue my explorations in Africa: whereas, the very small sum sent me by Major Harris rendered it compulsory on me to hasten home,—the only wonder being how, under the circumstances, I succeeded in doing so at all. And thus, after so much money had been expended by my friends and myself, and fatigues and dangers undergone by me in penetrating into those remote regions, I had to submit to the unspeakable mortification of relinquishing the task upon which I had been so long zealously engaged.

Prematurely, however, as my geographical labours were put an end to, the highest authority in this branch of science has publicly stated, that, “of all Abyssinian travellers since the days of Bruce, Dr. Beke, as an individual, has most improved our geographical acquaintance with that country.”*

As a subject of serious consideration for the Christian philosopher, I have traced, in accordance with the principles laid down in my *Origines Biblicæ*,† the gradual degradation of our religion through the forms of the Alexandrian and Abyssinian churches, until, among the savage Gallas beyond the Abáí, having reached the extreme of debasement, it could not, as *Christianity*, fall lower, but has passed over into absolute Polytheism, the Saviour and the Destroyer both forming members of the rude Pantheon, without their ignorant worshipers being conscious of the real character of either.‡

For the philanthropist, I, as an *individual*, collected and sent to Europe so full and correct an exposition of the state of slavery in Shoa, that Her Majesty's Envoy, with all the advantages of his official situation, and after a twelvemonth's further residence in that country, could not do better than embody my information, *almost word for word*, in his official communication to Government on the subject.§

In the cause of philology and ethnography, I have collected vocabularies of various Hamitish || languages, spoken by the tribes and nations in

* See the Anniversary Address of Roderick Impey Murchison, Esq., V.P.R.S.; President of the Royal Geographical Society, 1844. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xiv., p. cxvi.

† Chapter iii., pp. 41—63.

‡ See “Friend of the African,” vol. i., pp. 90—94.

§ See Appendix. Major Harris's official letter of the 20th July, 1842, commences thus:—“A residence of more than twelve months in the kingdom of Shoa having enabled me to collect every requisite particular relative to these subjects, as well in Abyssinia, as in the countries beyond, hitherto closed to European foot, I have now the satisfaction to lay before Government a full report on slavery and the slave trade, embracing the causes and passions which would appear to have first given rise to this detestable and debasing traffic in this portion of Africa.”

|| In pages 229—246 of my *Origines Biblicæ*, the opinion is advanced that the Hebrew, Arabic, Ethiopic, and other languages to which the particular designation of “Semitic,” “Shemitic,” or “Shemitish,” has been applied by philologists, are cognate with the languages of Africa, and ought therefore to be denominated *Hamitish*. See likewise a paper in the *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal* for April, 1835, vol.

Abyssinia and the neighbouring countries, of all of which our knowledge is but scanty, and several of which are entirely unknown in Europe. Should I be able to devote sufficient time to the task, it is my intention to arrange these vocabularies, and communicate them to the scientific world in the course of the present season.

As regards the general results of my wanderings, alone, during the greater part of three years, over countries almost totally unknown to Europeans, I might be able to communicate much to interest, to instruct, and to amuse. But the preparation of my "Narrative" for publication will probably be delayed for some time.

I have now to advert to circumstances of another nature, which occurred in the interval between my application to the Government of Bombay and the final judgement of the Home Government.

At the commencement of last year (1844) Major Harris published his "Highlands of Æthiopia," and, at the beginning of the following March, a critique of this work, written by me, appeared in the "Westminster Review" (No. 80). This again was followed, in May, by the publication of a second edition of the author's work, with an Introduction, in which the article in the "Westminster," although it is signed with the initial letter of my name, and my authorship of it was from the commencement well known, is attributed not to myself individually, but to a *clique* of personal enemies of Major Harris, whom he describes as being "of the most implacable and malignant character;" "persons to whom he had shown kindness, which they have apparently no means of repaying but by inveterate aversion;" and who "will make a point of pursuing him as long as he is above ground, and perhaps much longer." He does not name the parties to this atrocious plot, but he so far describes them as to mark their identity beyond the possibility of mistake. He calls them (p. xx.), "three individuals, two who affect to speak from their own knowledge, and one whom they have taken under their patronage as their cat's-paw." By the "two" he means Mr. Johnston, the author of "Travels in Southern Abyssinia," and myself. By the third he means the writer of an unfavourable criticism of his work in the "Athenæum" of January 6th and 13th, 1844, pp. 11 and 32.

In bringing this charge of *conspiracy*, Major Harris seems to have forgotten that so grave an accusation should be properly substantiated, otherwise it recoils upon the person making it; since his resorting to so perilous a mode of attempting to throw discredit on the evidence of others, *en masse*, only gives rise to the suspicion that there must be some weighty reason for his dreading, and thus trying to stifle, their individual and separate disclosures. As no such substantiation is attempted, it might scarcely be necessary for me here to notice the matter further. Still, lest any one, from reading Major Harris's "Introduction," should fancy there might be some foundation for the charge, I think it right to state publicly that the article in

xviii., pp. 293—296. I have the satisfaction to perceive that the truth of this theory is gradually being recognized. In a paper read at the meeting of the Philological Society, on the 24th November, 1843, Mr. Newman "proposed to employ the adjective *Syro-African*, to include (*with the Syro-Arabian, i.e. Shemitic*) *the Berber and other African languages which answer similar conditions.*" See Proceedings of the Philological Society, vol. i., p. 136. And see *Blackwood's Magazine* for September, 1844, vol. lvi., p. 324; and the *Quarterly Review* for October, 1844, vol. lxxiv., p. 349.

the "Westminster Review" was written *by myself alone*, without either of the two gentlemen with whom I am accused of *conspiring*, having had anything to do with it, or even knowing anything of it until they saw it in print; and that I, on the other hand, have never participated in anything that they, or any one else, may have thought proper to publish respecting Major Harris or his work.

With respect to my critique itself, I will show how far I am qualified to express an opinion of Major Harris, as he appears before the public, whether in the character of a diplomatist or of a traveller.

I was in Shoa with Mr. Krapf upwards of five months before the arrival out of the British Political Mission, and was *intimately* acquainted with the causes of its being sent, and with all the circumstances connected with it. For more than three months after its arrival I remained in its company, taking part in *all* its transactions. I continued in Abyssinia till some time after the Mission had altogether quitted Shoa; and my very much longer stay in the country from beginning to end, and my far closer communication with the inhabitants, (to say nothing of my previous studies for years in contemplation of my journey,) give me an undoubted right to consider my knowledge of matters connected with them equal, at least, to that of the author of the work. As to the transactions of the Mission subsequently to my departure from Shoa, I have, in addition to the native reports, the testimony of the Europeans whom I met with in Tigre, and particularly of Messrs. Isenberg and Mühleisen, who had shortly before parted from Mr. Krapf. At Djidda, on the Red Sea, I met with Mr. Johnston, who had been with the Mission in Shoa during the latter portion of its stay there, and who had come down with it to Aden, and in his company I travelled for two months, as far as Alexandria. I arrived in Egypt only a few days after Major Harris and two other members of the mission, Dr. Roth and Mr. Bernatz, had passed through on their way to Europe, and I heard the reports and opinions of several intelligent Europeans with whom they had been in communication. At Cairo I likewise met with Mr. Hatchatoor, the British agent at Tadjurrah during the residence of the Mission in Shoa; and lastly, on my way to England through Germany, I was for several days at Munich in company with Messrs. Roth and Bernatz themselves.

With all these means of information at my command, I have to add that every assertion in the critique is not merely made *on authority*, but as far as practicable the authority itself is adduced. Thus, the reader is not called on to take any thing for granted, but has himself the means of testing the accuracy of the several allegations. And in the few cases in which it is not possible to cite my authority, I give reasonable grounds for the correctness of my statements. If I have, by chance, any where fallen into error, it has been unintentional, and certainly on no point of the least importance.

That these statements are substantially correct is proved, in fact, by this very "Introduction" to the second edition. It is true that it professes to be a complete and triumphant refutation of the Review; but the reader must be told how this "refutation" is effected. It is, namely, *either by not meeting the specific charges at all, or else, by denying them in vague and indefinite terms in the "Introduction," and at the same time altering the text of the second edition so as to correspond with the corrections made in my Review of the first!*

A single specimen will suffice. In page 193 of the Review, it is said—

“A very considerable portion, the far greater part, indeed, of all that is of any value in the work, was obtained from Mr. Krapf. Wrapped up and concealed—smothered, we should rather say—in the verbiage of the author, the dry matter-of-fact details of the worthy missionary (who gave up not only his time and labour, but his whole heart and soul to the Embassy and its members, the author especially) will still from time to time peep out; and, however misconceived, distorted and spoiled by ignorance and fine writing, they are, in many cases, still to be identified by an ear-mark *quite unconsciously* put upon his property by the real owner!”

And it is then stated that Mr. Krapf, who is a native of Upper Germany—

“Cannot correctly distinguish between the hard and soft sounds of consonants—between *b* and *p*, *d* and *t*, *j* and *ch*, (*ḍsh* and *tsh*), *k* and *g*.”

Hence mistakes in pronunciation and spelling, which *no Englishman who judges by his own ear* ever commits. And several examples are cited in proof of the position advanced.

To this, Major Harris's reply is in these words:—

“The critic's observations on the pronunciation of Amharic and Galla words are so elaborate a specimen of trifling, that *it would be wholly lost labour to wade through them*. Of the Galla language he knows nothing; and had the case been different, *still I might be permitted to judge by my own ear* in the case of a tongue absolutely unwritten. Those acquainted with the works of travellers in the East are aware that almost every one has adopted a peculiar system of orthography. All, therefore, but one might, *by a disingenuous critic*, be accused of ignorance.”—*Introd.* p. xxxix.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the point in question, namely, the plagiarism from Mr. Krapf and the mode of detection, is here altogether evaded. But this is as nothing in comparison with the fact, that, in the face of what is thus broadly asserted, the author *did* “wade through” this “elaborate specimen of trifling,” and does *not* “judge by his own ear,” either in the first or in the second edition of his work; for in the former he, in ignorance, copies the erroneous pronunciation and spelling of Mr. Krapf, and in the latter he, being by me made aware of his error, unscrupulously adopts the corrections of his “disingenuous critic.” As witness the following list of words, as they stand in his first edition, in my review, and in his second edition:—

First Edition.	Review.	Second Edition.
Dech Agafari, ii., 143.	Dej Agafari.	Dej Agafari, ii., 141.
Gumbidchu, iii., 45.	Gumbitchu.	Gumbitchu, iii., 45.
Abidchu, iii., 45.	Abitchu.	Abitchu, iii., 45.
Egzia behere maskin, i., 335.	Egziher emasgin.	Egziher emasgin, i., 374.
Egzia isto, ii., 28.	Egziher istikh.	Egziher istikh, ii., 25.*

* In my critique, the names *Gochob* and *Dumbaro* are likewise corrected. They should be *Gódjeb*, or (according to the Royal Geographical Society's system of orthography) *Gójeb*, and *Tambáro* or *Tzambáro*. But these names could not have been altered without endangering Major Harris's “discovery” (see page 7, *ante*) of the river “*Gosnob*,” and the cataract of “*Dumbaro*,” &c. That the real name is *Gódjeb*—or even *Gódjeb*, for the sound of the unaccented vowel is of little consequence—is corroborated by other travellers in Abyssinia, who have “judged by *their own ears*,” like myself. M. d'Abbadie writes it *Gwádjáb*, (as Gondar is written by him *Gwándár*), and M. Lefebvre, *Godjobe*. M. Jomard has it *Ghod-Jeb*. (See *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, 2^e Série, tom. xix., pp. 176, 496, and 3^e Série, tom. i., p. 54.)

It may perhaps be objected that I might have adduced an example on some more important subject than the spelling and pronunciation of Amharic and Galla words. I might have done so, I admit; but this one is chosen in preference, because its results can be placed in a tabular form, so as to be comprehended at a glance. And, besides, the points of graver import are more suited to form the subject of consideration elsewhere.

There is, however, one passage in this "Introduction" which requires notice here. In the article in the *Westminster Review*, allusion is made to the author's having omitted to mention, that the Mission was met on the frontiers of Shoa by the only two Europeans then in the country, Mr. Krapf and myself; which allusion is made, not on my own account, but on that of the worthy missionary, whose presence in the country was of such essential service to the Mission, and to whom Major Harris, both in his private as well as in his public character, was under such great obligations.

To this Major Harris replies thus :—

"Secretly, however, it is not the missionary that is aggrieved, but *another individual whose name I will not be provoked to print in my pages.** This person, we are told, came down to Dinómali, in company with Mr. Krapf, 'to welcome the Embassy.' What he came down to do is not, however, the question. Come he certainly did; and *I should have made honourable mention of him, had I, during my stay in Shoa, found no reason to be dissatisfied with his conduct. The reverse was the case;* and as I did not choose to be at the trouble of writing in his dispraise, I thought it better to say nothing."—p. xlv.

At the time when this "Introduction" was published (May, 1844) my case was before the Court of Directors of the East India Company, to whose notice I immediately brought this fresh matter. And, as I had then been given to understand that the real alleged ground of complaint against me was, not merely, as Major Harris had stated in his letter to me of February 21st, 1842, that I had "transmitted packets to Dr. Roth and Mr. Krapf,"† but that I had surreptitiously made or attempted to make those packets the vehicles of communicating information to Europe, in violation of my engagement with the Indian Government, *I laid before the Court of Directors declarations from all the parties implicated, joining with myself in denying, in the most unqualified and explicit terms, that such had at any time or in the slightest degree been the case.* I cannot tell the precise steps taken by the Court in consequence; but the result was a sufficient vindication of my character from the aspersions cast on it.

Before concluding, I cannot but advert to a letter in the *Bombay Times* newspaper of the 11th December, 1841, which I did not see until the end of last July, and of which the following is an extract :—

"**ABYSSINIA.** Letters have been received from Captain Harris's party, whose arrival in Ankóber, the capital of Shoa, we announced some time since.....

A Doctor Beke, who was travelling for the Royal Geographical Society, had been there, but had left for Gojam and the sources of the Nile. *From this person,‡ however,*

* The reader will readily understand how Major Harris, not having mentioned my name in *his communications to Government*, would require a strong "provocation" indeed to "print it in his pages."

† See page 11.

‡ We find this expression repeated in the passage in Major Harris's "Introduction," cited above: "*This person, we are told,*" &c.

we fear nothing very wonderful is to be expected, as from his total ignorance of the habits, manners, and languages of the East, few people would appear more unsuited to the task he had undertaken. . . . The letter is dated the 9th October."

I shall not weary the reader with a detail of circumstantial evidence to prove that this unfriendly notice of me could only have originated with Major Harris; for it would be but circumstantial evidence after all. I will leave it to make its own impression; merely observing, that the editor says it came from "Captain Harris's party," which party consisted but of five officers and a dozen European artillerymen; that the Editor, Dr. Buist, Secretary to the Bombay Geographical Society, would not thus have disparaged a traveller of the parent Society (for so I am called, though in error) upon a slight inducement,—such, for instance, as a communication from one of the artillerymen,—whatever he might have felt himself justified in doing on the authority of Major Harris, a member of the Council of his own Society; that, as to the four other officers of the Mission, I can conceive no motive whatever on the part of any of them for attacking so ungraciously a fellow-traveller in a distant land, who is unconscious of ever having given the slightest cause for the bad feeling evinced in this letter. Consequently, I am bound to acquit those gentlemen. But as regards the superior officer of the Mission, I leave the reader to judge, from all his acts, whether the *wish* may not have been father to the *thought*;—and whether the "fear" expressed that "nothing very wonderful was to be expected" from me, may not have been intended to be realized.

The letter in question was written on the 9th October, 1841. At that time I was on such terms with Major Harris, that only four days previously I had prepared for him the draft of a document for carrying into effect the most important object, *save one*, that the British Government had in view in sending this Political Mission to Shoa; and only the next day after this letter was written I parted from him and the other members of the Mission, apparently on friendly terms with all. The reader will recollect how soon afterwards it was that an unfriendly disposition was openly manifested towards me, and the first strong measures used for arresting my means of movement and communication with England.

But I forbear. If this letter did not originate with Major Harris, I am glad of it for his sake, and can only express my astonishment that any one else should have gone so entirely out of his way as to be guilty of uncharitableness and detraction, without even the excuse of having some end to serve.

But with matters like these I can now have no concern. If, only, my friends and the public are satisfied with my humble endeavours in the cause of philanthropy and science, and do not disapprove of my conduct under circumstances of a peculiar and most trying nature, I am more than requited for all that I have undergone.

APPENDIX.

IN Major Harris's letter of November 9th, 1843 (see page 17), it is stated that no use whatever had been made, or ever would be made, whether privately or publicly, of any of the maps, documents, or letters received by him from me. How far this is the case will be shown by the following parallel passages. Those on the one hand are from my reports to the Reverend J. M. Trew, written in Shoa between April and July, 1841, and published in the "Friend of Africa," vols. i. and ii. for 1841 and 1842; which reports, with a few slight verbal alterations, formed the Memoir (No. 1) "On Slavery and the Slave Trade in Shoa," drawn up by me, by Major Harris's desire, for the information of Government (see page 8). Those on the other hand are from Major Harris's official letter to the Secretary of the Government of Bombay, dated Ankóber, July 20th, 1842, printed in the *Parliamentary Papers* on the Slave Trade, Class A, of 1843 (published in 1844), p. 436, *et seq.*, and reprinted in the "Friend of the Africans" for October, November, and December, 1844.

My Memoir of August 27th, 1841.

The slaves imported by the traders are intended principally for further transmission to the coast, there being two main routes by which they pass through the kingdom of Shoa. The one is by Ankober to the market of Aliu Amba, in its vicinity, where they are sold to caravan traders from Tadjúrrah and Hurrur, from which latter place they are carried to Zéila and Bérbera; the other is by the way of Débra Libanos to the market of Antziókia (Antioch), adjoining Asséleli, the frontier town, to the north, of the kingdom of Shoa; from whence they find their way to Massowah through northern Abyssinia, and also probably supply the caravans to Aussa.—*Friend of Africa*, vol. i. p. 168.

The Negús has the right of pre-emption of all slaves passing through his dominions. On their arrival, his governors set apart such as they deem worthy of his consideration; these they submit to him for his approval, together with the sum asked for them by the proprietors; but he himself fixes the price to be paid for such as he thinks proper to select. Further, an import duty is exacted by the Negús of four pieces of salt, called Amole, equal to about 10*d.* sterling, (20 Amoles, more or less, going for one Austrian Convention dollar of the year 1780), upon every slave, male or female, exposed for sale; and as the number brought annually by the way of Ankober is probably from 2500 to 3000, and the number by the other route is, perhaps, as large (I speak here merely from the conjecture of my informants, without any certain data), the whole amount of duty will not exceed some 250*l.* sterling. Such is the miserable revenue derived by the *Christian* ruler of Shoa, from the traffic in his fellow creatures!—p. 169.

Major Harris's Official Letter of July 20th, 1842.

22. From Enarea and Gurágué, the two slave-marts principally frequented by the dealers in human flesh, who trade through the Abyssinian states, the traffic is conducted to the sea-coast via Sennar, Agrobba, Aussa, and Hurrur; slaves imported in Shoa, passing through the kingdom by two great highways from the interior. The first by Ankober to the market-places of Aliu Amba and Abdool Russool, where they are eagerly purchased by the caravan traders from Hurrur, Zeyla, and Tadjoura; the other by Debra Libanos, to the market of Antziochia, adjoining Asselleli, the frontier town on the north of the kingdom, whence they pass through Upper Abyssinia to Massowah and Roheita, supplying also the Aussa caravans which come to Dawé, on the Wollo frontier.

23. Sahela Selassie has the right of pre-emption of all slaves that pass through his dominions, his governors selecting and submitting for the royal approval those which appear worthy of consideration, when a price placed by the holder on the head of each, is modified by his majesty at pleasure. A transit duty of four amoles (10*d.*) sterling, is further levied upon every slave, male or female, and of whatever age, exposed for sale or barter; and the number which annually pass by the two roads above named, being estimated at from 15,000 to 20,000,* the revenues derived from the traffic in his fellow-creatures by the Christian ruler of Shoa must average about 4000 German crowns, or 800*l.* sterling money.—*Friend of the Africans*, vol. ii., p. 74.

* This estimate is far too high.—C. T. B.]

My Memoir of August 27th, 1841.

Major Harris's Official Letter of July 20th, 1842.

The prices of slaves at Aliu Amba, as furnished me by some of the traders from Tadjirrah, are, for boys, 10, 12, and 15 dollars (equal to about 40s., 50s., to 60s., sterling), and for girls 12, 15, to 20 dollars (equal to about 50s., 60s., to 85s.), and for very beautiful ones as high as 25 to 30 dollars (equal to about 5*l.* or 6*l.*), for whom they would obtain at Mokha as much as 80, 90, or even 100 dollars (17*l.* to 20*l.*)

This shows what immense profits are made in this trade, especially as the journey from hence to the coast is but short, as is also that to the opposite shores of Arabia; and being attended with no difficulties or dangers, the mortality among the slaves can scarcely be said to exceed that under the ordinary circumstances of life.—p. 169.

Although in the cases above mentioned a Christian is at liberty to dispose of his slaves, still, by the law, not only of Shoa, but of the whole Abyssinian empire, he cannot be a slave-dealer, and it has been recorded by former travellers, that, as a rule, they are not so. Ruppell says, indeed, that Christians sometimes secretly participate in the trade carried on by Moslems; which, however it may be the case in Northern Abyssinia, can scarcely take place within the Kingdom of Shoa. The transgression is followed with the loss of the offender's whole property, and in this country there is such a general system of espionage, the actions and dealings of each person are so completely known to almost every body else—for, with their immense quantity of leisure time, they seem to have hardly any other occupation than to pry into the affairs of their neighbours—that it could not well escape detection.—p. 204.

But he cannot *sell* a Christian slave, under the penalty of the forfeiture of the whole of his property. A Galla or Moslem slave, a Christian owner is at liberty to dispose of for money; but this very rarely happens, as they are generally converted to Christianity soon after their arrival in the country.—p. 204.

The Negús, too, in rare cases, with very refractory slaves, has been known to dispose of them, although Christians, to the merchants of Tadjirrah and Hurrur.—p. 204.

Of their condition I cannot say anything determinate at present, except that, under a despotic government like that of this country, where the life and property of even the highest subject is at the absolute disposal of the ruler, there is no such very great difference between the freeman and the slave.—p. 168.

The treatment which slaves receive in this country is, on the whole, mild, as is generally the case in Oriental countries. They are not exactly placed on the same footing with hired servants, being made to perform the more menial duties, and being looked on with a certain degree of contempt by their free fellow servants. If they behave ill they are punished in the same way as *young* hired servants are; they have their feet or hands tied together, are kept without food, or are beaten. If they continue incorrigible their proprietor will part with them to a friend, or some person of authority, in exchange for another; and in some extreme cases, will turn them out of his house altogether, thus giving them their liberty.—p. 204.

25. ... The usual prices in the Shoa markets are, for boys, 10, 12, and 15 German crowns, equivalent to about 40s., 50s., and 60s. sterling; and for girls 12, 15, or 20 German crowns, or 50s., 60s., 85s. For females possessing very superior personal charms, 25 and 30 crowns (5*l.* and 6*l.* sterling), or even more, are frequently given; and for these, from 17*l.* to 20*l.* can be obtained at Mocha.

The profits accruing from the trade are thus obviously large; the journey hence to the coast, and the subsequent voyage to the shores of Arabia being short, and attended with so few difficulties, that even including the murders which are occasionally perpetrated by freebooters on the road, the mortality can scarcely be said to exceed that under the ordinary circumstances of African life.—p. 75.

* * * *

28. ... The law, not only of Shoa, but of the whole Abyssinian empire, prohibits a Christian from dealing in slaves; and it has been recorded by former travellers, that as a rule he does not do so. Ruppell affirms that Christians do, indeed, sometimes secretly participate in the trade carried on by Moslems in the northern provinces; but such could scarcely be the case in Shoa, where the transgression involves forfeiture of property; where the system of espionage is complete; and where the ample leisure at the disposal of all classes, renders public the affairs of every component member of the community.

No subject of the realm can, under any circumstances, sell a Christian, although he is at liberty to buy an unlimited number of slaves of the dealer, without any reference to creed; but the Moslem or Pagan captive, who obstinately rejects the doctrines of Christianity when proffered to him, may be sold to the coast trader; and the Negús has, in very rare instances, been even known to dispose of incorrigible Christian slaves, pertaining to his own household.

29. Regarding the condition of slaves in this kingdom, it may be premised that under so despotic a government, where the life and property of the highest and the meanest subject are equally at the sole and absolute disposal of the ruler, no very marked distinction can exist between the freeman and the bondsman.

The treatment of the latter is, generally speaking, much the same as that of an hired domestic, with this exception, that he is looked down upon by all, and, being of the lowest class, is usually employed in the performance of the most menial services. Misbehaviour is punished, as in young free servants, by corporal chastisement, by deprivation from food, or by confinement in bonds; and, proving incorrigible, the delinquent is either given away to any one who will take him, or else turned out of doors with his liberty.

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If in consequence of severe punishment a slave should die—a case which, from their general gentle treatment, can scarcely happen—the punishment is the forfeiture of the owner's whole property. The murder of a slave by a *stranger* is punished with death.

Should a slave run away from his master, he may be reclaimed at any time, and the person who has supported him in the meanwhile (not knowing his owner) is entitled to one dollar.—p. 204.

Slavery is hereditary, and this, not merely on the side of the mother, but also on that of the father: that is to say, if a free woman marries a male slave, her children become the property of the husband's owner; the reason being, that she and they have to look to him for support. There is an exception, however, in the case of the children of the Negús's male slaves, who are free if born of free women. I have not found any one who could inform me of the precise reason for this exception; but it may be, that the Negús's slaves have, for the most part, fixed duties to perform, for which they have a certain allowance of food, &c., so that the same argument does not apply as in the case of a private individual. Marriages between free persons and the slaves of the Negús, both male and female, are very common; and as the latter, after the performance of their stated tasks, remain at home with their families, and support themselves and them by other labour, it is only by inquiry that one ascertains that they are really slaves.—p. 203.

A slave, whether of the Negús or of a private individual, may acquire property, and is allowed the enjoyment of it during his life-time; but upon his death it passes to his proprietor. In the case of the Negús's slaves, there is this favour shown to their children, whether freeborn or slaves, that the lands of the deceased parent are left to them for one year from the date of his death, and the house utensils and articles of small value are relinquished to them altogether, by way of a blessing, as it is called. The cattle and moveables of any value are, however, taken possession of by the Negús, after the expiration of the usual forty days' mourning. The children of a slave who possessed land then begin to *wait upon* the Negús, as is the foolish and (for habits of industry) most ruinous custom of Abyssinia, and continue doing so for several (in some cases as many as ten) years; and it not unfrequently happens that, in the course of time, they obtain a grant of their parent's possessions.

If the slave of the Negús purchase a slave, the latter passes to the Negús, with the rest of his master's property, upon his death; but during his life-time the master is not permitted to substitute his slave's services for his own. The daily allowance is a personal grant made in consideration of *personal* services, which do not admit of commutation.—Vol. ii. p. 40.

The manumission of slaves is not unfrequent, particularly by the owner on his death-bed; but in this case the fact must be confirmed by the confessor of the deceased, otherwise they descend to his children like any other property.—Vol. i. pp. 203, 204.

Major Harris's Official Letter of July 20th, 1842.

30. Should a slave die in consequence of the severity of corporal punishment inflicted, a casualty which the uniform mild treatment experienced at the hand of the master renders of very rare occurrence, the forfeiture of the owner's property is the penalty to the crown; and the sentence passed in wilful murder is either death, or imprisonment for life. A slave who has absconded from his purchaser can be reclaimed after any lapse of time; and the party who, in ignorance of the proprietor, may have afforded temporary asylum to the fugitive, is, at the period of resumption, entitled to receive remuneration, not exceeding one dollar.

31. Slavery is hereditary, not only on the side of the mother, but also on that of the father, since if a free woman weds a slave, her progeny becomes the property of the owner of her husband; the reason assigned for this claim being, that the couple look to him for support. The male slaves of the Negús form, however, an exception to this rule, their offspring being free, if born of a free woman; a privilege which probably owes itself to the circumstance of the royal slave having a stated duty to perform, for which a certain daily allowance of food is granted; whereas the whole time and labour of the slave of a commoner are at the exclusive disposal of the master. Marriage between free persons and the slaves of his majesty are thus by no means unfrequent, the bondsman, after the performance of his allotted task, enjoying liberty to return daily to his family, and occupy the residue of his time as he will.

32. A slave, whether of the Negús or of a subject, is competent to acquire property; and during the natural term of his life, is permitted to retain it, although upon demise it passes to the master. The issue of a royal slave, whether freeborn or otherwise, are suffered to reside on the lands of their deceased parent for one year, and property of trifling value, such as household gear, is usually relinquished to them altogether, by way of blessing, as it is termed; but after the expiration of forty days of mourning, the live stock, together with all moveables of consequence, are assumed on the part of the Crown: it is then usual for the sons of a slave, who held landed property, "to wait" upon the despot for an unlimited term of years—an absurd custom, which proves utterly fatal to habits of industry; but it not unfrequently happens that, in consideration of service rendered, or of some military exploit performed, during the period of gratuitous attendance, a grant is obtained of the parent's possessions.

33. Should a bondman of the king purchase a slave, the latter passes into the hands of his majesty, in common with other posthumous property; neither, during the life of the master, is he permitted to substitute his sub-slave's services in the performances of his own allotted task; the daily allowance received from the Crown, being a personal grant made in consideration of personal services, which admit of no commutation.

The manumission of slaves is not unfrequent, especially by the owner on his death-bed; but, unless the fact be confirmed by the ghostly confessor of the deceased, the slave passes in bondage to the inheritors of the estate.—p. 76.

* * * *

My Memoir of August 27th, 1841.

The daily allowance made by the Negús (king) to each slave, is a small portion of barley, barely sufficient to make two flat cakes of bread. Beyond this, they must provide for their own subsistence.

When, from age or sickness, they are unable to work, it too frequently happens that they have their liberty given them; in other words, their daily allowance is stopped, and they are left to shift for themselves. On the other hand, a child born in slavery has its allowance (at first not so large) from the moment of its birth, as from that time it incurs the liabilities of its condition, although it is not set to work until it arrives at a competent age. In order to ascertain this, and also to keep a check on them, as in many cases they are living with their free parents or relatives, dispersed over the whole country, a yearly census is taken of them throughout the whole kingdom, and such of them as are found of a proper age, are taken to one of the two capitals, Ankóber and Angólla, and their daily task assigned them.—
Vol. ii., p. 40.

Major Harris's Official Letter of July 20th, 1842.

34. ... The daily allowance made to each, under the appellation of "dirgo," consists of a portion of barley sufficient to compose two small flat cakes. Beyond this, they must provide their own maintenance.—p. 76.

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35. When incapacitated by age or sickness from further active labour, it too frequently happens that a slave receives his liberty at the hands of his majesty, or, in other words, is deprived of his daily subsistence, and abandoned to shift for himself. On the other hand, a child born in slavery receives "dirgo," in a limited proportion, from the moment of coming into the world, the liabilities of bondage being incurred from the cradle. As a check over those who reside with a free parent in various parts of the kingdom, an annual census of the whole is taken by the royal scribes, when those who are ascertained to have acquired a competent age, are removed to one of the imperial establishments, and have their daily task assigned.—p. 89.

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