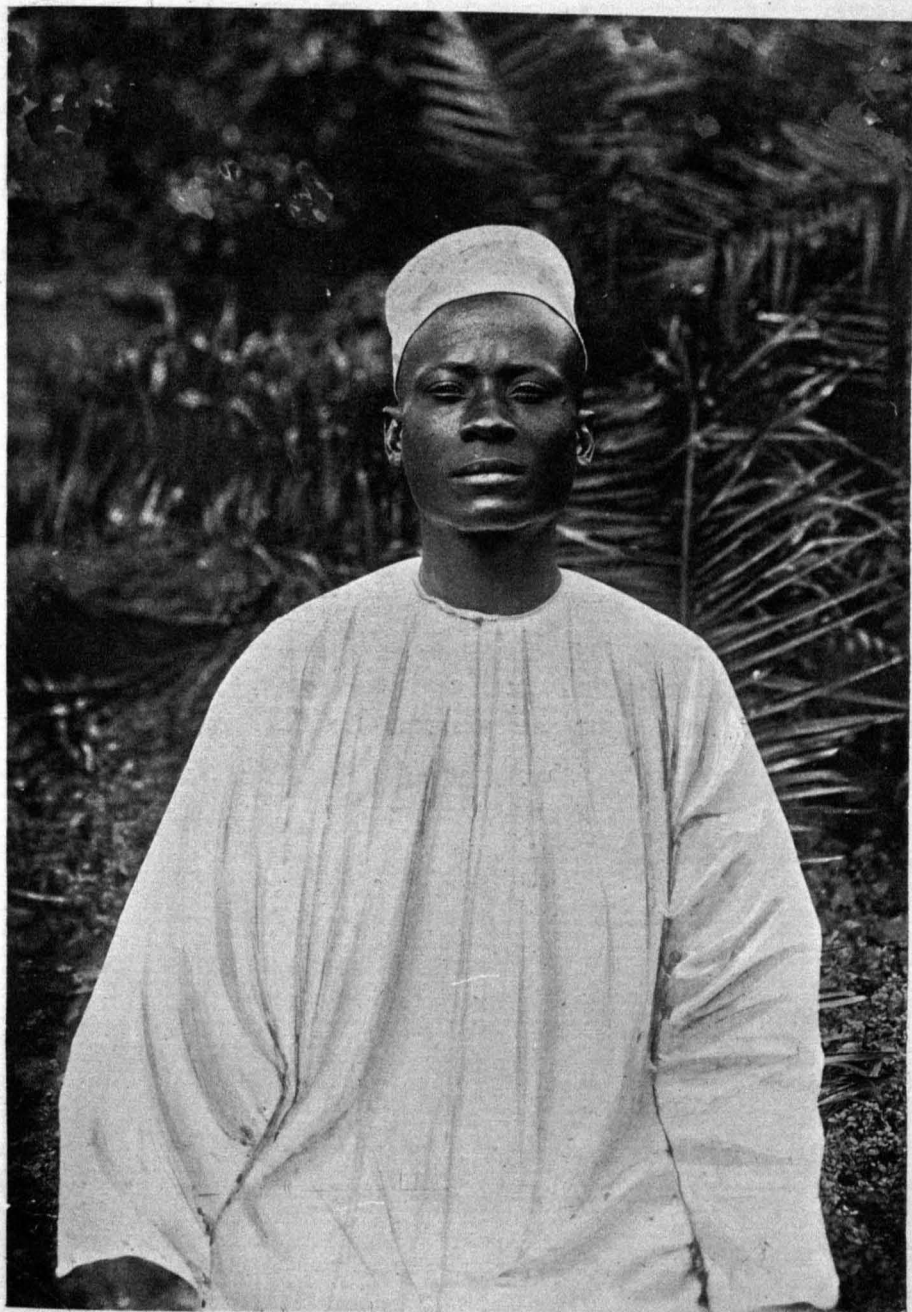


“Mandwa” is a general term for a priest of any of the gods. The chief temple of Mukasa’s mandwa was in the island of Bubembe, and hither were sent the offerings of the neighbouring kingdoms. The Uganda kings sent offerings of cows and goats sufficient to make a stream of blood, when they were slaughtered, to flow from the temple to the lake, a distance of several hundred yards. The animals were slaughtered at the



A WAR CANOE, SESE

temple and the blood allowed to flow down the valley to the lake, and when it reached the lake a great howl went up from the assembled multitudes, and it was then assumed that the goddess was appeased. As her influence waned, the cattle were not so numerous, and then the people laid the rinds of the banana-tree on the ground, each end overlapping the end of the other, like the guttering of a house, and in this way the blood was still made to flow to the lake, as there was much less loss owing to soakage in the ground.



GUGU, OF BUBEMBE ISLAND

This young chief is the son and successor of the late high priest of the goddess Mukasa



THE VALLEY OF BLOOD

The blood of animals slaughtered for sacrifice to Mukasa flowed down this valley to the lake from the temple

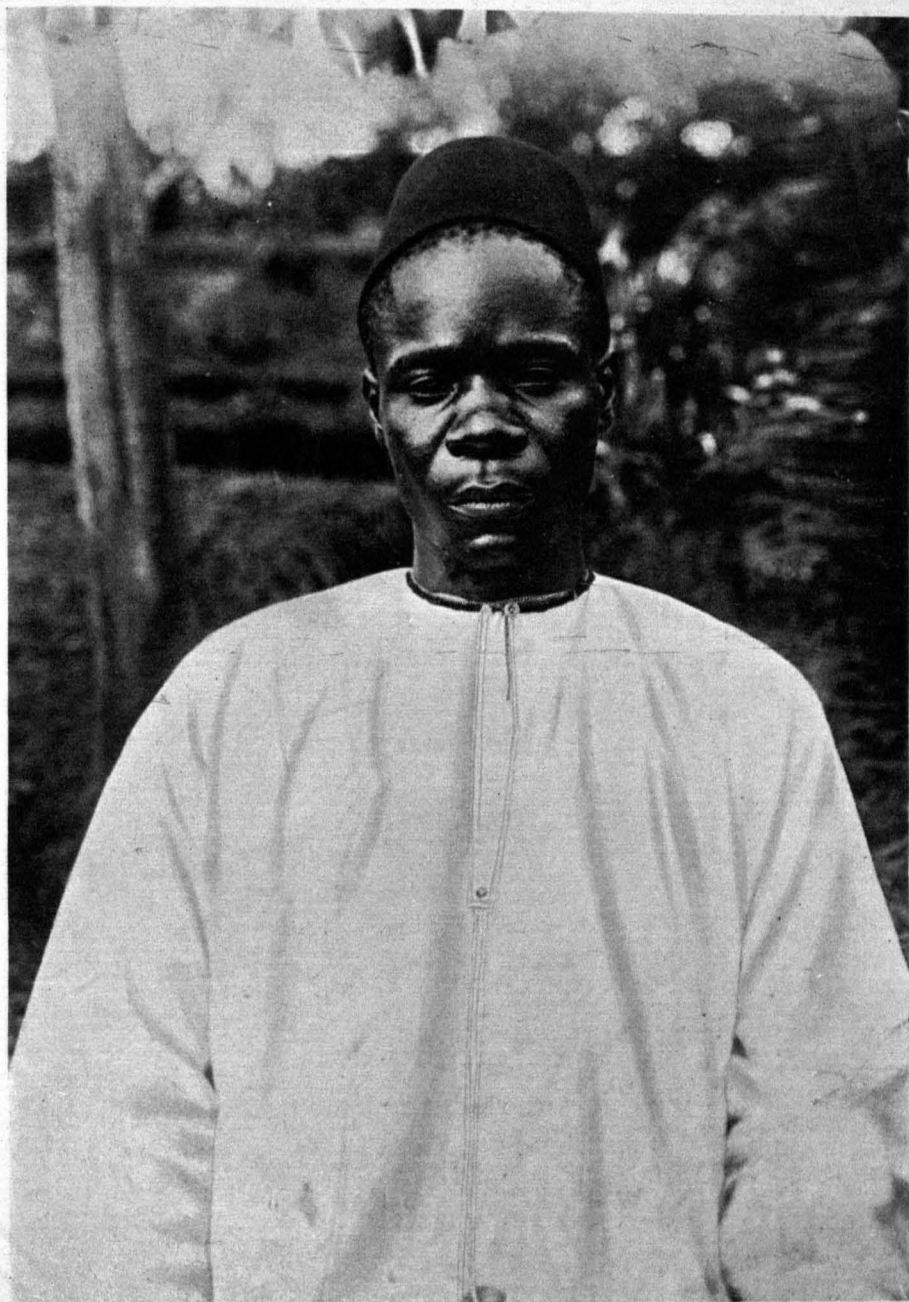
The goddess appeared once in three months, and at these times only offerings and sacrifices were made. In the interval the mandwa was a private person, of chief's rank, and went



FOREST SCENE, BUBEMBE ISLAND

Mukasa's temple was near the tree on the right

about his business in the way of ordinary mortals, but when the day of sacrifice came round he became possessed of the spirit of Mukasa, and became a bow-legged, contorted wizard.



MOANDA, OF BUKASA ISLAND

This young chief is the son and successor of the late Moanda, the high priest
of the goddess Wanema

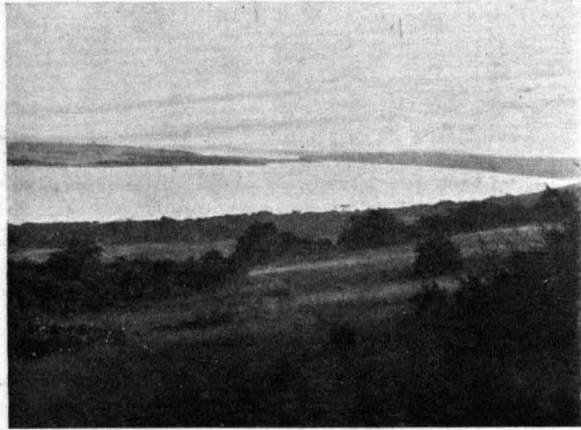
Mukasa never visited any of the other islands : all the people had to go to her island when they wished the favour of the deity to be asked on their behalf. From private persons, goats, shells, and even rolls of bark-cloth were accepted. Kings and great chiefs always presented the deity with girls, women, and cows.

“What kind of women did she like best ?” I asked.

“It made no difference,” I was told.

“Did she like them fat, or tall, or thin, or what ?”

“We do not know that she objected to any kind.”



A LAND-LOCKED BAY, EAST OF BUGALA

“But what did she do with them ? You say she often received hundreds at a time.”

“She kept them in the temple for a few days, then distributed them amongst the chiefs who were on good terms with her.”

“Did she also distribute the shells and goats and bark-cloth ?”

“Yes ; that was the custom. She kept as much as she liked.”

“Is the temple still in existence ?”

“There is hardly a trace of it left now : the grass has grown over it.”

The successor of Mukasa's high priest came to meet the

writer in January. His name is Gugu. He is seen in one of the photographs. Gugu is a quiet, silent young man. He claims the whole of the island of Bubembe—quite a large estate, approximately 3,500 acres. The island is four miles at its longest measurement, and about two miles across. There is a high hill in the centre, and all along the lower levels there is



TYPICAL HUT IN A BANANA-GROVE

fine forest. The great goddess Mukasa chose for her residence one of the most picturesque islands of the whole group.

Gugu, who so narrowly escaped being a high priest himself, is a Christian, and there is little to distinguish him from other chiefs, except his gentle subdued manner. The peasants on his estate kneel down when he passes, but this is a sign of respect general in Uganda.

When Mukasa "came"—that is to say, once every three months—there was a general rest proclaimed, varying from ten to six, and sometimes five, days, according to the mood of the deity.

Most of what I have said about Mukasa applies equally to the goddess Wanema, who was Mukasa's mother.

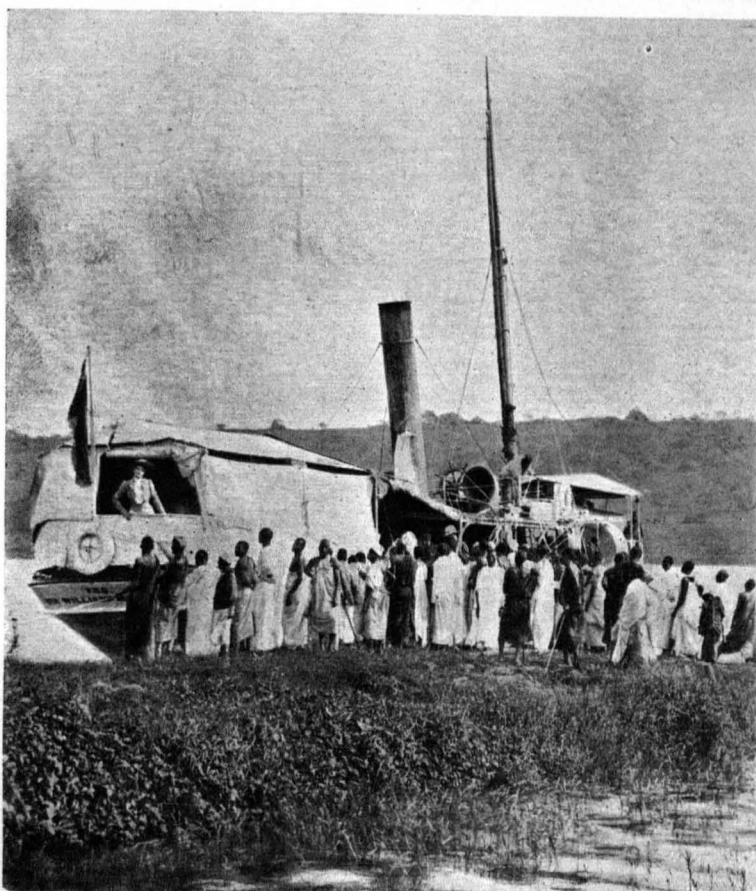


WATER-CARRIERS, SESE

The god Kitinda of Damba was a vicious brute and accepted no offering but men. He was invisible, but the crocodile was taken as his priest, and an offering of a man was made to the crocodiles in the lake when it was meant to appease him. The poor wretched victim was hauled along to the brink of the lake, where his knees and elbows were broken, so that

he could not crawl away. He was then abandoned, and the crocodiles came out and seized him.

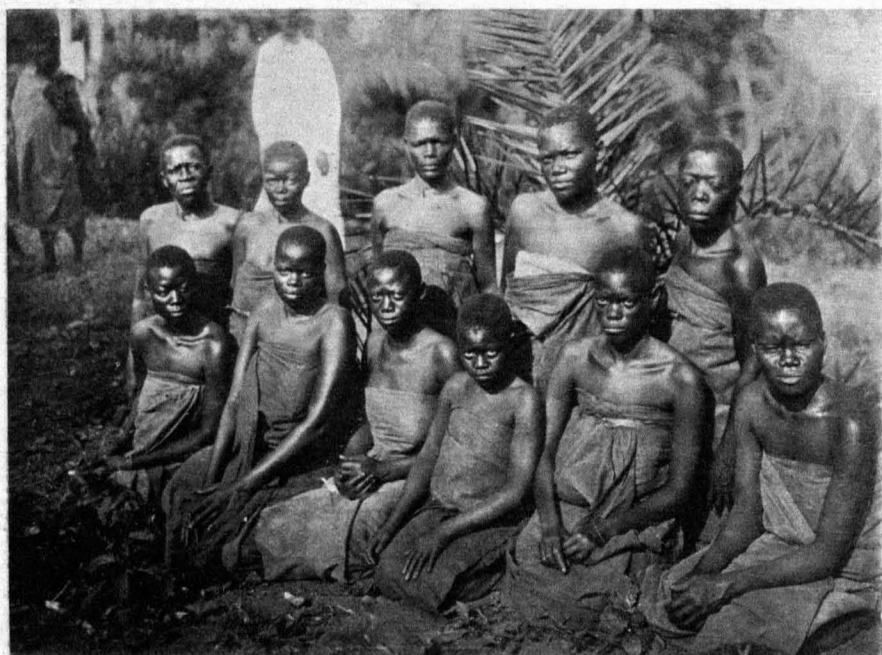
Musisi was the god of Fumvwe Island ; Nalwoga of Nsadzi Island, and so on. Most of these gods or devils are also common



THE PIER, FORT STANLEY, SESE

to Uganda, and I will deal with them more in detail when describing the people and customs of Uganda proper.

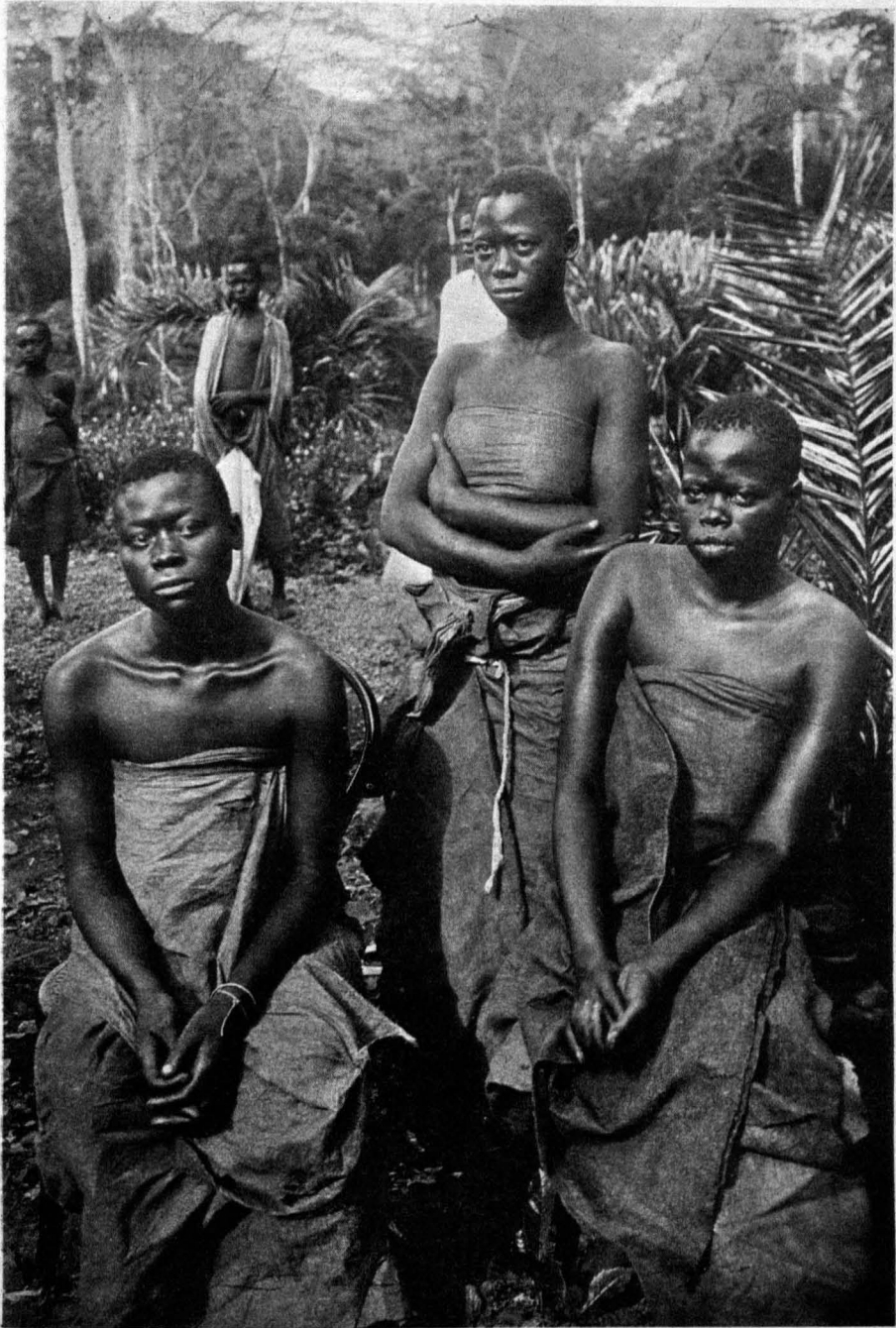
Kome Island is about eleven miles long by eight broad. Mowambi is the chief. He tells me of rather an extraordinary



SESE WOMEN AND GIRLS

custom that prevails in his island. If within the first year of married life a child is not born, the husband is understood to be at fault, and the wife may make overtures to the husband's brother. The intrigue must not be carried on in the husband's house, but visits are made to the residence of the brother, and this is continued until there is a result. As soon as the wife is aware of the result, she and the brother go together to the husband and tell him all about it. Life then assumes its normal features, and when the child is born it is recognised and treated as the legitimate child of the husband. This is an established custom on the island of Kome.

These people are elaborately enveloped in robes of bark-cloth. Only very young children run about naked. Young boys and girls do not smoke tobacco, but the practice is pretty general amongst grown-up people, men and women.



SESE GIRLS

They are good cultivators, and raise large crops of bananas, beans, potatoes, wild coffee, Indian corn, and tobacco. These are taken to the mainland to sell; so also are fowls. There are no lions or leopards or hyænas. The hippopotamus and the njobe (Speke's tragelaph) are plentiful.

The climate is healthy. I was told by the chief Kweba that in thirty years he had only two slight attacks of fever. A headman named Katanda told me that he had been unwell twice only during his whole life. He is now about forty.

The hair of the head is worn short, and the beard is shaven or pulled out by the fingers. The eyelashes are allowed to grow naturally. There are no markings on the bodies of the men; the women have a design scarred on their stomachs. Another woman is always the artist, and there is a fixed charge of fifty kauri-shells for each design, or about a penny. No credit is given: a woman or girl who wishes to have the design made on her stomach must pay her fifty shells in advance, or hold them in her hand till the work is completed.

There are few ornaments, except anklets of wire. A chief's wife may have bracelets of wire from her wrists to her elbows. The faces are not cut or distorted in any way.

Their dances are very simple: they prance round and round in a circle to the music of the "nderi" (a reed flute). There seems to be great mirth but very little agility or foot movement.

Drums are also used, but principally in signalling from island to island. There is a special drum, the "ntugo," which is beaten on the occasion of the birth of twins. The "kigudye" is beaten only at the new moon.

In Kome Island twins are looked on with favour, but amongst the other islands it is not so. A father may not see his twins until after two months. Then a feast is made, their heads are shaven, and he sees them for the first time.

Marriages are easily arranged. The girl takes her lover



THE KWEBA, NATIVE RULER OF SESE

to her father. If she is old enough to marry, she proceeds at once to her new home, and within a few days afterwards the girl's father pays them a visit, and gets two cows as a first present. There is a second instalment of six cows, which may



THE SESE COUNCIL

Showing (starting from the left) Moambi, Chief of Kome Island ; Kaganda, Chief of Bukasa Island ; All Sese, the Kweba ; Semagala, Chief of Bugala Island ; and, on the extreme right, Katanda, headman

be paid or claimed any time within a year of the marriage. (This was the old custom. Now, marriages are regulated by the native law of Uganda.)

Unfaithfulness in a wife was punished with a beating, and the fining of the co-respondent three to five cows, according to his wealth. If a young woman was seduced, the man

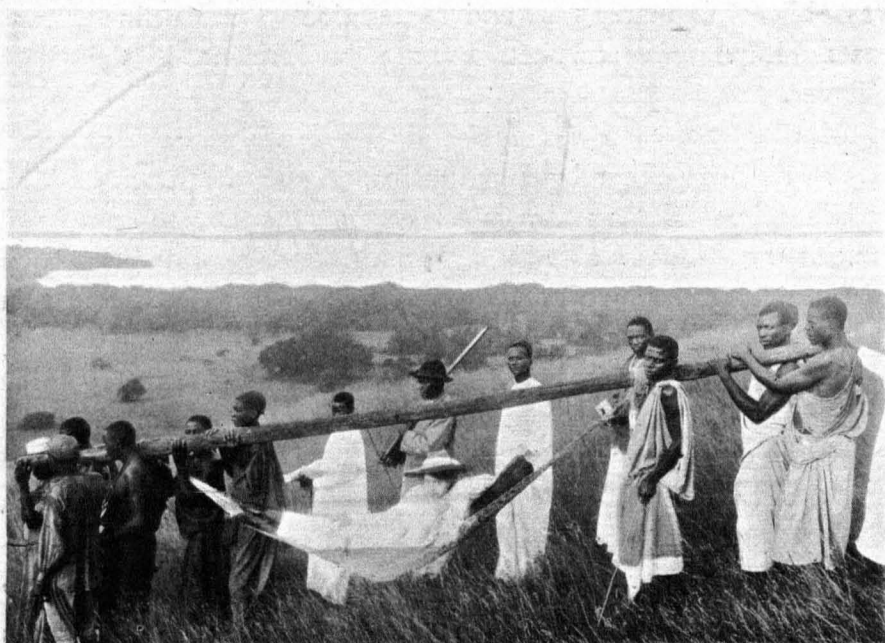
was obliged to marry her, and in addition to pay a fine of two goats. Rape was punished by the banishment of the male offender.

Murder of a man was punished with death, and the sentence was carried out either by hanging, beating to death with sticks, or beheading. It was always open to a murderer to compound the penalty if he was able to pay a fine of two girls and two cows to the nearest relative of the murdered man. I was told that wife murder did not matter at all.

The law of inheritance gave the house and gardens of the deceased to his brother. The brother also got one-third of the wives. Thus, if a man left six wives, his brother would get two and the eldest son the remaining four (not including his own mother), and so on in proportion. There are also certain circumstances in which the son inherits the house, but in no case does he inherit the gardens of his father.

The men in Kome would not eat vegetables. All the other Sesians eat every kind of animal or vegetable food. The women will not eat mutton or fowls, and they will not drink milk.

Politically, Sese Archipelago forms a county of Uganda proper, and is represented in the Lukiko, or Native Parliament, at Mengo by Kweba, the principal chief of Sese, who receives £200 a year from the British Government as county chief. Kweba is assisted in his government of Sese by the chiefs of the principal islands, and in case of his sickness or absence, certain of them are authorised to act for him in the Mengo Lukiko. The present Kweba was formerly admiral of the Sese fleet of canoes. He has been promoted to his present post of county chief on account of his long and faithful services to the European element in Uganda. As may be seen from his photograph, he is a man of fine presence, with a calm, dignified manner that many a European might envy. He and all his chiefs visited Entebbe at the time of the King's Birthday celebrations, and they gave



SESE BOYS AS HAMMOCK-BEARERS
Lake Victoria in the background

me the details here recorded. The clear, clean-cut lips are remarkable features of Kweba's countenance. He has a fine sense of humour that was apparent several times whilst he was giving me the above details. For instance, when we were talking of Sese dances, I asked him to show me what their movements were like. He turned to his crowd of followers and beckoned an aged veteran, and told him solemnly to dance before him. It was quite clear that the veteran had never received such an order in his life before, and his look of astonishment plainly showed what he felt. The crowd laughed as the obedient old man wriggled a few paces, and the chief explained with a smile that he was really not the best dancer that the Sese Islands could produce.

VI
THE BAKOKI

VI

THE BAKOKI

(The Koki country is a small county of Uganda south-west of Buddu, bordering on the Kagera River, near Ankole)

KAMSWAGA is the present Kabaka, or King, of Koki. His father, Lubambula, is renowned in local history as a dead shot. It is said that a number of good shots arrived from different countries to dispute his title, and a target was set up with a needle in the centre. The competitors tried and tried again, and when their best was done, Lubambula fired and his bullet struck the needle on the point. It is not known what was the length of the range, and it is very probable that the hit was a fluke, but at all events he will be known to posterity as the "dead shot" of Koki.

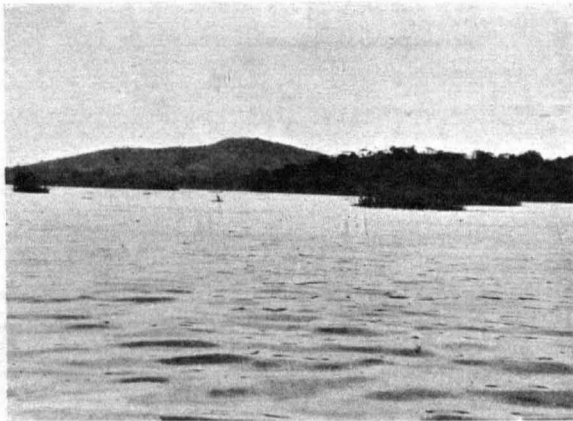
Guns are almost unknown to the ordinary people, but with the bow and arrow they are really first-class marksmen. Whilst yet boys playing about the villages, one of the most popular sports is to fix a small "ntengotengo" (fruit the size of a gooseberry) on the point of a spear and shoot at it with arrows. At a distance of thirty or forty yards they rarely miss the mark. I doubt whether even the Andorobo are their match with the bow and arrow.

GENERAL

The language of Koki is allied to the dialect of Toro, and in appearance the men resemble the Banyoro, especially in

their dress, which consists of a skin which they pull round to windward, or which they drag to the front when speaking to a stranger.

Each householder has a "temple" erected in the vicinity



KOKI LAKE

Note bird on floating island

of his dwelling. It is a sort of hut about three feet in height. In times of peace it is more or less neglected, but when the husband goes to war or on a journey, the women gather wild-flowers on the veldt or in the forest, and offer them to the domestic god in the temple so as to render him favourable, and thus secure the safe return of the absent one.

Their skill in smelting iron in their furnaces and making their own hoes, hatchets, spears, and knives is well known.

The men wear the hair cut short ; but the women wear it long and worked into tresses. These plaits are made to stand erect on the head by using a band of bark about eight inches in width. This is a distinctive mark of nationality, and the Koki women are very proud of their hairdressing. It looks picturesque and attractive. In the event of deep mourning, these creations are shaved off.

Their dances are nothing striking: they consist in rioting round a basin of banana wine, and a number of the performers carry "ndeku" (small calabashes) in which are placed a handful of dry beans. These gourds are rattled with great fury. That constitutes the Koki concert.

MARRIAGE

When a young man decides to marry, his father undertakes the negotiations. He takes two cows, a few goats, and some bark-cloth, and repairs to the girl's father. If anything further is necessary, the price is fixed and a feast prepared. The young man and a few friends then go to fetch the bride. It is laid down by custom that she must not enter her new home until after sunset. Whilst on the way, she is given presents of shells at intervals, and it would be quite shameful to allow her to cross a stream or river without an additional present. All who join in the marriage procession must be fasting, and the bride and bridegroom must not eat anything next morning. By way of mocking their hunger, they are presented with a live goat, or one thousand kauri-shells, which of course are of no use in that form as food, and which are taken to the girl's father. She then must go into strict retirement for three months, and only the brothers and sisters of the husband are allowed to visit her, and even in their case they must pay something or give a small present for the privilege of being admitted to her presence. After three months she may go abroad again and resume her usual duties.

A young man in Koki would never think of marrying a widow or a dishonoured woman. If a wife was unfaithful, she was sent back to her parents. After three or four years had passed, the husband was understood to take her back. The correspondent was fined one cow. Infraction of the code in regard to an unmarried girl was one of the severest crimes known to

their law, and the man was fined three cows to the father of the girl, and one to the chief. The girl was driven from home and remained for ever after an outcast.



TEMPLE OF THE DOMESTIC GOD

Woman offering wild-flowers to secure the safe return of her husband from a journey

Theft was punished severely, sometimes with death, but if the thief stole bananas, nothing was said. It was not a crime

to steal bananas. During the trial the hangman stood at the door with a rope in his hand.

Nothing seems to give rise to stranger customs than the treatment allotted to twins. In Koki there was a special ceremony. On their birth the father was obliged to send word



FISHERMEN ON KOKI LAKE

to the grandfather on the maternal side, or his successor. Four days afterwards this patriarch arrived and his followers carried two small trees, which were duly planted before the house. The father was then sent on a visit to his relations, the real object being to collect some presents, and these were in due time handed over to the patriarch. The midwife in such cases received a

special fee, and the first person who entered the house after the birth was entitled by custom to a fee of the same amount. A feast followed, and it was then that names were given to the children. If they died, they were buried in a river.

A woman named Nakawanga, wife of Yombo, has given birth to triplets on two occasions. She is living now and is healthy and strong. There is still the probability of her occasioning the advent of the patriarch, and the planting of additional trees before her door.

The men will not eat fowls, nor the flesh of the wart-hog. The women will not eat fowls, nor a kind of banana known as "mamba." I am informed that these ladies will not eat the winged white ant, nor the "senene," a species of grasshopper. These are great dainties to the men folk.

The salutations are :

Morning, "Orairege" ; response, "Orairege kurungi."

Midday, "Osibire ge" ; ,, "Osibire kurungi."

Night, "Osibege" ; ,, "Orarege."

When a peasant addresses a chief, he says :—

Morning, "Oraire otya" ; response "Oraige muto."

Midday, "Osibire otai" ; ,, "Osibire ge muto."

To the King (called "Kamswaga") all say : "Ngunda Zonna atuwokye."

Kamswaga's officers of state are :—

Sabakaki, head servant, or butler.

Muketo, the treasurer.

Mulungiro, the guardian of the pipe.

Musenero, the chief beer-maker.

Mugoma, chief drummer ; Mukonderere, trumpeter.

Mukumirizi, the guardian of the king's women.

Bagala, pages and messengers.

Katikiro, man of business.

VII
THE BASOGA

VII

THE BASOGA

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

[THE District of Busoga is situated on the right bank of the Nile where it issues from Lake Victoria, at the Ripon Falls.

In the early days, before claus and steamers were placed on the Victoria Lake, the main route to Uganda passed through Busoga. The people were always friendly to Europeans, and it is the custom even to-day for the local chiefs to visit a traveller immediately his camp has been pitched in their locality, and to bring with them a large gang of people, all loaded with food for the passing traveller and his followers.

Nandi and Mumia's country immediately to the east of Busoga are, in the main, open grasslands, but the traveller at once knew when he entered Busoga owing to the endless banana plantations. The soil is rich and food plentiful, except during seasons of unusual drought.

In the matter of scenery, the Ripon Falls are the great attraction in Busoga. There are high hills on each side of the falls, and about thirty miles of rapids below them. The Nile is about four hundred yards wide at the falls, and the Uganda telegraph line here spans the river, having one support erected on the rocks about midstream.

Near the Busoga side, the falls consist of a series of gaps during the dry season, but on the Uganda side, owing to a deflection in the Nile, the principal volume of water is thrown

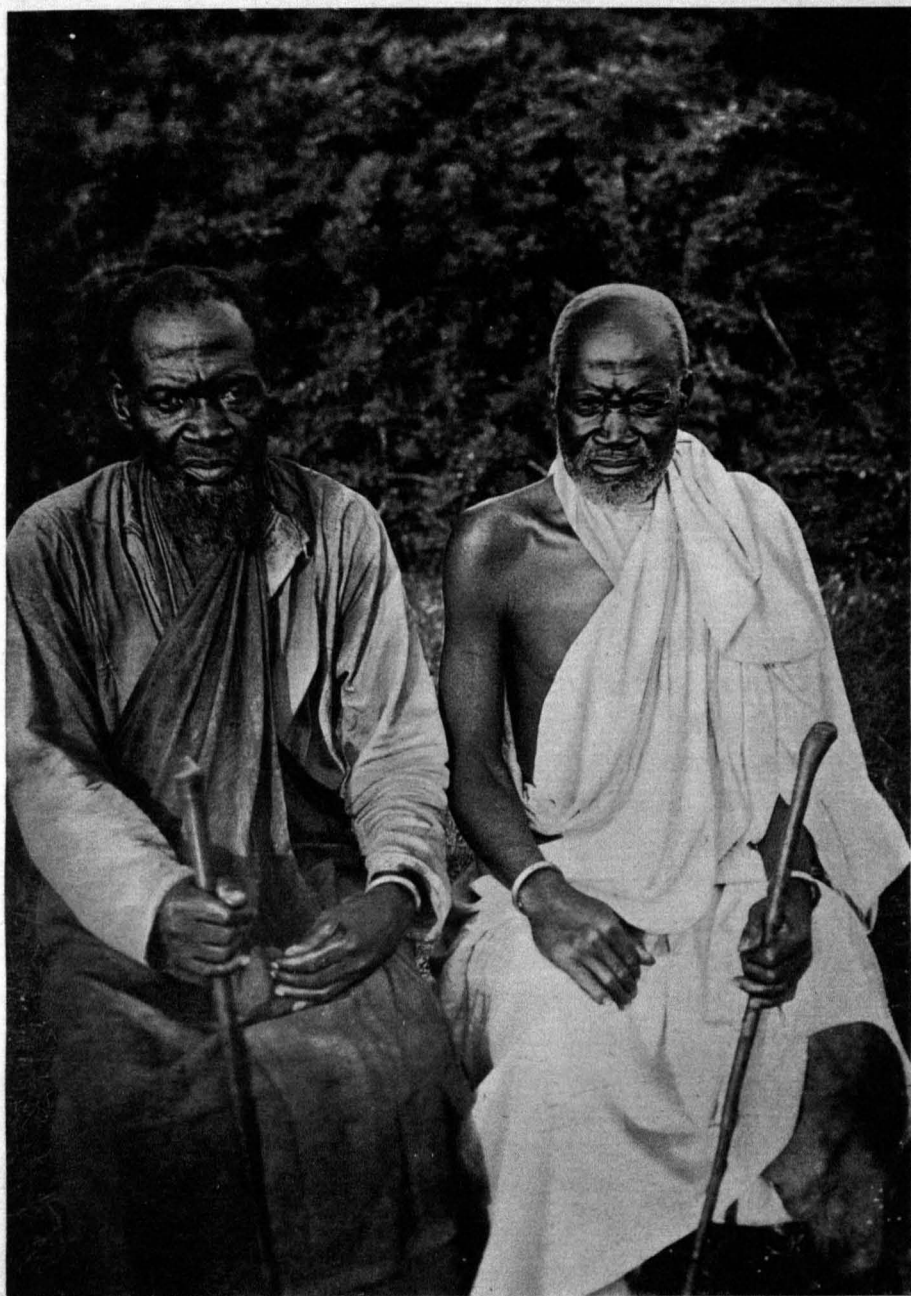
in that direction, and at all seasons of the year it is a sight truly magnificent. There is a quaint little village of fishermen's huts just below the falls, at the very edge of the water, but owing to the din and roar of the swirling waters, these people seldom speak to each other, and conduct their spearing of fish with signals and a sort of dumb vocabulary. They are very friendly and take great pains in showing their methods of work to visitors.

Fish are frequently seen jumping in the falls, either being hurled down or trying to ascend to the upper waters—it is difficult to say which; and, as they appear above the water, herons and other fish-eating birds dart at them and occasionally secure a prize. The falls are not more than twelve or sixteen feet high, but the rush of water, the surrounding scenery, and the fact that this is the birthplace of the long-mysterious Nile give the traveller an impression that is not easily forgotten.

In the southern portion of Busoga the country is generally undulating, with rolling wooded ridges and flat valleys running in a north and south direction. The greater part of the drainage of the district flows towards the north, and not into Lake Victoria. In the neighbourhood of the lake the ridges frequently culminate in clusters of well-defined peaks, of no greater altitude, however, than some five or six hundred feet above the level of the lake.

The soil on the higher elevations consists of a rich red loam, with frequent rock outcrops of granite and gneiss. In the southern part of the district small streams are to be found in the majority of the valleys. These streams usually flow through grassy swamps of small extent, and unimpeded by any dense growth of reeds, such as are frequently met with in many other parts of the Protectorate.

Towards the north, in the vicinity of Lake Choga and Mpologoma and the tributaries of the Nile, there are some extensive swamps, the two largest of which are called the



BASOGA CHIEFS

Kayongo, sub-chief

Sekibobo of Iganga

Mpologoma and Nagombwa. There is a large forest on the west of the district.

Busoga is a country of great fertility. In addition to the vast area under banana cultivation, the inhabitants grow millet, Indian corn, cassava root, sugar-cane, ground-nuts, beans, sweet potatoes, "sem-sem," and "numbu." The tendency of the inhabitants, however, is to rely almost entirely on the banana as a universal food supply, and in the event of any failure of the crop the natives are not unlikely to be reduced to great straits in the matter of food. This actually happened in 1899, an exceptionally dry year, during which the bananas languished, and in some districts died. The people at that time had no other food crop of importance to depend on, and felt the pinch of hunger severely, while several thousand people are said to have lost their lives from starvation.

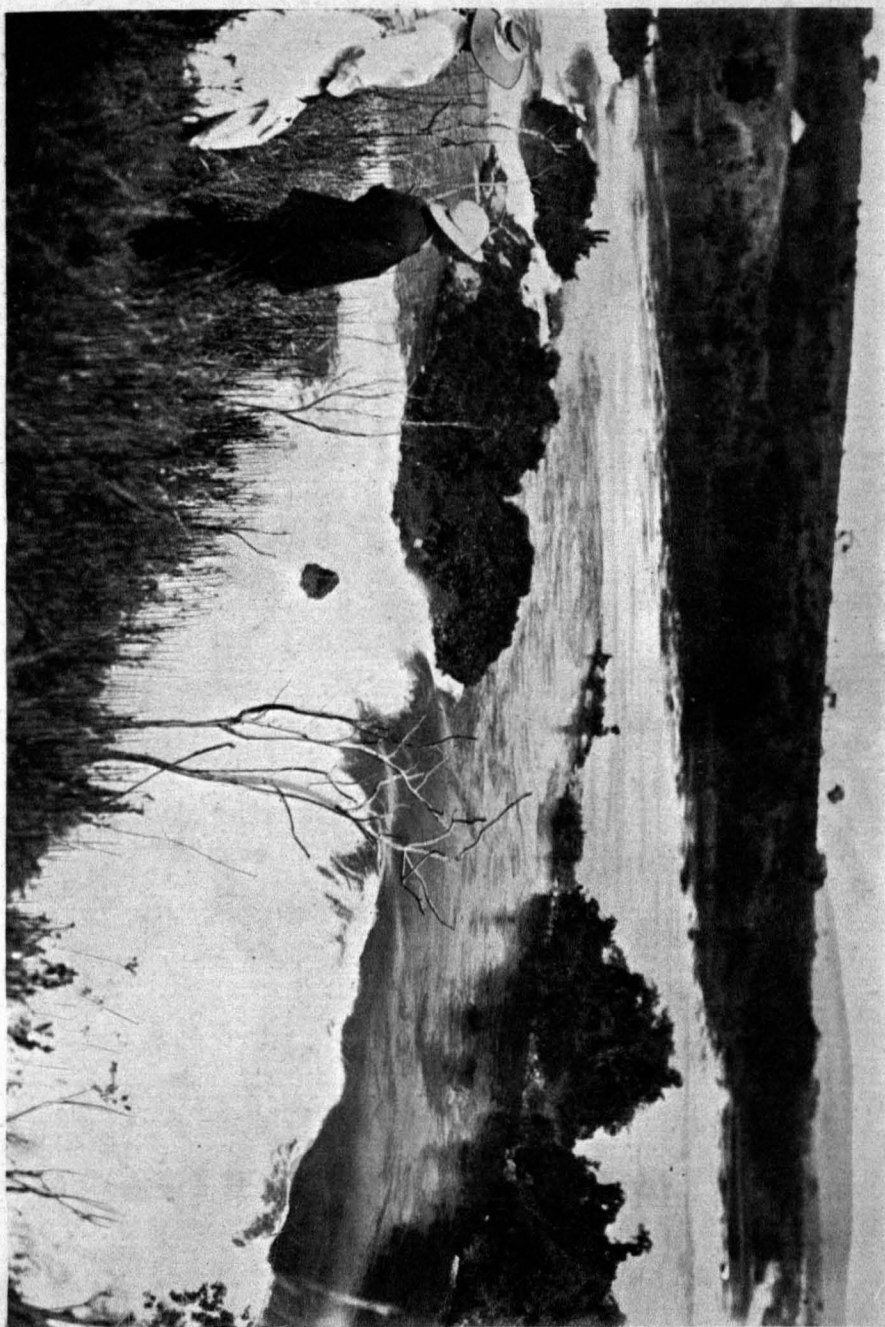
The population of Busoga has been rapidly decreasing during the last three years, principally owing to famine and diseases, such as sleeping sickness,¹ smallpox, etc., and the number of inhabitants, according to a recent estimate made by Mr. W. Grant, C.M.G., the civilian officer in charge of the district, does not now exceed about 100,000.

The country is divided amongst various small chiefs, each of whom in former days used to be subordinate to one of the more powerful chiefs of Uganda, to whom tribute was paid. Not content with this annual tribute, the Baganda were in the habit of raiding Busoga and committing great depredations, which seriously interfered with the development of the country.

The Basoga inhabit the greater portion of the district from Barawa River up to the Nile and Lake Choga. They are a peaceable race of agriculturists, though they possess a fair number

¹ Sleeping sickness is most prevalent in the vicinity of the lake between Jinja and the Sio River. Numerous plantations which two or three years ago were in a flourishing condition are now deserted and waste.

RIPON FALLS, WHERE THE NILE QUILTS LAKE VICTORIA



of cattle, sheep, and goats. These people are, as a rule, friendly to Europeans, but are said to be much addicted to thieving, and travellers should keep a careful watch on their property, especially fire-arms and ammunition, when marching through the country.]



“LET me see your umbilical cord,” I one day asked an old Busoga chief.

“I have not got mine,” he replied.

“I heard that the umbilical cord was preserved in each family in your tribe.”

“Only in the case of twins. It is supposed to be very lucky, and it is always kept.”

“You don't know what happened to yours?”

“I think it was kept by my mother till I was grown up to be a lad, then, I believe, she threw it to the rats.”

This conversation was held with an excellent sub-chief named Kayongo. Another chief called Sekibobo from the same locality was present, and a crowd of peasants. In regard to what follows, a short consultation was held after each question, and I could see that there was an effort made to give every detail I required.

“How are girls prepared for marriage in Busoga?”

“They are not prepared at all—I mean they are always prepared, because they never know until the last moment whether they are going to be married or not.”

“Now, how did you get your wife, for instance,” I asked Kayongo.

“I eloped with her from a dance.”

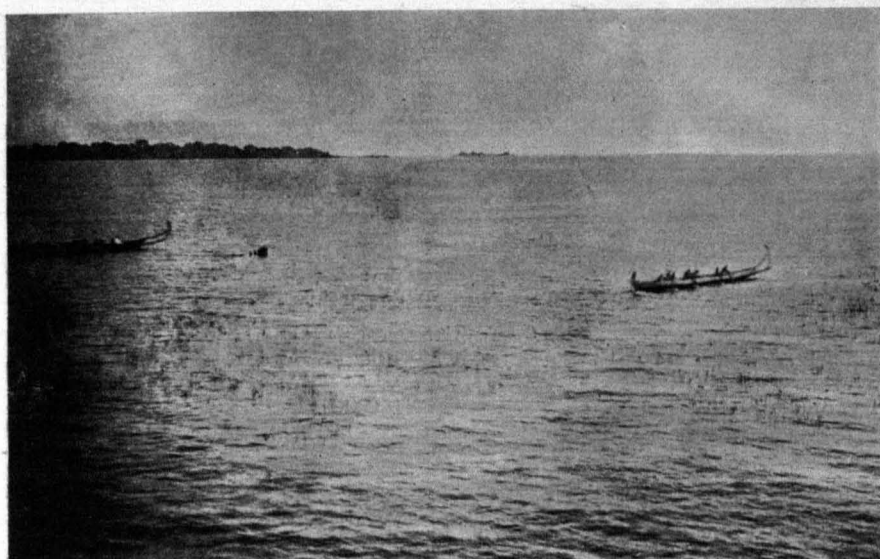
“Why?”

“Because that is what she preferred.”

“In the daytime?”

“No, it is contrary to etiquette to elope before sunset.”

“Could you not have applied to the girl's father.”



FRAIL BASOGA CANOES FACE THE HIGH SEA

"It is not the custom in Busoga: that is the custom in Uganda, but we never do it here."

"But do the girls not send word to their parents, so that they may know what has happened?"

"It is not the custom; the parents find it out in a day or two."

"As a matter of fact, I suppose it is arranged beforehand between the young people that they are going to elope."

"It is arranged very often."

"Then why do they not elope in the daytime?"

"Well, they must first come and dance, and drink beer, and as all the girls are carried off from dances, it is more in the fashion to come to the dance and be carried off from there."

"Does the mere fact of being carried off make it a recognised marriage?"

"Yes."

"Is there any ceremony such as going before the chief?"

"No; they go straight to their new home."

"Does the matter end there?"

"No; the girl's brother pays them a visit next day and receives a present—a cow, or something that the young man can afford to give."

"Is there not a fight, when the brother arrives?"

"There cannot be a fight because etiquette prescribes that the bridegroom must hide himself, and cannot at that stage meet the relations of the girl."

"Does the girl hide?"

"No; she receives her brother."

"Who gives the present?"

"The brother of the bridegroom."

"Does the girl's brother keep the cow for himself, or does he give it to the girl's father."

"He keeps it, but of course he pays it away again when he in turn marries."

"I have heard that fathers in Busoga sell their daughters, even when they are yet children. Is that so?"

"I have heard of cases of it. For instance, if a man has contracted debt, and if he has no other means of paying it, and he is being pressed by the creditor, he might arrange to give him his daughter in lieu of any other payment; but that is the exception. The national routine in regard to marriage is what I have told you."

It will be seen from the above that the mutual consent of the parties concerned constitutes a valid marriage. The only other tribe in which anything approaching this system exists is the Bavuma, and as they are near neighbours, it is probable that the Buvuma maiden has copied the Busoga girl, but the practices are not exactly alike: the Buvuma maiden may elope in the daytime, whereas the Busoga girl waits for the excitement of a dancing multitude and the clashing of drums at the dead of night.

I have heard this described by Britishers as a regrettable state of society. Those who say so are not aware, or probably have forgotten, the laws of their own country. For instance, in Scotland at this moment a man and woman may contract a perfectly valid marriage without banns or without publication of notice, without clergyman or registrar, simply by expressing their mutual consent to take each other for man and wife in the presence of any two witnesses, even in the presence of two who can neither read nor write, but who have sufficient common sense to understand that the parties concerned gave their mutual consent. Such a marriage may or may not be registered afterwards, but registration is not essential to the validity of the marriage. This is actual valid law in Scotland at this moment, and if it is good enough for Scotland, it is good enough for Busoga. It is quite right of course; it contains the essence of a contract: it is a mutual agreement of parties who are equally free to make the agreement.

"Now," I continued, "that is quite clear, as far as the first wife is concerned; but in Busoga a man may have as many wives as he can afford to keep. How does a man manage with the subsequent wives?"

"Just as with the first."

"What, does the married man elope with another young woman?"

"Yes."

"And takes her back to his home direct?"

"He does not take her to his own house: he takes her to the house of a brother or friend to begin with—that is, until it blows over."

"What blows over?"

"There is generally bad feeling when a man, already married, carries off a young girl."

"And then?"

"In the same way as before, the girl's brother calls at the man's house. He is not at home, but his brother gives the present and the girl's brother then goes away. The man may then return to his home and bring the subsequent wife or wives with him."

"I see that married men attend these dances. Do married women attend them also?"

"Oh, yes."



BASOGA PEASANTS

"Are married women sometimes carried off?"

"It very rarely happens. If it did happen, it would be a breach of custom, and as such would be brought before the chief. As a rule, in such a case a man's brothers and friends come and convince him that it was all a mistake, and the woman is sent back to her husband, together with a cow as a fine."

It is rather eccentric that this dance, called "kisibo," at

which matrimonial relations are contracted, is part of the death ceremonies of some one who has died in that locality.

Preparations are made immediately after death for burial. The core of a banana-tree is taken and pounded into a spongy, fibrous pulp. It contains sufficient moisture, and a few handfuls of it is taken and the women of the house scrub the corpse with it. If the deceased is a married man, the wife performs this duty. If a woman, some other woman of the household does it. No one is allowed to be present at this operation but the parties engaged at it.

The persons entitled by right to carry a corpse to the grave are the grandsons or great-grandsons of the deceased. If these are not present, then other arrangements are made. There is no coffin or box. The body is placed in a grave fifteen feet deep, covered with bark-cloth, and then the earth is filled in. The earth is, however, not firmly pressed down, as it is the custom of absent relations who are dwelling at a distance to come on the scene as soon as they can, and they dig up the earth again till they come very nearly to the corpse, and then they pack the earth down very tightly, and again when the grave is full of earth, it is trodden down, the surface is swept clean, and nothing whatever except the fresh surface remains to indicate the spot.

Custom also prescribes that a great quantity of bananas should now be cut and prepared to make beer. This takes about ten days, but as soon as all is ready, the beer-pots are collected in the open space of the village or in front of the house, and in the afternoon a special drum is beaten which means to those who hear it that there is going to be a "kisibo" that night. The kisibo is therefore the final item in the death ceremonies. They are not held at certain periods, but whenever a person dies, and they are attended by not only the people in the village, but by all the young men and women within a radius of eight or ten miles.

In addition to the kisibo, there is another dance called the "balongo," which is held on the birth of twins. Twins are a good omen in Busoga. There is a monthly dance called the "muta," but this is merely a village dance for the youngsters. Strangers from the neighbouring villages do not attend a muta, neither do elopements occur then.

If a Musoga man dies far from home, so far that it is not practicable to bring his body home for burial, a few of the relations go a short distance from home, cut a twig, and wrapping it up in bark-cloth, proceed to carry it to the dead man's home. When they approach the hut, one of the bearers goes in front, and tells the relations that the "corpse" is approaching. Loud wailing is the result, and they all go *en masse* to meet the *cortège*. The usual ceremonies are performed, and the stick is ultimately buried and the proceedings terminate.

RELIGION

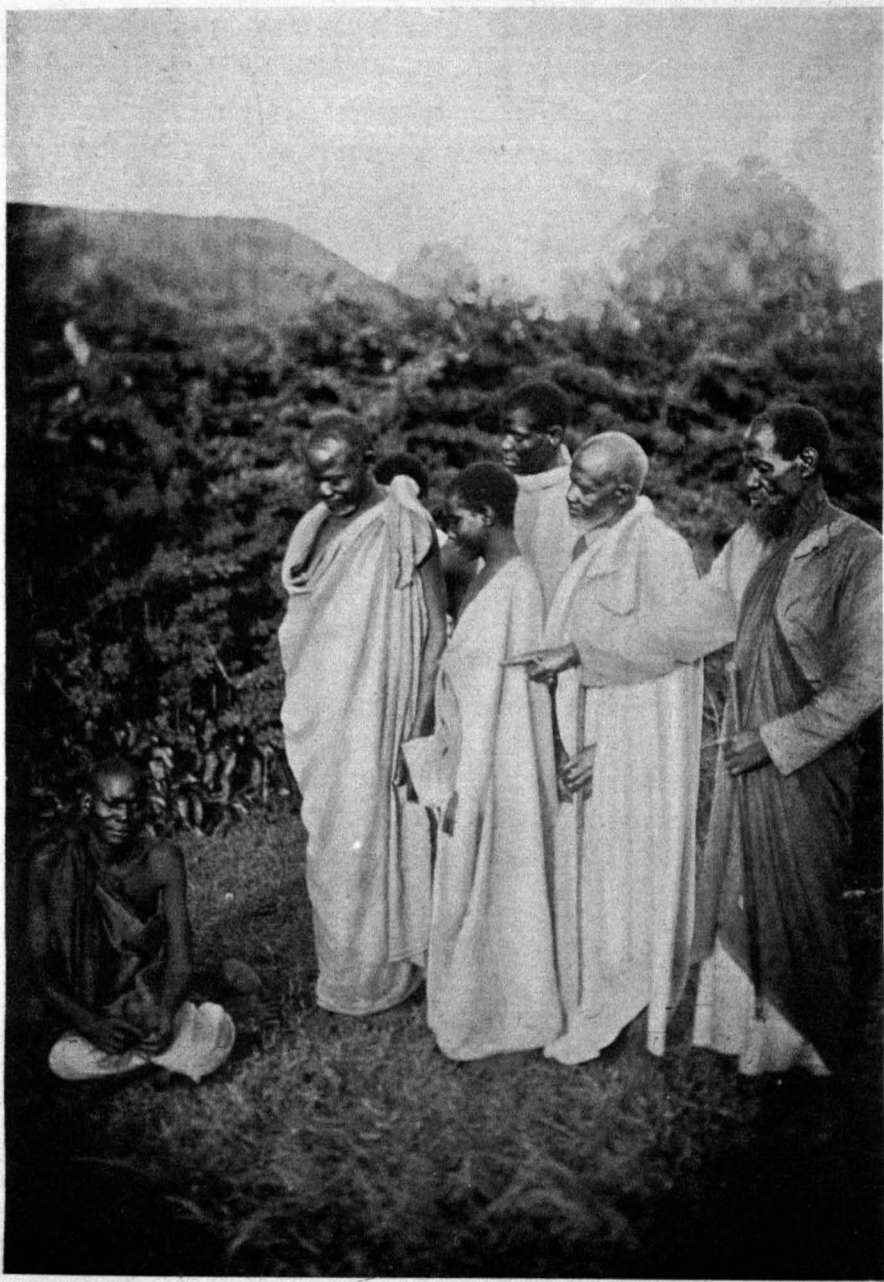
The Catholic and Protestant missions have made good progress in Busoga, but beyond their immediate vicinity there is not the least idea or belief in a God or any supernatural existence after death. They roar with laughter at the idea of a peasant having an immortal soul.

A chief pointed at a poor peasant and said :

"He have an immortal soul? I cannot believe it ; but I will admit that perhaps Wakoli or Luba had a soul. Wakoli had four hundred wives !"

These were very important chiefs, and the native mind cannot bring itself to picture their total annihilation, and to their thinking a man with four hundred wives should have an immortal soul if anybody had one.

When converted to Christianity, they are ardent in religion ; and, on the whole, it may be said that they are a moral people.



BASOGA CHIEFS "SCORNING TO BELIEVE THAT A SLAVE COULD HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL."

Love and passion have no existence in the sense in which they are accepted in Europe.

The men have no objection to helping the women in the cultivation of the gardens, differing in this respect from the men in Uganda, who consider it a degrading thing for a man to handle a hoe or spade, or work in the fields.

All these tribes can make themselves heard for a long distance from hilltop to hilltop, and across stretches of water. For instance, in crossing the ferry in Gabula's country, the ferry is at the Uganda side of the Nile, but although the stretch is more than a mile, the natives can easily make themselves heard across the water. The piercing scream of a woman can be heard for a much longer distance. Even in the midst of a thunder-storm a woman's scream may be heard above the crash of the thunder.

People are called together by special beats of the drum: the "ngoma ya kutitima" is the alarm drum. It might be used in times of war, or when a wild animal, such as a lion, was suddenly discovered in a village. The drumming for calling workmen together is called "gwampala." The blowing of a horn "ndeka" means that the next day will be devoted to hunting.

Directly the traveller enters Busoga from Mumia's country, he notices the change in vegetation and the general appearance of the landscape. Mumia's is open grassland: Busoga is densely wooded with banana-forests, and the soil is a rich, dark loam. The crops are bananas, potatoes, peas, beans, ground-nuts, sugar-cane, maize, oil-seeds, and vegetable marrows. One meets flocks of goats and sheep under the care of small boys. The men look after the cattle. They never engage Bahima herdsmen as is done in Uganda.

The banana is the staple food of the country. The traveller need not trouble about rations for his caravan whilst passing

through that country. It is the custom for the nearest chief to send into his camp as much and more than he can use of bananas. The chief expects a small present in return.

In the old days these people had a reputation for thieving from passing caravans, but when the writer passed there in 1899, he took no particular precautions, and had nothing stolen. Still, it would be just as well to have a few sentries posted at night round the camp.

In hunting the "musu" (ground rat) dogs are used with little "byuma" (iron bells) attached to their necks. In this way they frighten the musu, and drive it into small nets. A large net, called a "kitimba," is used for catching wild pig and leopards. There is a leopard trap, called "nduli," made of sticks in the form of a square house, open at the front and back. The roof consists of heavy poles, which are attached by means of ropes to the supports in such a way that when the leopard enters the trap, the timbers of the roof fall on him. A trap on the same principle, a "kisuwi," is made to kill hippopotamuses. A heavy log with a spike is suspended over the hippo track. When a hippo passes and disturbs the suspending cord, the log falls and buries the spike in his back.

As far as can be ascertained, there are no idols in human shape, but it is a fact that they throw themselves down before horns, sticks, and stones. There is a "devil dance" in honour of the "lubare." The drum known as "ngoma ya nswezi" is beaten to call the people together, and then they adore a man or woman in whom the "lubare" (little devil) is supposed to dwell. After the ceremony the man or woman receives gifts and contributions from the worshippers.

The principal Busoga charms are:—

(1) "Nsumbi," a small water vessel, often with several openings at the top, in which they put a mixture of clay and grass. This stuff, having been dedicated to the lubare, has

the power of deciding difficult law-suits. If the mixture, after application to the body, sticks to the skin, the individual is guilty; on the other hand, if it falls to the ground, his or her innocence is proved.

(2) "Nsimu," or a sacred hoe. Having made it red-hot, it is applied to a bundle of grass attached to a man's or woman's leg. If the grass burns away, the verdict is guilty; if not, the person is innocent.

(3) "Kakwanzi," a holy red bead. This is softly thrown into the eye of the person being tried. If it sticks in the eye, guilt has been proved; if it falls to the floor, innocence is established.

There are other charms consisting of small bits of wood fastened at the wrist or hips, and supposed to protect them from famine, wild animals, or illness.

They have a superstitious fancy that the ghost of a dead chief may take up its dwelling in a living man or woman. They also attach importance to dreams.

The men do not mark their bodies in any way, but the women think it a mark of great beauty to have four upright scratches on the stomach. A woman always makes the design on another woman's stomach. The charge is one fowl. Some men wear brass bracelets. Both men and women have two teeth pulled out from the front of the lower jaw. Women wear "nalo," brass wire neatly coiled round the wrist; "bikomo," a heavy brass bracelet worn on the wrist, sometimes as an anklet. It is also considered good taste to have several strings of beads and shells tied round the waist.

The national garb is bark-cloth. Women wear a small strip round their loins, and both men and women wear the "mugayere" or great wrap over all. The men tie it in a knot over the shoulder. The women fold it round their body, under the arms, and then press down an arm to keep it from unwinding.



BASOGA CANOES IN HARBOUR

A woman keeps one arm fixed close to her side. The real object is to keep her robe of bark-cloth from falling loose. There is a cord round the waist, and the women frequently

allow all the clothing above this cord to drop down and flap round the hips, leaving the upper part of the body quite naked. When approaching a stranger on the road they may be seen pulling up the corners and adjusting it under their arm. Young girls have a habit of constantly opening this garment, unconsciously exposing their breasts, and then fixing it up tight again.

It is a peculiar thing that stocks were used in Busoga as a means of punishment. After careful inquiries from natives and from missionaries I find it is a fact. The only case, however, in which stocks were used, was when a woman was unfaithful. The husband put her in stocks and beat her as much as he liked. There was no appeal to the chief in such a case. The husband was bound to keep order in his own family circle.

Some uncertainty prevails as to the laws of succession and inheritance. A brother succeeds a brother or sister, rather than sons or daughters of the deceased. According to some informants the brothers divided the wives of the deceased amongst them; according to others, the sons got a share if the wives were sufficiently numerous to go round. In any case, there was a general distribution of the effects, and the only things that custom demanded should be left behind in the house were a shield, a spear, and a waist-belt. The successor, whether a brother or a son, killed a cow with a spear on the grave of the deceased, and thus established and sealed his right. His right might have been disputed before, but not after.

Graves are watched in Busoga to prevent the "baswezi" (devil messengers) carrying off the corpse. It is said that the local medicine-men make a most deadly poison from the corpse of a human being. A decoction of it spread on spears or arrows is greatly feared.

Busoga being a maritime country, has large flotillas of canoes. They resemble the Uganda and Sese canoes, but are not of quite such good workmanship. They weave "biwempe" mats,

make water-vessels, and are the only people I know who knit caps, called "busadia." They are made of cotton thread and are knitted with one sharp stick. They show much cleverness in making pottery and rough pipes.



BASOGA CANOES

The following officers are attached to a chief's household :—

Katikiro, the chief minister.

Musigere, his *remplaçant* in absence.

Mwanika, the storekeeper.

Musenero, keeper of the beer.

Murungiro, keeper of the pipes and tobacco.

Mufumbiro, cook.

Sabakaki, doorkeeper.

Sabairu, head slave.

Bagalama, page-boys.

Mugoma, bandmaster.

Kairu, head wife.

All sorts of animal and vegetable food are eaten without restriction, except that a woman after marriage cannot eat fowls. No reason is given, but I fancy the principal cause is a greedy husband.

VIII
THE BAVUMA

VIII

THE BAVUMA

(Inhabiting the large island of Buvuma, off the north coast of the Victoria Nyanza; the Bavuma are allied to the Basoga)

A WOMAN may do anything she likes in Buvuma except sit on a chair. Even when no men were present and she was alone in the house, it would be a most audacious thing to do, and she would never think of committing such an enormity. She must sit on the ground.

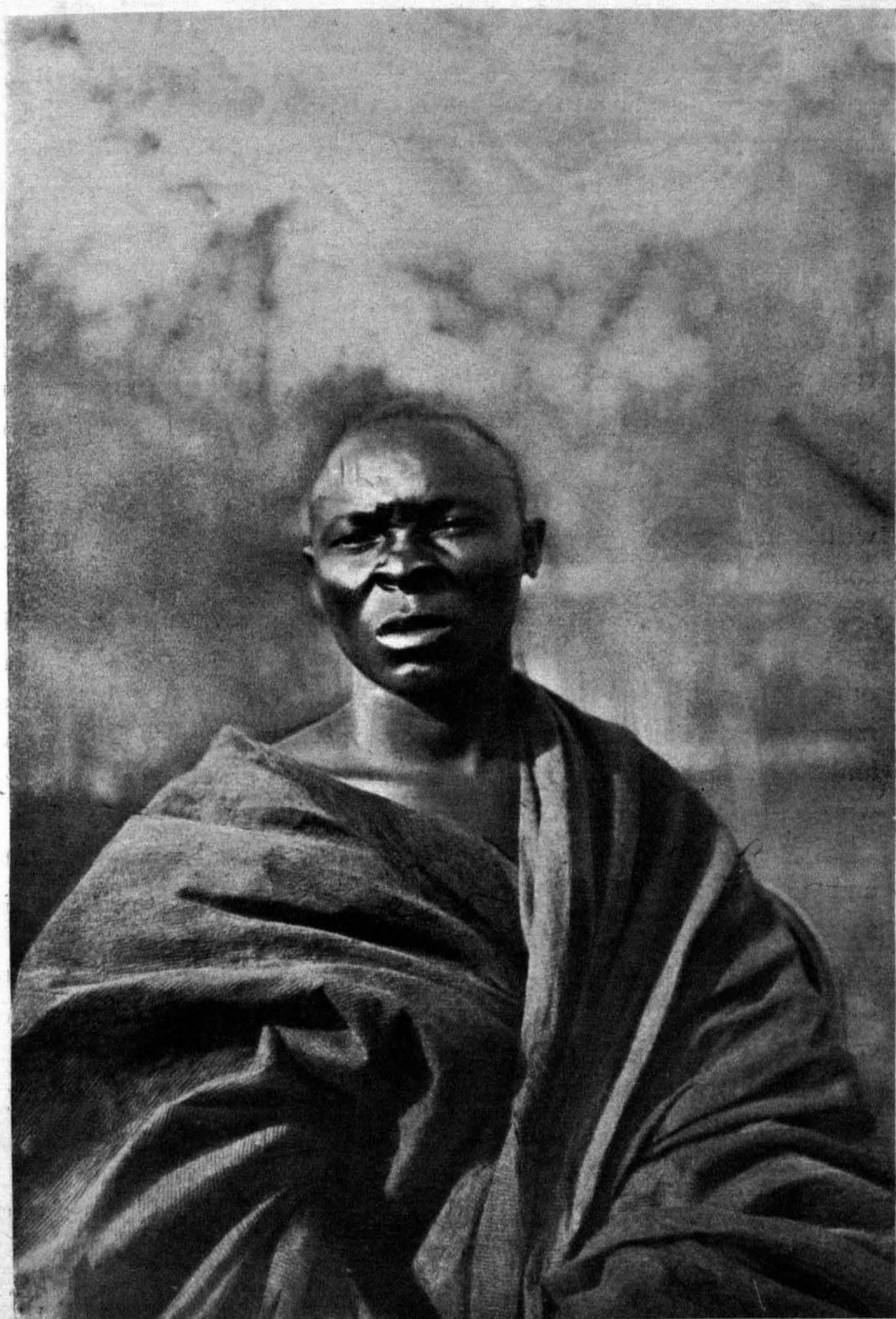
In all other matters women are treated with exceptional leniency and respect in Buvuma. The unmarried woman is a very independent being, and submits to no control, especially in her love affairs. This is the only people I have met where the father has nothing whatever to do with arranging a marriage for his daughter. She it is who is asked directly by her lover whether she will marry him, and, if she consents, such consent constitutes the whole of the marriage ceremony, and she proceeds straightway to her new home with her husband. If the consent is given whilst she is even temporarily away from home, she does not take the trouble of informing her parents that she has accepted a husband. Within a short time, however, the news reaches her home, and the father or brothers make a call on the young couple and receive a present of two cows and five goats. The father keeps the two cows, and one of the goats; the other four goats are distributed as follows: one to the mother, one to the grandfather, and one each to the paternal and maternal

uncles. A chief or a rich man may give as many as fifteen cows as a present to the girl's father. Etiquette prevents the *sending* of the cows and goats ; they must be *taken away* by the girl's father, or her brothers.

Still, she must not sit on a chair. Neither must a man dressed in bark-cloth. If a man is dressed in a white " kanzu " or Arab shirt, he may sit on a chair. The national dress for all the men is a robe made of bark-cloth, toga fashion, knotted over one shoulder and flowing gracefully to the ground, as shown in the photographs. A woman's dress consists of a banana leaf. The frond of the leaf is tied round her waist, and the blade of the leaf then forms a frill or fringe and hangs all round. It has two great advantages—it is easily renewed, and it is always clean, and in this latter respect the naked natives are angelic when compared with tribes that wear clothing from month to month and from year to year, without a change of garments.

A son would inherit his father's wives, except his own mother ; she would pass to her husband's brother. In other respects, the sons and daughters divide the deceased's estate fairly amongst them. No one must inherit the father's house. It is laid down by strict custom that it must be razed to the ground and another built up anew for the new generation.

The name Buvuma is applied to the group of seven islands near the north-eastern corner of Lake Victoria, just off the Busoga coast, where the Nile takes its leave of the Great Nyanza. The three largest islands have each a separate dialect—Luvuma, Lugaya, and Lusiri. In reality, like Lusoga and Lusesese, they are dialects of Luganda, but various causes have contributed to making these dialects so different as to make it difficult for a man from Uganda to understand them. For instance, in the largest island, Buvuma proper, the people have a custom of knocking out two of their teeth in the front of the lower jaw. This alone makes a great difference in the articulation ; and



KISOKO, NATIVE OF BUZIRI ISLAND (BUVUMA ARCHIPELAGO)

as the people of Busiri knock out four teeth, this makes matters still worse in regard to distinctness of pronunciation. As these languages are not written, it is easy to see that a stranger would have great difficulty in understanding the language spoken in the neighbouring islands, although as a matter of fact they are only dialects of Luganda.

There is a native dentist for removing the front teeth, and his charge is two kauri shells. For this fee you may have either two, three, or four teeth taken out, according to the island on which you reside. The operation takes place when the native is yet a child, say six or eight years of age.

Their system of counting is exactly the same as in Uganda, with one exception: "ndala" means "one"; in almost all the countries bordering on the lake "one" is "emu."

The Bavuma have cows, sheep, and goats. They also till gardens and raise extensive crops of sweet potatoes, beans, and other things. The local banana is a small variety, but it is the main source of food supply. They are also expert fishermen, and fish is eaten both by men and women, except a small sect who will not eat the fish known as "nkedye."

Tobacco is not grown locally: it is imported from Uganda and is not much used; only the old men and old women smoke it.

There are said to be a few lions on Buvuma proper, but there are no leopards or hyænas. There are also no dogs or cats.

I found these people quite ignorant of the art of making fire by friction between two sticks.

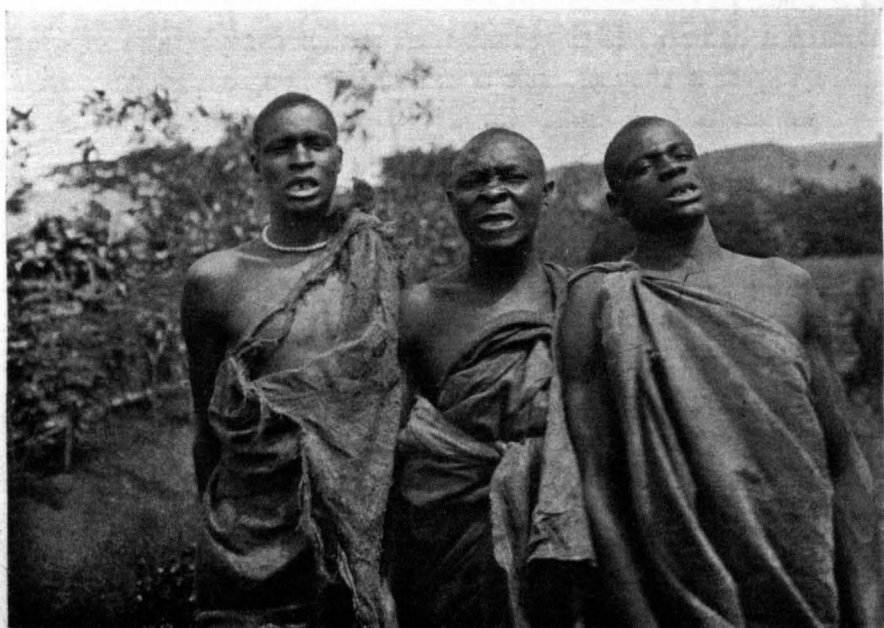
"How do you make fire?" I asked the headman, Kisoko.

"By throwing wood on the embers of the old fire," he replied.

"But supposing you had not got any embers—supposing the old fire had gone out."



BAVUMA IN PROFILE



SHOWING GAPS WHERE TEETH HAVE BEEN KNOCKED OUT

"In that case," he replied, "I should go to another hut and get a piece of lighted firewood."

"But supposing the fire in the neighbouring hut had also gone out," I continued.

"I should try another hut," said he.

"I don't mean that: I mean if you were going along the lake shore where there was no hut and you wanted to make a fire, what would you do?"

"I should use matches."

"But long ago, before matches were brought to Central Africa?"

"Oh, in that case I should go on shore and search for a hut, and get a firebrand."

"Have you ever heard of people making fire by friction between two pieces of stick?"

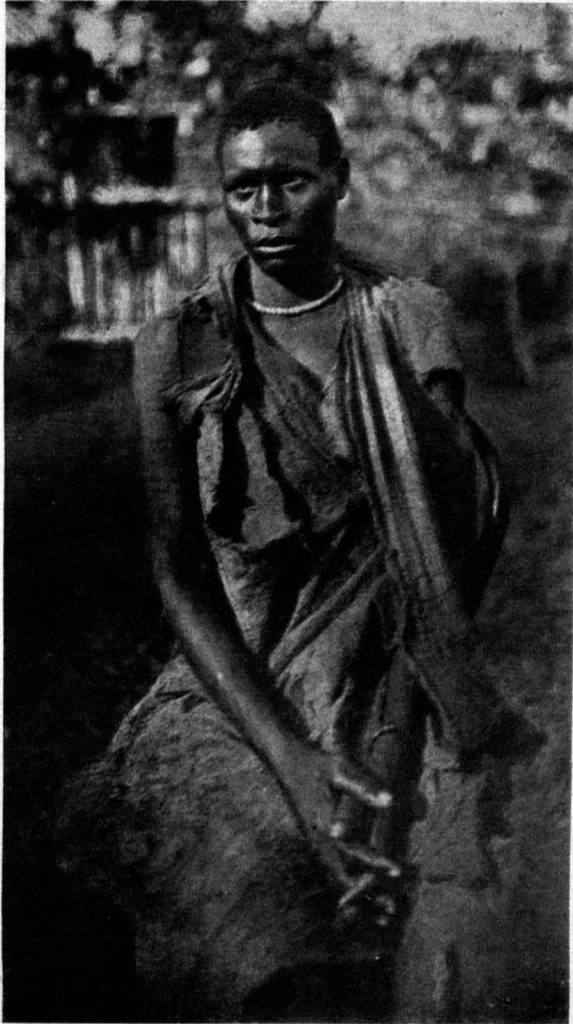
"No; and I don't think it can be done," he replied.

I then showed him how it was done. They had never heard of it before. If they had, the art was completely forgotten, and seeing that they are not a wandering people, but have lived for ages on their islands, where fire was always available, it is little wonder that the art of making fire, if it ever existed, had been lost.

From a physical point of view, the Bavuma are strong, healthy and muscular, and this might be turned to account either as a labour supply or as a recruiting ground for the armed forces. They are a brave race, as the neighbouring tribes of Basoga and Baganda know from experience.

Their great desire for independence, however, carried them too far when Sir Harry Johnston was framing a constitution for the Uganda Protectorate. He tried and tried again to get the leading chiefs to join quietly with the other Baganda chiefs in governing themselves, and ruling their own affairs through the native council known as the Lukiko. The Bavuma utterly

refused to submit or send representatives to the Special Commissioner, except to say that their one great object in life was



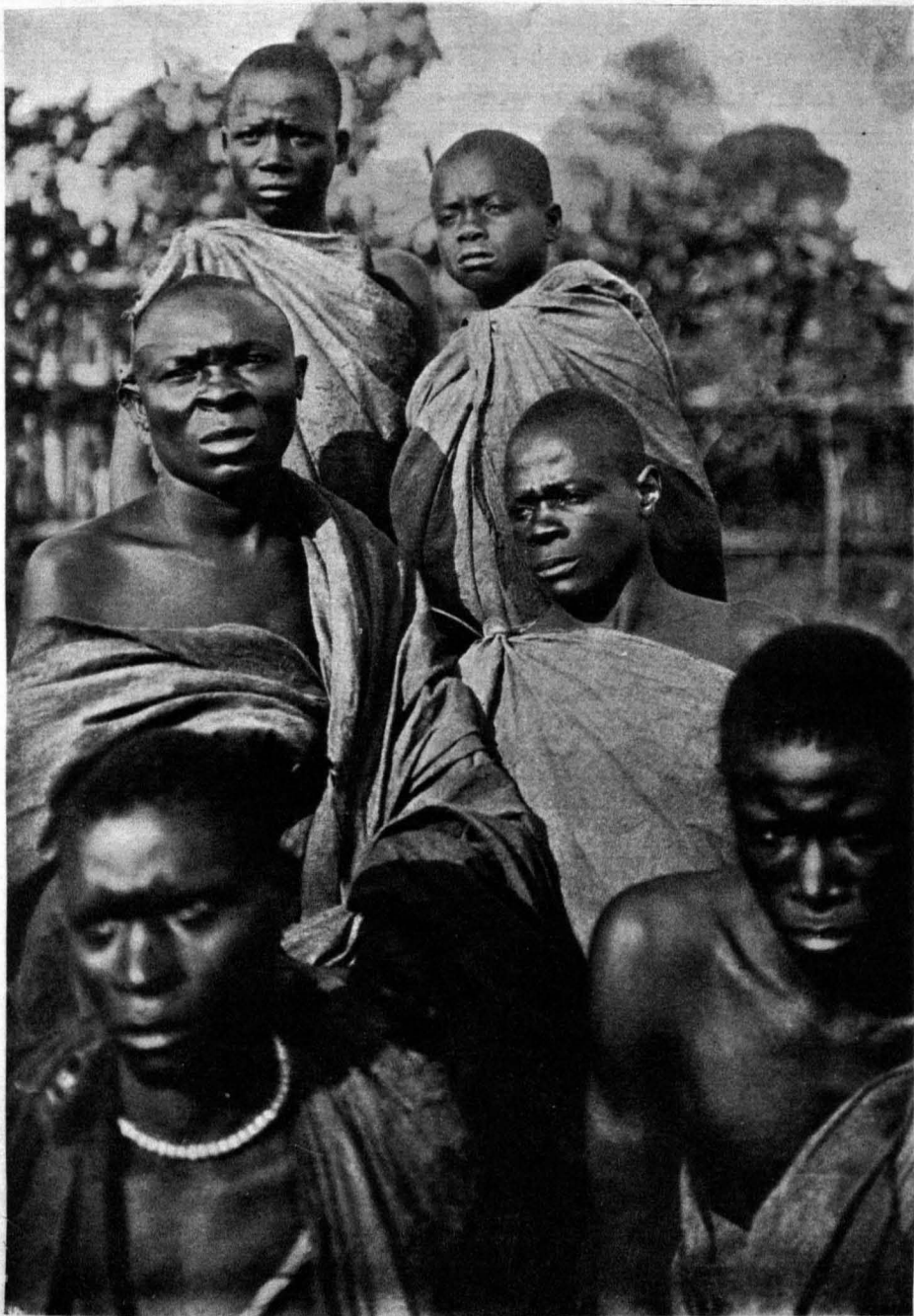
CHEOKWERI

Showing necklace and bracelet

to make war on the Administration. They were, of course, too insignificant to send a military expedition against them. and, besides, it has never been the policy of the Administration to

come into violent collision with savages who have not had an opportunity of judging of the advantages of peace and settled government: the rule has been to leave them alone until they see for themselves what the advantages are, and until confidence in our methods has grown up. In this instance, as in every other, the result has been satisfactory, and now the Bavuma are sorry they did not take part in the original scheme for administering their affairs. They were stubborn at the time, and they were placed under the native government of Uganda, as a province of Uganda, with a chief from Uganda to be their governor, this chief having already had a good idea of the settled ways of administration in Uganda.

Thus it comes to pass that Buvuma has that most pitiable of institutions, a king without power or influence. Kisandya is still there as nominal Kabaka or King, surrounded by his officers of state, and the pomp that was once the envy of the kings of Buziri and Bugaya. There is the great "Musenero," Lord of the Cellars (literally, "the beer pots"), robed in massive garments of bark-cloth. He can drink more beer than any man in the seven islands, and yet stand the local test of sobriety, viz., he can tell whether it is daylight or dark. There is "Mugoma," Lord of the King's drummers. When he struck the war drum the concussion was such that the eggs were broken in the crows' nests at Mengo (fifty miles away), and every man in the province of Busoga was given fever for three days and three nights. There is "Mumwi wa Kabaka," the King's barber: even the back of his razor would cut a hair; whereas the barber of the King of Busoga had nothing better than a piece of broken bottle with which to rasp off the hair and beard of that monarch. And again, there is the "Mukuma," Lord of the Household (literally, "he who looks after the King's mother and father"). His duties consisted of proclaiming the perfections of the Kabaka's mother. "Her fringe of banana leaf, was it not the best possible; had she ever

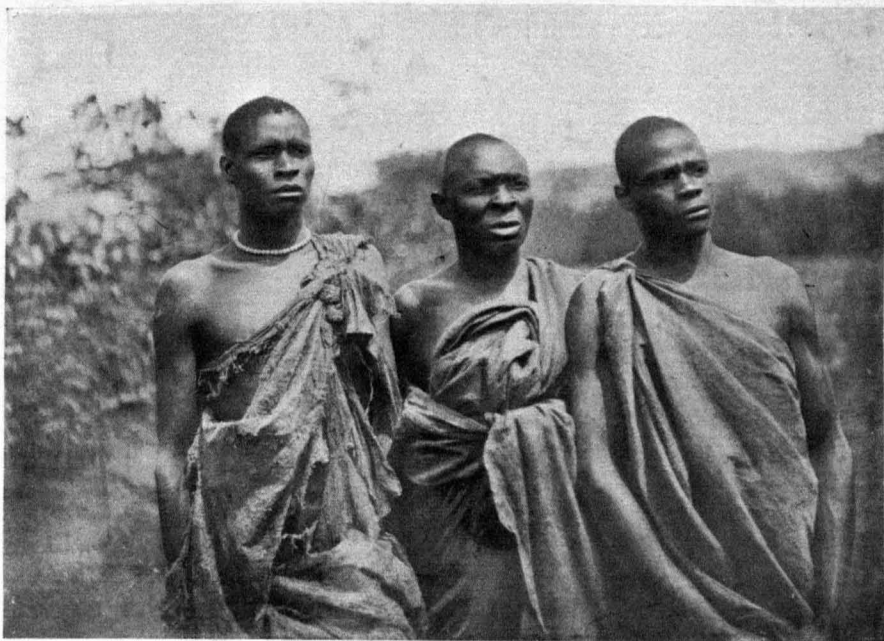


TYPICAL FACES FROM THE BUVUMA ARCHIPELAGO

been known to sit on a chair? The queens of Uganda, with all their talk, were very little when compared with the Queen of Buvuma : why, they did not even have their front teeth knocked out, though it cost only two kauri shells!" There was never any mention of the King's father, even when he happened to be alive, though for courtesy he was bracketed with the Queen Mother even when dead, and they were referred to as the "Batete," or the royal pair. He played a very small part, the Queen Mother being everything.

As regards religious belief, they are very familiar with the spirits of departed relations, and make a small grass shelter for each on the graves. There is no common cemetery : the dead are buried in graves made in front of each hut, about thirty feet from the door, and the small spirit shelters are arranged there. No food is put into these small structures, nor water nor beer in any sort of vessel. These houses are renewed from time to time when in need of repairs. It is allowable for either the living relations or for strangers to repair these spirit shelters. A new one may be made by a labourer for one string of kauri shells, value about $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. Each man's grave is marked by a young *dracœna* tree : a woman's grave is not marked in any way, except that she is entitled to a shelter for her spirit, as in the case of the men.

These ancestral spirits take an interest in the living, and when any disaster occurs it is well known that some one of them is angry and must be appeased by an offering. The particular gift in which an ancestral spirit delights most is a living goat. A goat is therefore brought to the spirit house of the angry ancestor, and a little speech is made to the spirit, to the effect that he must be angry no longer, and that the goat is presented as an offering. The goat is then hauled up till his head touches the little shelter, the donor turns his back, and the goat goes free, and generally joins the donor's herd in the course of the day.



CHEOKWERI
(from Bugaya)

KISOKO
(from Buziri)

SEWAYA
(from Buvuma Proper)

(Showing manner of wearing bark-cloth robes)



KAFUNGA
(from Buvuma)

The others are the same as in the illustration above.