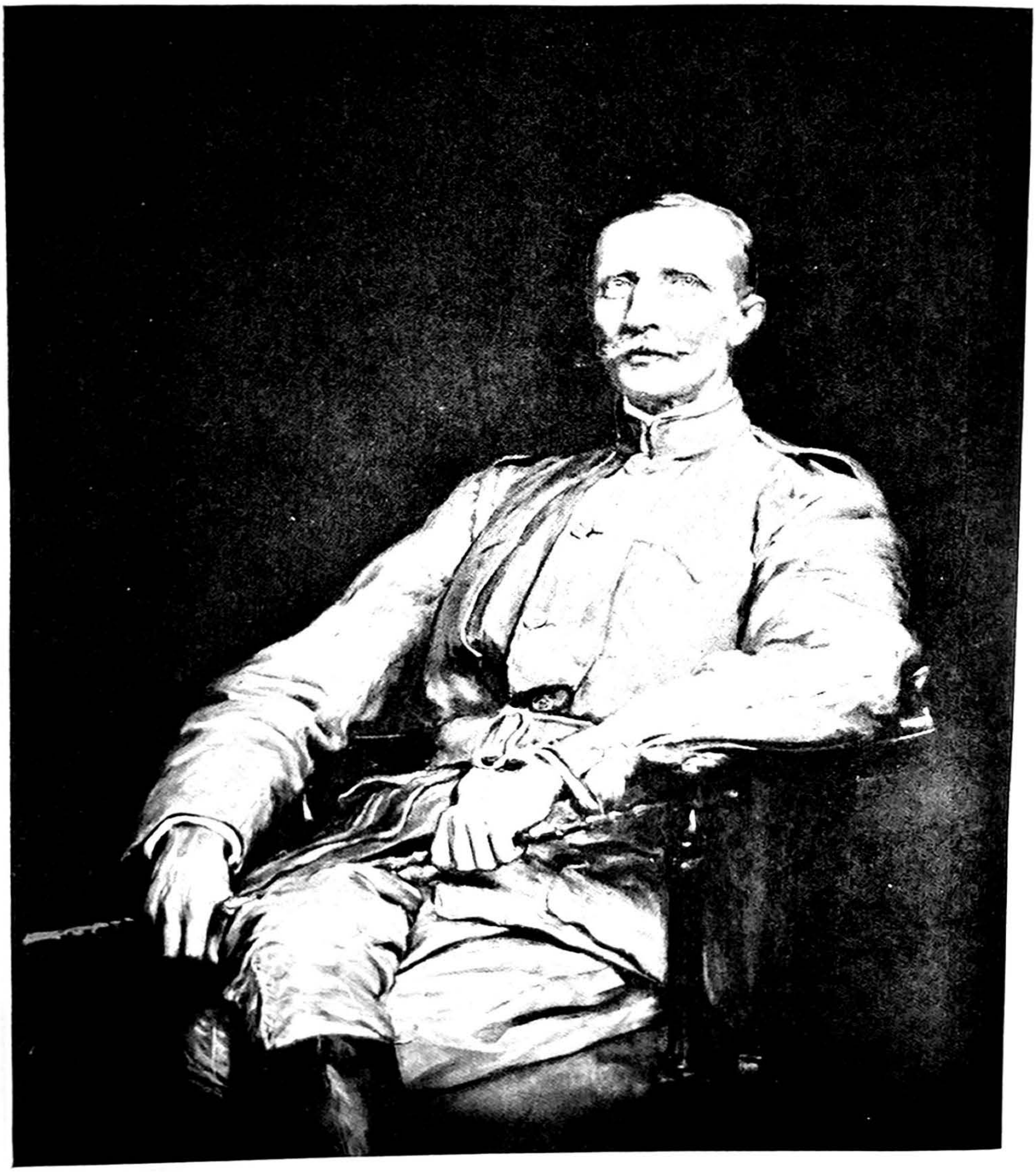

THE RT. HON. SIR GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE, P.C., K.C.M.G.

From the portrait by Herkomer (now in the National Portrait Gallery) presented by the Shareholders of the Royal Niger Company to the Founder of Nigeria, 1899

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SIR GEORGE GOLDIE

FOUNDER OF NIGERIA

A MEMOIR
BY
DOROTHY WELLESLEY,
Duchess of Wellington

WITH A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION BY
STEPHEN GWYNN

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1934

FOREWORD

I HAVE undertaken this sketch of Sir George Goldie because I feel strongly that some attempt should be made to save from oblivion the memory of the Founder of Nigeria. In doing so I am glad to know that I have the support of many who worked with him and appreciated him.

There are three methods of writing a book about Sir George Goldie. The first is the traditional method, and in most people's opinion the most satisfactory one. This is represented by the two-volume biography, the author of which, fully armed, and in sole possession of the facts, deals out to the public just so much as he judges it fit to be told. In dealing with the work and life of a man such as Sir George Goldie, the task would be a vast one, and altogether beyond my powers. It would entail a detailed account of his work and his adventures in Africa, on the Continent and at home. It would necessitate the help of the Colonial Office, and permission to sift all official documents relating to

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the question. I hope that someone else will one day undertake this work, but I do not feel qualified to embark upon it myself. Moreover such works tend to be unenlivening, and, most important of all, Sir George Goldie would not come to life. He would take his place among the national monuments beloved of Victorian biographers; he would become one of the gentlemen in frock-coats, or knee-breeches, who stand about on pedestals near Westminster Abbey. This would be, for him, highly unsuitable. We should learn little or nothing about the human being who won Nigeria for the Empire. In this instance the human being concerned was not only a great man, but a creature peculiarly interesting, eccentric and lovable. Goldie is interesting, in fact, not only, nor even chiefly, on account of his work for his country, but on account of his strange personality.

The second method would be in my opinion equally unsatisfactory, and most distasteful to me. This would consist of a voluminous collection of letters, sayings, anecdotes, raked together from different sources into a single volume. This kind of book makes neither good portraiture nor good literature.

I have chosen a third method. An opportunity recently arose of supplementing my own memories, written in 1929, with the story of the making of Nigeria and of Sir George Goldie's part in it. Mr. Stephen Gwynn, who wrote the life of Sir George Goldie's friend and sympathiser, Mary Kingsley, and who is intimately acquainted with West African history, has kindly undertaken to contribute the necessary background of fact, without which my portrait of the man might have been unconvincing. For this purpose I placed at his disposal the material I had already collected from various sources, including the letters lent me by my stepfather, Lord Scarbrough. I am aware that this creates an effect of patchwork; but, by the sense of contrast thus obtained, I hope to present the man to the reader. That he was an elderly man, and I a child, when we first became friends, serves in itself to light up a charming facet of his personality. This memoir might in fact, more properly be called the story of a friendship.

Since Sir George Goldie's death in 1925 I have realised that his wish to remain unrecognised amounted almost to mania. I have expected to see starting out from some publisher's announcement:

"The Life of Sir George Goldie, Founder of Nigeria." The present year, the centenary of the emancipation of slaves throughout the British dominions, might, I thought, bring forth some account of the man who in 1897 proclaimed the abolition of slavery throughout the territories of the Niger Company, and who so passionately maintained that no progress was possible in Africa until the slave trade had been suppressed. Yet nothing of the kind has appeared. He seems to have passed into the silence that he wished for. Is it right to break this silence? Knowing him as I did, frankly I scarcely know. My excuse in doing so is that I am troubled by a sense of injustice. He has never had due recognition.

Sir George Goldie did not choose to write his own life, though he had more to tell us than most men. He often promised to do so when he was old. He had no literary ambition, no desire for popularity, no desire whatever to make money. This promise, then, to write his own life, although often repeated, he never intended to fulfil. No doubt he knew that the promise would take us all in; and it did.

Lord Scarbrough succeeded Sir George Goldie as Chairman of the Niger Company, and held that position for many years. He would seem therefore a most suitable person to write the life, given his great knowledge and admiration of Sir George's work, the long experience he had in working with him, and last, but not least, the friendship which existed between them until the end. I still cherish a hope that my stepfather will do so some day. So far he has only written a brief account for the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

I had hoped that either his son or daughter, or both, would some day write a full account of his life and work. I therefore wrote to Miss Alice Goldie asking her if she had ever entertained the idea. She replied that her father had burnt all his papers immediately before his death, and had also extracted a promise from both herself and her brother, to the effect that neither of them would ever write anything about him, and that they would never assist anyone else to do so, in any way whatsoever. He had added: "All that I wish to be recorded of myself can be read under the articles headed 'Nigeria' and 'Goldie' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. If you break this promise to me, I swear I will rise and haunt you."

It was, then, in some trepidation that I asked Miss

Goldie, and her brother Mr. Valentine Goldie, if they had any objection to my attempting some account of their father. It was obviously impossible, owing to lack of material, to embark on a full personal biography. I obtained their permission to write this sketch, after telling Miss Goldie what an admiration I had felt for her father ever since I was a child.

My thanks are due to Lord Scarbrough for the loan of the letters already mentioned, and to Miss Hilda Matheson, who has helped with the arrangement of the material and, through her connection with African research, has put me in touch with certain expert opinion.

DOROTHY WELLESLEY

1934

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THE MAKING OF NIGERIA

A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

STEPHEN GWYNN

THE fact about Sir George Taubman Goldie which at present has most significance is that he secured for Great Britain and the Dominions a free market among some twenty million people in the most prosperous part of native Africa. But for his vision and energy British commerce would have had to find its way into Nigeria across such barriers as it must surmount in any of the French possessions.

It is perhaps of less general interest that he was the means of delivering twenty millions of people from the curse of slave-raiding. This deliverance would undoubtedly have taken place in any case, as a consequence of European conquest, which, had it not been for Goldie, would have been carried out by France or Germany, or by both. But compared to what happened elsewhere in West Africa during the period between 1880 to 1900, the subjugation of Nigeria was accomplished with singularly little bloodshed and destruction. It was not completed by Goldie, and opinions may differ as to how far his policy and foresight contributed to this result. But three things can be laid down as certain.

Effective occupation was brought about with comparative ease because Great Britain possessed in the navigable Niger a base of operations infinitely superior to those on which France—her great rival—relied during her conquest of the Soudan; and this base was secured to Great Britain by Goldie.

Secondly, resistance among the natives was lessened because they realised that submission did not involve sacrifice of their institutions, and indirect rule, of which Nigeria has become the classic example, was introduced into Nigeria by Goldie.

Thirdly, and chiefly, but for Goldie Great Britain would have been forestalled in Hausaland as she was forestalled in the Niger Bend.

In short the British Empire owes to Sir George Goldie its possession of Hausaland, the Niger Delta, and the navigable waterway reaching five hundred miles inland from the sea to within easy distance of the most populous cities in Negroland.

Goldie conceived his purpose as a private citizen; he pursued it without thought of gain, being already rich; but the object he pursued was trade, not territory. Territory was acquired only as a means of securing trade. In order to achieve his end, he selected means which should give him the greatest measure of freedom; and by force of what he had already accomplished within seven or eight years the Government was persuaded to accord him power to attain much more, not in their service, but as master of an institution which had the right to speak in their name. Not for an instant during his African career was he in Government Service. Always employer, not employed, he even on occasion employed Government officers and troops.

There is no more singular figure of an adventurer in modern times. The adventure had no more thought of personal gain than Scott's expedition to the Antarctic; but it sought a lasting result. Goldie was the adventurer as statesman and as administrator. His ambition was probably for achievement; but it was also to secure the achievement for his country. He saw clearly that the results of English enterprise on the Niger were passing into the hands of rival nations, and he determined to prevent this.

Eighty years before 1877, when Goldie first went to West Africa, the Niger was only a name to European geographers, and wholly inaccessible to European commerce. The existence of a great river in central Africa was indeed known to Herodotus as well as to later geographers; but reports were divided on the simplest of all points, whether it flowed east or west. But one thing Europe knew at least since the beginning of the seventeenth century; it flowed past a great city, Timbuctoo, of whose wealth there were fabulous stories; and this was reported to be only some two months' journey on a route used by traders from the upper waters of the Senegal.

Colbert, Louis XIV's minister, once had projects of opening up a connection; but nothing came of these. The decisive move was made by a group of English gentlemen who in 1788, over a dinner-table, formed themselves into an African Association. At their own cost they despatched one emissary after another, first seeking to make a way from the north across the desert, by the routes of camel-borne trade, and then, when these attempts failed, trying the approach from Senegambia. The fourth explorer, a young Scot, Mungo Park, succeeded in reaching the river, saw one of its important cities, Segou, and was much impressed by the appearance of commerce and industry along its banks. His account was published in 1797 and henceforward the world knew that the Niger flowed east towards Timbuctoo, not west from it. But where the Niger reached the sea was still matter for guessing: Rennell, a leading geographer, held that it never reached the sea at all but was lost by evaporation somewhere in the centre of the continent.

The results obtained whetted appetite, and Sir Joseph Banks, a wealthy man, who himself had accompanied Captain Cook, pushed on the exploration. Other emissaries had been launched while Park was supposed dead; but the others did not come back. In 1806 Park went out again, this time with a Government commission and an expedition of forty Europeans. All but six were dead by the time he had constructed and launched a boat on the Niger; and then he disappeared into the void. Years passed, and at last news came that after navigating downstream more than a thousand miles, he and his were lost in the rapids at Boussa while repelling an attack. The outlet of the Niger was still unknown; and some still believed it to be in the Congo.

When the war with Napoleon was over, the British Government returned to its purpose of establishing trade relations with the cities on the Niger. An expedition was sent up the Congo, which of course achieved no result; three others in succession, or rather the same attempt three times begun, from the Gambia, never reached the Niger. A new Mohammedan power, that of the Fulahs, had come into being, and was determined to bar the way. From 1818 onwards, no attempt at penetration by what may be called Park's route was made by Englishmen. Government had spent, it is said, half a million on their expeditions and had lost a heavy toll of lives. Thenceforward, the task of opening up a way to Timbuctoo was left to France.

But beyond Timbuctoo and the chain of towns west of it lying along the Niger, was another region eastward, of which report reached the African Association through Mohammedan travellers. In 1792 they published the account given by an Arab, Shabeni, who had seen the Empire of "Husa" and had resided two years in its capital which in size exceeded every town known to him except London and Cairo.

One of the instructions given to Mungo Park was that he should explore Timbuctoo, and beyond that if possible establish communication with "Husa." He failed to do either; but what he failed to do was accomplished in 1822 by two other Scots, Clapperton and Oudney, who crossed the desert from Tripoli. They were well received in Kuka, the capital of Bornu, and subsequently in Sokoto and Kano, by Sultan Bello, successor to Othman dan Fodio, founder of the Fulah Empire. Major Denham, an English soldier who had joined their expedition, saw with intense interest a battle in which mail-clad cavalry with lance in rest charged as in the time of the Crusades: what is more, he saw his own side, Bornu, which relied on the presence of a couple of hundred Arabs with guns, defeated by the Fulah cavalry supported by archers.

Denham and Clapperton got safely back to England across the desert; but they did not reach the Niger, nor get any clear account of its course. After their *Travels* had been published, Clapperton went back to carry the work further. This time he entered from the Gulf of Guinea and made first for Boussa, under pretext of seeking news of Park. Three of his European companions died, but the fourth, his servant Richard Lander, accompanied him into Hausaland, where they were again well received; but the Sultan Bello refused to allow them passage through his territory into Bornu, as he was at war with its ruler. In Sokoto Clapperton died, and

Lander, making his way back with his master's papers, conceived the idea of going down the Niger by boat, to determine finally what was still the problem of its ending. He was prevented by the natives from doing this, but did not relinquish the idea: a year later, with a small Government grant, accompanied by his brother, he made his way again from Badagry to Bussa, and, through many difficulties, journeyed by boat down the Niger to one of its many mouths, and got away by an English ship lying in the Brass River.

This was in 1830. In short, the access to the interior of Africa which the Niger offers was not known to Europe till steam was ready to exploit it; and within two years, MacGregor Laird of Liverpool had a steamer on its water, seeking to open up trade—taking Lander in his company. But the natives were unfriendly, as Lander had found them, the climate was disastrous and four-fifths of the Europeans on the expedition died—Lander among them. But MacGregor Laird did not die.

In 1840 the British Government carried out a survey of the river to the point where it ceases to be navigable; and in 1841 a larger expedition, backed by the Prince Consort, set out, but from lack of scientific knowledge again had desperate losses—48 men out of 145 in two months.

Yet at this period England was possessed by a fine crusading spirit against slavery and it was largely in the hope to check the supply at its source that Dr. Richardson headed an expedition in 1849, starting from Tripoli, in which he was assisted by two German scientists, Overweg and Barth. Richardson died, Overweg died, but Barth, an indefatigable worker, remained in Central Africa for five years, exploring Bornu, exploring Hausaland, and even reaching Timbuctoo, where he was received on sufferance, though a Christian.

One Christian before him, Major Lang, had reached that place in 1826 and had sent back letters from it, but had been killed by desert tribes, set on him by Moorish traders. René Caillié, a young Frenchman, passing himself off for a Mohammedan, had reached it a year later, and had got safely through to Morocco—but only by reason of his disguise. Barth was known to be a Christian, though under the protection of a leading Shereef. It is not clear whether he was known here, as he certainly was in Bornu and Hausaland, to be empowered to make treaties with the native rulers and in a sense to represent the English Government.

But nothing resulted for England from Barth's visit to Timbuctoo. He gave details about the Niger from Timbuctoo to Say, a stretch considerably above that described by Lander. But in an earlier part of his travels he arrived at a result of great significance when, setting out from Kuka near Lake Chad he made his way to the Benué, which he rightly guessed to be identical with the river that joins the Niger at Lokojá, and is there called the Tshadda.

The reports of Barth's results which from time to time reached England gave new impetus to MacGregor Laird, and in 1853 he persuaded Government to renew the attempt at opening up the Lower Niger. A specially designed vessel, the *Pleiad,* was built by his brother, Laird of Birkenhead, and in her a dozen Europeans with a crew of sixty-seven Africans spent four months in the river without losing a man, and explored the Tshadda for some distance. As a result, an organised steamboat service to the Niger was started, and Dr. Baikie of the Royal Navy was established as Consul at Lokojá where the two rivers meet. Trading posts were established at points above the Delta, several steamers were put on the river service, and Government made an annual grant, rising to £8000. Even so, Laird lost money, everybody lost money: and the natives of the Delta, who had been used to levy toll on all that came down the river, now attacked Laird's boats. Then in 1861 Laird died; and the spring went out of the enterprise.

Baikie held on. He had created a town at Lokojá, he had made friendly relations with the kings and chiefs among the Niger banks as far as Nupé; and he had not made war. But in 1864 ill-health drove him home. The consular post was maintained till 1868, but then was finally abandoned. Nothing was left to show for all Britain had done on the Niger but a few isolated and unsupported trading posts. And in 1865 the House of Commons had passed its well-known resolution, declaring that all further extension of territory in West Africa, or grant of protection to native tribes, was inexpedient and that the object should be ultimate withdrawal from all settlements except the coasting station at Sierra Leone.

Meantime, the trail which Park blazed in 1796 and again in 1806 was being opened again. Faidherbe, appointed to a post in Senegal in 1852, sent in a scheme which so impressed the Government of the Second Empire that he was put in full charge to acquire the colony of Senegal and in 1860 his task was completed. Already, it will be remembered, French conquest was extending itself in Algeria. Barth at Timbuctoo in 1854 found the Moorish merchants much agitated by news of operations in the north of the Sahara. If they had known, the threat from the west was more formidable.

In 1863 Faidherbe despatched an officer, Lieutenant Mage, to reach the Niger and enter into relations with El-Hadj Omar, who had recently established an empire with Segou for its capital. The Hadji's son, Ahmadou, who shortly succeeded his father as Sultan, detained the mission for a period of two years, but sent them back in 1866 with a treaty of friendship. Meanwhile the members of the Mission had been studying communications, and Faidherbe decided on the creation of a line of posts, linking the waterway of the Senegal to the waterway of the Niger.

In 1865 he was withdrawn to Algeria: and in 1870 came the Franco-Prussian war, which inevitably checked developments. But by 1878 France, eager for some solace to her pride, was disposed to take up colonial enterprise again and Bismarck through policy encouraged these ambitions. The work went ahead, with fierce energy. By 1884 the French had launched a gunboat on the navigable stretch of the Niger which reaches East and then South for a thousand kilometres. But this was only part of a vast design which aimed at linking into one West African empire all France's African possessions, of which the southernmost reached to the right bank of the Congo. Midway between this and Senegal were posts on the Ivory Coast. Nor was even this all. So far back as 1880 Frenchmen planned to link Algeria with what already began to be called the French Soudan.

These visions, in so far as they were known to Englishmen, passed for lunatic speculations. Now that they have been very largely accomplished, with Morocco thrown in, the matter looks different. It is seen that at one point only Great Britain has retained access to the populous, fertile and semi-civilised regions of Central Africa. The Gambia is a tiny patch on the map; Sierra Leone not much bigger; the Gold Coast territories, ample though they are, are still an *enclave* in the French possessions;

and rich territories in the Niger Bend, including at least one important state which definitely desired to be under British rule, have become French. It is true that the purpose of Great Britain's colonies on the West Coast was to secure trade, not territory; and wherever the British flag flew, trade was equally free to all nations. Unfortunately the other Europeans did not reciprocate. Wherever their flags flew, trade was forced by artificial barriers towards their own ports. The inconvenience of this, and the unfairness, were increasingly recognised; but it scarcely occurred to anyone in the latter part of the nineteenth century that Great Britain might one day be short of markets for her manufactures.

Merchants indeed protested; they were resolute men, they stuck doggedly to their trading posts in the Niger Delta even after the British government had withdrawn officially from the river. But they could take no effective action to prevent the Lower Niger from becoming what the Upper Niger was destined rapidly to become—the possession of a European power who would keep trade in her possessions as a monopoly for her own subjects.

Fortunately however for Great Britain, at the very period when France renewed her activity on the Upper River, a man was found who could organise the unprotected British merchants for effective action which he would direct. The clearest account is given by Mary Kingsley in her short *Story of West Africa*; and the close though independent alliance between her and the man of whom she writes makes it certain that her account is exact:

> "Sir" [he was then Mr.] "George Goldie came upon the scene of Niger affairs in 1877, when British enterprise was in a diffused state, and foreign statesmanship was preparing to take steps to secure the region. He had not had the advantage of being brought up in the West African school, but he had a knowledge of African conditions acquired in Upper Egypt, and he had an interest in West Africa that arose from two things. Firstly, he had while in the Nile region contracted a desire to know the still little-known region between the Upper Nile and the Niger; secondly, certain members of his family had been investing money in one of the English trading companies in the Lower Niger. This company, in 1877, was financially in a low state, and Sir George Goldie,

thinking to combine two laudable undertakings—to see after the company's affairs and then to cross Africa from the Niger to the Nile—went out to the Niger accompanied by his brother. This scheme was not completely carried through, for his companion became so ill with fever after reaching Nupé that the trans-African part of it failed. Sir George Goldie returned with his brother to England; but he had seen on that 1877 voyage enough of the Niger to realise the worth of it to Britain and the necessity of securing it for her.

"Whenever an idea of this kind gets into the head of one of that particular kind of Englishman he sets about carrying the thing out; and, according to the amount of statesmanship he has in addition to his other abilities, he succeeds. Sir George Goldie commenced by inaugurating the principle of amalgamation among the trading firms already working in the Niger, and in carrying this important thing through he was aided by Mr. James Pinnock, whose great interests and still greater local knowledge were very valuable, and also by Captain Croft, Mr. David Macintosh, Mr. Edgar, Messrs. Miller Brothers, and others who knew the Niger and realised its importance. This group of Englishmen Sir George Goldie welded into the National African Company."

As soon as the French realised what was being attempted by private venture on the Niger, French enterprise was pushed in there also, but with Government financial support. Goldie also wanted, necessarily, to involve his Government, for it was manifest that private concerns could not stand against the enterprise of a great European power; but the support he wanted was not financial. He sought to persuade Great Britain to revive the method of extending influence by delegating certain rights to a chartered company; and at first he failed. The story was outlined by himself, after his fight was over, in an interview given to Reuter's Agency on July 5th, 1899.

"At the close of 1877, when the idea of making Nigeria British was first conceived, there was no foreigner, whether trader, soldier, missionary or traveller, in the entire basins of the Niger and Lake Chad, between the French colony of Senegal on the extreme west of Africa and the valley of the Nile on the extreme east, or between the seaboard factories on the Gulf of Guinea to the south and the Algerian and Tunisian frontiers on the north. But it took until July 1879 to amalgamate British Nigerian interests, and then two years had to be allowed to prove the value of Niger commerce before attempting to float a public company with a capital of a million sterling, with the object of obtaining a charter of government.

"For I must tell you that I made the first application for a charter in 1881, when I found that a large capital would be an essential preliminary to obtaining it. When in consequence the National African Company was launched in July 1882, we had already completed the negotiations with the Paris Society for amalgamating with us under the British flag, another essential preliminary to the issue of a charter; but meanwhile M. Gambetta pushed into the Lower Niger a Marseilles Society with a large capital, so that when I went over to Paris with the deeds for signature, I was met by a refusal at the last moment; as the Paris people pointed out that they would be sacrificing their flag to no purpose, seeing that another French Society was in the field. This made the issue of a charter impossible for the time.

"When some two years later, we had at last cleared the way for a charter by taking over both the French Societies, Germany, to the surprise of the world, suddenly launched out as a colonising Power, and summoned the West African Conference in Berlin, thus commencing the real scramble for Africa. We were then told that a charter could not be granted, and we had to wait a year for it.

"The only stroke of fortune that we have had throughout was the reaction in France in 1884 against colonial enterprises, in consequence of those disasters in Tonking, to which M. Jules Ferry, the great Colonial Minister, owed his downfall and the nickname of 'Le Tonkinois.' But for this reaction in France, which lasted until the Paris Exhibition of 1889, and which she has long and rightly deplored, we might have been pushed out of Nigeria. If, apart from this, we had had a little less ill luck throughout, we should have extended British influence over double our present area, and should, in extent of territory, have rivalled British India.

"Not that the loss is very greatly to be regretted, for England has, in Nigeria, even as now limited, the most populous and valuable area of tropical Africa. She may well rest and be thankful. On the ratification last month of the Anglo-French Convention, her work of political expansion in those regions terminated, and the ground became clear for the coming work of commercial and industrial development."

That is the end of his answer to the interviewer's question, "Have you carried out all that you originally intended?" The beginning of the answer was: "By no means! At thirty, one's dreams are in excess of the capacity of execution."

It is interesting to speculate what the dreams were then. Goldie, it has been seen, came from the Upper Nile; that was his first contact with Africa. His first intention on coming to West Africa was to traverse the Soudan from west to east; and certainly he was always impressed by "the essential homogeneity of this great belt of Africa which is called the Soudan—extending from Upper Guinea to the Sahara and from Senegambia to the Red Sea." These are his own words.

My belief is that he conceived an African dominion stretching from the Niger to the Nile and beyond that to the Indian Ocean. Certainly Mary Kingsley did: "Never now shall Nigeria and Uganda join hands," she wrote to me when the Convention of

June 1898 had given France the east shore of Lake Tchad, and so a continuous way from her hinterland in Congo to the Sahara. Her aspirations are more than likely to have been shaped by the man whom in African politics she regarded as her master.

This belief is strengthened by the memory of a talk with Sir George Goldie about the same period, when he consented to see me, not as an interviewer but as a seeker after knowledge. I raised the question of the Cape to Cairo Railway, then talked of with such passion. He did not think it corresponded to natural logic. "Trade," he said, "seeks the sea by the shortest route." The axiomatic utterance was characteristic of a mind whose conclusions were thought out with singular completeness. He was talking by this time naturally, having dropped the somewhat domineering tone with which he opened. But the man's intellect was of a kind born to dominate and impress. Apart from this one phrase, there remained clear in my mind from the interview a perception that in Africa the natural lines of intercourse ran across, not lengthwise. Moreover, essentially, Africa, taken crosswise over its greatest width was homogeneous: along its length, heterogeneous to the utmost. For Central Africa, trade's shortest route to the sea had been by camel across the desert to the Mediterranean; Goldie proposed to make it run by road and river to the Atlantic.

There is, however, the less reason for me to seek to give my version of his views, because in that conversation he referred me to one document for an exposition of them — the introduction to Lieutenant Vandeleur's *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger*. "I have more than one man's work to do," he said, "but I gave eight hours to dictating that paper. That will tell you if I attached importance to it."

For that reason, the document is printed as an Appendix to this volume.

But setting aside this question of what Goldie projected, it is necessary to consider what he had to contend against. There was first the ardent energy of France; and next, what followed as a consequence from it, Germany's growing sense that Africa was worth annexing. Lastly and chiefly, there was the indifference of the British Government. Lord Lugard writes in his book, *The Dual Mandate*: "The rulers of Great Britain were strongly opposed to the extension of our territory in Africa, but the popular demand left the Foreign Office no alternative."

That is an accurate statement as concerns South Africa; it may be true also of East Africa; but remembering the period from 1895 to 1900 when the scramble was at its hottest, I cannot recall any sign of popular enthusiasm for annexations in West Africa. The Niger Company had to fight its own fight unsupported, and the Niger Company was, in the words of its chairman, Lord Scarbrough, "a one-man show."[1]

The degree of support which Goldie got from the British Government may be illustrated by a few quotations from the *Memoirs* of Sir Charles Dilke, then a member of Mr. Gladstone's administration. The first is not strictly relevant, as it concerns an offer of protectorate over Zanzibar. Dilke notes:

"On December 14th (1884) Mr. Gladstone broke out against the proposed annexation in what is now called the Kilimanjaro district. He wrote: 'Terribly have I been puzzled and perplexed on finding a group of the soberest men among us to have concocted a scheme such as that touching the mountain country behind Zanzibar with an unrememberable name. There *must* somewhere or other be reasons for it which have not come before me.' "

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[1] Private letter to his stepdaughter, Lady Gerald Wellesley.

In these matters there was not a penny to choose between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Gladstone—except indeed that Lord Salisbury would have had less faith in the existence of reasons. But to come to West Africa. In January 1882 King Bell and King Akua of the Cameroon River wrote to Mr. Gladstone: "As we heard here that you are the chief man in the House of Commons, so we write to tell you that we want to be under Her Majesty's control." Dilke was for accepting, "holding that this spot was after all the best on the West Coast of Africa and the only one where a health station could be established." But the Colonial Office boggled, and while discussion went on "the Germans suddenly interfered, snapped it up, and made it a new colony." Chamberlain wrote to the other Radical Imperialist in 1884:

> "The Cameroons! it is enough to make one sick. As you say, we decided to assume the protectorate eighteen months ago and I thought it was all settled. If the Board of Trade or Local Government Board managed their business after the

fashion of the Foreign Office, you and I would deserve to be hung."

The next thing that happened was that Germany claimed to turn her holding in the Cameroons into a Protectorate over the Niger Delta which would have given her command of the navigable river. While the French companies existed in competition with Goldie's organisation, an effective reply to this proposal was difficult; but most persuasive money arguments prevailed, and at the eleventh hour Goldie was able to come before the Berlin Conference and prove that no flag but the British flew in the Lower Niger.

At this Conference summoned by Bismarck to decide European interests in West Africa (and incidentally to found the Congo Free State), it was settled as a compromise that the Niger waterway should be free to vessels of all nations. But when a year after the Conference, Goldie (now Sir George) induced the Government to revive an abandoned practice and grant his company a Charter, the Royal Niger Company acquired the right to make treaties with native rulers; to raise a force in support of its authority; and in doing these things, to act as the representative of the British Government. It followed, according to the British view, that the control of the admittedly international way was now vested in the Company: that no armed vessels but theirs should be allowed in it; and that the treaty-making power might be used to secure exclusive landing facilities along the banks.

On this construction of the matter, Goldie acted; but not unnaturally the rival powers did not willingly accept his interpretation; and serious trouble arose.

Still he had his Charter. He had chosen his instrument. "I attribute the success of the Company," he told Reuter's representative, "chiefly to our following a definite plan from the commencement instead of growing up by accident. I do not mean that we have not modified the details of that plan under stress of circumstances; but in the main the policy conceded on the Niger in 1877 has been maintained to this day and has been played out like a game of chess."

For thirteen years he had exercised, in his own words, "almost uncontrolled powers," unaffected by changes of Government, until 1894, when Mr. Chamberlain's assumption of the Colonial Office brought him a powerful ally. But essentially, he was free of the Crown Colony system which even under Mr. Chamberlain in one case (the Sierra Leone hut-tax) produced disastrous results. He was at liberty to shape his own policy for dealing with the natives; and to quote Lord Lugard in *The Dual Mandate*: "The Niger Company may honourably claim that, unlike the Congo State of those days, the natives were not subjected to any form of forced labour, or even to any direct tax, while the introduction of spirits in the North, from which a large revenue would have accrued, was prohibited. The right of the native to his land and produce was not interfered with. He received a fair price, albeit his market was practically limited to the company's depôts."

Mary Kingsley puts her view with more enthusiasm, but with hardly less authority:

> "The Royal Niger Company shows how great England can be when she is incarnate in a great man, for the Royal Niger Company is so far Sir George Taubman Goldie. The Company has in a few years and during the period of the hottest French enterprise, acquired a territory in West

Africa immensely greater than the territory acquired during centuries under the Crown Colony system; it has also fought its necessary wars with energy and despatch, and no call upon Imperial resources: it has not only paid its way, but paid its shareholders their 6 per cent, and its bitterest enemies say darkly, far more. I know from my knowledge of West Africa that this can only have been effected by its wise native policy. I know that this policy owes its wisdom and its success to one man, Sir George Taubman Goldie, a man who, had he been under the Crown Colony system, could have done no more than other men have done who have been Governors under it. . . . For nearly twenty years the natives under the Royal Niger Company have had the firm, wise sympathetic friendship of a great Englishman, who undertsood them and knew them personally. It is the continuous influence of one great Englishman, unhampered by non-expert control, that has caused England's exceedingly strange success in the Niger."

Goldie had the name of being a hard man to serve, and there was no uncertainty about his determination to dominate those who came into contact with him, for any purpose connected with his work. But it is right to take into account the memory he left with one who knew him from the very start of his Company, and who recorded it when Goldie was in his grave. Mr. Joseph Trigge gives an account, opening with their first meeting:[1]

"On Friday, January 3, 1880, Sir George himself interviewed the first office-boy. Sir George was a fair blue-eyed man, with piercing eyes, which seemed to bore holes into one. That piercing glance was characteristic of him to the end of his life. That first office-boy applicant, let it be said, was myself.

"After ascertaining from me all the essential particulars of my school work" (continued Mr. Trigge), "and inquiring if I could speak and write French—I could not—he remarked to me, 'We want a boy with his head screwed on right!' When I left his room I certainly did not realise what a lucky boy I was. I entered the service of the Company on January 6, 1880. Of the directors and employees with him on that day, both in this country and in Nigeria, only about three survive. The record of his work is public property, and requires no comment from me, but I may say that those who were associated with him had to work early and late, in season and out of season. For a period of 20 years Sir George was obsessed with the value of Nigeria to the Empire. To be in his service was to realise you were with a masterful man, whose instructions had to be obeyed. Yet one learned to love him; some to fear him also.

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[1] West Africa, August 29th, 1925.

"Those who did not carry out his instructions, or showed slackness, were severely dealt with. To give an instance of his insistence on the carrying out of his instructions, in detail—in the early days of the company, at 34 Ludgate Hill, a heavy cask arrived at the entrance of the building. I was ordered to see that it was brought up to the first floor. I told him it could not be done. His reply was, 'Don't tell me that anything cannot be done. Go and do it!' I learnt my lesson.

"Sir George, when he gave a man any special work to do, would close the door on him, and tell him privately why he wanted it done. This was to get the man personally interested. Not only did he see that his orders were carried out, but he grasped every detail of the work himself. Naturally, in a few years, those associated with him in administrative work and Nigeria, and at London headquarters, began to realise that they were fellow-Empire-builders with him.

"Before attending the Berlin Conference, Sir George impressed upon me that the gin trade of West Africa, then an important one, would never bring profit. Then I could not understand him, but I have long since proved to my own satisfaction how right he was in his conclusion. In looking back it is astonishing to realise the little encouragement given to his scheme by the Government, prior to the issue of the Charter. One could almost say he forced the hands of the authorities. More astonishing still was the opposition after the issue of the Charter, shown by some of the merchants trading in the Niger Coast Protectorate at the time. Had they taken a broader view I think his full scheme for acquiring Nigeria for the Empire would have materialised. When the Brass raid on Akassa, in January 1895, had no effect on the trade of the company, this was proof of the hold the company had obtained in Nigeria. I am probably one of the few men who conscientiously believe it would have been better for Nigeria if the Charter had not been revoked until later. Sir George was very far-seeing. No one doubts that. The enormous development taking place in the 25 years since the revocation of the Charter was foreseen by him. He was always impressing on those working with him the possibilities for the development of cattle, cotton, oilseeds, minerals, and other industries. It must not be overlooked, either, that this vast area was obtained for Great Britain almost without cost. During the 20 years that Sir George dominated every movement, he had round him only a very small, though devoted, staff.

"The company was a paying proposition from first to last, and when the Charter was surrendered, and Sir George relinquished his work, I think I can truthfully say that the whole staff, here and abroad, would have given the first consideration to following him anywhere, in any work he cared to undertake. For several years after Sir George left the Niger Company, his spirit dominated the staff, in Nigeria, London and Liverpool, and there remained the wonderful *esprit-de-corps*; and the natives talked—and still talk of 'the Company.'

"My remarks will doubtless be read by many associated with Nigeria during the 20 years Sir George controlled, and for several years subsequent thereto, and who look upon those years as happy ones. I am not called upon to speak about his useful work in later years, but many of us feel that his services for the Empire were not adequately rewarded. His life might be expressed by the phrase 'This thing I do, without consideration of personal interest.'

"As he lived, so he died—and he was laid to rest very quietly. It must be a comfort to his family to know that he was the Founder of Nigeria, and did a wonderful work for the Empire, and to have the knowledge that he was the man born to benefit millions, now our people, in Nigeria."

One invariable mark of a great administrator is the power to select the right agents, and for carrying out the work of establishing relations with native states, Goldie relied chiefly on a most remarkable explorer, Joseph Thomson—one of the long line of Scots who from Mungo Park onwards played a great part in the opening of Central Africa. Before the Charter was secured, and while the Berlin Conference was still at work, Goldie had secured Thomson, just back from a remarkable journey through Masailand. By the end of 1884 Thomson was already launched into Hausaland, where his mission was to enter into direct relations on behalf of the Company with the Sultans of Sokoto and Gandú. When Othman dan Fodio died in 1817, the great Fulah empire which he had created was divided between his sons Bello and Abd Allahi. Bello, the remarkable monarch whom Clapperton found ruling in Sokoto, received the eastern part of the dominion, including the great centres of Katsena and Kano; and to this there was attached at least a theoretical suzerainty over the whole. But the western provinces, lying along the Niger with Gando for their capital, fell to Abd Allahi and his successor ruled them.

Going up the Niger in March by boat to Rabba, Thomson struck inland to Sokoto, thence to the other important town Wornu, and finally to Kano. By September he was back in London having made treaties with three great potentates, which, in the words of Captain Vanderleur, practically placed the dual Fulah empires under a British Protectorate and gave all commercial privileges to the National African Company. There can be no doubt that this crowning achievement determined the grant of the Charter in the following year—though even then the British Government was very slow to delegate so much power or to revive the practice of granting charters.

It has always been recognised that Thomson's service in this brief period of his employment was decisive for the fortunes of the Company and indeed for Britain's interests in Central Africa. Probably no other man living could have done the work; and Goldie's choice of an exceptional agent was more than justified.

The unfriendly relations with Liverpool of which Mr. Trigge speaks were matters of general knowledge, and Lord Lugard in his account of the Company's origin makes frank reference to them:

> "The Royal Niger Company was conducted on business lines as an amalgamation of various existing commercial enterprises already on a lucrative basis. From the outset it incurred the bitter hostility of the Liverpool merchants who complained that though the Charter conferred no monopolistic rights, these had in practice been created. The Company, while denying the charge, held that a measure of exclusive privilege was necessary to enable them to meet the cost of

administration which their rivals in trade had not to incur."

Mary Kingsley, Goldie's most ardent admirer, criticising the institution of Chartered Companies in principle and in detail, without condemning the Niger Company, observes that it was indeed too much inclined "to keep its ain guts for its ain seamews." Her relations were much closer with Liverpool merchants, ship captains and local traders up and down the coast, than with the Company as a company. But in Goldie she saw a statesman and administrator defending the interests of England against two great European powers, and used all her influence to guard him against attacks from his own side while the international contest raged. In her own fashion she described the difficulties to her friend Mr. Edward Clodd, in whose Memoirs the letter will be found:

> "Liverpool, as I daresay you know, hates the Royal Niger Company like the devil. The R.N.C. has got its back against a door, fighting France. I, from my statements on this liquor traffic, Liverpool's back-bone, have a certain influence with L., and that influence I threw into getting the

Liverpool merchants not to harry the Company while it was in this trade row. I had succeeded beautifully, Liverpool was behaving like ten saints rolled into one, when down in the middle of it comes Major Lugard's article, praising the Company up to the skies for its anti-liquor policy —pitching into me and Liverpool right and left. My flock broke away at this and I have had a pretty scratching time of it, getting them into the fold again, and have only done it by saying I will answer Lugard. This I have only just got through and sent it to the printer. It is fire and brimstone for me when it comes out, and all Liverpool can do is to put up a memorial window to me. It would be a friendly act to think out a suitable design. I fear Liverpool in its devotion to me might select a West African ju-ju hung round with square faced bottles."

It is not often realised how formidable was the opposition which Goldie had to face, while behind him in his own camp were these elements of dissent. The first threat came from the Germans. French commercial interests on the Lower Niger had been bought out, their shareholders were even included in the Company; French military enterprise was fully occupied farther to the north and had not yet reached within striking distance of anything claimed by the British. But no less a man than Bismarck felt that he had been worsted, and he had no disposition to sit down under defeat. He had now, by the negligence of the British Government, a base at the Cameroon alongside the Niger mouths; he had secured another in Togoland on the other side of the Delta; and in 1885 a newly founded German Colonial Society sent out Herr von Flegel, who already knew the country, to make treaties. Flegel died, but a later emissary, Hoenigsberg, who quite plainly said that his purpose was "to burst up the Charter," moved about in the Company's occupied territory, stirring up trouble. Goldie did not hesitate to have him arrested, tried by the Company's Supreme Court, and on its finding deported. This was a bold challenge to the most powerful man in Europe, and Bismarck sent out his nephew Von Puttkämer to report, demanded heavy damages from the Company, and meantime kept up pressure on Lord Salisbury's Government to force a new division of "spheres of influence," by which the Company would have lost a third part of their territory.

A change of attitude came with Bismarck's fall in March 1890: the subsequent compact by which Heligoland was ceded to Germany brought a general temper of negotiation; frontiers were delimited in Togoland; and on the Cameroon side, Goldie initiated negotiations by which he succeeded in using Germany as a buffer against the growing menace of France.

For the scheme of a French empire reaching from the Congo to the Mediterranean had now full possession of the French Colonial party, and French expeditions were pushing up from the Congo to Lake Tchad. Any European power that held Lake Tchad would hold Bornu; and if France held Bornu, the whole empire of Sokoto would lie open to French enterprise on the east of it and French enterprise on the west.

Goldie conceived the idea of conceding to Germany a long narrow triangle of hinterland extending to Lake Tchad which would interpose itself between French action and those territories to which the Company attached importance. This was done in 1893, and on that side he could feel secure against French aggression.

But only on that side. In 1890 an Anglo-French agreement had delimited "spheres of influence"; and all Hausaland up to a line from Say on the Niger to Barrua on Lake Tchad was earmarked for Britain. Yet in 1890 Colonel Monteil starting from the Upper Niger made a memorable journey with a very small armed expedition as far as Kano and Sokoto and was believed to have sought to enter into treaty relations with these States.

This was perhaps only a symptom. But in 1890 France occupied the Coast of Dahomey. Goldie, at once on the alert, wrote to Lord Scarbrough (11th June 1890):

> "She seems *now* not to mean to occupy Dahomey bodily. One great reason that we have for reticence about ourselves (for which we have been censured) is that I hold that a man going to steal a march on his neighbour ought not to blow trumpets to show how fast he is advancing. Before France is alive to the work we are doing, that work will be done—securely."

In 1892 French troops conquered Dahomey after fierce fighting. This brought France into close proximity to the navigable Lower Niger, and M.

Ballot, sent out as Governor of Dahomey in 1894, made the pace furiously.

So far back as 1890, Lieut. Mizon, going up the Niger with a steam-launch came into collision with the Company's officials. He claimed to be merely on a journey of exploration up the Benué; they accused him of distributing arms to the natives. The incident was settled, not without friction and ill-feeling; and causes of quarrel developed fast, between the aggressive power, and England which preferred to remain stationary on the coast—which indeed still wanted to avoid extensions of territory.

France had now three bases on the Atlantic within striking distance of the Niger. Senegal was her chief line of penetration; and along this at the beginning of 1894 she reached Timbuctoo, mastered it by a *coup de main* with a tiny force which then met disaster; but the situation was rapidly restored by a soldier named Joffre—then first widely known.

From her position on the Senegal and Niger France was busy reducing the countries included within the Niger bend, and also in warring against the determined resistance of Samory, a negro whose genius for war had put him at the head of a little empire. These expeditions, working southwards behind the British sphere of Sierra Leone, co-operated with others from the Ivory Coast, lying between that possession and the British Gold Coast. Now from 1894 onwards, M. Ballot pushed from the new base at Dahomey new expeditions into the great territory comprised between the Niger and the Atlantic, in which the British flag had scarcely been seen.

But it had become necessary to show it there: if only because Samory's marauding Sofas began to enter spheres marked as British by agreements made in London and Paris. In 1893 a British force going up to deal with one of these bands actually came into collision with a French party on the same quest. The French attacked the British camp, believing it to be that of Sofas; their officer lived only long enough to explain the tragic mistake. A couple of years later the hinterland was delimited by a surveyed frontier, and France now got the junction of Senegal and the Ivory Coast recognised and complete.

But it was in and from Dahomey that the serious trouble arose, because only from the Niger Company's bases was British power effectively extended into the interior: and because only from Dahomey could Britain's hold on the Lower Niger be attacked. In 1894 Commandant Toutée started on a voyage, professedly of private exploration, and applied to the Niger Company for leave of passage; but as he was taking with him a considerable armed force, the request was refused. Toutée then, starting from Porto Novo in Dahomey, marched north-west till he struck the Niger some distance below Bussa. Here he established a camp and fortified a position which he called Fort d'Arenberg, naming it after a well-known leader of the Colonial party. From this point there was navigation to the sea, though not with safety: no vessel was then insured beyond Jebba, some thirty miles further down. This point was in the territory of Borgu, a large pagan state on the right bank of the Niger whose inhabitants had never been subjugated by the Fulahs.

Meantime Commandant Decoeur at the head of a strong force had marched due north from Dahomey, aiming to make a treaty with Gurma, a country lying along the Niger above Borgu. Having secured this, which would cut the German hinterland of Togo off from the Niger, he could make a treaty with the King of Nikki which the French represented as the capital of Borgu.[1]

Now the Niger Company claimed both these countries, Gurma and Borgu: Gurma on the ground that it was a province of Gando, with which state they had a treaty, and that Gando was a fief of Sokoto, and by the convention of 1890 the Company had rights over all appanages of Sokoto. Borgu they claimed in right of a treaty with the King of Bussa who represented himself as sovereign of Borgu; and to him they had paid a stipend since 1890.

However the Company desired if possible to anticipate Decoeur at Nikki, and Captain Lugard, already distinguished in Africa, had been sent out to act for them, at Goldie's request. Hurrying by water to Jebba, Lugard succeeded in reaching Nikki first and got his treaty, five days before the French arrived. But this whole region was now full of expeditions. M. Ballot sent out two others; the Germans also had one: and since each treaty was accompanied by a gift, it is not surprising that one ruler signed three in six months.

[1] This account is abridged from "The Struggle for Borgu," published in *Blackwood*, March, 1899. It is now permissible to say that the account was based on material furnished by Major Lugard (as he then was) and revised by him.

The French, having reduced the status of treaty right to a farce, now began to insist that a claim should rest only on "effective occupation."

Meanwhile, however, the Niger Company had complained of Captain Toutée's act of aggression; Lord Rosebery had insisted that there must be evacuation, which followed, and Fort d'Arenberg became Fort Goldie. Further, it was notified to France that Bussa was under British protection and the fact was published in the *London Gazette* of June 1895. None the less an expedition under Lieutenant Bretonnet, leaving Dahomey, reached the Niger in Gurma, above Bussa, which town he entered at the head of his force on February 5th, 1897. This was no less than an act of war: and at that moment Sir George Goldie had within a week's march of Bussa a fully equipped force which had just achieved notable victory against overwhelming numbers. The Niger Company could instantly have repelled the aggression; but their hands were tied by a pledge to Lord Salisbury's Government, which must be explained.

The Fulah state which lay nearest to the Company's military headquarters at Lokojá was that of

Nupé, whose power extended to both banks of the Niger at the head of the navigable water; and its ruler, whose capital was at Bida, levied heavy toll on all commerce between the Niger and the central marts of the Sudan. When Joseph Thomson made his journey to Sokoto and Gando in 1885, the Emir of Bida did his utmost to prevent his passage, not desiring the establishment of direct relations between the Company and these States.

The Fulah rule in this province was at its worst. Clapperton in 1827 had described Nupé as full of well-inhabited towns and prosperous people: Thomson saw ruin everywhere—in the sharpest contrast to what he met at Sokoto, where he said "you may travel as safely as in Great Britain." In Nupé the rule was predatory and slave-raiding, and Goldie, using the rights given him by the Charter, warned the Emir that raiding expeditions must not cross the Niger.

But in May 1896 the Emir of Bida sent a force of some 6000 men to the west bank. Several motives prompted Goldie to treat this challenge as a summons to war.

There was the European aspect. France and Germany were traversing the whole country west of the Niger with military expeditions, and France at least had filled West Africa with a dread of French arms. England remained almost entirely inactive, and the effect of this comparison must be felt through the whole Sudan. There was further the new French claim that a "sphere of influence" must be maintained by effective occupation.

Also, there was the strategic consideration. The Emir had divided his very formidable forces: Goldie saw his way to attack them separately and prevent mutual support. He went to the Home Government with his plans and applied for the services of some officers to reinforce those already employed with the Niger Constabulary. This was granted: but since the French, learning of the proposed force, represented that the Company would use it to go in and occupy Nikki, whose allegiance was still disputed, Lord Salisbury exacted a pledge that Goldie would not undertake any operation North of Jebba, which is the head of the navigable Niger. Nobody at that moment believed that a raid upon Bussa would be contemplated; but Bussa also lies north of Jebba.

Goldie was able to devote his energy to the preparation of a campaign and equipment of a force—

in which machine guns must play a great part. Mr. Trigge says (in the interview published by *West Africa* after Goldie's death):

> "One point will illustrate his thoroughness. An empty room was taken in Norfolk Street, Strand, and in it was put a Gatling gun (for use of course in Nigeria). Sir George if he had a minute to spare would work and sight the gun where he had a good view across the Thames."

The force on which he had to rely numbered about 1000, and of them a great part must be left to garrison forts or guard the long line of communications. It was drawn from races who for half a century had been in abject fear of the Fulahs; and it had been only a very few years in existence. A letter from Goldie to Lord Scarbrough in June 1890 expresses some apprehensions:

> "As to Fanties fighting, I have always told Sauley that they fought well under David McIntosh—at Zhibu (on the Benué) and elsewhere—and it depends entirely how they are led. Of course, I would far rather have Sikhs, or Nubian Soudanese, but there are difficulties to be overcome before we can get either of these.

"We have had a long struggle to overcome these difficulties; but I cannot say we have advanced much.

"Yet till we have better soldiers we cannot conquer and hold the Hausa territories."

When the moment came for action, he himself went out to take charge, though the military command was left to Major Arnold, chief of the Niger Constabulary. Letters to Lord Scarbrough show that he apprehended difficulties, as some of the officers seconded for service might have competing claims; later ones show that he had no need to fear. It appears also that news had reached him that a further force had crossed the Niger, which suggested a change of plan. For the strategy of the expedition was his; tactics were left to the commander.

HOTEL METROPOLE
LAS PALMAS
GRAND CANARY
11 *Decr.* 1896

MY DEAR SCARBROUGH,

We had very heavy weather soon after starting down to the latitude of Gibraltar—three boats smashed, but nothing of importance carried away.

After that a strong swell to within a day or so of here. I fear the Batanga will be late, but I am not sorry for two days ashore at quiet work with my crammed and, as yet disorderly, dispatch box, at which Brett and Carden were working till late the night before I left, shoving everything in pell mell, as typed. I shall make Capt. John Murray hurry up between here and the Forçados. My official letter to Surrey House, which will be at once sent to you will explain the new development. I tell you *privately* that if Abu Bokhari has brought over an additional large force, and left Bida undefended, I MAY not be able to resist the temptation of destroying that nest of pirates first, and trust to the consequent revolution facilitating my task on the south west side. *Dios sabe*. I don't, yet.

SIERRA LEONE
S.S. *Batanga*
20 *Decr*. 1896

DEAR SCARBROUGH,

As I have plenty of preparatory work on board, I will ask you to show this letter to Mr. Miller and Mr. Croft. I have duly received the cablegram "Tabards Liberty Akassa" for which I am thankful and I am sending a cablegram

"Tabards," which will inform you all that I am here and well. I may add "in excellent spirits"—for the moderate work I am doing, and the many hours of pacing the deck and reading, give me a much needed holiday after the constant *rush* of the last eight months. We shall be a good deal behind time leaving here (owing to the terrific gales north of Canary) but Captain John Murray—who was very pleased at the message from you—is going to skip the Kroo Coast and some ports and land me at Burutu (Forçados) on the 27th, so that I shall be at Lokojá on or BEFORE the 31st. I enclose copy of a confidential circular or "Order of the Day," which I shall issue on the 1st of the new year and which contains a more personal appeal to the prudence and self restraint of officers than I could insert in the formal Expedition orders, of which you have, I believe, a printed copy. This, indeed, is the chief of the many reasons why my presence with each expedition is necessary. I am sure there will be—is, indeed—a good deal of jealousy about Arnold. They will want an aged man of the world to prevent difficulties arising.

After the tumbling about between Southampton and Canary, the passage here has been like paradise. A Treasury man, coming to S. Leone, had a banjo on board and we have had some good singing on deck between dinner and bedtime; a nearly full moon each night—the ship hardly swaying to the gentle heave of the ocean—and no boring passengers. I cannot speak too highly of the skipper. He is kindness itself. Any little boisterousness of his five years ago has softened down and I would rather sail with Murray than any master I know. The purser too is very kind in lending me his cyclostyle which is invaluable to me in my preparatory work, as I can get 40 copies with little more work than writing one copy.

But I am impatient, in spite of the restful feeling on board; I want to get at them at Kabba—for, IF THE POSITION IS UNCHANGED when I reach Lokojá AND IF THE "LIBERTY" IS UNABLE to do her work of carrying men and stores to Egbon, I have finally DECIDED to march from Lokojá, diverge south of Kabba and march round the camp and cut them off that way from retreat on Illorin.

I don't like it, as it is not good strategy; but I can't risk 600 men, 1000 carriers, ammunition, guns, equipment, 33 horses, etc., etc., without the "Liberty" as well as the "Empire."

CAPE COAST CASTLE
10 A.M. 26 *Decr.* 1896

I remembered friends
at home yesterday.

MY DEAR SCARBROUGH,

As we cracked on *much* speed on leaving Sierra Leone, we got here (without touching on the Kroo Coast or anywhere else) early this morning. It being no use getting off the Forçados in the middle of the night, Capt. Murray (after much consultation) decided to stop here for five hours light, deliver his mails and all the cargo he could and start for Accra at 10.30. We shall reach Accra about 6 P.M., but only deliver and receive mails—then on to Lagos bar for the same—and I shall sight Forçados bar at daylight on the 28th. I must be at Lokojá before the close of the year.

I received here, this morning, the following ("unlimited reply paid") Government telegram from Denton—who acts while Carter is away—"Am instructed by Secretary of State to have personal interview with you as I have been ill hope you can find time to come in to Lagos shall be very pleased to welcome you at Government House if not I will meet you in branch steamer outside bar."

To this, after long consultation with the skipper as to rates of speed, hours, tides, etc., I have replied:

"As Batanga reaches Lagos tomorrow afternoon and leaves at dark greatly regret cannot land must be Forçados earliest moment possible will gladly board branch steamer if you can come in her."

Apart from the impossibility of practically losing a day, when the Emir of Bida has crossed to the south west of the river, I feel no scruples, as I am told that, since he has been ill, Denton has been living on board steamers, so as to get away from Lagos at night. If, which I cannot suppose, any feeling of dignity is involved, I shall satisfy it by visiting *him* on *his* (the branch) steamer, as I did Moor last year on arriving at Forçados. *Toujours la politesse.*

Perhaps you—at Surrey House—know what the Secretary of State for the Colonies wants discussed; but probably not, as I doubt their knowing themselves, but it is no use guessing; I shall know tomorrow.

He reached Lokojá on January 1st and found that his original plan could stand. West of the Niger the Nupé forces under the Marum, or heir apparent, were at Kabba. Goldie's force, consisting of 600 Hausas and Yorubas with thirty European officers and others, would be ferried across from Lokojá and advance on Kabba: meanwhile a flotilla of steam launches, under Mr. Wallace, the Company's chief agent, would go up the river and patrol so that nothing should cross.

Nupé was not the only objective. There had been trouble also with the important state of Illorin lying nearly opposite to Lokojá. In February 1895 Goldie had written to Lord Scarbrough:

> "The Illorin difficulty is settled—for the present, which is all that I ever live for. No doubt in a year or two, perhaps sooner, we shall have complaints of Illorin raiding coming home from Lagos, and we shall have to fight the battle again, and so on—just like England v. Russia in Central Asia. Sufficient unto the day."

Illorin had been in communication with Bida concerning a general revolt, into which these Mahommedan states sought to bring Bussa also. Illorin was now to be dealt with and after that a small expedition would settle a turbulent tribe in the Delta region.

On the day after his arrival Goldie wrote:

LOKOJÁ
2nd Jany. 1897

DEAR SCARBROUGH,

It seems rather superfluous writing letters when the cable will have told you the issue of the Niger Soudan campaign before this can reach you but I want to wish you and our colleagues and The Company a Happy New Year. Our plans are settled.

1°. Beat or disperse the Marum's forces which the natives will then eat up.
2°. Advance on Bida.
3°. Dictate terms to Illorin, or smash them.
4°. Smash Iddah, and settle lower river palavers.

Wallace has patriotically agreed not to come to Kabba but to carry on the all important work to prevent the Foulahs recrossing from south-west to north-east, and to raise the whole country against Bida.

Watts and Marmon will be the two civilians with us for Kabba—Craster and Stanton the two doctors. Cargill and Castellote will be the doctors for the Bida expedition.

We have a splendid set of officers and Flint has done wonders in making them all happy coming up river. I need hardly say Wallace has provided everything here.

Arnold is proving himself just what I thought him in selecting him as Commandant. There is no friction and to make things run smooth I have held a Council of war before deciding on plans.

For Niger Govt.:	For C.S.T.:
Self	Major Arnold
Wallace	Major Cunningham, D.S.O.
Watts	Lieut. Festing

Festing has made a splendid and accurate map of the country. He is fit for the Intelligence Division and is quite well again.

Renny is the only sick man.

Arod is at Asaba.

—— (a fool) at Akassa.

—— (not much better) at Fort Goldie.

So that all the good men are here. Those not practised in Maxims are hard at work. I reviewed the troops this morning, then went to the range for Maxim practice. The squads dismounted and mounted the guns (after running 200 yards with them) with great rapidity. I have been at work since 4 A.M. It is now 9.30 P.M. and I am dog tired, and must close this letter—have a last cigar and to bed. One rush all day, especially as regards Niger with Flint, Hindly and Bradshaw for Benué, C.S.T.—plans for 2nd expedition to meet us at Egga. It all makes me as fit as a 20 years old.

The account of the campaign can be read in Lieutenant Vandeleur's very good book. It is worth noting that two native priests were brought along with this force, since it was certain that the Fulahs would preach a religious war against all Christians: and now Moslem was to fight Moslem.

Before Kabba was reached, the Nupé force had retreated. But at an assembly in the town Goldie addressed the chiefs "in the most inimitable pigeon English," which was translated by his own interpreter into Nupé and by a Sergeant Major into Yoruba. The purport was that they would be henceforth taken under the protection of the Royal Niger Company, whose object was to promote peace and trade; that any disputes between them and other towns must be referred to the white man, and that slavery should be at an end henceforth, and all the Fulahs driven across the river.

There was no doubt that this would be welcome news, for Southern Nupé had been persistently raided for cattle and for human cattle.

Bida was now the objective; and the flotilla which had kept the river patrolled now provided ferries. Goldie, inured as he was to the climate, had a touch of fever. "But," Vandeleur says, "limiting himself throughout, he carried as little baggage as any of us. He kept in his own hands the Intelligence Department, and was constantly engaged cross-examining spies, guides and messengers—an arduous task when African natives are concerned. With a wonderful prescience as to how events would turn out, he had planned everything, long before in England, and the organisation of the expedition was complete to the smallest detail."

They marched on Bida, 507 constabulary, rank and file, 565 carriers, 32 Europeans, 6 Maxims and 7 guns from 12 pounders to 7 pounders. Their enemy awaited them in the open, and the little square of 600 men advanced with Goldie in the centre of it. He had the historic and pictorial imagination, and for him it must have been of intense interest to see "these Fulah horsemen firmly fixed in their high peaked saddle with enormous brass and iron stirrups, as they galloped along on their long-tailed ponies, covered with gay trappings, waving their swords or spears in the air, with their white robes flying in the wind, accompanied at the same time by the clamour of their small drums and the deep bassed horns which were encouraging them to the attack. Like the knights of old days, every horseman seemed to be followed by two or three squires carrying his gun and some spears, and when the horsemen were banded together they were followed by similar parties of footmen."[1]

The fight lasted two days and had the Fulah horsemen had the nerve, it is plain they could have crumpled up the square. But they did not charge home and the masses of footmen with their guns and spears made poor shooting. Cannon were dragged into position, the wall was breached, the Emir himself wounded, part of the town set on fire and the enemy retreated. Goldie took up his quarters in the Emir's palace: and on January 30th here also he made an address, saying that Fulah dominion was at an end and that a short route free of tolls would be opened from Kano to Lokojá, for the good of trade. On February 5th a new Emir was appointed, whose rule was to be limited to the east bank of the Niger and who must conform to such directions as the Company might give him.

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[1] Vandeleur's description.

Then the expedition marched back to Jebba, on its way to crush disaffection in Illorin; and at Jebba they were met by the news that Bretonnet had occupied Bussa with a force of 500 men and four officers. But, as has been explained, Goldie's hands were tied by a pledge. The European menace had to be met by diplomacy in Europe.

At Illorin there was more fighting, but the resisting force had not such overwhelming numbers; and after the town was occupied the Emir submitted and was reinstated on terms strictly drawn up. By March 1st Goldie was back at Lokojá and could telegraph to the Prime Minister news of his complete success.

There followed an expedition of quite different sort against one of the tribes on the Delta—native people using poisoned arrows. But here a display of force was sufficient, and within two months from the day when the force first left Lokojá, Goldie returned to the administrative headquarters at Asaba, near the Delta. Here he crowned this triple campaign by an announcement that in all the Company's possessions the legal status of slavery was abolished.

This of course did not apply to the States, greater and lesser, with whom the relation was one of a treaty freely accepted. But it applied to Nupé and Illorin, and was an appeal to the Hausa and Yoruba elements in the population against their former overlords, the Fulah race. So the venture ended with a gesture that was not merely decorative nor philanthropic—Goldie's deepest conviction being that the main cause of Africa's backwardness was the practice of slave-raiding. Till that was checked, there could be neither stability nor prosperous industry. Since war was generally undertaken simply to capture slaves, wherever there were men, the constant inducement to war existed. To check it where he felt strong enough, he had risked much.

For it had certainly been a gamble. In sanctioning it by the loan of officers, Lord Salisbury had entrusted Goldie with the fortunes of the British

Empire in Nigeria, if not in all West Africa. Failure would have had disastrous consequences. It is true that Lord Salisbury attached very little importance to West African possessions; but Mr. Chamberlain was of another mind; and if the facts were known, Chamberlain probably made the decision. One thing however is clear from Goldie's correspondence. Before the expedition was undertaken, he knew that the British Government were not prepared to continue delegation of power to a Company in a region where international ambitions jostled so fiercely.

He wrote to Lord Scarbrough on his way out, on December 11th, 1896:

> "If we succeed in this campaign (and OF COURSE we shall succeed) we must not take the terms which I offered Lord Salisbury through Kirk and subsequently through Moor. We are now risking the whole existence of the Company, against immense odds, and if we give up commerce we must have an equivalent for this risk. Besides, we shall have the public on our side if (no! WHEN) we succeed."

In other words, knowing that the Company would certainly be bought out, he took the gamble in the interests of his shareholders. That was the business aspect. But there was another aspect. His purpose throughout had been, not to make money; he could not achieve his purpose except through a money-making scheme; but the purpose was to win Nigeria for Great Britain. It must have been apparent to him that unless some British military enterprise were carried out in that region, the other power which was pressing on at such speed with so much military energy, would succeed in all its objects. And there was really no other British force available. The thing had to be done by the Company or not done at all.

When the Company succeeded, the foreseen effect followed; they had public enthusiasm on their side. Goldie wrote to Lord Scarbrough:

11 QUEEN'S GATE GARDENS, S.W.
12th April 1897

MY DEAR SCARBROUGH,

Thanks for your letter and reference to the *Saturday Review* which I have accordingly read. What with the *Saturday* comparing me to Clive and the *Daily News* to Cortes, I fear I shall cease to be the retiring man you have hitherto known, and shall become a notoriety hunter! But a visit to Roche Abbey when the blue-bells are out will remind me of "Duty *v.* Fame."[1]

I feel I *must* write and thank you more formally than I felt I could do by word of mouth—or even through the telephone to the Club!—for your great kindness and consideration while I was away.

It would be an impertinence for me to thank you for the able way in which you directed the Company's affairs during my absence; but I may express my intense satisfaction in thinking that the life of the Company no longer hangs on the life of a man nearly 51 years of age, and rather weary after 18 years of struggle.

I now know that if I disappear there will be some one competent to drive the coach—with reins 5000 miles away.

The significant sequel was that in October of that year Colonel Lugard was recalled from South Africa to form a West African Frontier Force with its headquarters in Nigeria. By the time its recruiting began, the French were really in effective occupation not only of Gurma but of Borgu, which country, in despite of treaties and proclamations, they declared to be part of Upper Dahomey. Similar things were happening in the hinterland of the Gold Coast and here also the British had been stimulated into some activity. On February 19th, 1898, Mr. Chamberlain read two telegrams to the House of Commons, one of which stated that a party of Senegalese had ordered a British post in Nigeria to haul down the Union Jack; the other reported the same for a place in the Gold Coast hinterland.

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[1] See page 109.

During these months, Colonel Lugard was in military charge in Nigeria; Goldie's place was in London, seeing to it that the Government did not concede too much. In the end, after months of tension, during which collisions were again and again narrowly averted, a Convention was signed. Britain gave up in the Gold Coast region more than she could give with loyalty to the chiefs who relied on her. But Borgu was evacuated and England's hold on the navigable Niger was secured for good.

The Convention of 1898 was virtually the end of the Niger Company, which meant the end of Goldie's activity in Africa. It was certainly part of the compact that the Company should cease to exist. Mary Kingsley, who had much inside knowledge, understood that when the Convention was signed, the French statesmen agreed in advance to abandon what was still part of their dream, as it had been part of Goldie's dream—an empire reaching from the Niger to the Nile. At the moment of its signature Marchand was actually on the Nile watershed. Then in a few months came Kitchener's triumph at Omdurman and the confrontation of French and English flags at Fashoda. France withdrew, as Mary Kingsley believed they had agreed in advance to withdraw, if confronted by a victorious Sirdar. But she wrote to me: "They had got for Fashoda (i) Sir George Goldie's head on a charger; (ii) Article ix" (whose terms indirectly but greatly favoured their commerce); "(iii) the East shore of Lake Tchad" (along which they could link up North Africa to their possessions of the Congo).

The first point, as this student of African affairs judged the matter, was that they secured the removal of the Englishman who had done more than all others to block their advance on the Niger and had made Hausaland a British possession.

Goldie's task was really finished, though in 1898 he was in his fifty-second year and had twenty-seven more to live. There was a year of negotiation on behalf of the Company whose rights were finally taken over for a payment of £850,000. On July 5th, 1899, when the Bill to carry out the transfer was before Parliament, Goldie gave the interview to Reuter which has been already quoted and spoke at least some part of his mind.

Asked if the transfer was satisfactory from an Imperial standpoint, he answered:

"Very much so, as a pecuniary transaction; for the empire is buying for a mess of pottage a great province, which has cost twenty years of arduous labour to build up, and for which either Germany, or France, or both, would have paid a very different sum. Yet I would rather have seen the transfer deferred, if practicable, for ten or fifteen years, with some modification of the charter such as I have advocated, not only since its issue, but in earlier days, especially in 1884 and 1885. However I fully recognise that the recent international crisis precipitated matters, for the company has always aroused a good deal of animosity abroad. This could not possibly be otherwise, since the colonial parties of two foreign nations considered Nigeria to be the most valuable part of tropical Africa, and were annoyed at being forestalled. Before July 1890 we were not popular in Germany, where efforts were made to get our charter withdrawn. This, happily, is long ago forgotten; but from November 1890 we have been unfortunately quite disliked in France, where—as in Germany—our work is much better known than it is in England, whose Colonial Empire is too wide for public opinion to pay much attention to Nigeria. I can conceive that as our political work of foundation is completed, it may now be in the wider interests of the Empire to replace us by a direct Imperial administration."

Then came the question of terms, as considered from the shareholders' standpoint. He preferred to reply by a reminiscence appropriate to the occasion.

"In the early seventies, during some Carlist troubles, I met at a *fonda* in the Spanish Pyrenees a commercial traveller, of course a Liberal, who was complaining bitterly of a Carlist band having stopped the Gerona diligence and appropriated his boxes. A priest asked whether his clothes were left on him, and being told they were, said, 'Then you ought to think yourself well treated; for, a short time ago a band of Liberals stopped the diligence and sent the passengers away in newspapers.' "

What were his personal feelings about the transfer?

"I suppose that no man could lay down without some slight wrench the almost uncontrolled powers which the confidence both of my colleagues and also of the Secretaries of State has left in my hands during the thirteen years of our existence as a Chartered Government. Yet I am glad to be released from almost crushing work, always at full speed and high pressure. Until I went to the Andes last autumn to get away from dispatches and telegrams, I had not had a rest for over twenty years. There is also some pleasure at having realised what, in 1877, was only a conception, subject to risks of failure. To-day Great Britain is about to take up and carry on our work, which, while giving peace and freedom to the millions of Nigeria, will add not inconsiderably to the well-being of the millions of our own island."

He was then asked why, as was already announced, he proposed to sever his connection with the Company, and what his future was to be.

There were, he said, two personal reasons for ceasing to belong to the Company when it ceased to govern Nigeria. The only one that he chose to make public was one of characteristic pride.

"When I first took up this Niger question I had no personal pecuniary interest in it whatever, nor did I intend ever to have such an interest. My investment in it came later. I have given to the work what no pecuniary reward, however great, could have induced me to give. Probably my name will soon be forgotten in connection with Nigeria, and to this I am indifferent; but, if it is remembered, it shall not be as chairman of a Nigerian financial company, which, however useful and however important, will necessarily exist for purposes of profit alone."

Was there any truth in the statement that he was to obtain some responsible Government appointment?

"None whatever. These persistent remarks have caused me a good deal of annoyance and correspondence, and I shall be obliged if you will contradict them emphatically. Up to last Friday I had been battling with a cautious and economical Treasury on behalf of shareholders whose risks had made success possible. I had been in the position of a trustee negotiating for those whose interests I was bound to put before all others. I could not possibly have mixed up with these negotiations any discussion as to my own occupations for the future. If later on the Government consider that I could be of service to the Empire in any capacity I should, of course, be proud to serve it."

That was his attitude and no doubt frankly represented his state of mind at the beginning of July when the Bill for the transfer of rights was before Parliament. Those newspapers which represented the interests of unchartered trade criticised severely the terms of compensation. Yet even the *Liverpool Post* ("my old enemy," as Goldie called it in a letter to Lord Scarbrough) made admissions which have the more weight because they are in a most churlish article:

> "Even under the terms of this liberal bargain this country will acquire Nigeria at much less cost than would have been incurred if its conquest had been carried through by the Colonial and Foreign Offices. It is highly probable indeed that the Niger basin would never have been added to the British Empire if it had not been left to the Niger Company to acquire possession of it."

But the most authoritative tribute came from the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he introduced the Bill; and a House which knew Sir Michael Hicks Beach chiefly for his rasping tongue marvelled to hear him so outspoken in praise.

He could remember, he said, that when he held the office of Colonial Secretary in 1880, British interests in that part of Africa were not considered important. They had been secured, and their importance had been shown by an organisation very loosely connected with the Government. He praised its conduct. Subject as it was to very slight control, it had not, as was so often done, made its shares the object of speculation nor become the fruitful parent of many other companies, "granting concessions for various purposes perhaps of greater advantage to those who obtained them than to the public at large."

As a trading Company, it had been successful (and he gave details); but his concern was with the administrative side. "Under the guidance of two men, Lord Aberdare and Sir George Goldie, it had extended its protectorate over half a million square miles and a population estimated at thirty millions. It had recently abolished the legal status of slavery in its own territory and materially checked that terrible curse of Africa, the trade in spirits with the natives. It had established very valuable relations with the Empires of Sokoto and Gando, which as compared with most African tribes were really civilised countries. And all this had been done in sharp contrast with the neglect that successive Governments and Parliaments had shown to British interests in that part of the world."

The coupling of Lord Aberdare's name with Goldie's in this fashion showed some lack of contact with the facts; but it was not likely to offend Goldie, who wrote to Lord Scarbrough on Lord Aberdare's death:

> "He was, I think, the best man I ever knew, too good to rise to the highest rank in statesmanship, which needs hardness and diplomacy of which he was incapable.
>
> "He wrote me once that he looked on me as a younger brother and I certainly felt for him all the affection and respect that a son has for a noble father.
>
> "When depressed and out of heart with my work, his cheering letters would give me fresh courage."

But it is clear that between summer and winter things happened which altered Goldie's frame of mind and led him to think his services undervalued. For himself he wanted no rewards; but he thought that his recommendations of those who worked with him should have been honoured, and they were not. Having set out on a journey for his "first holiday in 22 years" he took ship for the Far East, returning by the Andes and the Amazon. On a significant date, he wrote to Lord Scarbrough, a letter which does not conceal disappointment. But how vivid and active a mind it displays!

The anniversary of Bida, *January 26th*, 1900
S.S. *Clyde*. Nearing PENANG

I am sorry to realise that my sea voyage is drawing to a close—for we are due at Hongkong on the 4th Feb. and we shall probably be a day or two ahead of time. I cannot tell you the feeling of *peace* that it has given me. But the days are too short. I seem to have been on board only three days instead of three weeks. I have with me a dozen books on China which I am reading with intense interest. I have been through them all once to get the gist and make my plans; but I shall re-read them more closely on the spot. By the way, you wrote of my visiting the Land of the Rising Sun. I do not know yet if I shall come home by Japan. I want to have three months in China, and I would sacrifice a good deal to that. New Japan is modern and strong and self reliant. The real interest of the first quarter of the 20th century will be in the fate of China—its rebirth or its partition.

My idea before leaving England was to see Canton, then go up the Sikiang (or West) River as far as a junk could take me; then strike across country north or north west to the upper waters of the Yangtsze Kiang and come down by junk—through the gorges and rapids—until I struck the highest point to which the Yangtze steamers from Shanghai proceed. But the passengers on board here with me doubt whether I can do this owing to the disturbed state of inner China and the present exceptional hatred of the Foreign Devil.

Chamberlain has given me a special letter of recommendation to Sir Henry Blake at Hongkong and Lord Salisbury to the British consuls in China generally, and I must consult these authorities before I finally decide on my plans. I have no wish whatever to *explore*. My object is to see the Chinaman at home, away from the treaty ports and from European influence. Whether I succeed in this must depend on the state of the country when I arrive there. I certainly will not run any extreme risk; because I might prove a trouble to the F.O. But I do want to form a definite opinion for myself (and for those whom I may be able to influence) on this vast and complicated Chinese problem, in the intricacies of which we have been drifting for the last few years. I may not be able to do much; but every little helps in forming public opinion.

I have given up all idea of the Government ever utilising my services for the Empire. My eyes were opened by Flint's name not appearing among the C.M.G.'s on the 1st January; when half a million square miles and 30 millions of people were transferred to the Empire. I asked for nothing for myself; as I prefer to feel that the country *owes* me something; but it is clear that Lord Salisbury has forgotten the services of the United African, National African, and Royal Niger Companies.

Chamberlain, I know, believes in me; for, to a friend who had spoken highly to him of my "talent" he said, "it is not talent; it is positive genius." But then he is not Prime Minister. Do you remember Lord Salisbury saying at the Mansion House, that Africa was created to be the plague of Foreign Offices? Now that I have been able to review the past from an outside standpoint, I realise what a perpetual nuisance I must have been to our Government for the last 20 years, and how they must have wished Nigeria at the bottom of the sea.

No matter! I can serve the country (or humanity in general) as a free lance—perhaps better than if I were trammelled by official ties.

It is singular enough that a free lance so qualified found no employment worthy of him. He was indeed offered certain governorships abroad which he refused; he was placed on two Royal Commissions that enquired into the waste during the South African war; and in 1903–4 the British South Africa Company invited him to Rhodesia where he drew up the first scheme for self-government of that territory.[1] Later, from 1908 to 1919, he was an alderman of the London County Council, and chairman of their Finance Committee.

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[1] Goldie told me that this was at Cecil Rhodes's personal request. D. W.

However, many men who have governed great provinces return to run tennis clubs and golf courses, and perhaps he was lucky. In any case, the essential for him was that he had completed his work, and the work stood.

On April 10th, 1900, he reviewed the West African situation before the London Chamber of Commerce.—In tropical Africa, he said, "security could not have been obtained without political possession by a civilised state—in other words, without Empire." But political possession had two aspects; one external, towards rival colonising nations racing for territory; one internal, towards other forces of domestic disorder in which Africa is prolific, such as international wars, slave-raiding, fetish barbarities and native rebellions.

As regards external rivalry, Great Britain had no cause of complaint. Twenty years ago her West African territories consisted of two or three scattered strips of coast-line. Now she possessed a West African Empire, with a population which in spite of terribly destructive conditions during countless generations was little less than that of Great Britain and should now grow rapidly to three or four times its present size.

In saying this, Goldie had every right to feel that he had been, if not the sole, certainly the determining agent in that result. It was part of his pride to feel this and to say nothing of it. As to the future, he could be well content. Colonel Lugard, now become Sir Frederick, had been appointed to carry on the work, as first governor of Northern Nigeria, and the appointment was made certainly with Goldie's full approval, probably at his suggestion. Development went on; possession—which meant Empire—was extended with surprising rapidity. It is not certain that if the Niger Company's existence had been prolonged, extension would have been so rapid. In 1896 Goldie warned his shareholders concerning the possibilities of interference with the Great Central States.

"I do not believe that the Imperial Government, following the Imperial and imperious methods it pursues in other parts of the world, would establish peace throughout the powerful Sokoto-Gando empire except at a cost of life and money from which the nation would recoil."

Yet, on his view, security there must be, if there was to be prosperity; and Empire was the only way to security. All African rule was vitiated by the practice of slave-raiding by war, which Mungo Park in 1796 had found fully active, in regions where no white man had been seen. But even then European arms were filtering in; the king who could get powder and muskets could invade his neighbours; and from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward, Central Africa saw the rise of one dominion after another, based on the possession of fire-arms. This was perhaps less the case with the Fulah empire, whose rise dates from 1807; the driving force behind it was largely Moslem fanaticism and a sense of superior power in the race. But after them came towards the middle of the century El Hadj Omar with his Toucouleurs, devastating the valley of the Upper Niger—again in the name of religion. A generation later, there was the rise of Samory whose genius for war could not excuse the savagery of his rule. And when the French ended Samory's career in 1897, there was already another leader of the same class, sprung up like Samory from the people, owing his power to the possession of fire-arms and the instinct for using them. This was Rabba, in the region of Lake Tchad; and when Goldie's force occupied Bida in 1898 they found that the merchants of Hausaland were already anxious lest Rabba's destroying progress should come their way.

Rabba also was dealt with by the French, not before he had inflicted disasters on their expeditions. But for the Europeans, there is little doubt that he would have been victorious in the empire of Sokoto as he had been in Bornu. For although that empire was civilised by comparison, it had lost something of its virility. In 1902–3 the end of its independence came. Lugard found it necessary to make an expedition, and this powerful dominion was reduced with far less difficulty than Goldie had anticipated in 1896. But without Goldie's preliminary success in Nupé and Illorin which established the prestige of British arms in Hausaland, and above all, without the proof he gave that submission did not mean slavery, Lugard's task in front of Kano and Sokoto would have been vastly more difficult. Goldie left a great inheritance to his successor—and it was admirably used.

He has been blamed because after 1898 he declined to advise upon Nigerian affairs. This was certainly not a case of what the Greeks called *εἰρωνεία*, the affected self-depreciation which masks an unwillingness to serve. But since Goldie in all his life had little desire for counsel but greatly valued service, he may have seen a touch of what we call "irony" in the suggestion that he should give advice when he was denied the opportunity to continue serving. Yet I think the true explanation is that he always desired and obtained a free hand for himself and thought it a disservice to hamper another ruler even by the expression of a view.

Other men might have been flattered or gratified by a request for counsel, or might have thought it a duty to give what was asked for. Goldie, however, was not very like other men.

Yet how unlike other men, I never guessed—not because I undervalued him. The chances of my life have enabled me to observe at close quarters many persons most distinguished in government during the last forty years; and none of them, with a single exception, made so lasting a mark on my mind as Sir George Goldie, in the single interview of which I have spoken. I felt there the special genius for the task of governing,—the mind that can devise and can shape, the will that can drive action to its determined end. It was only when, in writing the life of

Mary Kingsley, I had occasion to make enquiries that I was confronted with a fact so extraordinary as to be astounding. Sir George Goldie had destroyed all his papers. No one knew better than he that he was destroying the records of an institution which in its brief existence of thirteen years played a decisive part in African history. His relations with his shareholders, with the unchartered traders, with the Colonial Office, with the Foreign Office (whose Intelligence Branch he kept sedulously informed) were all of historic interest; and he swept all record of them out of reach.

Why? I cannot but think there was an element of pique as well as disdain in the gesture; nor can I doubt that it was a gesture—certainly not a precaution.

After I had read, some years later, Lady Gerald Wellesley's presentment of the vehement and vibrant personality that lay behind the blue steel of his eyes, I felt, if not better able to guess, at least much stimulated to try and understand. I felt also that it would be an honour to help others to try to understand so great a man; and so I have put together these notes which may serve as a kind of support, setting in its proper light her image of the fiery spirit who found in a young girl—even, at first, in a child—an eager listener to his talk. There surely never was in the annals of biography a stranger companionship, though it was clearly based upon a kinship of temperament between the pioneer that had been and the poet that was to be. The result of reading the story of this friendship has been, at least for me, to make an empire-maker familiar, comprehensible, and even more remarkable than I had thought him.

D. W. AT ELEVEN, WITH NOBBY AND BALOO

THE FOUNDER OF NIGERIA

A MEMOIR

DOROTHY WELLESLEY

Men are admitted into heaven not because they have curbed and governed their passions, or have no passions, but because they have cultivated their understandings. The treasures of heaven are not negations of passion, but realities of intellect, from which all the passions emanate, uncurbed in their eternal glory. The fool shall not enter into heaven let him be ever so holy: holiness is not the price of entrance into heaven.

WILLIAM BLAKE, *A Vision of the Last Judgment*

I

"THAT man looks like something between a vulture and a mummy," I said to myself at ten years old, when first I saw him. I weighed the alternatives. A mummy I decided. Suddenly I heard a woman say —we were sitting round the tea-table at the time: "Sir George, have you ever killed anybody?" "But of course," the mummy answered. I tingled with a warm glow. He became fixed in my imagination: A great man. This marks my first memory of him.

One winter afternoon I was walking across the park. I was eleven years old, and he a man of about fifty-five: a man five-foot-nine in height, ill-made, spare to the point of emaciation, rapid and violent in his movements, his nervous force extraordinary, the nose the beak of an eagle, the eyes blue rapiers. We were absorbed in conversation. He was talking about the significance of skulls. Bumps, he said, were indicative of character.

"Feel mine," I cried, tearing off a scarlet tam-o'-shanter.

We stopped. The road ends here, dribbles into a grass track, meanders into the rougher fastnesses of the park, distances of trees, deer, and bracken, smudgy with mist, romantic in the blight of invisible collieries. The old man gravely entwined his gnarled and purple talons in my hair. I did not like his hands, but I was determined to learn all about bumps in general, and mine in particular. Rigid with self-control I waited while his fingertips travelled my scalp.

"You," said the old man solemnly, "have the three bumps of temper, pride and combativeness more developed than anyone I have ever known."

What did combativeness mean, I asked, exulting.

He explained. "And now," he said, "we must go home."

"But, Rameses," I said (I called him Rameses by this time because he was so like the mummy of Rameses the Second in the Cairo Museum, of which I had seen a photograph), "Rameses, I like the park after the road ends."

"You always will," he answered.

I did not know that phrenology was, already at that date, an exploded science.

Years later I asked Sir George if he too remembered the incident. I had not referred to it before.

"Perfectly," he replied.

One winter evening—I was by this time about sixteen—Sir George came up to the schoolroom and sat down in front of the fire, with his cigar.

"Rameses," I said, "will you tell me that long-promised story; the story of your life?"

He stared into the fire and laughed. After a few minutes' silence he said: "All achievement begins with a dream. My dream, as a child, was to colour the map red. In 1877 I left England (largely to escape from private entanglements) to explore the interior of Nigeria with my brother. He got fever badly when we were half-way up the river, and I had to bring him home. On the journey back I conceived the ambition of adding the region of the Niger to the British Empire."

With this opening, which I remember vividly, he went on to tell me the story of his work from start to finish, and he talked for two hours. This was long ago, and I will not attempt to reconstruct his account with any accuracy now; but from the anecdotes and conversations that follow, I think the reader should be able to piece together a convincing picture, one drawn by himself.

He was an incongruous mixture of reason and passion and certainly the most excitable man one can imagine. He must have been extraordinary as a young man. "I was like a gun-powder magazine. I was blind-drunk when I passed my final examination for the Engineers. Two years later a relation died, leaving me his fortune. I was so excited by the freedom that this gave me, that I bolted without sending in my papers, and leaving all my belongings behind. I went straight to Egypt. There I fell in love with an Arab girl. We lived in the desert for three years. Garden of Allah! She died of consumption. I came home to lead a life of idleness and dissipation."

One day (I was about fourteen), I fell into a violent rage. I had taken the door-knob carefully into my hand, so as to get a firm grip on it, and had then slammed the door till the room shook and the Wedgwood vases rattled in their cupboards.

Sir George turned to me gravely: "I have only slammed the door once in my life. I reserved that satisfaction for a great occasion. If you do it once, it may be effective."

"When was that?" I enquired, shamefaced.

"When I was informed by Her Majesty's Government that Queen Victoria had refused to grant me a Charter for my work in Nigeria. I had worked five years to obtain it. I got up, I went out, and I slammed the door. I got my Charter."

I quote from the article headed "Goldie" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th Edition):

"The method by which he determined to work was the revival of government by chartered companies within the Empire. . . .

The first step was to combine all British commercial interests in the Niger, and this he accomplished in 1879. . . .

Goldie sought a charter from the Imperial Government (the 2nd Gladstone ministry). Objections of various kinds were raised. . . .

The scruples of the British Government being overcome, a Charter was at length granted. . . ."

It had taken Goldie five years to persuade the Government to his point of view. We have a sound constitution. One of many official conversations had finally provided the occasion on which he slammed the door.

Sir George added: "When at last the Charter was granted, and drawn up for signature, Gladstone left it in the pocket of his great-coat; and his great-coat he left in the train. A new one had to be prepared."

He told me that at the time of the partition of Africa between the Powers, he had great difficulty in dissuading the Government from handing over to Germany a large and valuable tract of Nigeria. "Again," he said, "I saw my life's work disappearing before my eyes. I was summoned to attend a conference in Berlin."

In the *Encyclopaedia* I find the following passage:

"Mr. Goldie, present as an expert on matters relating to the river, was able to announce that on the Lower Niger the British flag alone flew."

"The German speeches were conciliatory," he told me. "The German representative rounded up his proposals with the following words: 'No doubt Mr. Goldie will remember the Gospel text: Who is not against us is with us.' I leapt to my feet: 'No doubt —— will remember that there are two renderings of the text he quotes; the other stands: *Who is not with us is against us!'*

"Later on," he added, "I induced the British Government to grant a great strip of Nigeria to Germany. She swallowed it with alacrity; it was worthless."

Encyclopaedia Britannica: "By conceding to Germany a long, but narrow strip of territory between Adamawa and Lake Chad, to which she had no treaty claims, a barrier was raised against French expeditions. . . ."

"No treaty claims" and "A barrier was raised" are, I think, suggestive phrases.

"On yet a third occasion," he said, "my enterprise was endangered. This was at the time when the natives were still hostile. Gradually they were won round. Day by day the various tribes would come in. In the end one tribe only held out against me, the strongest of the lot. One evening the chief invited me to supper. I went, of course, and sat on his right hand. He was an immense fellow, bloated, and covered with leprosy. Making the gesture of hospitality, he took a piece of meat from his own platter, and raised it to my lips. It swung in mid-air between his leprous fingers. For one instant I hesitated: years of work rose up behind me, months of trouble rose up before me. I bolted the meat!"

Encyclopaedia: "He conceived the idea of adding to the British Empire the then little-known regions of the lower and middle Niger, and for over twenty years his efforts were devoted to the realisation of this conception."

Once I said to him: "Did you ever get any fighting?" "A little," he replied. "I used to attack as the Romans did, in a phalanx. I would be in the centre, directing operations. I enjoyed this part the most of all."

Encyclopaedia: "The hostility of certain Fulah princes led the company to despatch in 1897 an expedition against the Mohammedan states. . . . This expedition was organised and personally directed by Goldie, and was completely successful."

He would talk quite simply about his lack of recognition. I once asked him the cause. He answered: "When I had completed the first part of my work certain persons wished the country to be called Goldesia." Starting up in his chair with excitement: "I wouldn't allow it!"

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"What about Cecil Rhodes, and Rhodesia?" I asked.

"Exactly!" he cried, clutching violently at the arms of his chair. "If I had allowed it I should have been as famous as Cecil Rhodes!"

"But why are you so anxious to be unheard of? It seems to me that you exaggerate the importance both of obscurity and of fame."

"Because," he answered solemnly, his excitement falling from him suddenly like a cloak, "because in 100,000 years Nigeria will have been wiped out by geological formations, which now we do not even dream of."

This was a characteristic reply, and it so delighted me that I refrained from answering, as I might well have done: "If you really feel like that why did you take so much trouble about it?"

On another occasion I said to him: "Does it give you no satisfaction to know that you could, if you wished, live on in men's minds?" This was a success.

"Men's minds," he cried, starting out of his chair as though he had sat down on a pin. "I don't care a STRAW about men's minds."

II

ONE day I casually opened a book, and there on the flyleaf in his handwriting, I read the following words: "No man can serve two masters, the real and the ideal. But he can make one the master, the other the slave of his life. Under which king, Bezonian, speak or die." These words made an extraordinary impression on me.

One evening I went downstairs filled with imaginary terrors. I had been reading ghost stories and the evening was closing in. In the hall I found Sir George engrossed in a scientific work.

"Rameses," I said, "do you believe in ghosts?"

He put aside his book, and gravely lighted the customary half cigar. "No, on the whole, I don't, but I am quite capable of working myself into a state of terror under suitable conditions."

"Why don't you believe in ghosts?" I asked.

"Partly for this reason. A famous scientist of the last century records the following experience. One evening after a long day's work, he looked up to see a friend of his sitting in an armchair. Now he knew this friend to be abroad at the time. He got up, passed his hand through the sitting figure. Nothing happened, the figure remained. He then sat down in the chair. Still nothing happened. He then picked up a lancet and opened one of his own veins, and, whilst the blood trickled, kept his eyes fixed upon the figure in the chair. Gradually, very slowly it disappeared. That is one of the reasons why I do not believe in ghosts."

"But," said I insisting: "then you wouldn't mind sleeping in a churchyard or even in the Chamber of Horrors?"

"I shouldn't mind a straw about either."

"Yes, but if you had to, even you might mind?"

"Perhaps you're right," he replied. "I remember vividly what a fright I had some years ago in a friend's house which was supposed to be haunted. The ghost was said to grip one suddenly from behind. As I was going up to bed in the dark I was seized suddenly and violently from behind. Some seconds of terror passed before I discovered that my coat-tails had been caught in a heavy swing-door."

On another occasion I asked him: "Can you hypnotise people?"

"I could once, but I have given it up. I gave it up for the following reason. One day I was telling a friend how I used to hypnotise a servant I had had whilst living in Egypt. This lad was a native of about seventeen. I obtained almost complete influence over him. My friend said to me: 'Why not try to hypnotise this boy from this distance, just to see if it is possible. You can ascertain later if it has acted or no.' I agreed to try. My friend walked away to a distance of some hundred yards, and sat down on a bench. After I had gone through the process of hypnotising the boy who was in Egypt and had tried to 'get through' to him, I got up and went to fetch my friend. He was sitting on the bench in a deep hypnotic trance, his eyes turned back in the way peculiar to that state. I realised then that hypnotism was dangerous, and I never used it again."

One day my brother and I had a violent quarrel. This was not, I am afraid, an unusual occurrence, for I had a violent temper, and when I lost it, which I frequently did, the spectacle I presented was not an edifying one. I was about fifteen at the time, and should have known better. But lose my temper I did, and doubtless beyond any proportion that the occasion demanded. I flew at my brother both physically and morally. The grown-up people stood round in silence.

"Let us," said Sir George, "go in to luncheon."

Scarlet, not with repentance, but with unfulfilled revenge, I sat through the meal in silence.

"I," said Sir George suddenly, "had the good fortune to lose both my parents before they could have any influence upon me." The silence was complete. Sir George assured me years later that this remark had slipped out unawares, a statement which I am afraid I do not believe. "I shall never forget," he added, "the mixture of indignation and amusement that I afforded."

I quote this incident purely to illustrate the peculiar charm of the man. I myself was at the age when the world was out of joint. Early childhood was coming to an end. With its passing an inner melancholy began to settle upon me. Perhaps all children feel the same; perhaps it was simply the approach of adolescence. Yet I believe the cause lay deeper than this. I had long been convinced that I was an unmanageable, unattractive and plain child.

Up till this time an almost violent vitality, an intense excitability about life, had carried me along. I had disregarded the snubs and the complaints administered by the grown-up people. But at last something seemed to slacken. I stopped, turned the gaze inward: something is happening—what is happening? What did actually happen was that from one day to another I discovered poetry. Pandora's box was open, all the miseries of the world flew forth. At the bottom remained, not hope, not comfort, but the incredible relief of actually writing verses myself. I instantly sat down and composed the following stanza:

> I sat on the stones of the Parthenon
> And wondered in my heart
> If anything could be sadder
> Than the long tale of the past.

The rhyme, it is true, did not altogether satisfy me; but I was convinced nevertheless that the poem had the true touch of the sublime.

Not only was I becoming introspective, I was becoming acutely critical. I believed nothing I was told to believe, refused even to consider the evidence of wise and just men, who had lived and died long before I was born. I told Sir George this. He seemed disappointed. "Can you not believe anything to be unwise before you yourself have experienced disaster?" "No," I replied, stoutly, but with an inner sinking.

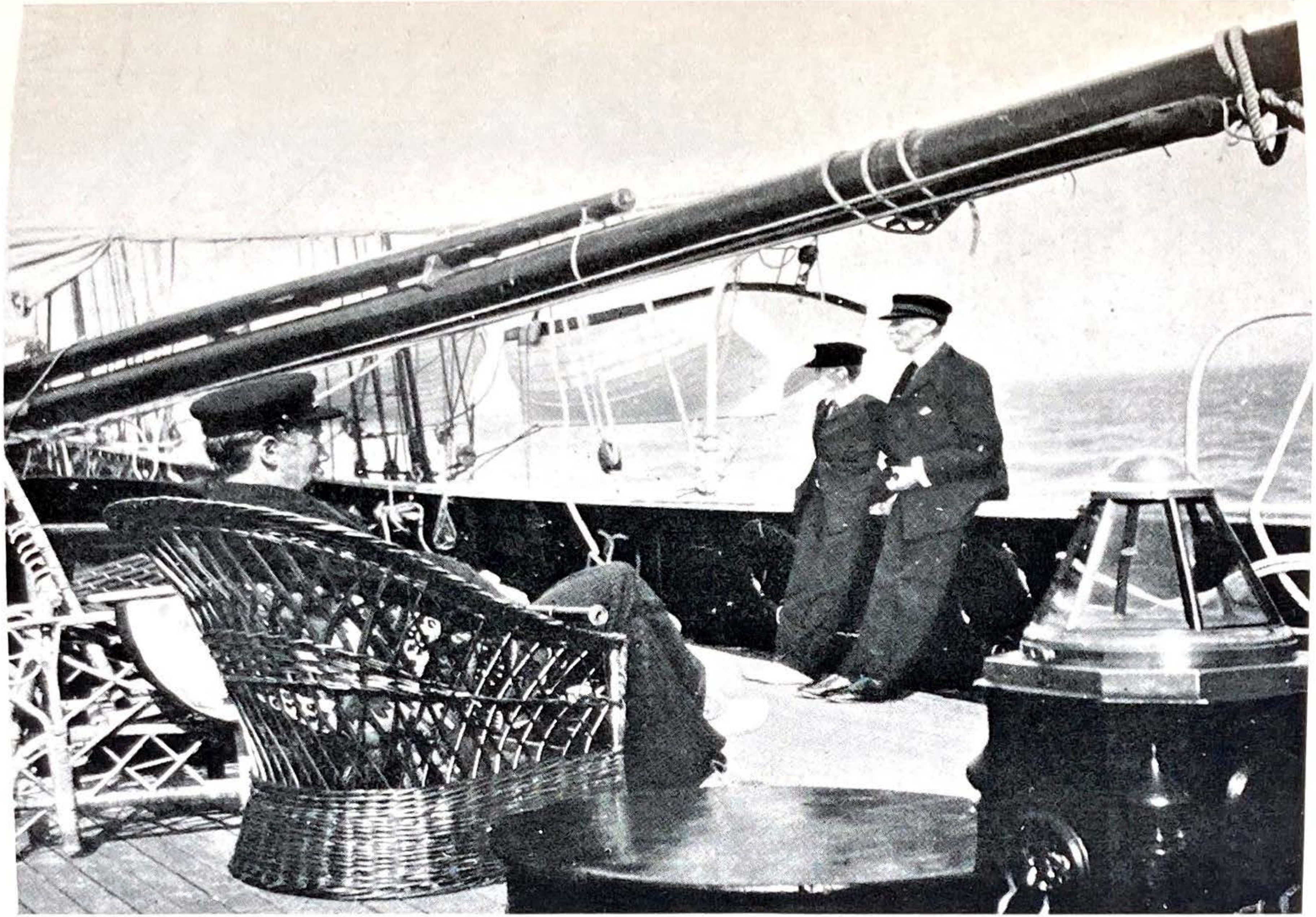
At that time I would get up at six in the morning to read in the library. What I read I have long since forgotten; I am afraid that the only book that I remember reading is the unexpurgated edition of *Gulliver's Travels* in an eighteenth century edition. One morning I got up at five, thinking it was six, and was found by the housemaid half asleep on the top of the library ladder. I was scolded and my early morning readings came to an end. "You are quite right," said Sir George, "I never travelled without an extra camel to carry my books alone."

Although his words always calmed me, wild I remained. My brother, my cousin Robin, and I, all felt precisely the same at that time about the Christian religion. This was because we were convinced that one should face the truth at all costs, however painful. We were intensely sincere. We said that the nice feelings of grown-up people did not matter a pin in the white blaze of our sincerity. I remember my cousin and I turning to one another in the schoolroom one morning, and shouting, "Let us dedicate our lives to the destruction of the Church." We discussed the scheme in detail. How exactly we proposed to work it out, I cannot now remember. Next day we consulted Sir George about this. He threw back his head and laughed. "You needn't worry, it will soon come. When I was years older than you I left England, to escape from the sound of the church bells."

So we were comforted, thinking he was right; and now I think he was wrong in his premises; and I am no longer convinced that the destruction of Christianity is so desirable as it then appeared. Sir George, as may be gathered, was a man of extreme views on the question of free thought, yet he never attempted to persuade me to agnosticism. That he was amused by the violence of views which would have horrified my parents was obvious, but not until my opinions on such questions were more or less fixed did he talk to me freely on those subjects. "How can people believe all that? What is this doctrine of a divine sacrifice? It means nothing," I would say. "Nothing whatever," he would agree. "Church people are so immoral," I would shout, banging the furniture with my fist.

"They tell you to be good, because if you aren't you will be punished afterwards. They bribe you to live decently by promising eternal happiness if you do. And a jolly sort of happiness they propose to give you too, after spoiling your life for you first." "Ha, ha, ha," from Sir George. "And anyway they've always been hypocrites; no one would have hated them more than Christ Himself! Much do they love one another! What about the wine at the wedding, and the woman who loved much? Obviously Christ approved of both anyway." "Ha, ha, ha," from Sir George.

His views represented the intellectual attitude of the Huxley and Darwin period, and he was extremely entertaining on the subject. He regaled my delighted ears with echoes of controversies long since dead, between Huxley and Gladstone. "Out would come Huxley's big guns and he would wipe the floor with Gladstone, every time!" I had been given *The Martyrdom of Man,* by Winwood Reade, and this brilliant, ill-constructed, impassioned book, became my Bible. I would go about declaiming the profane passages aloud. Soon this was replaced by the anarchist poems of Shelley, and later still, by the more flagrant erotics of Swinburne. All this was shouted aloud to the woods and sky, generally from a pony's back. At any moment one might meet a gamekeeper, or even a relation; but one did not care. In all of this Sir George sympathised. In many ways he was himself the eternal adolescent. As I have said he did not encourage me. I suppose he thought this would have been immoral; though why I do not know, since he believed so sincerely himself in what he called the material philosophy. Thinking back now, I see him most characteristically, sitting in a far corner of the garden, facing the sun, his hat drawn over his eyes, and half a cigar in his mouth. He always cut his cigars in two because that seemed to make them last longer. I would erupt from the house, run to him, overflowing with turbulence about some insignificant domestic disagreement. "It's a disgrace, it's snobbish, it's intellectually dishonest," I would shout. "Ha, ha, ha," would come the inevitable answer, the head thrown back, the fingers concealing the eyes. "How you remind me of my youth," he would say. "Were you like me?" I would ask, anxiously. "Far more so," he said, and then and there would follow most delightful memories of an old man, when he was young. Gradually he would work himself up into



SIR GEORGE GOLDIE ON HIS YACHT "APHRODITE" WITH LORD SCARBROUGH (IN CHAIR) AND THE AUTHOR'S BROTHER the old conviction as he talked, and then oddly it was my turn to be amused. If I continued fretful he would say: "*Carpe Diem*: Seize the day. Never forget that." One day something went more than usually amiss with my spiritual condition. "Come for a walk," he said. "When I was a little older than you, I acquired a settled gloom that nothing could shake off. No extravagances of mind or body could help me. At last I decided that I must make up my mind once and for all whether it would have been better if life had never existed on this planet at all. I sat down on a sea-shore, placing a large black pebble beside me. I can see the pebble now. Should I decide that life was bad, that I could if I wished, by touching that pebble, wipe out not only all present life upon the earth, but the whole of past life also, so that life had never existed, I would put out my finger and touch the pebble. I sat for hours staring at the sea. After a long time I put out my finger and touched the pebble."

"What did you do then?" I asked.

"Started my work in Africa."

He had a passion for the sea, that peculiar passion which differs altogether from the love of the sea found in most English people. We once spent six weeks on the same yacht, and he appeared never to go to bed at all. Sharing the same passion, I would slip up on deck late at night, or at dawn, when the rest of the party was asleep, and there inevitably would be Sir George. One day when half a gale was blowing we came over from Ostend to Dover, and we took twelve hours to do it. The yacht was behaving like a corkscrew, and her deck was awash from bows to stern, and he and I were holding on to anything that came handy. I was not altogether happy, but then, as Sir George said, I "had tempted Providence by sitting on the screw all the morning, and on the bowsprit all the afternoon." Over the three coats which he usually wore—he was always cold—he had pulled on a crumpled old waterproof. When we were within two miles of Dover the entire German Fleet, or what appeared to be the entire German Fleet, suddenly hove in sight and steamed past us. I remember still how steady the warships appeared to my reeling vision. Sir George was furious. "What the DEVIL are they doing here?" he said.—I decided to ask him something I had always wanted to know: why he had the surname of Taubman. "Is it a German name?" I asked, "people think it is."

This question did not appease his annoyance at the sight of the German Fleet.—"German! It's a Manx name!" I decided that he had been asked this question before, and that this was the reason why he had reversed the order of his surnames.

A friend once said to me: "Did you ever see Goldie bring his yacht down Southampton Water, cutting in and out? By God, I never saw a man take such risks, but never out by an inch."

Here is a story which he told me. As a young man he was travelling in Germany and found himself in a railway carriage with two Germans. The weather was hot, and one of his companions, a very fat man, proceeded to remove his outer clothes, even to his boots and stockings. "So is one more comfortable." The train stopped at a station, and the man, half stripped, got out to cool himself, but the train started to move and joggled on again while he was still on the platform. The other German passenger was immensely delighted and amused, but Goldie leapt up to throw the clothes out of the window. "Let him have his boots at least!" he said. "Dirty old man." His companion who was in high spirits protested, but after a struggle Goldie chucked out the boots. The two men spent the remainder of the journey in a discussion of music. When they parted the German drew a visiting-card from his pocket, and handing it to the young Englishman said: "Come and see me one day." It was Richard Wagner. He was on his way to produce an opera at a time when public derision was giving way to popular approval. From boyhood Goldie had had a passionate admiration for Wagner's music.

I have realised since his death that it was strange that he should talk so much to a child. He talked on almost any topic: politics, socialism, philosophy, poetry, sex, travel, science, human relationships. He warned me especially against the pitfalls and disillusions of love. We talked a great deal about this. No doubt he did this from his own characteristic mixture of motives.

He loved to talk, lashing himself into a frenzy of logic or enthusiasm. He also told me a good deal about his private life. Doubtless he talked in the same way to other people, especially to women friends. I accepted, that is to say I did not criticise, his personal confidences, but recorded them in my mind, placing them in their own setting, the only suitable one, realising that such emotional experience formed a part of that life force—was simply the reserve side of his explosive genius.

He came often to the house, and my mind is stored with memories of him. Many anecdotes and conversations between himself and others I am scarcely at liberty to set down. Goldie was an extremely amused and amusing man, and appeared (I say, appeared) to have a minimum of that caution and reserve of which we English are so proud. It must suffice that I was a very little pitcher with very long ears.

As I grew up I learned to understand his weaknesses and idiosyncrasies; I learned that he combined uncontrollable passions, ruthlessness, indifference to individuals, contempt for sentimentality in any form, with the excitability and sensitiveness of a child; and a child's peculiar capacity for anger and pain.

He was very fond of women, and no man admitted it more frankly. Reports of his personal relationships certainly reached the ears of Queen Victoria, and I have been told (I can scarcely believe it) that she refused for this reason to recognise his enormous services to the country. In short "the

Queen was not amused.'' He was, moreover, a violent and uncompromising man. He had a good deal of uncontrolled temper and was lashed into frenzies of impatience by stupidity, or incompetence. Never did man suffer fools less gladly. Thus he was difficult in some ways to work with, in spite of the outstanding kindness and consideration for others, which formed an intrinsic part of his most complex nature. ''Why do we follow this man blindly, only to get hit?'' one of his subordinates once said of him. I have wondered if he sometimes made enemies where he would more wisely have made friends.

One of his characteristics was that he had no stage between waking and sleeping. He never dozed, he said, and certainly I never saw him do so even when he was at his favourite recreation: sitting in the sun. He was proud of this characteristic, regarding it as a mark of unusual vitality.

Believing himself to be, at all times, calm as Diogenes before Alexander, he was in reality the most easily ruffled of human beings. He was highly inflammable. The slightest contretemps (provided it were slight enough) would cause him to lose his detachment instantly. Had, however, the town been overwhelmed by an earthquake, had the Martians descended suddenly from the sky, he would have remained unmoved, and immensely interested. But should he be five minutes late for an appointment, should someone banter him on a favourite subject, say for instance his deep-rooted aversion to Women's Suffrage, or to the Daylight Saving Bill, he would flare like a straw bonfire in the wind; but above all, if anyone suggested that he should go to a social gathering, however informal. I have often heard him take up the remark of some ignorant and silly woman by the retort: "I never argue"; and I knew that this was the signal: away he would go, banging away at it for an hour sometimes. This used to annoy me, partly because the point was not worth the argument anyway, and partly because I knew that a vain woman had laid a trap for him, and that he had walked straight into it, like the perennial child that he was. This rather endearing weakness was not lost upon the sillier and prettier women of his acquaintance, and God knows that these were as the sands of the sea. They would try to make a fool of him, and then confide to one another afterwards that Sir George was not a man of the world.

I have never arrived at a clear definition of this phrase, but judging from the type of man and woman who uses it, I am glad if he was not. I am, however, sure that the complete man of the world never looks as if he were a wild animal suddenly trapped in a cage. Scenes then rose before me: African landscapes, nights and days of fever with gigantic responsibility upon him, the millions of black men he had won over, governed, for whom he had drawn up a code of laws; men to whom his name is historical, to whom it will be legendary. Other figures also: Bismarck, Gladstone, Salisbury, Queen Victoria, all of whom he had also fought inch by inch, year by year, had won over, had induced, after long opposition, to accept his will. A life of self-sacrifice, struggle, toil, victory. He used to tell me that for years he had worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. The truth is, I think, that in daily life he had much of the emotional instability associated with artistic genius. This was perhaps due to the fact that he was, like the poet or the artist, in essence a creator—tossing each day in the welter of personal emotion, steadied each day by the very storm and speed of his vision. I have always wondered why he was stamped so peculiarly with this violent excitability. It formed in daily life the most salient characteristic of the man, to whom many men turned for guidance, to whom millions owed security and peace. Perhaps the answer lies in the tradition of Victorian biography; the biography that flourished before Mr. Lytton Strachey shocked the older generation and delighted the new. We might, if told the truth, discover that many men of great creative genius, scientists and administrators, as well as poets, have been moody, difficult, exaggerated in daily things. I suggest, as a thesis, that such temperament is not associated solely, as conventionally supposed, with artistic genius, but with practical creative genius also.

He corresponded exactly to one's conventional idea of a man of genius: not poised, not finished off, as lesser men are; a bias in one direction, a lift here, a tilt there; and humanly so vulnerable, yet with all this incomparably able at his own work. I could not bear to see how stupid and ignorant people laughed at his excitability. In their crass, bland stupidity, their ignorance, they remained completely satisfied. It gave me pleasure to think then of the iron force that went out from him, in his past conquests, and administration in Africa, and in those offices of the Niger Company where a West African Empire was constructed.

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,
And did he stop and speak to you?
And did he speak to you again?
How strange it seems, and new!

But you were living before that,
And also you were living after,
And the memory I started at—
My starting moves your laughter.

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own,
And a certain use in the world no doubt,
Yet a hand's breadth of it shone alone,
'Mid the blank miles round about:

For there I picked up on the heather,
And there I put inside my breast
A moulted feather, an eagle-feather—
Well, I forget the rest.

Since his death I have realised clearly what a very unusual man he was. Thinking of his friendship with me, I have understood what a tremendous moral and intellectual influence he must have had; above all, how fortunate I was to know him thus. After I grew up I saw less of him, his influence waned, and I am ashamed to confess that for a time I even thought him slightly absurd; his anti-Victorian indignations, his agnostic violence, his "necessity of atheism." I had grown up with my own generation, a generation remarkable in its incapacity for impersonal passion, or intellectual indignation.

Writing of him now, I wonder how we should meet, what we should talk of to-day. I do not think that we should talk as in the old days, for now I should disagree with him on many questions. He was blind to most aspects of the aesthetic, but he had a great, perhaps a strange love for poetry. When I was about sixteen I caught chickenpox, and was banished to the Portcullis room at Lumley Castle. There I remained alone for a fortnight in December, and Sir George, who was staying with us, would come and sit with me. "Aren't you afraid of catching it?" I asked. "No," replied Sir George, "chickenpox is a complaint which Rameses has outgrown." It was then that our literary conversations began in earnest. I was reading *Frankenstein* at the time, and my nights were made hideous by the imaginary presence of that monstrous being. "Why read *Frankenstein* when you are shut up alone in a castle?" said Sir George, as well he might.—Although he often admired what was bad, he often admired what was good. I was relieved to find that he shared my passion for Shelley and all his works. He was particularly fond of Tennyson's "Love thou thy Land," and delighted to quote the lines beginning:

You ask me why, tho' ill at ease,
  Within this region I subsist,
  Whose spirits falter in the mist,
And languish for the purple seas.

. . . . . .

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought
  From out the storied Past, and used
  Within the Present, but transfused
Thro' future time by power of thought.

His lack of discrimination was deplorable. I do not know, but I suspect that he admired the cheaper doggerel of Mr. Kipling; but then he also admired *Lycidas*.

At seventeen I discovered Ibsen for myself, to the great delight of Sir George. He had an unbounded admiration for Ibsen, often referring to him and quoting from his works. He once told me that, immediately after Lady Goldie's death, an intimate woman friend had written to him proposing marriage. "What did you do?" I said. "I sent her a copy of *Rosmersholm*!"

He encouraged me ceaselessly to write poetry, urging me to study form, and to restrain imagination by writing sonnets. "See to your manner, your matter will take care of itself."

I say that his love of poetry was strange, yet having written down the word I query it; for I, as many another, question why the English, greatest of Philistine races, have produced the greatest mass of fine poetry within history. The answer is that the adventurer (who is usually a barbarian) is more akin to the poet, than the poet to the intellectual. The skyline, the lost treasure, the pursuit of the difficult, are all part of the romantic attitude. This theory is open to dispute as regards the modern classical poets, but it is true of the romantic poets; and the great bulk of English poetry is romantic.

I recall with amusement that he used to tell me how, mounted on a camel, he would ride towards the horizon, intoning *Tithonus* hour after hour.

"*Tithonus,*" he would exclaim, "that poem ranks among the first dozen in the language"; and really now, in maturity, I question if he was not right. Why, however, he should have cared for such a poem many will find difficult to understand. He preferred it to *Ulysses.* Not strange this to the literary mind, but strange in him.

I am, in a sense, glad that I can never talk with Sir George again; glad that our friendship ended when it did. It remains a perfect memory, was in its own way a perfect relationship, and this is enough. I did not always agree with him even when I was too young to know what I was talking about. He had certain fixed ideas that nothing could dislodge, ideas which time has proved to be prejudice. Yet now that he has receded into perspective, I have a very sure sense that he was by far the most original man I have ever known. He believed passionately in the civilising influence of material prosperity; in efficiency; in almost every detail that accompanies material developments. I once knew a charming old lady who used to say that Sir George Goldie had no soul. Someone repeated this to him, and it troubled him curiously. I wondered why he minded. I remember his walking up to me across the garden, planting himself before me, hands behind his back, and saying in his sudden characteristic way, without preliminary: "The soul is the sum of the emotions. I have as great and as complex a set of emotions as anyone alive: intellectual, moral, personal. What does she mean?" Though I am not clear as to the exact definition of this term, yet I understand what the old lady meant. He had in the spiritual sense no soul. For I do not think that he understood the perpetual quiver and question, the peculiar intellectual suffering of the poet or the mystic. Such aspects of thought were, I am sure, anyway in his old age, anathema to him. In youth he went through a period of great mental conflict and mental suffering, but he suffered I think simply because humanity was in pain, had always been in pain,—never because he did not know, never could know, *why* humanity was in pain. These attitudes of mind define, perhaps, the difference between the intellectual who is also a man of action, and the intellectual who wrote:

> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms against a sea of troubles.

Men like Goldie create, or preserve civilisation, and perhaps do not question it. Doubtless he believed that the state of a man's soul is eventually bettered by sound plumbing; and that for spiritual health, a pill is better than a prayer.

SIR GEORGE GOLDIE

These anecdotes of Sir George Goldie date almost entirely from the time when I was a child, or a very young girl. In the last ten years of his life I saw little of him. Bent, old and suffering, he seemed unwilling to see me. I felt sure of this from the tone of his letters, and I made no effort to meet him. I did not question his reasons, for I was sure that to him those reasons were important, and were thereby important to me.

I have written down these incidents and conversations entirely from memory, and I am sure that they are accurate. For although I forget many things, I have a peculiar capacity for remembering the actual words of conversations and quotations that have interested or impressed me. At best, however, these reminiscences present only one aspect of a remarkably many-sided personality. He was old enough to be my grandfather; and I am convinced (as I have already said) that he talked to many other people as he talked to me. Yet I want to record my own memories of him, my memories of his friendship with a child; his extraordinary capacity to appear interested in a child's efforts to write poetry, its indignation about the doctrines of the Church, or its pleasures in the latest litter of guinea-pigs. I hope thus to convey something of the man's unconquerable youth, his humour, his strength, above all his power of pointing the way.

"*Carpe Diem,*" he would exclaim whenever one became fretful, indignant at hypocrisy, rebellious against life as it is. "Never mind! Seize the day, seize the day." Our friendship had something perhaps of the classical quality, that is if the classical quality may be taken as representing the play of human types: puppets, marionettes symbolising the eternal in earthly relations. He, a type of all mankind, old, labouring, conquering, shattered often by his own humanity, born each day again, retaining always to the end that mysterious force that we do not understand, the force which drives man onward, keeping him eternally hopeful, eternally young. I, youth, pressing after, crowding him with questions, questions, forever asking him questions:

"Rameses, why do people think like that? Why are they so *wrong*?"

"M. A., don't cry for the moon!"

I have, in this memoir, laid stress on Goldie's clarity of thought and utterance, his accuracy, his love of reason. His was certainly the most clear-cut personality I have ever known.

Such a presentation may lead the reader to a misconception of his humanity in the common joys and sorrows of existence. In reading over my own recollections I am continually struck anew by the hyper-sensitiveness of this builder of Empire. I have seen him wince like a child under the lash of cruel or stupid criticism. Pain would always turn to anger, he would turn crimson as a child does, incline to argument, or walk quickly away. This peculiar sensitiveness perhaps explains very simply his lack of public recognition. But in order that he shall be more fully understood in this question of his humanity, I will recall how, soon after my brother's death from consumption ("that brilliant and beautiful boy" as Goldie called him) he urged me to go to Switzerland for a time. There he joined me and together we walked in the mountains. There in that cold spring among the leafless blossoming trees that appeared to me only as the waste loveliness of youth and life, I would ask: "Rameses, is there no personal life after death?"—"I have no reason to think it."—"Neither have I." He knew that the truth, or what appears the truth, however brutal, could alone strengthen me. Perhaps he knew that already long before the age of thirteen I had realised that suffering is the central fact of life.

For years he had said to me, "One day you will discover the secret of happiness." I would answer: "Why not tell me?" "No, that would be of no use, you must find it out for yourself." I remember very vividly an occasion in Rome. It was a spring morning on the Palatine Hill, and we were seated opposite one another upon two blocks of marble, and as usual discussing life. I said: "When I woke up this morning I suddenly realised that it doesn't matter tuppence if one is happy or not, so long as one is always interested." Sir George almost jumped from his block of *cippolino*. "You've found the secret!" he cried.

Again during the War when my cousin Robin Hollway, my last brother as it might seem, was in the trenches, having refused all offers of Staff appointments, I remember how his colonel wrote home to complain of only one weakness in Robin. He would "insist on reading the Greek poets during bombardments when shells were bursting around him." Commenting on his gallantry in his first action, Goldie wrote: "I am proud of him but not surprised."

Three years after the War this cousin, badly wounded, who had taken a Balliol Classical Scholarship at sixteen, and had perhaps the most remarkable brain I have ever intimately known, blew out that brain one morning in a bathroom in Half Moon Street. Goldie wrote: "I have been miserable all day. He had genius. I am so sorry for his mother, not for him. I am never sorry for the dead."

It is not unfitting to record here that Goldie once told me that as a young man he had himself considered the question of suicide, and had decided once and for ever against it. "I always carry, however," he added, "a tube of poison in my pocket in case of accident. I would not live if mutilated or incurably ill."

III

BEING essentially the man of action, he was not a fine letter-writer; that is to say his letters have small value, from the purely literary point of view. On the other hand, they are extraordinarily characteristic, simple, strong, direct. I remember with regret the long and charming letters he wrote to me when I was a child. Those I am sure would have been worth printing.

On looking up his letters I find that I have kept very few. I have a long one which was sent by hand. Across the top of the envelope is written: "For a leisure moment." It opens thus:

M. A.,

My answer must be prosaic. A poet may be trusted to say all there is to be said on the ideal side of life, a most intense and persistent side, but (at most) only one half of existence. We may, by aeroplanes (or other means) pass thrilling hours in the clouds; but for the greater part of

> most of our lives, gravitation keeps us on the ground. . . .

Here follow eight pages of excellent advice, ending thus:

> Each person's intimate work, if it is to be great must be solitary. Africa was a forbidden topic in my family.

Here is another characteristic opening:

> DEAR M. A.,
>
> You give me no address, you give me no date, I did not receive the fifty letters. But I am quite satisfied now that I know about them. "The spirit keepeth alive." . . .

And here another:

> TOO MATHEMATICAL, BUT EVER IMPATIENT M. A.,
>
> The only absolute rule in life is not to ask too much of it. The only golden rule is that there is no golden rule. Don't do anything irrevocable before I arrive. . . .

Another:

> Don't think me mad but I have wanted so to

> write to you for months, but dared not. I could not, it was not my business. Now I feel like Christian (the *Pilgrim's Progress* one) when, at last, the burden fell from his shoulders. . . .
>
> I have confidence in your brain when uninfluenced by passion, and no confidence in your brain, or mine, or anyone else's when passion manages to get the helm in its hands. Passion is like the Cresta Run. . . . One can avoid getting on to it, but once there, one must slide, anywhere! Passion is a bad master. No one knows that better than your ancient friend.

At the end of this letter is the following postscript:

> Someone is playing the *Liebestod* (beautifully). I can't bear it!

I quote these extracts from his letters because they give an impression of the man far better than words of mine can do.

I give the one letter I possess in which he writes of the war:

> *Nov.* 19, 1916
>
> In war anything may happen from day to day, so that I can never feel happy until peace is signed.

But at present I feel much happier than I did: (1) In August-September 1914 when it seemed as if France was about to be completely destroyed as a fighting ally. (2) In November 1914 when the German occupation of the French coast (with its immense consequences to our trade and food supplies) seemed not unlikely. (3) In February-March 1915 when the Blockade or Submarine Menace was most serious. (4) In May-July 1915, when the Russian collapse occurred and no one knew where it would stop.

All that has happened since in S. Eastern Europe is consequential on that collapse. No doubt it has prolonged the war for a year, or perhaps two years, but that is a lesser consideration.

The only vital question is "Who will laugh last?" To that my answer is the same as it would have been after the sun of Austerlitz: *England*. Possibly, though not probably, Egypt may go temporarily. Possibly, though not probably, the Germans may get Baghdad. But so long as we are masters of the oceans from pole to pole, we can shift our bases and land troops where we please, and Germany's policy of expansion will be her ruin.

> The worst of discussing the war is that I cannot now write on other subjects.
>
> I saw something of all five raids on the London area, and nearly everything of four of them, viz. Hoxton and Liverpool Street Raid—31st May, Bermondsey and New Cross Raid—7th of September, Holborn and Bloomsbury Raid—8th of September, Strand to Croydon Raid—13th of October.
>
> You must know that my flat occupies the very highest floor of the very loftiest building in England; so that I have unrivalled opportunities of seeing these fireworks displays, whether north, south, east or west. When the fireworks cease, I go out, and explore the ruins while still burning. I wish you were here to see it all.

About this time he wrote to me:

> You ask what I think about the future. I will give you the same answer as I gave ——, whom yesterday I met in the street. —— said: "Well, are you afraid of the war?" "No," I answered, "I am afraid of the Peace."

It was not without emotion that I found in his last letter to me the following words:

June 12, 1924

Your letter of the day before yesterday (dated characteristically the 4th of June) has reached me five minutes ago.

From the time when I first knew you 25 years ago, when you were a small, small child. . . . When you next write to me, months, or years hence, tell me one more thing. Then I shall be able to judge better whether your philosophy is likely to hold out, as I trust it will. You ask after me. Well, I remain a philosopher too. I have never abandoned *Carpe Diem,* in spite of being completely crippled by emphysema of the lung. I can't talk (except gently with one or two at a time) or walk (or rather creep) more than 100 yards without stopping for breath. I have seen you catch trout, and you know how they gasp when in the basket. Otherwise I am perfectly well, and I read most of the day and night, and am quite content and peaceful, taking if possible more interest than before in life and thought. I could do with more than 24 hours in the day, and am never bored. Seize the day, M. A., seize the day.

Writing tires me, goodbye.

I will give a final instance of his inconsistency, his quality of the unexpected. From time to time he wrote romantic, even religious, poetry. Here are three examples. First, a poem written in anagram form (which he favoured) on the theme of a ruined monastery in Yorkshire:

ROCHE ABBEY

Ruined fane, and cloister grey, sleeping in your verdant nest;
Organ, monk, and abbot mute, sunk, as I shall sink, to rest;
Canticle, and vesper-hymn, chanted now by birds alone,
Harmonized by murmuring waters to a soft and mystic tone;
Elevate my earth-bound nature, to a nobler, loftier aim;
Aid the struggling love of duty, crush the selfish love of fame;
By the lives of self-effacement passed within your valley sweet,
By the peace that throbbing passions found in your secure retreat
Ere I leave your precincts, teach me life's temptations to defy,
Yield to me your fateful secret: how to live and how to die.

I once asked him why he, who so disliked churches that he could scarcely be persuaded to enter one, should have written this poem. "Oh, a mood," he replied crossly.

Here is another anagram which he wrote at my request as an inscription in a Mortimer Menpes volume on Venice which he gave me:

To Dorothy Ashton on her 15th Birthday

A DREAM

Visions of the sea-girt city!—Gondolas (with maskers) glide
Eerie through the dusky byways lapt by Adria's gentle tide;
Nuptials, blest by Holy Father, of the Doges with the sea;
Executions: plots: stilettos: Councils of the Ten and Three:
Zephyrs softly fan the waters where, upon the broad lagoon—
In its ruffled mirror dancing Hesperus and crescent moon—
Anchored lie the stately galleys and the allied hosts of France,
Laden with unholy trophies from the wreckage of Byzance:
Ah! more glorious those that bear the fame of Venice to each pole
By thy matchless brush, Vecelli! lord of colour, form, and soul.
Ever thronged the Piazzetta, where the winged lion flies.

Life reigns o'er St. Mark's Piazza, Death within the
Bridge of Sighs:
Lovelier glows each dome and palace, mellowed by the
sunset beam:
Art and nature, love and drama, blend in one romantic
dream.

Finally, here is one written to a child:

TO A WILD DAFFODIL

Darling child of wind and sleet,
All your mingled loveliness,
Frail yet strong and proud yet sweet,
Faintly could mere words express:

Oh had I the sculptor's skill
Dreams to draw from mead and wood,
I would never rest until
Life-like for all time you stood.

IV

> I have done the State some service and they know it.
> No more of that. *Othello*

Goldie's wish to remain unrecognised was, as has been shown, an obsession. Before embarking on this sketch I determined to discover how far his object has been achieved. I must know for certain whether any life had been written, however slight. I went accordingly to the London Library and there ransacked the shelves above those narrow ironwork corridors. I found no work on Sir George Goldie but about thirty books on Nigeria, and in five or six of these only is he mentioned at all.[1]

Before leaving I had the curiosity to look up the books dealing with Cecil Rhodes, and the making of South Africa. I found at least ten full-length biographies of Rhodes, while the books on his work in Africa—in which he figures as the great Empire-builder that he was—filled several tiers of the shelves. The Founder of Nigeria has not a single volume to his name.

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[1] See Notes on Books.

At a Nigerian Exhibition held within recent years, there was nothing to remind the English public sauntering through the rooms that Goldie was the founder of Nigeria. Can it be conceived that at a Rhodesian Exhibition there should be no reminder of Cecil Rhodes?

Speeches and articles, even by distinguished and well-informed authorities, which deal with the early history of Nigeria, and of the beginnings of indirect rule (the development of which is rightly connected with Lord Lugard), seldom if ever mention Goldie, still less his work. Yet the Niger Company, and before that the United African Company, were only synonyms for Goldie's name.

In 1927 Mr. Ormsby-Gore read a paper at a meeting of the Geographical Society on his return from a six weeks' visit to Nigeria. I will quote a passage from this paper: "The history of Northern Nigeria from the death of Othman Ibn Fodio,[1] to the coming of Sir Frederick Lugard is the history of the re-establishment of the independence of all these states, under their Fulani governors, as separate sovereign powers."

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[1] Othman Ibn Fodio was a religious leader who founded the Fulani Empire about 1807. See Historical Introduction.

Instances could be multiplied of the omission of Goldie's name from articles and lectures on Nigerian history. On May 2nd, 1928, an article two columns in length appeared on the front sheet of *The Times*. It was headed "A Visit to Nigeria—Thirty Years' Progress—An Empire Market," and was a vivid description by Mr. Walter Elliot, M.P., of a recent journey in the company of two other members of Parliament. He gives an account of present conditions in Nigeria, and describes the suppression of the slave trade, and the establishment of settled government and of indirect rule. "It was Chamberlain" (as he truly says) "who initiated the policy of developing these great estates of the Crown, and who by administration, by research, by arms where necessary, brought about the ordered vigour which is the mark of all these states to-day. The success of this policy may be judged by the fact that these wide territories, these twenty million warlike people, are governed and regulated by a power which has at its hand no more than the four battalions of the West African Frontier Force, every man of them recruited from the country itself." And further: "Nigeria in particular is a black man's country, and can never be anything else. If development is finally to be done the black man must do it. This is the principle on which successive Governments have gone in producing the political system now in force. This system is called 'indirect rule'; the desire is to have a Government of the African, by the African, for the African."

Neither of these accounts mentions that it was Goldie who amalgamated the various trading Companies on the coast, thus preventing their withdrawal; Goldie who proclaimed the abolition of the slave traffic; Goldie who handed over to the Government "those great estates of the Crown"; Goldie who initiated the policy subsequently adopted by the Government; and last, but not least, that the present system of government is based upon Goldie's original scheme.

I will quote Lord Scarbrough, speaking in 1899, on the presentation to Sir George of a portrait of himself by the Niger Company.[1] Lord Scarbrough offered testimony, based on personal inspection, of the remarkable organisation existing on the Niger. He said he would never forget what that organisation was, or that it was controlled by one man, who had no precedents to guide him, but created them as he went along, and in an incredibly short time had won for Great Britain the richest part of Tropical Africa. The public should not forget that what was written on the picture was absolutely and literally true: *Nigeria was founded by one man.*

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[1] See Frontispiece.

Sir George in his reply referred to the inscription at the foot of the picture, dedicating it to the Founder of Nigeria. That inscription, he confessed, pleased him, partly for a childish reason. It vividly recalled a thrill of emotion such as he could not hope to feel again, when, twenty years before on the Niger, he suddenly grasped the firm conviction that the one thing needed there was civilised government, through which alone there could come about a great development of commerce, by giving to the people peace, justice and liberty.

Lord Aberdare in making the presentation said he trusted that the picture would be handed down by Sir George Goldie's children, for their example, and in remembrance of an ancestor who had given a great province to his country, and had helped to make the history of his time.[1]

Finally, let me quote in support a few sentences from Lady Lugard's article on Nigeria in the

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[1] *West Africa*, August 29th, 1925.

Encyclopaedia Britannica: "The administrative control of the territories was practically from first to last vested in the person of Sir George Goldie. . . . On the surrender of the Charter . . . no administrative records were handed over, and very little machinery remained. Two enactments, however, bore testimony to the legislation of the Company. One, which by force of circumstances remained inoperative, was the abolition of the legal status of slavery, proclaimed in the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. The other, more practical, which has remained in operation to the present day . . . was the absolute prohibition of the trade in spirits beyond the parallel of 7° N."

In reading the back files of contemporary newspapers, I get four curiously strong impressions. The first is that the making of Nigeria was a one-man show. The second, that it was accomplished in the face of persistent and violent opposition at home. The third, that Goldie continually endeavoured to throw the limelight upon his work, and away from himself. No one, I think, reading the newspaper articles of 1899 can doubt this. The fourth impression is, that the phase of what one might call the spade-work is veiled and obscure. No detailed account of this time appears to exist. Yet this important period was covered by the years 1877 (when Goldie first visited Nigeria and conceived his project) to 1879, when, by his efforts, the United African Company was formed, to 1886, when after perpetual struggle of one kind or another, a Charter was at last granted to the Company. These years, therefore, should be the most interesting ones, because they represent the most creative years, when the helm was in the hand of one man. Not only this; those years must contain the true story of Goldie the pioneer, and a detailed account of that time could alone, so it seems to me, give an accurate appreciation of his genius.

Where, again, are the records of 1885 onwards, when, to quote from *The Making of Northern Nigeria*, by C. W. J. Orr: "The years that followed the Berlin Conference witnessed in this portion of Africa an international rivalry of the keenest description. Some of the foremost of the European powers entered on a hard fought struggle to obtain a footing, and extend their influence over various regions of the African continent. In the neighbourhood of the Niger, the curious spectacle presented itself, of a small, commercial Company, left to up-hold its interests, and therefore those of the Nation under whose flag it fought, against those of two powerful foreign Governments. This Company had secured for Great Britain the country at the mouth of the Niger."

Do any papers exist relating to this vast work, or have they all been destroyed? It is possible that the whole history of the making of Nigeria must remain forever untold.

When I had almost completed this Memoir I wrote to Mr. Ronald Norman, late Chairman of the L.C.C., who had been a friend of Goldie's, to ask if he had any letters of public interest. I had already anticipated his answer; he had nothing. Mr. Norman has added, however, an incident of great interest. Goldie told him that he had destroyed his own history of his life-work shortly after the outbreak of War in 1914, feeling that "it was deprived of value." He had said: "Since the War I feel that I am out of date."

What did he mean? One might speculate for the remainder of one's life.

I close this section with a letter written by Sir George to Mrs. Stopford Green, the historian, and wife of John Richard Green, the author of *A Short History of the English People.* This letter was sent in reply to a request that he should allow his biography to be written, on his retiring from presidency of the African Society, founded in honour of his friend Mary Kingsley, of which he was the first President.

MY DEAR MRS. GREEN,

Lord Scarbrough has told me of your *most* kind and flattering idea of devoting considerable space in the next number of the African Society's Journal to a biography of its retiring President, and of your entrusting this work to Mr. Morel.

Let me say at once that, if such a summary of my life were to appear, and if you yourself were unable to undertake it, I know few people whose knowledge and capacity would so completely satisfy the hero (?) of the tale—a poor hero!

But I must *implore* you, as a true friend, not to pursue further your most generous design.

I should not mind the Society—if it feels so inclined—devoting a paragraph to any services it may think I have rendered to itself, to its regret that I am unable, at present, to continue those services, or even to its referring in *general* terms, to my long continued efforts for the spread of civilisation in Africa. Such a concise and general statement, coming as I know it would from the hearts of my colleagues, would indeed deeply gratify me. But more than this I could not bear.

Twenty years ago, at the Berlin Conference where I was able to do useful work which has never been made public, some leading journalists asked me to allow my name to be used, on the ground that the public cared more for personalities than for generalities; and they pointed out how I should be helping the cause I had at heart. Between then and 1900, other public men urged on me the same argument. Since 1900, four of our principal publishing firms have written to me or interviewed me *repeatedly* urging that the time had come for issuing a biography.

Although deeply grateful for these delicate compliments, I have throughout refused compliance. I daresay it has been partly due to excessive sensitiveness; and if this were all, I should try to conquer it. But behind that, lies a principle which has remained unaltered ever since I began to *think*, nearly half a century ago. That principle is: "*L'oeuvre, c'est tout; l'homme, c'est rien.*" We (not I) bring our children up to think that fame, position, recognition by the public, are proper objects of ambition. I *loathe* them all. I do not believe that the world will make any great advance until children (generally) are brought up with the idea that real happiness is only to be found in doing good work, in however small (or great) a sphere.

I felt this as strongly at 18 as I do to-day. If you say "this is only intense pride," I shall agree with you. I do not imagine that I have a higher sense of duty or philanthropy than my neighbours. I do not assert that my pride is an amiable quality, and I conceal it carefully except on an urgent occasion such as this, when I am compelled to open my heart freely, to a friend.

Having all my life regarded self-advertisers, from Caesar to Napoleon, as the worst enemies of human progress, I cannot, in my old age, forswear my principles and join the army of notoriety hunters—poor things.

When my active work is over, I want (before I die) to write on this subject. *Una voce poco fa;* but the sea is made up of drops, and I may be able to do something to help the world to see in which direction true happiness lies.

At the time of Goldie's death several people said to me: "Had you ever heard of a man called Sir George Goldie?" One of these was a member of the Foreign Office, aged forty. "Yes," I replied and let the conversation drop. Goldie was just dead and the question was intolerable. Something of his own obstinate pride seemed to leap in me and command silence. For I knew that this man had, in little more than twenty years, without personal profit, and almost without bloodshed, accomplished a feat comparable—although on a smaller scale—to the conquest of British India. Had there been more fighting, more bloodshed, he would have been famous. Incredible indeed that self-effacement can have been so sweeping in its results.

V

I do not intend to enter into the rights and wrongs of the Royal Niger Company in particular, or of Imperialism in general. It is a great moral question, one of the greatest in the world, intruding as it does on ethics, and invading philosophy. Personally I have never been able to decide whether or no Western civilisation is desirable even in Europe. Probably the more fully a man lives, the more intelligent, the more sentient and therefore the more truly moral, even spiritual his life will be. Perhaps therefore it is good to encourage people to be more sensitive, happier and more miserable. This is one of the questions which many of us, perhaps, will never be quite sure about. I have, however, noticed that the anti-Imperialist is usually a man who spends his working life in London, and his holidays on the Continent. He has not seen native babies, their eyes two black blotches of flies, the mother inanely smiling, not even troubling to brush the flies away; has not seen cholera at work; not witnessed the horrors of slavery; has not realised in short, the primitive conditions of mental and physical suffering that have existed as a matter of course since the beginnings of human life on this planet. The worst perhaps that can be said of Imperialism is that it gives to the native a new set of troubles in exchange for the old.

In cases of men such as Clive, Rhodes, Goldie, genius has from the start the reins in her hands. Such men are elemental, inevitable. They have always existed, they will always exist. There was no solution, no outlet for their peculiar talent, but the one which they chose. Such men are turned out seething from the great workshop, the foundry of life.

All the men who worked with Goldie, however, knew that he was in many ways exceptional. Of him it might be truly said that he represented a rare combination of human qualities: idealism and practical genius. Idealist, because he was one of our few Imperialists who, engaging on an enterprise of this magnitude, and asking no personal gain, was actuated solely by his belief in English civilisation. Rightly or wrongly, he believed in British government for the African peoples, and he gave it to them.

He believed in his own country and he gave to his own country a territory seven times her own size.

The conquest by peaceful means, or otherwise, of uncivilised races by more civilised races has hitherto been universal throughout the world. It may be that in the far, or near future, such a method of government will appear to our descendants at its best an anachronism, at its worst a crime; yet it is well to remember that only in the last century with the spread of humanitarian ideas did the modern world begin to emerge from moral barbarism. In touching therefore upon this aspect of colonisation I will quote from a speech which Goldie addressed to the shareholders of the Company previous to his retirement:[1]

"In an unsettled country where the foundations for the security of native life, liberty, and property are being laid by the efforts of a small number of British subjects, scattered amongst dense populations of turbulent savages, and where the conditions of progress are hampered by climatic and physical difficulties, it is of the utmost importance that these efforts should be united, instead of being wasted in internal jealousies and struggles, which not only retard the progress of civilisation but must ultimately destroy what has already been effected. I am not ashamed to confess my personal responsibility for the conception and execution of this policy of united effort from the year 1879—three years before the present foundation of this Company—down to the present day. It seemed to me that thus alone could the Niger Territories be won for Great Britain, and British influence be maintained there during the period of foundation and pacification. My colleagues have throughout entrusted to me the carrying out of this policy and eighteen years' experience has convinced me of its soundness, so long as the administering power of those regions remains in the invidious position—unparalleled in our generation—of a trading company liable to competition with other Europeans within its jurisdiction."

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[1] *The Making of Northern Nigeria*, by C. W. J. Orr (Macmillan).

I quote also from his speech at Grosvenor House in May of 1895 in which he gives his views on prohibition in Nigeria:

"I speak from sixteen years' experience, and I say confidently, that unless immediate steps are taken to stop this traffic, not by higher duties, but by absolute prohibition, a state of things will soon be brought about that must ultimately lead to the entire abandonment of the country. I cannot believe that the conscience of Europe will long allow that the vast populous regions of tropical Africa should be used only as a cesspool for European alcohol."[1]

I knew that Goldie had been intensely interested in the colour question of the United States of America, and it is perhaps worth recording that very many years ago, foreseeing its many dangers and difficulties, he advocated the policy, to use his own words, "of Dr. Blyden—himself a remarkable type of the capabilities of the black race—to terminate the war of colour by the restoration of the Negroes to the homes of their forefathers." He believed the evil effects of slavery to be lasting, and urged the United States Government to deport without delay their entire Negro population to Africa. He actually worked out the cost of the scheme, discussed it with Sir Edward Grey, and presented it to the United States Government for consideration. Never did any man respect individual liberty more passionately than Goldie.

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[1] *British West Africa*, Lieut.-Col. A. F. Mockler-Ferryman (1898), quotes this speech.

What then of his Imperialism? That he was inconsistent in his private life I knew, but that he should be inconsistent in public life I could not believe. I was therefore much interested to find my belief confirmed by Mr. Leonard Woolf in his book *Imperialism and Civilisation.* Mr. Woolf is not an Imperialist. On the contrary. His book is a wholesale denunciation of the policy of European Imperialism. The following passages are therefore significant:

"No one can pretend that the conditions in Kenya are satisfactory. The natives are backward economically, and native agriculture is actually discouraged in the interests of the white settlers.

"On the west coast exactly the opposite system is in operation. There to all intents and purposes, the land has been reserved for the natives, its alienation to and exploitation by Europeans and European Companies has been forbidden."

Again: "Even in 1885 the statesmen of Europe recognised that if civilisation as well as trade was to be introduced into Africa, two things were necessary; the material interests of the native would have to be protected, and he would have to be educated to understand and utilise the blessings of civilisation. Only on the west coast have the material interests of the natives been protected against the white man."

After reading these passages I again took special pains to ascertain from Lord Scarbrough that the present form of Government in Nigeria is based upon Goldie's original scheme and he replied that this was so. "The policy of ruling through Native Chiefs was his, prohibition of Liquor Trade in the Northern Province . . . abolition of slave traffic, all his."[1] I understood at last why the men who know all about Goldie—measured unfanatical men—still speak of him as a man apart from his fellows. I understood the look that leaps into the eyes of such men of the older generation when, as occasionally happens, I meet someone who knew him.

To be a pioneer of Empire is an achievement; to the majority of men it is even a great achievement; but to be also a man of heart and personal integrity, is rare indeed. Sir George told a friend that at one time he was personally offered an immense sum by a foreign Power if he would agree to develop for them the country he had been responsible for opening up for England. I remembered how he used to say, speaking as from a great store of personal experience and memories: "No man is fit to be trusted with power."

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[1] See Appendix for Goldie's published views on administration. See also Mary Kingsley's *West African Studies*, from which Mr. Gwynn has quoted in his Introduction.

When Goldie had completed his work in Africa, he was offered certain Government appointments at home and abroad. He refused them. To the day of his death it remained his proud boast. "I have never served under any Government." He was also offered a peerage, which he refused without mentioning the fact to his wife and family.

The total trade of Nigeria in 1929 was valued at thirty-one million pounds.[1] From start to finish Goldie made no personal profit out of the Niger Company. He was a moderately rich man, and he gave up part of his private fortune to launching it during the early years; but he was a poorer man when he left the Company than when he entered it.

What then is pride? I do not know. Probably it is only a makeshift for strength. Difficult however as it is to analyse, one is left with the certainty that pride, conscious or subconscious, and unreasonable as it often appears, is perhaps the sole human quality that all men respect. Goldie would say: "Where is the difference between the very large and the very small?" For all his material conception of the life of the body, he was the least material of men. His personal possessions at his death (apart from his books) consisted of a gun-metal watch, a penknife, and a single horn shirt-stud. It is pleasant to reflect that he, like many another remarkable man, was born at the right moment. Born in a happy hour for the fulfilment of his destiny; at the moment of revolt against the grosser manifestations of Victorian materialism; a revolt most stimulating to his sensitive and rebellious mind.

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[1] Owing to the world depression it has since fallen to fifteen and a half million pounds.

I never knew a man who so loathed the press, who so despised its values—those ready-made opinions served up in slabs on the breakfast table every morning. He never grew accustomed to it, being one of these people who are born perpetually young, perpetually indignant. He had less of the herd instinct than anyone I have ever known; in fact he had none.

He died before the mania for self-advertisement had engulfed the modern world. Certain aspects of this would, I think, have driven him to desperation.

Goldie remains, in his public life, the type of what Montaigne calls "the well-born soul."

He had a lion's share of life and he died in the full knowledge of death. One of the last things he said was: "I am spending my last twenty-four hours of life in my favourite occupation: reading." No man, waiting for his pulse to stop, in the stark recognition of death that a strong brain alone preserves, can have reached a finer consummation. He was surely too wise to regret this life, and certainly he desired no other.

VI

ONE dingy April morning I decided that I must visit that vast necropolis in Brompton where he lies buried. When I got there I was stopped at the gate by a fat man with a red face, obviously reinforced by whisky. "I don't blame him," I said to myself. "Not open till 'arf-parst one," he said. I assured him that I should be more than grateful if he would let me in then and there. "Oh if it comes to that . . . 'Oo is it ye want?" he said. "I want to see the grave of Sir George Goldie," I replied; "how can I find it?" "Sir George Goldie? don't seem to 'ave 'eard of 'im some'ow. . . ." Scratching his head: "Now if the orfice was open you'd be all right; get 'im in no time. 'Arf a mo; why! 'e's in the Circus!"

I was admitted. We trudged along together. "Forty-four acres we 'ave 'ere," my guide informed me. We entered the Circus. Almost immediately upon the left appeared the inscription I sought: "Sir George Taubman Goldie, Founder of Nigeria." My guide waved his arm triumphantly. "Why, there 'e is. Now isn't that wonderful, stumbling right on to 'im like that, as you might say." "Thank you," I said. "Shall I see you at the gate when I go out?" He left me. Under a granite cross, beside his wife, lies my old and irreverent friend. His number is 161-699. A thin intermittent wind blew at intervals, rattling the tin cans containing withering flowers on the neighbouring graves. A sound of knocking caused me to turn my head. It was the sound of a trowel; a young couple were decorating a grave. I wondered irritably how much money the guide made by letting people in at all hours. There is a large congregation at Brompton Cemetery, a great gathering of the eminently respectable and leisured classes, packed thick as sardines. I noticed many family parties: "This is the family vault of John Howard Nicholson," and again, "This is the family grave of Captain Smith"; this one being adorned by a marble medallion of that officer's beloved wife, and by tiny tablets of innumerable offspring. The Elegy in a London Churchyard has yet to be written.

"So here," said I, "are contained the relics of that extraordinary manifestation of human energy." A closed-in place, a cross, herded in with his fellows;

in death, as in life, the least spectacular of men. A grave more unsuitable it is impossible to imagine. "Consistent to the end," I thought, remembering the grave of Cecil Rhodes among the boulders on the veldt, and those of many nonentities who lie in Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's.

In Brompton Cemetery are no great spaces, no river-mouth, no wind from the sea.

APPENDIX

Note.—The only statement of policy by Sir George Goldie himself which appears to exist is set down in the introduction he wrote for a book by one of his officers. In view of the fact that he here describes the principles of Indirect Rule upon which Lord Lugard, Sir Donald Cameron, and others have built, it has been thought well to reprint the essay in full, omitting only one or two short passages referring to the history and geography of Nigeria which are unnecessary here.

Introduction by Sir George Goldie to "CAMPAIGNING ON THE UPPER NILE AND NIGER," by Lieutenant Seymour Vandeleur, D.S.O. (Methuen & Co., 1898.)

If, in the year of grace when Her Majesty was born, a traveller had combined in a single volume his experiences on the Nile and Niger, the incongruity of the subjects would have then appeared almost as great as though the rivers had been the Ganges and St. Lawrence. We now know that the vast regions between the Nile and the Niger are so closely connected by unity of religious faith and by internal commerce, that political events on the one stream react upon the other; we recognise that the Nile and Niger questions are not disconnected, but are two sides of a single question—that of the Sudan.

Between these great rivers of East and West Africa lie regions of the breadth of the entire continent of Europe, regions which were, in 1819, altogether unknown and believed to be but sparsely inhabited. It was not until Major Denham and Captain Clapperton, in 1823–25, and Dr. Barth, in 1849–55, explored this vast area on behalf of the British Government, that the civilised world recognised that this heart of Africa was no barren desert. They found that it was filled with populous and organised States, that it possessed a fertile soil and intelligent and industrious inhabitants; but they did not sufficiently recognise—and this discovery was reserved for our days—that the considerable civilisation of the Sudan could make no further progress, that this lost thirtieth of the human race could have no adequate connection through commerce with the outer world, until a sound basis was substituted for that on which the social system in those regions has hitherto rested.

No student of history can, indeed, assert that the institution of slavery in its customary forms is an absolute barrier to intellectual progress and the creation of wealth. Greece, Rome and the United States of America have afforded a sufficient answer to that extreme view. Nor can the slave *trade* be such a barrier, if the word be confined to its usual and proper meaning of buying and selling of slaves; for this has been the natural course in all ages in all slave-holding countries; while the capture of slaves in war has proved, at any rate, preferable to the more ancient practice of killing all prisoners.

The radical vice of the Sudan, the disease which, until cured, must arrest all intellectual and material progress, is the general, constant, and intense prevalence of slave-*raiding*. It is not possible, in a brief preface, to present any adequate picture of a system under which considerable towns disappear in a night and whole tracts of country are depopulated in a single dry season—not as a result of war, but as the normal method of the rulers for collecting their human cattle for payment of tribute to their suzerains or for sale to distant parts of the continent. Much has been written on this extraordinary subject. It may suffice to refer the reader to Canon Robinson's *Hausa Land*, and to Sir Harry Johnson's *Autobiography of a Slave*, which, though presented in the form of fiction, is an under-statement of the facts. But perhaps a more vivid picture is given in *The Life and Travels of Dorugu*, dictated by himself, a translation of which appears in Dr. Schoen's *Magana Hausa*, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Dorugu was a native of the Niger Sudan, who was ultimately brought to London by Dr. Barth. The merit of his story lies in its artlessness and brevity. His childhood is largely filled with sudden flights into the forest or hills to escape the slave-raiders. His family rebuild their burnt farmhouses, or change their homes with philosophic equanimity like that of vine cultivators on the slopes of a volcano. The simplicity with which Dorugu relates the fears and dangers of his boyhood shows that to him they seemed as inevitable as measles and school to an English boy. At last he is caught in his turn; his parents, brothers and sisters, for whom he evidently had a strong affection, vanish suddenly and entirely out of his life, and he himself becomes one of the millions of pieces of human currency which pass from one Sudanese State to another.

At first sight it seems impossible to reconcile this universal and continual slave-raiding in times of peace with the considerable civilisation and complex political organisation of the Sudanese States. The system probably originated from the great demand for negro slaves that has existed from time immemorial amongst the lighter coloured races of mankind. The docility of the negro, combined with his intelligence and capacity for work, must have given him a special value in the slave markets of antiquity, as in those of modern days. The growth of Mohammedanism, with its polygamous institutions, during the eight centuries after the Hegira, gave an immense impulse to the export slave trade of the Sudan to Asia, Europe and North Africa. At the commencement of the sixteenth century the philanthropic efforts of Bishop Las Casas laid the foundations of the negro slave trade to the New World. Three centuries of this export trade on a large scale must have contributed to confirm and develop the old slave-raiding habits of the Sudan, though it seems unjust of certain writers to lay the entire blame on Christendom for a social canker which had existed in Africa for many hundreds of years, before Charles V, out of pure benevolence, permitted the import into St. Domingo of slaves from the Portuguese Guinea Coast. But although the qualities of the negro and the demand for his services by lighter coloured races in all ages account for the inception of the remarkable system of slave-raiding, the number of slaves exported has probably been insignificant compared with the number dealt with in the internal traffic of Negroland.

To understand this question properly, it must be remembered that the value of a slave is extremely small near his place of capture. His initial price is often lower than that of a sheep, which has less tendency to escape. As the slave is taken farther away from his home, his value rises rapidly; so that it is commercially a sound transaction to send a hundred slaves, say, from Bornu to Darfur, while bringing a hundred others from Darfur to Bornu. No doubt they have also a value as transport animals, but I venture to assert that this feature of the traffic has been over-estimated, especially as camels are plentiful in the northern regions, while horses and donkeys are largely used and might be cheaply bred to any extent throughout the Sudan. While, therefore, a well-planned system of Sudanese railways would have a considerable indirect effect on the internal slave trade, and consequently on slave-raiding, it would not, as generally believed, directly touch the root of the evil. This can only be eradicated by the same vigorous means which we employ in Europe for the prevention of crime and violence. It is, I fear, useless to hope that commerce with Europe will, by itself, suffice to alter a social system so deeply ingrained in the Sudanese mind; for the creation of commerce on a large scale is impossible until slave-raiding is abated.

Let me not be misunderstood as preaching a crusade of liberty against the Sudanese States. To this policy I am most strenuously opposed. Force must indeed underlie all social action, whether in Africa or Europe, whether in public life or in the more intimate relations of parent and child, schoolmaster and pupil. But there is a wide difference between its necessity and constant display and its unnecessary use. The policemen of our towns have not their batons habitually drawn, though they do not hesitate to use them on occasions. There is probably no part of the world where diplomacy is more effective than Negroland, provided it is known that behind diplomacy is military power. There is certainly no part of the world where the maxim *Festina lente* is more applicable.

When, however, the application of force becomes absolutely necessary, it ought surely to be thorough and rapid. Yet last spring, after the completion of the operations described by Lieutenant Vandeleur in the latter half of this book, one of the most able and respected organs of public opinion in this country questioned the morality of "mowing down natives with artillery and Maxim guns." Now, these "natives" were the fighting organisation of great regions which they—though in a comparatively small minority—held down with a hand of iron, treating the less warlike inhabitants as cattle to be raided when wanted. The death of each Fulah killed at Bida secured the lives and liberty of scores of peaceful and defenceless natives. If Europe had no material interests to protect and develop in Africa, it would still have the same right, the same duty to extirpate slave-raiding that a man has to knock down a ruffian whom he sees maltreating a woman or child in the street.

While, however, this consideration should satisfy the consciences of persons interested in the welfare of the oppressed millions of Africa, the material importance of opening up the Sudan cannot be overlooked by any European State which subsists largely on its manufacturing and shipping interests. On this point it will be well for me to confine my remarks to the region lying between Lake Chad and the Niger, to which my studies of the last twenty years have been mainly directed. This region has been known of late under the name of the Niger Sudan. It comprises Bornu and the Fulah or Sokoto-Gando Empire, the greater and more valuable portion of which is mainly peopled by the civilised, commerceloving, and industrious Hausas, who form about one-hundredth of mankind, and whose intellectual capacity H. M. Stanley has aptly emphasised by describing them as the "only Central African people who value a book."

In dealing with the value of the markets to be developed in the Niger Sudan, it is difficult to decide on how much must be said and what may be assumed as known. On the one hand, all geographers and many publicists are familiar with the fact that the region in question possesses populous towns and a fertile soil, and, most important of all, races whose industry is untiring, notwithstanding the discouraging and paralysing effects of insecurity of life, liberty, and property. They know that these races are possessed of high intelligence and considerable artistic skill, as displayed in their fine brass and leather work. They know that the early marriages in those latitudes, and the fecundity and vitality of the negro races, have, through countless generations, largely counteracted the appalling destruction of life resulting from slave-raiding, and that under reasonable conditions of security the existing population might soon be trebled and yet live in far greater material comfort than at present.

They know, in short, that all that is needed to convert the Niger Sudan into an African India is the strong hand of a European protector. But, on the other hand, the general public and a considerable section of the press seem still inclined to confuse the Niger Sudan with the very different regions which border the Guinea Coast. The well-clad, intelligent and fairly civilised races of the interior are constantly referred to as half-naked and indolent savages; the fine country which forms three-fourths of the Niger Sudan is confounded with the swamps of the Niger Delta. It is not difficult to recognise how this delusion originated and is maintained. The Niger Sudan is separated from the civilisation of the Mediterranean regions by a thousand miles of the Sahara, which the Tuareg and other wandering tribes render well-nigh impassable. It is separated from the Guinea coast-line by a maritime belt, malarious in climate, and inhabited by lower races who have, perhaps, been gradually pushed seawards by the successive waves of higher races coming from the North. The vast majority of Englishmen—whether soldiers, officials, missionaries, or traders—who have visited West Africa have seen only the coast-line or, at most, the maritime belt, and their impressions of this small section of the continent have very naturally been accepted by uninformed readers as applicable to the vast *Hinterlands*. The difficulty of access to the Niger Sudan regions accounts amply for this important and valuable portion of the earth's surface having been cut off from outside intercourse for all practical purposes until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The barriers which from time immemorial have separated the Sudanese races from the remainder of the human family have at last been effectually broken down, and it may be safely prophesied that within twenty years the union will be complete, provided vital errors of policy are avoided. The two principal dangers can hardly be too often urged, and I propose to deal with them briefly in turn.

Central African races and tribes have, broadly speaking, no sentiment of patriotism, as understood in Europe. There is therefore little difficulty in inducing them to accept what German jurisconsults term *Ober-Hoheit*, which corresponds with one interpretation of our vague term "Protectorate." But when complete sovereignty, or *Landes-Hoheit*, is conceded, they invariably stipulate that their local customs and system of government shall be respected. On this point they are, perhaps more tenacious than most subject races with whom the British Empire has had to deal; while their views and ideals of life are extremely difficult for an Englishman to understand. It is therefore certain that even an imperfect and tyrannical native African administration, if its extreme excesses were controlled by European supervision, would be, in the early stages, productive of far less discomfort to its subjects than well-intentioned but ill-directed efforts of European magistrates, often young and headstrong, and not invariably gifted with sympathy and introspective powers. If the welfare of the native races is to be considered, if dangerous revolts are to be obviated, the general policy of ruling on African principles through native rulers must be followed for the present. Yet it is desirable that considerable districts in suitable localities should be administered on European principles by European officials, partly to serve as types to which the native governments may gradually approximate, but principally as cities of refuge in which individuals of more advanced views may find a living, if native government presses unduly upon them; just as, in

Europe of the Middle Ages, men whose love of freedom found the iron-bound system of feudalism intolerable, sought eagerly the comparative liberty of cities.

The second danger to be apprehended—a war of religions — will probably present itself to every thoughtful European. Fortunately for the Niger Sudan, Moslem fanaticism in this region has not the intensity of that now existing farther East—in Wadai, Darfur and the Nile provinces. Yet ill-advised legislation, a careless administrative system, or a bad selection of officials, might well create an entirely different state of things. Twenty-five to thirty years ago one was able to travel in the Egyptian Sudan without escort, and without even keeping watch at night. With what incredulity would one have then received a prophecy that only ten or fifteen years later that district would become a hotbed of Mohammedan fanaticism, and would be absolutely closed to Christendom for a long period of years! The danger in the Sudanese States is accentuated by the close connection between them, due not only to a common faith and similar modes of life, but also to the constant communications kept up by the Hausa trading caravans which radiate from Hausa-land into distant parts of the continent. Prior to the Mahdist conquests, the pilgrim caravans from Central and Western Africa used to pass through Darfur to the Red Sea. I have travelled with no less than eight hundred Hausa pilgrims in a single caravan between Khartum and Suakin. The rise of Mahdism has temporarily diverted these pilgrim travellers northward from Lake Chad to the Mediterranean; but every part of the Sudan is still permeated by trading caravans constantly passing to and fro, and carrying news, almost always distorted and exaggerated, from one part of this vast region to another. About twelve years ago a placard issued by the late Mahdi was found posted in a street of Bida, no less than two thousand miles distant across country from Khartum; while one of the incidents that precipitated our war last year was the receipt of letters from the Khalifa at Omdurman by the Sultan of Sokoto and the Emirs of Nupe and other provinces of the Sokoto Empire, urging them to drive the Christians out of their country.

The similarity of the Sudan regions from east to west may be further illustrated by a striking fact of no little importance to the British Empire, and in which personally I take more interest than in the commercial development of the Sudan. Its entire northern belt, from Senegambia to the Red Sea, is inhabited by races at once capable of fighting and amenable to discipline. The value of the Sudanese regiments of the Egyptian army is widely known. Less has been heard, as yet, of the splendid qualities of the Hausa as a soldier when well officered. In the campaign described by Lieutenant Vandeleur, these qualities were fully proved. On the rapid and arduous march of seventeen days from Lokojá to Kabba, and thence to Egbon, and again on the march to Illorin, with serious scarcity of water, and at times shortness of rations, our troops were always good-tempered and cheerful; and, although in heavy marching order, would pick up and carry the seventy-pound loads of the porters who fell by the way. In camp their conduct was exemplary, while pillaging and ill-treatment of the natives were unknown. As to their fighting qualities, it is enough to say that, little over 500 strong, they withstood for two days 25,000 to 30,000 of the enemy; that, former slaves of the Fulahs, they defeated their dreaded masters; that, Mohammedans, they fought for their salt against their brethren of the faith; and finally, that though they had never before faced cavalry, they stood firm under charges *home* on to the faces of their squares, maintained perfect fire-discipline, and delivered their volleys as steadily as if on parade. Great Britain has had to rely too much of recent years on Indian troops for tropical climates. This is not a healthy condition of things, for many reasons. She may well find an independent source of military strength in the regions bordering the southern limits of the Great Sahara.

I have necessarily touched very briefly on the main features of the Nile and Niger question—one which must inevitably become better known in the early future. When the history of the Victorian age is written from a standpoint sufficiently removed to allow a just perception of proportion, the opening up of Tropical Africa will probably stand out as a prominent feature of the latter half of that era. The fifty years that followed 1492 formed by no means the least interesting period in the domestic and international history of England, France, Germany or Spain, or in the history of freedom of human thought and action; yet no events of that half-century appear to us now more important than the discoveries of Columbus and the conquests of Cortes and Pizarro. The results of opening up Tropical Africa cannot, of course, be on a similar scale; yet it seems to me that they must be so great as to dwarf many contemporaneous questions which now occupy the public mind in a far higher degree.

The share that Great Britain may take in this movement depends on the condition of the national fibre. A statesman of the early Stuart period would have deemed it impossible that these little islands could control an empire such as that of the days of Chatham; while the Great Commoner himself might have felt misgivings could he have foreseen the Greater Britain of the Diamond Jubilee year. Yet the growing burden of empire has brought with it a more than equivalent accession of wealth, vigour and strength to maintain it; and, although it may be that the British Empire has now reached its zenith, and must gradually decline to the position of a second-rate power, we are not bound to accept such assertions without the production of more valid evidence than has yet been adduced in their support.

NOTES ON BOOKS, ETC.

BY DOROTHY WELLESLEY

THE real sources for a history of the years before 1900 presumably lie in the archives of the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office which are not yet released for public use.

The authorities consulted in writing my Memoir are the following:

A.—(1) *Articles* on Goldie: *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* by F. R. Cana; *Dictionary of National Biography,* by Lord Scarbrough.

(2) *Articles* on Nigeria: *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* by Lady Lugard.

B. Books referring to the period, as follows:

(1) *The Voyage of the Dayspring,* by A. C. G. Hastings (Bodley Head, 1926),[1] "Trade was firmly established on the Niger, and in 1879 the various firms amalgamated and seven years later got their

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[1] Pages 221, 222.

Charter as the Royal Niger Company." This policy of amalgamation was a most far-reaching one, and was initiated and carried through, entirely by the tact and energy of Sir George Goldie. Mr. Hastings, however, does not mention this. He goes on to say: "The British Protectorate over the Oil rivers had already been recognised by the Berlin Conference, and at last, in 1900, the Government took over control of the remaining territories of the Niger Company. Nothing perhaps during those forty years is more remarkable than the small amount of fighting which was necessary to establish our footing in the country. Thus was consolidated the great territory of the lower third of the Niger, and its delta coast. Park, and Clapperton, and the Landers, Laird, Bird-Allen, Baikie, Glover, Goldie, and the rest of those men, some of whose names are little known. . . ."

No comment, I think, is necessary.

(2) *Nigeria,* by Ed. Morel (Smith Elder & Co., 1911).[1] "The external trade of Northern Nigeria plays as yet but an insignificant part in the commercial and industrial activities of the country. It is largely in the hands of one company, the Niger

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[1] Page 166.

Co. Ltd., to the enterprise of whose founder is due our possession of the Northern Protectorate." In his letter to Mrs. Green, quoted above, Sir George forbids Morel to write his biography. I cannot help thinking that Sir George passed this little paragraph himself.

(3) *Great Britain in Modern Africa,* by E. Sanderson, M.A. (Seeley & Co., 1907), pages 203-207. In this book I was glad to find a clear account of Goldie's life work. The only portion I will quote is this. Speaking of the expedition led by Goldie in 1897 against a Fulah chieftain, he says:

"The campaign was planned with admirable foresight by Sir George Goldie. . . . Sir George Goldie visited a large number of natives, chiefly Haussas in race, at a great camp near the City, and received a warm welcome when he assured them from deliverance of Fulah tyranny, from slave raiders, and of absolute safety in future for every man, woman, and child, who might pass through any portion of the late Sultan's dominions. The decree abolishing slave-raiding and slavery throughout the Niger Company's territoires came into force on Diamond Jubilee Day."

On this occasion the native population gave way to "extraordinary demonstrations of joy," and several communities sent letters expressing gratitude to the Company, for freeing their country from oppression and slavery. Goldie was therefore responsible for the abolition of slavery, and slave-raiding, throughout the huge territories of the Niger Company. This achievement alone should make an enduring epitaph.

(4) *Nigeria: our latest Protectorate,* by C. H. Robinson (Marshall & Sons, 1900). In this book I was glad to find an acute appreciation of Goldie's achievements.

(5) *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger,* by Seymour Vandeleur (Methuen & Co., 1898). This book has a preface by Sir George Goldie, most of which is reproduced in the Appendix to this book. It contains an important definition of true indirect rule—*i.e.* "ruling on African principles through native rulers"—as opposed to the form then in vogue in Crown Colony policy, *i.e.* "ruling on European Principles through natives." He gives a sketch of the horrors of slave-raiding. The book itself contains accounts of campaigns organised by Goldie, and he is frequently mentioned.

(6) *A Tropical Dependency,* by Lady Lugard (Flora

Shaw) (Nisbet & Co., 1905). In the chapter headed "England and France on the Lower Niger"[1] I found the following passage which I quote in full:

"The British Company trading on the river began to feel that it was becoming a matter of life and death to them to overcome the foreign competition, which threatened them with extinction, and under the pressure of their struggle for self-preservation, they found a leader and evolved a policy which had for its result to revolutionise the entire position of Great Britain in West Africa.

"In 1879, under the inspiration of a young engineer officer, Mr. Taubman Goldie, whose tastes for travel had led him to acquire some personal knowledge of the interior of the Soudan, and whose interests, owing to family circumstances, had become involved in West African enterprise, the British Companies trading upon the Niger, were induced to amalgamate, and took the name of the National African Company. The effect of amalgamation was to abolish rivalries between them, and to enable them to present a united front to the advances of French enterprise upon the river. In the sharp round of commercial war which ensued,

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[1] Page 352.

Mr. Goldie, afterwards Sir George Goldie, became the acknowledged leader on the British side, of a movement which under his guidance rapidly assumed an overtly political character."

This account, as also the account at the end of Chapter 38, cannot fail to impress the imagination of the reader, however ignorant of the subject. Lady Lugard goes on to tell the history of the subsequent struggles involved by this policy, though she makes no direct reference to Sir George Goldie, the instigator and leader of the enterprise.

In the chapter headed "The Royal Niger Company"[1] she writes:

"In the ten years which elapsed . . . the action of the Company in the interior led to the further declaration of a British Protectorate over territories lying on the Middle Niger, and to the definition by successive international agreements of British frontiers, round a territory covering an area of about 5,000,000 square miles, of which a considerable part was situated in some of the richest, most healthy, and most thickly populated regions of West Africa.

"The most important of these agreements were those with Germany of 1886, and 1893, and that of 1890 with France. . . ."

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[1] Page 357.

This brief account omits to say that the treaties with native chiefs, 400 in number, were drawn up by Goldie, that this process brought upon us the rivalry of Germany, that Bismarck used the weight of his influence to assist the German Colonial Society to secure the Lower Niger for Germany, and that Goldie eventually outwitted Bismarck's policy.

(7) *Nigeria under British Rule*, by Sir William Nevill M. Geary (Methuen & Co., 1927). This book contains an admirable chapter on the activities of the Royal Niger Company from 1886 to 1900. If read with close attention, it throws much light on Sir George Goldie, and to me, at least, who am ever fascinated by intense individualism, it reads like a story by Conrad. Even in this short, detached and conventional account, I recognise with amusement the man I knew. He emerges from the canvas, jumping about as one might say, with his characteristic, almost inhuman energy. I will quote one sentence, permeated by his personality, as those who knew him will at once recognise: "The Charter of 10th of July 1886 did not contain any map or

definition of the Company's rights, but gave complete control of the waterways."

(8) *The Making of Northern Nigeria*, by Sir Charles Orr, C.M.G. (Macmillan & Co., 1911). Chapter II gives an interesting account of the Chartered Company and throws considerable light on Goldie's administrative work.

(9) *West African Studies*, by Mary Kingsley (Macmillan & Co., 1899). A most important authority already quoted by Mr. Gwynn. Mary Kingsley was one of the few people who whole-heartedly understood and appreciated Goldie. He always spoke of her with the greatest admiration and affection. There existed between them a kinship of spirit, and in her book alone I find adequate recognition of his genius.

(10) *History of Nigeria*, by A. C. Burns, C.M.G. (Allen & Unwin, 1929). The standard work on Nigeria, with much of interest about the early history, though little to show the peculiar position occupied by Sir George Goldie. But see the clauses of the Charter (drafted by Goldie) on page 164.

C.—*Letters* to myself from which I have quoted, and *Letters* to Lord Scarbrough, in his own possession, which he has allowed me to use. Extracts from these have been incorporated by Mr. Gwynn in his introduction.

D.—Contemporary articles and speeches. In addition to those quoted in the text, the following further references may be given:

The Times, January 1st, 1900, "Transfer of Nigeria to the Crown" and an impressive leader on a historic occasion from which I quote the opening paragraphs:

"To-day on the banks of the Niger the ceremony takes place of the transfer of the political and territorial powers of the Royal Niger Company to the British Crown, and to-day the Royal Niger Company ceases as a political organization to exist.

"The history of this remarkable company is one of which the country has reason to be proud. Unstained by crime, undimmed by failure, its record during the short period of 20 years which have elapsed since its first inception under another name, is a record of achievement only to be paralleled by that which its great predecessor, the East India Company, accomplished in a very differently chequered career, of upwards of two centuries. When in 1599 the East India Company was seeking to obtain its charter the subscription of capital which was made amounted only to £30,000. With that small beginning it established a trade footing in India that brought in its train the at first unforeseen development of political and military empire. The territory to which it gradually extended its operations covered before it renounced its charter an extent not falling far short of 1,000,000 square miles. The population served by its trade when its commercial privileges were first shared with the trading public in 1813 was estimated at 70,000,000 persons. These figures almost exactly double those of the Royal Niger Company, of which the influence extends over a territory of 500,000 square miles with an estimated population of 35,000,000. But whereas the work of the East India Company was accomplished by the efforts of successive generations, directed and controlled by a long list of the most distinguished names in English history, the work of the Royal Niger Company has been conceived and carried to a successful end under the controlling influence of a single mind. It is primarily to Sir George Taubman Goldie, the founder and Governor of the Royal Niger Company, that the country owes the acquisition of the two new provinces which are to-day by the Order in Council of the Queen formally incorporated in the British Empire."

The Times, April 15th, 1925, "Nigeria and the British."

The Times, August 22nd, 1925, "Sir George Taubman Goldie."

West Africa, August 29th, 1925, "The Founder of Nigeria."

African World, August 29th, 1925, "The late Sir Taubman Goldie."

Isle of Man Examiner, August 28th, 1925, "Sir George Goldie's Death."

Manchester Guardian, August 24th, 1925, "Sir George Goldie."

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THE END

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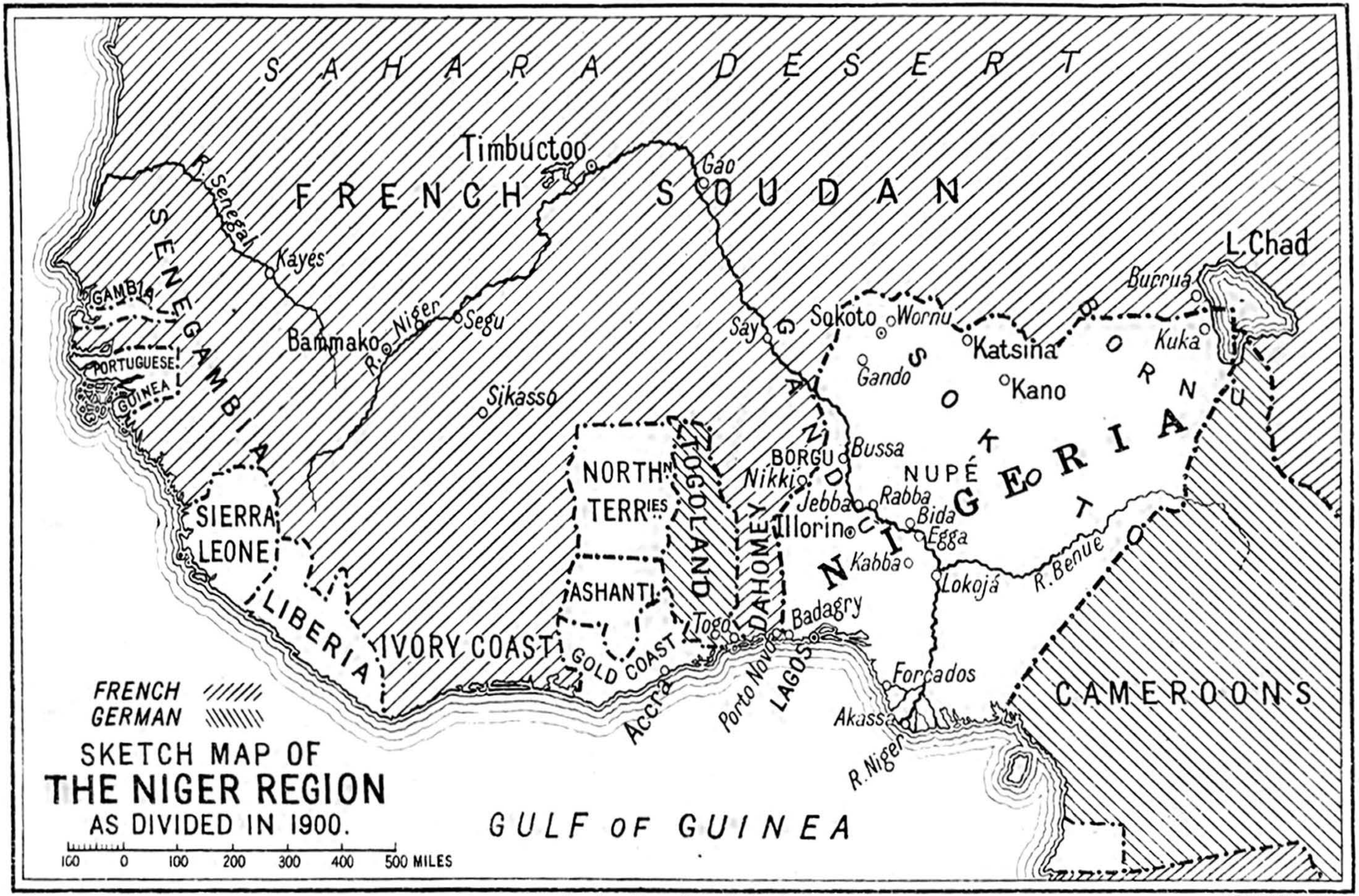

SKETCH MAP OF
THE NIGER REGION
AS DIVIDED IN 1900.

SAHARA DESERT
FRENCH SOUDAN
Timbuctoo
Gao
L. Chad
Burrua
Kuka
BORNU
R. Senegal
SENEGAMBIA
Kayes
GAMBIA
PORTUGUESE GUINEA
Bammako
R. Niger
Segu
Sikasso
Say
GANDU
Sokoto
Wornu
Katsina
Gando
SOKOTO
Kano
NIGERIA
BORGU
Bussa
Nikki
NUPE
Jebba
Rabba
Bida
Illorin
Egga
Kabba
Lokoja
R. Benue
NORTHn TERRies
TOGOLAND
DAHOMEY
ASHANTI
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
IVORY COAST
GOLD COAST
Accra
Togo
Porto Novo
LAGOS
Badagry
Forcados
Akassa
R. Niger
CAMEROONS
GULF OF GUINEA
FRENCH
GERMAN
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